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THE NEGRO LABOR UNIONIST OF NEW YORK

Problems and Conditions among Negroes in the Labor
• Unions in Manhattan with Special Reference to
the N.R.A. and Post-N.R.A. Situations

BY

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SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN THE
FACULTY OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

No. 420 in the "Studies in History, Economics and
Public Law" of Columbia University.

NEW YORK
1936

X:96(Y76).7311.N3

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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TO
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An Inspiring Friend

PREFACE

THE Harlem "Riot" of March 19, 1935, the causes of which were determined to have been basically economic, created a new interest among laymen as well as students of social and economic problems in the conditions of life and work of the people of that area. So great, in fact, was this interest, that the City of New York, in an effort to determine the cause of the riot, gave legal recognition to the need of a fundamental social and economic survey of that area and the Mayor appointed a Commission to undertake the study. One of the phases of this research project dealt with the problems involved in the employment of Negroes and the necessarily related consideration of their status in the local organized labor movement—a tremendously important issue, for trade unions, broadening their jurisdictional activities to cover many professional and "white-collar" occupations as well as the skilled craftsmen and unskilled common laborers, have increased their scope to such an extent that union membership is now a prerequisite for almost any kind of employment. It was during his service as a research worker on this problem that the author of this treatise developed a keen interest in the use by Negroes of collective bargaining through trade unions in their efforts to secure and maintain desirable employment. Therefore, apart from his official work with the Mayor's Commission on Conditions in Harlem, he began this intensive study, the purpose of which is to present objectively and descriptively a picture of local conditions among Negroes in the labor unions of Manhattan, with a brief sketch of the historical development and special emphasis on a descriptive analysis of the situation at the close of the N. R. A. period.

A preliminary survey of the published and written materials and all other available sources on the subject revealed the complete lack of up-to-date information and the utter inadequacy, because of recent developments brought about during the N. R. A. period, of the data available on the local situation. However, several comprehensive studies dealing wholly or in part with the status of the Negro worker in the American labor movement were available. Outstanding among these are: *The Black Worker* by Sterling Spero and Abram Harris, *Racial Factors in American Industry* by Herman Feldman, *Negro Membership in American Labor Unions* by Ira Reid and an earlier one, *Negro Labor in the United States* by Charles Wesley. All of these point out that in his struggle to gain a prominent, stable and desirable position in the economic life of the American people the Negro worker has been handicapped by his lack of membership in some unions and various limitations on his full membership in others. Throughout these treatises there are numerous references to local New York conditions. Collection of these references, together with many other isolated reports, newspaper and magazine articles, etc. dealing with or related to this subject, served very well in the historical development of the background of the present conditions. On the other hand, information on the N. R. A. and post-N. R. A. situations is the result of original, first-hand research and investigation carried out during the last six months of 1935.

The major part of this field work consisted of interviewing union officials, members and other people connected with the organized labor movement in Manhattan, attending labor conferences, union meetings and lectures and making general observations. Since no one agency, such as the Central Trades and Labor Council of New York, had complete information on the actual relationship of Negroes to local unions—no records of the racial identity of the members

of these locals being kept in many cases—and since definite information on the particular experiences of each local union with Negro members was desired, the author resorted to the alternative method of getting authentic information—the personal interview with representative officials and the scrupulous examination of the records of each individual local union. These investigations were supplemented by interviews with both white and Negro union members selected at random. Contact was established with every union in Manhattan, although a small proportion of them evaded cooperation. On the whole, it cannot be said that the unions that did not furnish information were unfavorable in their attitude toward Negroes. On the contrary, many of them—for example, a few locals of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, the champion among unions fighting for the advancement of Negroes in the organized labor movement—are exceptionally friendly toward Negro members, while in both the groups that supplied information and those that withheld it there are some that exclude Negro members by means of a constitutional provision. Practically all of those refusing information merely insisted that they do not usually open their records to the public. The results of this research and investigation have been interpreted in such a manner as to show whether or not the situation in New York City is similar to that in the United States as a whole, and it is hoped that they may serve as a factual basis in future planning for a more complete integration of Negro workers in the local organized labor movement.

The author wishes here to take the opportunity to acknowledge his indebtedness to the several individuals and organizations without whose invaluable assistance this study could not have been made. To Dr. E. Franklin Frazier, Professor of Sociology at Howard University and Director of Research for The Mayor's Commission on Conditions in Harlem,

gratitude is expressed for making it possible for the author to do much of the field work for this study while serving as a research worker for the Commission. Especial indebtedness is acknowledged to Dr. S. McC. Lindsay and Dr. R. E. Chaddock, who gave valuable advice and criticisms on the planning of the study and made pertinent suggestions throughout its development. Similar credit is also due Dr. A. A. Tenney and Dr. L. Wolman.

The author is under obligation to the many labor union officials and members who willingly cooperated and to The National Urban League and The Harlem Labor Committee for placing at his disposal their research departments.

Gracious thanks are extended to Professor Ira DeA. Reid of Atlanta University for reading the entire manuscript and making valuable suggestions and to Caulbert A. Jones for assisting in the preparation of the source materials and the final manuscript.

To Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. sincere appreciation is expressed for the grant to the author of a fellowship award which partly financed the study.

C: L. F.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, APRIL, 1936.

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. . . THE PRINTER

The printing industry is one of the most highly organized industries in New York City. Most of the large establishments employ only union workers. Three types of printing and publishing establishments exist: (1) the union shop, (2) the open shop which employs union and non-union men and pays the union wage scale, and (3) the non-union shop.

In attempting to discover the opportunities for the Negro in the printing trade three agencies were used: (1) the white employer, (2) the Negro employer, and (3) labor unions. . . .

WHITE EMPLOYERS WITH UNION SHOPS

Twenty-nine of the white employers operated union shops. Nine of this group employed thirteen Negro workers. Five were employed as pressmen, while eight were employed as compositors. Of the eight compositors, three were linotypers and five were hand compositors. All the employers of the union shop group found the Negro worker unsatisfactory. Eight found him regular and dependable. In every case it was found that he worked along with whites and received equal pay.

WHITE EMPLOYERS WITH OPEN SHOPS

Nine white employers, who conducted open shops, were interviewed. These employers engaged both union and non-union labor but maintained the union wage scale. Eight Negro printers were employed in four of these establishments. These employers expressed satisfaction with their work, one stated that he found the Negro willing to do more than the white worker. Each employer in this group felt the need for more and better training among the workmen. One Negro was an assistant foreman in a shop employing twenty-two men. It was evident from the interviews that employees were, in almost every case, engaged through friends and relatives of other employees. Two employers had never used a Negro in any capacity. One had heard that the Negro was not dependable and was not to be trusted. Another believed that the Negro could not do any work which required skill. He felt the Negro should remain on the farms or do the jobs which did not exact mental activity or skill.

WHITE EMPLOYERS WITH NON-UNION SHOPS

Eleven white employers operated non-union shops and employed eighteen Negro printers. Three were employed as pressmen, seven were hand compositors, and eight were linotypers. Eight employers readily admitted that Negro workers were not paid the same wage scale as the whites. One photo engraver stated that he had employed a Negro photo engraver for nine years. This Negro, he claims, had learned a part of his trade in England and had completed it while in his employment. Nine employers found the Negro a regular and satisfactory worker. Two felt that he compared favorably with the whites, being no better or no worse. They had found no labor entirely satisfactory. One employer believed that the failure to satisfy was due to his low wage scale, since the better workmen entered the union and better paying shops, while the other was convinced that labor at any price was no longer satisfactory since all laborers seek the highest wage while doing the least possible amount of work.

NEGRO EMPLOYERS

Sixty-nine Negro employers were interviewed. They employed a total of one hundred and sixty-five Negro workmen and two whites. None of the Negro employers or employees were members of the unions. Two employers had been members but had withdrawn their membership. One stated that he had discontinued membership because of discrimination encountered. This led him to open his own establishment. The wage scale in the Negro printing offices ranged from twenty to forty dollars per week. Nineteen of the establishments conducted by Negro employers were one-man shops, the owner doing all the work, occasionally employing a helper. Twenty-five employed one man, eleven employed two men, nine employed three men, four employed four men, and one employed six men.

THE NEGRO IS OBTAINING A FOOTHOLD IN THE PRINTING
INDUSTRY

The facts established on the foregoing statements are conclusive evidence that despite reluctance on the part of some white employers and an indifferent though not hostile attitude of the printing unions in New York City, the Negro printer is obtaining a foothold. The white employer, who has been doubtful of the Negro's ability to do his work and fearful of this white employer's objection to the presence of the Negro workman is slowly changing his attitude. The success of the few workers is establishing confidence in the employers. The twenty-nine employees interviewed were unanimous in the belief that their opportunities were increasing each year.

ATTITUDES TOWARD UNIONS

There were great differences in the attitudes of the men toward the unions. Some felt that the unions had been helpful in assuring more work and higher wages. They believed that they received employment, through the unions, in places which would ordinarily exclude them because of their color. On the other hand, there were strong expressions of bitterness towards

the unions, both by union and non-union men. Some union men declared they were given work only when the union wished to avoid giving them relief. Others stated that the unions discriminated against Negroes in their entrance examinations. The officials, they stated, would seek petty excuses for failing them in tests offered. A Negro, they said, had to be superior to the average white printer to enter the union. Still others felt that, after paying the large entrance fees and monthly dues to the union, they were no better off financially than they were when employed in non-union shops at lower wages. "If," one stated, "the unions practiced the policy of fairness and equality for all its members, then the unions and the Negro could unite in their efforts to improve the conditions of the working man;" the general opinion, however, was that the relations between the Negro and the unions were slowly improving.

SHEET METAL WORKERS

Thirty-two sheet metal contractors were interviewed. Twenty-six of them conducted union shops. No Negro was employed in any of these shops because there were no members of the Sheet Metal Union. A few men were employed in the United States Navy Yard in Brooklyn and a few Negroes might be found in small non-union shops scattered about the city, but generally speaking, sheet metal work was for Negroes in New York City a non-existent trade.

MACHINISTS

The Negro machinist encountered experiences similar to those of the sheet metal worker. The United States Navy Yard at Brooklyn operates an apprentice school in connection with its several shops. This school is affiliated with the Board of Education of New York City. Seven Negro apprentices have attended the school and five of them have completed the course. Three of this number are at present employed as machinists at the Navy Yard. Visits were made to forty-nine employers operating factories which produce almost every conceivable small metal product from screws, bolts, office equip-

ment, lamps, ornaments, small machinery, parts of small and large machinery to parts of motors. These factories were scattered over Manhattan, Brooklyn, and the Bronx. They employed from four to sixty men, sixty percent of the employees were skilled machinists, thirty percent were semi-skilled and ten percent were unskilled laborers. Twenty-three of these employers engaged twenty-six Negro machinists, nine semi-killed mechanics and seventeen unskilled laborers.

THE AUTO MECHANIC

At the beginning of this investigation it was soon disclosed that very few Negroes were employed in the large service stations of New York, but that they were employed in considerable numbers in the small garages. Owners were interviewed of sixty-one white and eleven colored garages in Harlem and the immediate vicinity. Two Negro owners of taxicabs employed one hundred and fifty Negro chauffeurs, employed nineteen mechanics, seventeen of whom were colored and two were white. The total number of chauffeurs employed by them was five hundred and fifty. Twelve percent of the chauffeurs were white. All of the chauffeurs worked on a forty percent basis. These owners employed white chauffeurs because they felt (1) that as public carriers they sought white and Negro patrons, and should therefore offer work to both races and (2) that their policy might serve as an example to white taxicab owners. The office force of five men, and the fourteen washers and polishers were all Negroes.

No difficulty was experienced in talking with the automobile mechanics; all of them stated that they found sufficient work to enable them to make a living.

THE WORKER ON BUILDINGS

The information regarding workers in the building trades must be condensed into a few bare facts. There are ten Negroes employing plumbers in the city. In the Harlem district there are six Negro electrical contractors, and one electrical engineer, whose principle work is the repair of electrical motors. While

there are no Negro members of the plumbing or electrical unions, the plastering and carpentering trades are wide open for the Negro as he may join the unions without restrictions.

THE GARMENT WORKER

There are few Negro men in this industry. Most of them are pressers in the tailoring and repair shops or are tailors conducting small businesses in sections of the city where the population is predominantly Negro. A personal canvass of twenty firms showed the great majority of Negro women employees to be pressers, cleaners and finishers. These are the least desirable jobs of the industry and since they require little skill, they are low wage jobs. Although there were few operators in the sampling, interviews revealed that of the twenty employers eight were decidedly in favor of using Negro operators if these were available.

NEGRO WOMEN IN BEAUTY CULTURE

Beauty Culture is an expanding field for the employment of Negro women. Several Negroes have acquired great wealth in this field. With greater economic security has developed greater interest in personal care. Beauty parlors abound in the Negro communities of New York City. Many of these shops can be classified as first class. Two schools of beauty treatment report 250 shops each in the greater city where the proprietors are graduates of their systems. In New York City 1320 Negro females are listed by the census as barbers, hairdressers and manicurists.

THE FOOD TRADE WORKER

We are familiar with the fact that a trade may be a so-called traditional Negro trade in one state and a white trade in another. In New York we have the interesting situation where the same trade is traditionally Negro under one proprietor and anathema under another. In one chain of food stores, 641 Negroes are employed. They have a record for superior service, and the merit system is used without regard for color. In sharp

contrast to this situation is that presented by another organization in the same field. Both companies are among New York City's largest restaurant chains. No Negroes have been hired by this firm, number five, during its thirty-five years of existence. "This can readily be understood," said the personnel manager, "when one considers that the average mental age of the Negro is seven years."

THE NEGRO WORKER IN THE HOTEL

The hotel business presents a changing situation. A representative of the Hotel Bellmen's Association, a Negro organization of many years' standing, makes this statement: "Since large corporations have taken over the hotel business, the Negro has been displaced by whites. Each year fewer New York hotels employ colored help. "The first-class hotels do not hire them." The personnel manager of one of the hotels where Negroes have held their jobs, explains that this change is simply a "fad." Inefficiency of the Negro is not the cause. It is the style of the hotels at present to use white bellmen, elevator operators, and doormen. The manager of another hotel (number three) states that he prefers Negro help, for the white boy wishes to advance. He expresses admiration for the Negro who "stays in his place, . . ."

APPENDIX II

SYNOPSIS OF ACTIONS ON THE QUESTION OF NEGRO LABOR TAKEN BY THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR CONVENTIONS

(Reviewed in its Proceedings of Conventions: pp. 217-222 in the 1932 Proceedings; pp. 193-195, 269-270 in the 1933 Proceedings; pp. 330-334 in the 1934 Proceedings; and pp. 808, 829 in the 1935 Proceedings.)

The question of non-recognition, discrimination and exclusion of Negro workers has been before the Federation from its organization in 1881 up to the present time. Many declarations have been made from time to time in favor of these workers showing that the American Federation of Labor welcomes and admits all classes of labor—skilled and unskilled—to its rank irrespective of creed, color, sex, race, or nationality—and although one Convention after another has spoken clearly and plainly on this matter it continually comes up.

In order that the position of the American Federation of Labor may be understood on this serious complaint, your committee believes it is now time to give a synopsis of the actions taken by previous Conventions of the American Federation of Labor over a period of half a century.

The call for the first Convention in 1881, among other things, specified that:

The time has now arrived for a more perfect combination of labor . . .

Thus we could elevate trades unionism and obtain for the working classes that respect for their right and that reward for their services, to which they are justly entitled . . .

That all international and national union, trades, assemblies or councils, and local trades or labor unions are hereby invited to send delegates to an International Trades Union Congress, to be held in Pittsburgh, Pa., on Tuesday, November 15, 1881.

PREAMBLE

The preamble adopted at the first Convention 50 years ago, and at every Convention since, specifies, among other things, that:

The history of the wage workers of all countries is but the history of constant struggle and misery engendered by ignorance and disunion; whereas, the history of the non-producers of all ages proves that a minority, thoroughly organized, may work wonders for good or evil.

"It behooves the representatives of the workers of North America, in Congress assembled, to adopt such measures and disseminate such principles among the people of our country as will unite them for all time to come, the secure recognition of the rights to which they are justly entitled." Conforming to the old adage, "In union there is strength," the formation of a federation embracing every trade and labor organization in North America, a union founded upon a basis as broad as the land we live in, is our hope.

1881 CONVENTION

At that Convention, Mr. Gompers, Chairman of the Committee on Plan of Organization, reported as follows:

Article 1. This association shall be known as "The Federation of Organized Trades Unions of the United States of America and Canada."

This was amended to read—"The Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada."

Mr. Grandison (colored delegate), of Pittsburgh, said: "We have in the city of Pittsburgh many men in our organization who have no particular trade, but should not be excluded from the federation. Our object is, as I understand it, to federate the whole laboring element of America. I speak more particularly with a knowledge of my own people, and declare to you that it would be dangerous to skilled mechanics to exclude from this organization the common laborers, who might, in an emergency be employed in positions they could readily qualify themselves to fill."

The amendment was adopted.

At the Convention held in Columbus, Ohio, in 1886 when the name was changed, it was a difficult matter to select a suitable title. All were satisfied with the name "Federation"; however, they did not want to carry the names "United States and Canada" if it could be avoided.

It was suggested that the word "America" would cover both countries. This was agreed to, but how to include all labor—skilled and unskilled, irrespective of creed, color, or nationality—was a stumbling block.

The conclusion reached, however, was that the word "Labor" covers all classes of workers, and this seemed to be a happy solution of a vexed and annoying problem.

It was there and then decided that in the future the name should be "The American Federation of Labor."

DECLARATIONS OF AFOL CONVENTIONS

Detroit, Mich., 1890.

RESOLVED, That it is the sense of this Convention, and it looks with disfavor upon trade unions having provisions which exclude from membership persons on account of race or color, and that we most respectfully request that the National Machinists' Union remove from their constitution such conditions, so that all machinists shall be eligible to membership.

Philadelphia, Pa., 1892.

Your Committee, to which was referred the request of Mr. Harry E. Easton, Grand Foreman and Organizer of the International Association of Machinists, begs leave to report that Mr. Easton appeared before us, and after some discussion expressed himself well satisfied with the position of the A. F. of L. as regards their association and the efforts of our Executive Council to unite the whole craft.

He also stated his belief that the coming annual Convention of said association would eliminate the color line so strenuously objected to by this Federation.

We therefore recommend that our President be instructed to visit the coming Conventions of both organizations in the interests of harmony and unity.

Chicago, Ill., 1893.

RESOLVED, That this Convention heartily endorses the present movement of the International Machinists' Association to drop the color line from their constitution and that the delegates of this Convention be urged to use their best endeavors to convince the locals of the association to agree to the proposition in question in order to bring about harmony in the machinists' organizations of this country.

1893.

RESOLVED, We deplore the introduction of any sectarian or captious side issues among the working people. Such movements are destined to divide labor's forces and produce bitter antagonism as they produce religious bigotry, provoke rancorous intolerance, and divert the working people from working out their own emancipation from the galling slavery of the present social and political conditions.

RESOLVED, That we here and now reaffirm as one of the cardinal principles of the labor movement that the working people must unite and organize, irrespective of creed, color, sex, nationality or politics.

Denver, 1894.

Educate the masses that are not with us to join their respective trade unions, in order that we may confront the enemy with an ever-increasing unity of action that will enable the wage workers everywhere, regardless of creed, color or country, to assert their rights and boldly maintain them.

1894.

A resolution identical to the one adopted in the 1893 Convention quoted in the foregoing was unanimously reaffirmed.

New York, 1895.

RESOLVED, That the Executive Council be and they are hereby directed immediately upon the adjournment of the Convention to issue an address to the wage workers of the country, urging them to join the unions of their respective trades or callings, wherever such unions exist, and to form unions where there are none such now, with the view of securing for them all possible advantages accruing from organization.

In 1897 it was reported that Booker T. Washington of Tuskegee University had made the statement that the trade unions were obstructing the economic progress of Negroes by refusing them admission to their organizations.

At the Convention held that year in Nashville, Tenn., the following resolution was adopted:

RESOLVED, That the American Federation of Labor reaffirms its declaration that it welcomes to its ranks all labor without regard to creed, color, sex, race or nationality, and that its best efforts have been, and will continue to be, to encourage the organization of those most needing its protection, whether they be in the North or the South, the East or the West, white or black, and that we denounce as untrue, and without foundation in fact, the reported statement of Mr. Booker T. Washington of the Tuskegee University, to the effect that the trade unions were placing obstacles in the way of the material advancement of the Negro, and that we appeal to the records of the Conventions of the American Federation of Labor and especially to the records of the Chicago Convention, as the most complete answer to any and all such assertions.

At the Convention held in Louisville, Ky., in 1900, the question of recognition of the Negro was again up and received careful consideration, after which it was decided that the trade-union movement is open to all classes of workers regardless of race, sex, nationality, creed or color.

It was further decided that the A. F. of L. grant charters to separate Local Unions and Central Bodies of colored workers.

In the belief that men of their race could organize the Negro workers, the American Federation of Labor, prior to the World War, had three organizers in the field but they made very little headway, practically none. The Negro workers did not show a willingness nor a desire to belong to the trade-union movement.

At the Buffalo (N. Y.) Convention held in 1917, two resolutions were introduced asking that colored organizers be appointed to organize the Negro workers, but previous experience along this line did not justify such action.

At the St. Paul (Minn.) Convention held in 1918, the Executive Council made the following report on Organization of Colored Workers:

Several resolutions were brought before the Buffalo Convention having their object the better organization of the colored workers. One of the earliest declarations of the American Federation of Labor was, "That it is the duty of the working people of the United States to organize and cooperate for the protection of all the workers without regard to nationality, sex, politics, color or religion."

The constitution provides for the organization of separate unions of colored workers when that course is deemed desirable and most advantageous and for the formation of central labor unions representing local unions of these workers. At every Convention of The A. F. of L. for the past 30 years there have been colored delegates and they have received the same treatment of cordiality, courtesy and fraternity as any white man could expect.

At our meeting in February, the first meeting at headquarters after the Buffalo Convention, we notified the following of our meeting and invited them to confer with us regarding plans for the organization of colored wage-earners:

R. R. Moton, Principal, Tuskegee Institute.

John R. Shillady, Secretary, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Fred R. Moore, Editor, *New York Age*.

Archibald Grimke, Washington Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Emmett J. Scott, Special Assistant to the Secretary of War.

Eugene Kinckle Jones, Executive Secretary, National League.

Thos. Jesse Jones, Educational Director, Phelps-Stokes Fund.

These representatives of the colored workers asked that when organizing their race there should be included skilled as well as unskilled workmen, those from the North as well as from the

South, employees of the government together with civilian employees, women as well as men.

We referred the subject to President Gompers with authority to appoint a committee representing the A. F. of L. to meet with a like committee representing the colored workers for further consideration of plans and policies.

The Committee thus appointed met in joint conference at headquarters April 22nd and the subject was comprehensively discussed.

The whole plan, work and desires of the A. F. of L. in regard to the organization of colored workers were laid before the representatives of the colored people at the conference. They were greatly impressed, so that they finally declared that they would issue a statement addressed jointly to the A. F. of L. and to the colored workers, calling upon the latter to organize into bona fide unions of labor and to become part of the existing trade unions, or to organize into purely colored workers' unions in full affiliation in spirit and fact with the A. F. of L.

The declaration referred to was never issued, or if it was, the A. F. of L. never received a copy.

At the same time the following communication was received from a committee representing various organizations of colored people:

New York, June 6, 1918.

Hon. Samuel Gompers, President,
American Federation of Labor,
Washington, D. C.

My Dear Mr. Gompers—We write to present suggestions for further cooperation between our Committee and the American Federation of Labor as growing out of our recent conference in Washington.

First, we wish to place before you our understanding of your statement to us at the conclusion of the meeting. We quote you as follows; and we will be glad for you to make any changes in the text as will make the statement more nearly conform to the ideas which you have in mind relative to the connections that should be established between white and Negro workingmen:

"We, the American Federation of Labor, welcome Negro workingmen to the ranks of organized labor. We should like to see more of them join us. The interests of workingmen, white and black, are common. Together we must fight unfair wages, unfair hours and bad conditions of labor. At times it is difficult for the national organization to control the actions of local unions in difficulties arising within the trades in any particular community, inasmuch as the National body is made possible by the delegates appointed by the locals; but we can and will use our influence to break down prejudice on account of race, color or previous conditions of servitude, and hope that you will use your influence to show Negro workingmen the advantages of collective bargaining and the value of affiliation with the American Federation of Labor. But few people who are not thoroughly acquainted with the rapid growth of the Federation of Labor know of the large numbers of colored people who are already members of our organization. The unpleasant incidents in connection with efforts of colored men to get recognition in trades controlled by the American Federation of Labor have been aired and the good effects of wholesome and healthy relationship have not been given publicity; and for that reason a general attitude of suspicion has been developed towards union labor on the part of colored working people; but I hope that out of this conference will spring a more cordial feeling of confidence in each other on the part of men who must work for a living."

We are living to co-operate with the American Federation of Labor in bringing about the results of the recent conference, and would make the following suggestions and recommendations which, with your approval, we shall proceed to carry out to the best of our ability.

First, we suggest that you prepare a statement, along the lines of the quotation from you given above, and send it to us for approval and then to be given to the Negro press throughout the country as expressing your position on matters connected with the relationship between Negro and white workingmen.

This statement, in our judgment, should contain a clear exposition of the reasons why certain internationals may exclude colored men as they do by constitutional provision and still be affiliated with the American Federation of Labor whose declared principles are opposed by such discrimination. This we think necessary because the stated facts above alluded to will be familiar to the leaders among the colored people, particularly to colored editors and ministers whose co-operation it is essential to secure if the best results are to be obtained.

We would suggest further that you consider the expediency of recommending to such internationals as still exclude colored men that their constitution be revised in this respect.

Second, that a qualified colored man to handle men and organize them be selected for employment as an organizer of the American Federation of Labor, his salary and expenses, of course, to be paid by the American Federation of Labor.

Third, that for the present we meet at least once a quarter to check up on the results of our co-operative activities and to plan for further extension of the work, if satisfactorily conducted.

Fourth, that you carry out your agreement to have your Executive Council voice an advanced position in its attitude towards the organization of Negro workingmen and have these sentiments endorsed by your St. Paul Convention in June, and this action be given the widest possible publicity throughout the country.

We should be glad to hear from you at your earliest convenience as to the action taken by your Council on these recommendations with such other suggestions or recommendations as may occur to you.

Sincerely yours,

EUGENE KINCKLE JONES

FRED R. MOORE

For the following Committee:

Dr. R. R. Moton, Principal Tuskegee Institute.

J. R. Shillady, Secretary of National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Fred R. Moore, Editor, *New York Age*.

Archibald Grimke, Washington Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Emmett J. Scott, Special Assistant to Secretary of War.

Eugene Kinckle Jones, Executive Secretary, National Urban League.

Thomas Jesse Jones, Educational Director, Phelps-Stokes Fund.

Dr. James H. Dillard, President of Jenes Fund.

Dr. Geo. C. Hall, Vice-President, Executive Board, Chicago Urban League.

The report of the Executive Council as well as this communication was referred to the Committee on Organization and was reported on as follows:

Upon that portion of the report of the Executive Council under the caption "Organization of Colored Workers" the Committee reported as follows:

This part of the Executive Council's report deals with conferences of leading men of the colored race with President Gompers and the Executive Council relative to the organizing of the colored workers, both skilled and unskilled, under the jurisdiction of the American Federation of Labor, and their promise to assist and co-operate in that work.

It is with pleasure we learn that leaders of the colored race realize the necessity of organizing the workers of that race into unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, and your Committee recommends that the President of the American Federation of Labor and its Executive Council give special attention to organizing the colored wage workers in the future. We wish it understood, however, that in doing so no fault is or can be found with the work done in the past, but we believe that with the cooperation of the leaders of that race much better results can be accomplished.

The report of the Committee was adopted unanimously.

The Committee recommends that the communication, signed by a number of representatives of associations of colored people, read in the Convention and printed in the third day's proceedings

(Page 108) be referred to the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor for such actions as they deem necessary.

The report of the Committee was concurred in.

At the 39th Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor held in Atlantic City, N. J., in June 1919, five resolutions were introduced relative to and dealing with the organization of colored workers and their admission to Local Unions of national and international unions and to the American Federation of Labor.

These resolutions were referred to the Committee on Organization. That Committee reported as follows:

A lengthy hearing was had on these resolutions, at which everybody interested appeared and discussed the subject matter contained therein from all viewpoints.

Many international unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor admit colored workers to membership and in so doing protect their rights and interests. Some organizations affiliated with the American Federation of Labor refuse admittance to colored workers, which brings about the present complaints. In such cases your Committee recommends that the American Federation of Labor organize these colored workers under charters from the American Federation of Labor.

After a lengthy debate and a poll taken of the International Unions having colored workers as members, the report and recommendation of the Committee was adopted.

At the 40th Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor, held in Montreal, Can., in June, 1920, three resolutions were introduced dealing with the organizing and admission of colored workers to Local Unions of national and international labor organizations. These resolutions were again referred to the Committee on Organization, and were reported on as follows:

"Your Committee gave a lengthy hearing to all parties interested on the subject matter contained in these resolutions. In the course of the hearing it developed that some few international unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor do not as yet admit colored workers to membership. It also developed that the majority and by far the greater

majority, of the international unions do admit colored workers to membership, and that these colored workers are entitled to the same rights, benefits and privileges that the other members enjoy. On account of these few international unions refusing colored workers admission, exception is taken. Your Committee, however, calls your attention to the action of the Atlantic City Convention of the American Federation of Labor last year on this subject, :

"Where international unions refuse to admit colored workers to membership, the American Federation of Labor be authorized to organize them under charters from the American Federation of Labor.

"We, therefore, reaffirm our former action on this matter, at the same time calling attention to the fact that the American Federation of Labor does not organize workers of any trade or calling along racial lines."

In the course of the debate that followed it was decided that national and international unions remove from their laws the words "only white" where such exist.

Delegate Sweeney, of the Tailors, asked: If it was not contrary to the principles of the American Federation of Labor to allow an affiliated union to draw the color line.

Vice-President Duncan replied that: The American Federation of Labor ever since its formation, has stood for organization without reference to color. It so stands today.

It is needless to say that as far as the American Federation of Labor is concerned all its influence will be used to have such a change made because the American Federation of Labor cannot be expected to favor an affiliated body that discriminates against a man on account of his color.

Delegate Duffy, Chairman of the Committee said: When the American Federation of Labor issues charters to colored workers, no matter of what trade or calling, the American Federation of Labor becomes the international union of those members. It is the duty of the American Federation to take up the grievances of those workers. Out of 110 national and international

organizations affiliated with the American Federation, more than 100 admit colored workers to membership.

The report of the Committee was adopted.

At the 50th Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor, held in Boston, Mass., in October, 1930, Delegate Randolph (colored) in behalf of the Pullman Porters, said:

We have been waging a campaign of education. President Green has addressed several meetings of our union in New York and Chicago. He gave a very forceful convincing and logical dissertation on our work in the interests of getting a successful consummation of our case. Those addresses of President Green were disseminated throughout the Negro press and also in the daily papers. We have been able to increase our forces and we are constantly making headway.

Our movement has won for the members an increase of ten dollars in the last five years. That is not much but it is something, and as a result of the indirect pressure we were able to exact that from the Pullman Company.

We are calling upon this Convention to use its influence in helping to carry forward this organization. We hope the central councils in the various cities will help us in our organization work. Some of them have already helped us — Vice-President James Wilson, of Cincinnati, has done and is about to do some work of our organization. We have also been helped in Louisville and a number of other places, and I am confident that with the militant spirit and determination on the part of the Pullman porters we are certain to win.

The laws of the American Federation of Labor now in force and effect specify in Article XI, Section 6, that:

“Separate charters may be issued to Central Unions, Local Unions, or Federal Labor Unions, composed exclusively of colored members, where, in the judgment of the Executive Council, it appears advisable and to the best interest of the trade-union movement to do so.”

After all that has been said and done in the last half century we have the matter before us again. Your Committee reiterates, re-endorses and reaffirms all the actions taken and the

decisions rendered by the American Federation of Labor on this subject.

We repeat that: All the workers of the United States and Canada—skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled are eligible to admission to the American Federation of Labor irrespective of creed, color, nationality, sex or politics. We welcome them into our midst. We will be glad to have them with us as that is the only way in which their and our rights and interests can be advanced and protected.

[The 1933 Convention witnessed the introduction and endorsement of several other resolutions concerning Negro labor. The purpose of these were a Protest Against Negro Workers Under N.R.A., a further request for Equal Rights for Negro Workers and a request for the use of Negro Labor Organizers by the American Federation of Labor.

In the 1934 Convention similar actions were taken; however, this time a resolution which brought forth a little result was introduced. It requested that a committee of five be appointed to investigate the status of Negroes in American Federation of Labor Unions. Subsequently, said committee was appointed by the president and Executive Council of the A. F. of L.

The outstanding feature on Negro Labor of the 1935 Convention was the Report of the Committee of Five, discussion by a Negro delegate which shows how it was accepted and, finally, a resolution for the further functioning of this committee. These follow:]

SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
COLORED WORKERS

The 1934 San Francisco Convention of the American Federation of Labor directed the president to appoint a committee of five to investigate the conditions of the colored workers of this country. Pursuant to this direction, a committee consisting of John E. Rooney, Operative Plasters and Cement Finishers, John Brophy, United Mine Workers of America, John W. Garvey, International Hod Carriers, Building and Common Laborers' Union, Jerry L. Hanks, The Journeymen Barbers

International Union and T. C. Carroll, Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees were appointed.

The Committee conducted an investigation and obtained considerable information on the subject. Opportunity was afforded those interested to present their views.

The report of the Committee indicates that there are a few National and international Unions that deny membership to Negroes. In most of these instances special provisions are made to organize the Negroes into Federal Labor unions directly chartered by the American Federation of Labor. In some National and International Unions admitting Negroes they are placed in separate local unions with varying rights of membership.

We are of the opinion that since each affiliated National and International Union has complete autonomy that the welfare of the Negro worker will be best served by a campaign of education of white workers to bring to them the necessity of solidarity in the ranks of the workers and the voluntary elimination of all restrictions against full rights of membership to the Negro.

The American Federation of Labor has consistently advocated the organization of all workers and we reaffirm that policy. The economic welfare of the workers can best be served by complete unity of purpose and action. We therefore recommend—

That all National and International Unions and the American Federation of Labor conduct a continuous campaign of education to bring to the white worker the necessity for greater unity of the workers in the labor movement to the end that all discrimination against negroes will be removed.

Your committee has considered the Supplemental Report of the Executive Council dealing with the Committee having investigated the conditions of the colored workers of this country and recommends concurrence in the Executive Council's report.

Delegate Randolph, Sleeping Car Porters: Mr. Chairman and delegates to the convention of the American Federation of Labor—the report of the Executive Council I consider quite inadequate: it does not meet the issue in any respect, and, in the first place, it has not followed the procedure laid down by

the San Francisco Convention. I wish to read from the records of the San Francisco Convention relating to this question.

In that Convention delegate Hutcheson, Carpenters, asked: "What was the final recommendation of the Committee?" The organization Committee non-concurred in the resolution, which dealt with discrimination against Negro workers.

Then Delegate Hucheson moved as an amendment: "Therefore, I move as an amendment to the Committee's report that there be a committee of five appointed by the President of the American Federation of Labor to investigate the conditions of the colored workers of this country and report to the next convention."

That report was not made here by the committee which was appointed by President Green. President Green appointed five persons on that committee as follows: John G. Rooney, Operative Plasterers and Cement Finishers; John Brophy, United Mine Workers of America; John Garvey, International Hod Carriers, Building and Common Laborers Union; Jerry L. Hanks, Journeymen Barbers International Union; and P. C. Carroll, Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees. These were the men who were appointed on that committee. They were bona fide trade unionists, men in organizations affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. The Committee met in Washington and held hearings for two days. Representatives of various Negro organizations appeared and presented data with regard to discrimination against Negro workers. The committee considered the recommendation for holding regional hearings in the centers where Negroes were in great numbers working at various industries, New York, St. Louis, Detroit, Cleveland, Chicago—places of that sort. The committee made its recommendation to the Executive Council. The Executive Council appointed one of its members to make the report of the matter. That is the report, but the recommendations of the committee appointed by President Green are not in this report. I think they should be included. As a matter of fact, this report of the Executive Council I will regard as merely a dignified, diplomatic camouflage.

This is the report which was made by the committee appointed by President Green, signed by four of the members of the committee of five. It reads:

"First, That all International Unions, who bar Negroes from membership in any way or discriminate against them through separate local systems or forbid them representation at conventions or on committees, will take up the Negro question at their next convention for the purpose of harmonizing constitution, rules and practices to conform with the oft-repeated declaration of A. F. of L. conventions on equality of treatment of all races within the trade union movement.

"Second. All charters issued by A. F. of L. shall be in conformity with both declared policy and law on the subject of membership.

"Third. The A. F. of L. through its officers, the American Federationists, A. F. of L. weekly News Service, Workers Education Bureau and other mediums, conduct a continuous active campaign of education within the trade union movement on the weakness of division and the necessity of greater trade union unity between white and black workers to the end that all workers may be organized.

Respectfully submitted,

"John E. Rooney,

"John Brohpy,

"T. C. Carroll,

"John W. Garvey."

Now I want to know why these recommendations were not included in this report and presented to this convention. As a matter of fact, the motion in the San Francisco Convention provided that both recommendation and findings should be presented to this convention. And, by the way, the findings are important because they represent the basis upon which those conclusions were drawn.

RESOLUTION NO. 153—BY DELEGATE A. PHILLIP RANDOLPH,
SLEEPING CAR PORTERS, 18068, NEW YORK CITY

“WHEREAS, The Fifty-fourth Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor, in San Francisco, adopted a resolution for the appointment by President William Green of a committee of five for the purpose of making an inquiry into the practices of discrimination by trade unions affiliated with the A. F. of L. against Negro workers, and to make recommendations to the next or this Convention; and

WHEREAS, President Green appointed the said committee composed of the following brothers: John E. Rooney, of the Plasterers; John Brophy, of the Miners; T. C. Carroll, of the Maintenance of Way; John W. Garvey, of the Hod Carriers; Hanks, of the Barbers, who have undertaken a splendid, far-reaching and constructive job of investigating every aspect of the relationship of the black workers to the American Federation of Labor; and

WHEREAS, The Committee held two hearings in Washington, D. C. and listened to testimony given by Negro and white representatives from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the joint Committee on National Recovery, the National Urban League, the Department of Interior, Howard and Fisk Universities, the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, and skilled Negro building trades workers, who gave a mass of factual data, pointing out the widespread practice, on the part of some trade unions, to discriminate against Negro workers through the color bar in their constitutions and color pledges in their rituals and other inexpressed but subtle and effective methods of excluding colored workers from the unions and thereby keeping them out of employment; and

WHEREAS, The Life of the Committee has been too short, having only started work in July of 1935, giving it about three months to function, hold hearings, take evidence, study and analyze the material that is presented to it or that it may search out for evaluation, itself, especially, in view of the magnitude and vital significance of the task before it; and

WHEREAS, Negro workers have neither the money or time to travel to Washington to tell their story of discrimination visited upon them to prevent them from becoming members of the union, or work on union jobs and since if they left their homes they would be cut off relief because of absence, and because Washington is not an industrial city where large numbers of Negro craftsmen live who might appear and testify before the Committee and, too, since the increase and accumulation of evidence of discriminations, of varied forms, which enable the Committee to get a clear and complete picture of the Negro workers' relation to the trade union movement, which will have great factual value and moral weight and worth; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the American Federation of Labor in its Fifty-fifth Annual Convention in Atlantic City, New Jersey, empower and instruct President Green and the Executive Council, to provide the Committee with the necessary funds with which to conduct regional public hearings, to take evidence on the aforementioned discriminations, in New York, Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, Cincinnati and St. Louis, in order that Negro workers in these large industrial centers may appear and tell the Committee their experiences in seeking membership in the unions, and work on jobs controlled by organized labor. This will serve as a gesture of sincere interest on the part of the A. F. of L. to organize Negro workers, and will bring to the Federation increasing moral assurance and spiritual force, public goodwill and economic power, which is born alone in working class solidarity, without regard to race, color or nationality."

[Report of the Committee on Resolutions:]

Your committee recommends that the resolution be referred to the Executive Council and that hearings be provided for in such cities as the Executive Council may determine.

[Action of the Executive Council:]

The Executive Council amended the committee's report by striking out the last section calling for meetings in various localities and with this amendment approved the committee's report.

APPENDIX III
PART II OF
PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF INDUSTRIAL DISTRIBUTION
AND
UNION STATUS OF NEGROES IN NEW YORK CITY
PREPARED BY
THE LABOR BUREAU, INC.
FOR THE
NEW YORK BRANCH OF THE URBAN LEAGUE
(1925—See Note 50, Page 99)

PART II. The following comments concerning the situation in New York City were evoked during interviews:

A. Working Conditions of Negroes. . .

I. Skill.

As may be seen from the census reports, the major occupations of colored workers are in the unskilled trades. Even under the general classification of skilled trades, a number of union officials state that the Negroes were in unskilled or semi-skilled branches. In several instances, the census and union classification of occupations did not therefore, correctly apply to the colored worker. The census, for example, lists 289 painters, glaziers and varnishers, but these are apparently occupied in white-washing. White-washers do not come under the jurisdiction of the Painters' and Decorators' union.

The officers of both the stationary firemen and stationary engineers said that Negroes were more apt to be found tending low-pressure fires, and doing jobs (porters) during the rest of the time. There are practically no Negroes employed as engineers in the ice plants and other large commercial houses of the city. Colored elevator operators are chiefly in apart-

ment houses, rather than in large office buildings. In this case also, their hours and their occupations tend to be less definite.

The organizer of the Tailors' Union said that 533 Negroes listed as "Tailors" in the census were probably all in valet service, i. e., cleaning, pressing and repairing. Valet service is not included in the New York local of Journeymen Tailor's Union. The only cleaners and dyers organization in the city is a Jewish union which has no colored members.

The same situation is found in the case of women workers. In the women's clothing industry, colored women are in the unskilled and semi-skilled trades; in the laundries, they are chiefly markers and sorters. The great majority of colored women, including those listed as waitresses, are in domestic service.

According to Mr. deChabert, Assistant Superintendent of the Harlem Branch of the New York State Department of Labor, Employment Service, the preponderance of Negroes in the unskilled trades is partly due to the fact that skilled colored men are obliged to accept and to apply for jobs requiring less skill, because they are unable to obtain more suitable employment. This opinion is supported by a statement of Mr. Robinson of the Brotherhood of Railroad and Steamship Clerks, Freight Handlers, Express and Station Employees, who said that about 50 per cent of baggage-men and about 10 per cent of freight handlers in the Grand Central Terminal were Negroes, and that they were probably a better educated group than the white men who were filling similar positions.

II. Rates of Pay.

Where colored men are organized, they receive the same rate of pay as organized white men for the same type of work. This was specifically emphasized in the case of the building trades, stationary firemen, teamsters, chauffeurs and longshoremen. Although there are no colored men in the Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks, Freight Handlers, Express and Station Employees, Negroes are included in labor agreements and decisions of the Railroad Labor Board. Their grievances are handled by the Clerks' organization. The only

class of labor to which Labor Board decisions are not applicable are the Station Porters (Red Caps) who are excluded from Railroad employees on a technicality that they work for a "gratuity" rather than a wage.

It was the consensus of opinion that unorganized Negroes received the same rates of pay as unorganized white men. Mr. deChabert thought that this was not always true in the case of unskilled labor, though the instance he mentioned (trackmen on the New York Central Railroad) is probably due to the fact that the white men are organized. Colored women in domestic service by the day receive the same pay as white women.

III. Apprenticeship.

One reason for the lack of colored men in the highly skilled trades may be found in the fact that a number of unions do not encourage or train Negro apprentices. Nevertheless, a certain term of apprenticeship is required before union membership is granted. This is true specifically, in New York City, in the case of many building trades, stationary engineers, and tailors.

B. Organization of Colored Workers.

I. Responsiveness to Organization.

Most union officials agreed that there was great initial resistance to be overcome in attempting to organize Negro workers than in the case of white men. This was ascribed largely to shorter industrial experience, great industrial exploitation and consequent suspicion and fear on the part of the Negro. Most union officers also stated that when they had been organized they were loyal members. Where the practice is to organize a trade by jobs, practically no difficulty was encountered in organization of Negroes who were in a union shop.

II. Use of Negroes as Strike-Breakers.

The following organizations mentioned that Negroes had been used by employers in attempting to break a strike.

1. Building Trades—1919. Mr. Calloran of the Building Trades Council said that this caused some hard feeling among concrete workers and the building trade groups.

2. Teamsters—1910. New York City Negroes were used to break a strike. These same Negroes were organized five or six years later, however, when "the soreness had worn off."

3. Railway and Steamship Clerks, Freight Handlers, Express and Station Employees. Negroes were used to take the places of white men during the outlaw strike of 1912. This gave them seniority preference over the white men whose places they had taken.

During the recent shopmen's strike, Negroes were promoted and introduced into new positions in order to release men who might replace the machinists.

4. Longshoremen. Negroes were used in a number of old strikes. Recently they were used in the United Fruit Line Docks, but apparently without success.

5. Waiters. Negroes replaced white waiters during the strike at Lorber's Restaurant. They are still employed. Mr. Lehman (Waiters' Union #1) said that there is a Colored Headwaiters' Organization on Lenox Avenue which furnishes strike-breakers to employers.

III. Methods of Organization.

Mixed Locals:

Practically all of the organizations which admitted Negroes were mixed, i. e., Negro and White. The only separate Negro locals encountered were Waiters' Union #11 of the Hotel and Restaurant Employes' International Alliance, a very small organization of one shop, a carpenters' local and Longshoremen's Union #968, a Brooklyn local of the International Longshoremen's Association. It is interesting to note that the latter organization has recently merged its numerous Colored and Italian locals until they are now practically all mixed. The officers find that they can "get better results" in this manner.

Federal Locals of the American Federation of Labor:

Mr. Hugh Frayne, New York Representative of the American Federation of Labor, has made several attempts to organize Negroes who, for some reason, were not eligible for membership in existing International Organizations, as Federal Locals directly affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. These were not very successful, though Mr. Frayne still does

not feel that the situation is hopeless. Mr. Robertson of the Railroad and Steamship Clerks, Freight Handlers, Express and Station Employees, whose organization does not accept colored members, thinks that this is the only possible way to organize workers who would otherwise be in his organization. He feels, however, that the Negroes would rather be in the same international.

Of the unions which Mr. Frayne attempted to form, the Railway Station Porters and Cleaners Union #16717, American Federation of Labor (Red Caps) is the only one which remains. This is by no means in a flourishing condition. The Elevator Starters and Operators, begun in the same manner, has since become local #67 of the Elevator Constructors International Unions and is now a mixed local. When the colored membership is sufficiently large, they will probably form a separate colored local. It was suggested, however, that their new international affiliation which is more highly skilled, is "not keen" about the colored delegates.

Colored Organizers:

The only unions which employed a paid colored organizer were the carpenters, elevator operators and seamen. The Elevator Operators and Starters have recently employed a colored organizer who is "bringing in good reports." The Eastern and Gulf Sailors Association employed two Negro organizers last year, who "didn't bring in a single name." However, Mr. Miller said that this organization was at very low ebb at the time, white as well as colored, and that he expected to try colored organizers again.

Of those who didn't use colored organizers, the Stationary Firemen, whose organization has Negro organizers in other cities, said that there weren't enough colored firemen in New York City to justify the employment of a paid colored organizer. Miss Schneidermann, of the Women's Trade Union League, who attempted to organize laundresses, said that the colored women had an inferiority complex and wouldn't give the same respect and attention to a colored as to a white organizer.

C. Discrimination.

I. In Obtaining Employment.

Since this survey was confined chiefly to union officials, very little information was obtained on this phase of the situation. The Teamsters and Longshoremen mentioned that the men "shape" together, and presumably, stand equal chance of being employed. Mr. deChabert, of the Department of Labor, thought, however, that they were less likely to get work. He mentioned that in mixed gangs, the proportion of Negroes was very small. The Elevator Operators said that when employers paid high rates, they preferred white men. The Stationary Foremen thought that employers sometimes request Negroes—"they think they can work them harder,—but they can't."

II. In the Unions.

A large number of unions' constitutions prescribe no "discrimination because of race, color or creed." These include a large number of the building trades, stationary firemen, teamsters, longshoremen, ladies' garment workers, etc. Nevertheless, although no discrimination is ostensibly employed, they are sometimes debarred by the high initiation fees, the apprenticeship rules and even more subtly. The compositors, for example, admit Negroes on the same terms as white men, but they're "not looking for them."

Negroes in mixed locals are rarely elected to office. A notable exception in this regard is the Secretary of the Atlantic and Gulf Clerks, Stewards and Waiters Union (International Seamen's Union) who is apparently considered a very able, loyal and efficient officer. Colored delegates to international conventions are more commonly met with. Colored locals will, of course, have colored officers and colored delegates. However, in the case of the carpenters' organization, they are "advised not to send delegates to the general meetings."

III. Suggestions as to Action.

It is assumed that one of the most practical ways of bettering the status of Negroes in industry is to extend their organization in Unions.

The above brief survey of the facts makes it clear that while there are obstacles due to general racial prejudice, the traditions or practices of unions, and the attitude of Negroes, such obstacles are not insuperable and have, in some cases, been overcome by practical work in detail rather than by any amount of general propaganda.

Table I furnishes a rough map of the situation which will indicate how the problem may be attacked in detail.

Where the larger number of Negroes work, and are less well organized, intensive application may be made by approaching both the union organization and the Negroes in the particular industrial group. Any influence, time, special knowledge or funds which the Urban League has to offer may be concentrated at these strategic points.

It is possible that the development and training of Negro organizers would help.

It is possible that a special central body representing Negro union locals, with a trained secretariat, would be able to extend the movement. In establishing any such body, however, care should be taken to secure the authorization and good will of the proper union authorities. Mr. Frayne of the American Federation of Labor should be consulted on this.

Similar central bodies already exist in the form of the United Hebrew Trades, the Italian Federation of Labor, and the Women's Trade Union League. Some derive their support from affiliated local unions, others, at least in part, from interested international unions, and others from individual contributions.

It will be found that in the case of some unions where Negroes are not well organized, whites are equally poorly organized as with the bookkeepers, stenographers and accountants. There may be poor places to begin work—except in cases where the organization of Negroes might furnish a key to the situation.

In some cases where no union has jurisdiction, Federal locals of Negroes may be established. Such locals are affiliated directly with the American Federation of Labor. In other cases,

such as private laundresses, dressmakers and servants, organization will be difficult if not impossible.

There is certainly an opportunity here for devoted, patient and useful service, which will establish a real center of cooperation between the labor movement and the Negroes in New York. Such work, of course, ought to be continuous, since its usefulness would grow with experience, under acquaintanceship, and confidence on the part of all concerned.

APPENDIX IV

EXPERIENCES OF LOCAL UNIONS WITH NEGRO MEMBERS (CONTINUED)

(Classified by Broad Occupational Groups as Used in Chapter Five)

CLOTHING AND TEXTILE INDUSTRIES

CLOTHING WORKERS OF AMERICA, AMALGAMATED:

Local 11—Children's Jacket Pressers¹—organized in 1915 and composed of 550 members of whom there are no Negroes. Initiation fee is \$20.65, and yearly dues are \$26.00. However, according to the secretary the local never had a Negro member because "Negroes never applied for membership". Because the local feels that Negroes should be organized "as workers rather than as Negro workers", it has made no special efforts to organize or solicit Negro members and contemplates no such program for the future. Up to this time it has not participated in a strike and, therefore, has had no experience with Negro workers during strikes.

Local 158—Wholesale Clothing Clerks²—organized 1933 and composed of 1500 members of whom 25 are Negroes. Initiation fee is \$27.50, and yearly dues are \$26.00. In this local Negroes have been members since its origin, and "they have gradually worked into the more skilled groups". The secretary-treasurer pointed out that the small Negro membership is due to the fact that there are very few Negro wholesale clothing clerks. Further, he stated that Negro members are among his best workers. "But," he said, "they are naturally lazy and

¹ Interview with the secretary of the Local—July 24, 1935. (Name withheld.)

² Interview with Harry Lederman, Secretary-Treasurer, July 30, 1935.

unthrifty." Other remarks were that all workers should be organized into mixed locals regardless of race or color and that no special plans should be made to organize any one group of workers. "What's the use of making all those special plans for Negroes when our workers get along like brothers. Why, there's even a Negro on our Executive Board." The union has had two strikes, one in 1933 and one in 1935. In both strikes Negroes were loyal members and participated as fellow unionists. "Working side by side in strikes helps them to get along better."

Local 169—Washable Jacket, Pants and Novelty Workers ^a—This Local did not disclose any information. The representative interviewed merely stated, "We do not discriminate against anyone on account of race, color or creed. I have worked along side Negro workers in some of our shops and have found them good workers."

Local 243—Shirt Makers—Pressers ^a—Organized in 1918 and composed of 500 members of whom 25 are Negro women. Initiation fee is \$10.50 and dues \$31.20 yearly. These 25 have become members only through being employed in a shop when the local organized it. "Negroes were in the first shop we organized, and we took them in just like anybody else," the business agent said. "We had no difficulty organizing them, and they work peaceably along with our white workers," he remarked further. Although Negroes are supposed to be admitted to full membership and participation in union activities, none of them hold offices in the local. "The number is so small that they cannot elect an officer", he unwittingly said after stating that they did not think in terms of race or act in groups or cliques. He continued to state that in the strikes held, the outstanding in Brooklyn in 1935, Negro members remained loyal to the union while Negro non-union workers performed as strike breakers. "They don't seem to understand the principles of trade unionism".

^a Interview with John N. Federiconi, Representative, August 8, 1935.

^a Interview with Mr. Petilli, Business Agent, August 6, 1935.

Local 250—United Neckwear Makers^a—organized in 1903 and composed of 2800 members, 85 of whom are Negroes. The initiation fee is \$15.00 and yearly dues are \$24.00. Although Negroes have been members of this local since its origin, there have never been more than 85. In its special efforts to organize Negro workers this union has on several occasions engaged Mr. Frank Crosswaith, Negro union organizer, to meet with Negro workers, discuss the advantages of organized labor with them and propose organization to them. These efforts have given most favorable and encouraging results according to the officer interviewed. They plan more of them for the future.

This officer favors and believes that organization of workers of the same trade, etc., into one mixed local offers the best solution for the race difficulties in organized labor.

In addition to taking active part in the meetings, etc., some Negro workers hold minor positions in the subsidiary bodies and in the organizational committee. The local conducted strikes in 1918 and 1933 in which Negroes participated as fellow unionists. The result of this was a further organization of both white and Negro workers and a lessening of the tension of racial sentiment.

Local 251—United Neckwear Cutters^a—organized in 1897 and composed of 300 members—no Negroes. The initiation fee is \$50.00, and yearly dues are \$36.00. This local has never had a Negro member. The officer interviewed feels that if Negroes applied for membership in this union they would be refused by some method or other—such as an efficiency test. The high initiation fee, \$50.00, is definitely set to discourage Negro workers and young white workers. This union is monopolized by old, white workers. Should a Negro come to the union with a transfer card, it is believed that he would be accepted only after a long struggle and a final mandate for his acceptance by the general organization, A. C. W. of A.

^a Interview with Louis Fuchs, Manager, July 29, 1935.

^a Interview with Louis Fuchs, Manager, July 29, 1935.

GARMENT WORKERS' UNION, INTERNATIONAL LADIES:

Local 1—Cloak and Suit Operators¹—organized in 1895 and composed of 8,000 members. At present, there are no Negroes in the 8000 membership of this local. Two years ago, one Negro joined in September, 1933 and dropped out in December, 1933. His leaving after but four months in the union could not be explained. "He just dropped out," said Mr. Davidoff, office manager of the local. The initiation fee of this local is not definitely established but varies with the "condition" of each applicant and is determined by a special committee on admission of new members. However, the yearly dues, \$26.00, are payable 50c weekly. Referring back to Negro membership, Mr. Davidoff said, "Negroes just don't take to this kind of work. We would have no objection to taking them if they only applied for membership. In 1933 Heady came here, applied and was admitted at once.—And let me tell you again, he was a nice fellow—gentle, courteous and respectful."

In the strikes of the I. L. G. W. U. in which this local participated and in the shop strikes or stoppages of this local no Negroes have been involved. "They could not be involved in our strikes," said Mr. Davidoff, "because they don't work in this craft of the industry."

Local 10—Amalgamated Ladies' Garment Cutters²—It was not until after the coming of the N. R. A. that Negroes gained entrance to this local which was organized in 1884 and which has at present 8500 members. In 1933, the Negroes applied for membership and were then admitted without any difficulty. These, said Mr. Stulzer, were the first to apply for membership. They have paid in full the initiation fee of \$77.00 which is payable quarterly during the first year's membership and are paying their weekly dues of 40c regularly. Also, they are full fledged members working in this industry. It is his thought that they do not attempt to learn the trade and that these two "accidentally" learned it while working about some shop as porters

¹ Interview with M. Davidoff, Office Manager, August 19, 1935.

² Interview with Louis Stulzer, Assistant Manager, August 19, 1935.

or something of that nature. "Nevertheless," he said, "these two fellows are fine chaps. They know their work and get along excellently with the other workers." He stated further that if any Negroes applied for membership in the future, they would undoubtedly be warmly welcomed. To illustrate the attitude of the whites towards Negroes—even though the union had no Negro members until recently—Mr. Stulzer points out that on several occasions, Frank Crosswaith, Negro General Organizer for I. L. G. W. U., has been engaged to lecture to meetings of this local. In the many shop strikes or stoppages participated in by this local, no Negroes have been involved as strike breakers or as non-union men in open shops; however, the two Negro members have cooperated in every way as fellow unionists.

Local 17—Infant, Child Coat & Reefer Makers*—This is another old local, having been organized in 1905. Of the 2800 members there are only ten Negroes. This number represents the greatest number of Negroes ever in this local. Until recently, there were only two or three. The initiation fee, \$26.85 to \$48.85, and the dues, 35c weekly, are reasonably small. The small Negro membership is accounted for by the fact that no Negroes or few were employed in the shops organized and few have applied directly to the union for membership. No efforts have been made to recruit and organize Negro operators. These few Negro workers seldom go to meetings and are very inactive. But, the "best possible relationship" exists between them and the white workers. "Before I became secretary," stated Miss Weisberg, "I used to work side by side with a Negro girl. She was swell. She was so sympathetic and understanding. I tried to get her to go to the meetings, but she seldom did. Never to my knowledge has there been any trouble about discrimination in any of our shops." No Negroes hold offices in this local. In the general strikes from time to time—usually every two years—and in the shop stoppages the Negro workers have cooperated highly and participated as fellow unionists.

* Interview with Miss Weisberg, Secretary, August 14, 1935.

Local 20—Waterproof Garment Workers¹⁰—organized in 1910. This local has but one Negro in its membership of 700. In 1915 Mr. Marsin was a shop manager at the Fulton Coat Company, 14-16 West 17th Street, New York City. At that time he brought this Negro worker—a neighbor and friend of his—to the shop where he learned the trade. He was then admitted to the union and has worked at the same shop since 1915.

Mr. Kessler explains that one must be an experienced worker before membership is granted. This definitely limits the number who can qualify for membership because practically all shops are closed now; hence, there is little opportunity for one to get the required experience.

Apart from the above-mentioned, neither the union nor any of its members or officials have encouraged Negroes to learn the trade and join the union. "Since", said Mr. Kessler, "we never had Negroes come to us for membership, we had forgotten all about them." In the strike and shop stoppages Negroes have not been involved. Their lack of experience in the work prevents them from joining or opposing the union.

Local 23—Shirt Makers¹¹—An interview with the manager-secretary of this local failed to produce any factual information on the activity of its Negro members, if there be any. The attitude of this official indicated that it is very likely that this local has no Negro members.

Local 25—Blouse and Waist Makers¹²—In 1933, when this local was organized, all the workers in the shops were taken in as charter members. Among these were several hundred Negroes. Both the total membership and the Negro membership increased during the one and one-half years of this local's existence to 2800 and 400, respectively.

Mr. Moskowitz emphasized the policy of the local to make no difference because of color or race among the workers.

¹⁰ Interview with David Marsin, Manager, and Joe Kessler, Secretary-Treasurer, August 15, 1935.

¹¹ Interview with Louis Reiss, Manager-Secretary, August 15, 1935.

¹² Interview with Max Moskowitz, Manager, August 15, 1935.

"They are treated as workers and not workers of a certain color," he said. Because of this policy no special methods are used to organize Negro workers as such. There is no Negro organizer.

Negroes—girls for the most part—are very active in the meeting and social activities of the union. There are three on the Executive Board and about six shop chairladies. On one Negro worker in this local was bestowed the highest honor which the local can give. She was a delegate of the local to the annual International Convention of the I. L. G. W. U. in 1934. Local 25 also sent a mixed delegation to the Negro Labor Conference in July, 1935, in New York City. Mr. Moskowitz concluded, "Let me sum up our relationship with the Negro workers in this union. Speaking as the manager of this union, I say that Negro workers in factories under control of Local 25 respond to the call of the union whenever called upon by this organization together with the white workers in a disciplined manner. In our experience we never had trouble during strikes, but Negro workers would remain loyal to the union while the others would go out."

Local 32—Corset & Brassiere Makers¹³—When officials of this local could not be reached for an interview, they were contacted by mail. The answer to this communication was:

"In reply to your communication of September 11th, I beg to advise you that the colored membership in our union is exceptionally small, and we are in no position to fill out the enclosed blank or supply any other information which would be of help to you."

Local 38—Ladies Tailors, Custom Dressmakers,¹⁴ etc.—organized in 1909. "Negro membership in this local has always been very small because Negroes are not in this kind of work. They create no problem with us. Also, the employers won't hire them.

¹³ Correspondence with Abraham Snyder, Manager, September 11 and 17, 1935.

¹⁴ Interview with J. Jacobs, Secretary, August 26, 1935.

Most of our members come from shops we organize and since there are usually very few Negroes in the shops, there are likewise very few in the Union," Mr. Jacobs pointed out just before he disclosed the membership figures for his local. Of the 1200 members there are 12 Negroes. The initiation fee is \$5.00 and the dues \$20.80 yearly or 40c weekly. Since 1912, there have been two or three Negro members of the local, and the present number of Negro membership is the highest ever in at one time. The local makes no special effort to get Negro members nor to keep those who are in the local. It feels, said Mr. Jacobs, that there are so few Negroes in this type of work that it does not need to consider the Negro worker as a vital factor in the labor movement. However, these Negroes who are members are full-fledged in every respect—receiving the same wages and working the same number of hours as the white members. There was a Negro girl shop chairlady in 1934. Mr. Jacobs does not hold a bright prospect for the Negro worker in the organized crafts of this kind of work.

Local 40—Belt Makers¹⁸—This union is of recent origin, July 1, 1933, and has grown very rapidly. There are only 60 Negroes in the total membership of 1325, and these are mainly unskilled and semi-skilled workers—floor workers and helpers; however, the number is increasing and is expected to increase greatly. Not all of the Negroes who are members come into the union through the organization of shops. Some came to the union office and applied for membership. These were granted membership after proving their efficiency. "My best members," asserted Mr. Schwartz, "are all the Negroes. They are more faithful and loyal to the union. Although they are not picketing in our present men's belt section strike now on, they have proved to be the best pickets." They like to picket because "they know that the union will have to reciprocate by giving them first preference for the best jobs." The Negro workers are moderately active, participating in an ordinary degree in the meetings. They have not as yet held any offices.

¹⁸ Interview with Sam Schwartz, Secretary-Treasurer, August 14, 1935.

Local 60—Dress & Waist Pressers¹⁶—composed of dress and waist pressers who separated from Local 35 in August, 1933. It was at that time that Negroes came into Local 60 in great numbers, especially just after the great general strike of the garment workers in 1933. Then, the initiation fee was low, \$10.00, and within the reach of the workers. Now it has been put up to \$75.00 "to keep the union from growing out of proportion to the work available and to protect those members now in the union."

The union has a total membership of 4500 of whom 700 are Negroes. Practically all of these 700 are girls and women. From this Negro membership there is but one Negro officer, a member of the Executive Board. At the same time he holds the office of sergeant-at-arms, "a high office in this union."

Mr. Wasilevsky told of an "arrangement for the convenience of the Harlem Negro members." Very often the "Harlem district" meets up at the Renaissance Casino at 138th Street and 7th Avenue. The purpose of these meetings is to select the Negro Executive Board member—"We allow them one member for the Executive Board"—and to register any complaints or grievances arising among the workers or between the workers and employers. So far, he said, he has received no complaints of discrimination of workers or ill harmony among them.

Local 62—White Goods Workers¹⁷—organized in 1909. Because no record is kept as to the nationality or color of the members, it was estimated that there were 1,000 Negroes out of 12,000 total members. "They have really taken full advantage of their opportunity."

Miss Shapiro said that, if the labor movement is to be successful, all workers regardless of race, etc., should be organized. "Since they are doing the same work under the same conditions, they should be organized together," she remarked. While no very special program is offered for Negro workers, they are

¹⁶ Interview with J. Wasilevsky, Chairman, September 13, 1935.

¹⁷ Interview with Fanny Shapiro, Organizer, July 30, 1935.

continuously encouraged to join the union and to take active part in its activities.

At first, according to Miss Shapiro, Negro girls are slow about attending the meetings, business and social, and taking advantage of the other opportunities, but as they realize that they are "really welcome and wanted in the union," they begin to develop into "A-1" members. Now, there are five shop chairladies—and all of these are in shops where the whites outnumber the Negroes. Also, Negro girls are taking advantage of the classes offered by the union school for its workers.

She pointed out, further, that the Negro girls are going more and more into the more skilled and better paid craft in the union, viz., the number of operators is increasing, number of examiners increasing and number of pressers decreasing.

There are always single shop strikes. In these Negro girls who are members of the union stick to the union. Some Negro girls without union affiliations often work as strike breakers. Attempts, with little success, are made to organize them. However, there are also many white girl strike breakers who cannot be organized.

Local 64—Button Hole Makers¹⁸—organized in 1919. This is a very small local, having a membership of only 50. There are no Negroes "merely because Negroes do not work in this craft."

Local 66—Bonnaz, Singer & Hand Embroiderers, Tuckers, Stitchers and Pleaters¹⁹—organized in 1913. According to Nathan Riesel, before the coming of the N. R. A. there were a very few Negroes in this local—about three or four. Then, Negro workers, like all others, realized the advantages of unionization in getting better working conditions and pay; consequently, they made application in greater numbers for membership. On several occasions, Mr. Frank Crosswaith (Negro), general organizer for the I. L. G. W. U., was used to address groups of Negro and white workers. Such efforts increased the

¹⁸ Interview with I. Schiffman, Manager, August 15, 1935.

¹⁹ Interview with Nathan Riesel, Business Representative, August 13, 1935.

Negro membership to approximately 100, which is yet a very small percentage of the total membership, approximately 3200. All of these Negro workers are full fledged members, working mainly as floor workers, finishers, stitchers, and pleaters. There are few Negroes in the highest paying crafts, tuckers and embroiderers.

One Negro girl is a shop chairlady. The other workers are not so active and do not attend the meetings regularly. Mr. Riesel gave several accounts of his experience with Negro workers. "In one shop," he says, "There was a hell of a fight. The employers did not want the Negro and white workers sitting side by side and threatened to fire the Negro workers. The local called a shop strike in which all of the workers joined and the employers were forced to stop their discriminatory practices." He pointed out further that he believes that a great deal of the ill-feeling and racial discrimination is caused by the difference in efficiency of the workers. On that point he said, "You must admit and face the fact that the average Negro worker is not as efficient as the average white worker. Of course, that is explained by the fact that Negro workers in this trade have had far less experience than the white workers. I sincerely believe that with the development of equal efficiency of workers, racial sentiment will subside." Continuing, he said, "The Negro worker must become industrially inclined. He must drop altogether that attitude that she is made to do the rough work and that 'if she (a white woman) gets \$25 a week, \$18 will be enough for me.'" All efforts are directed to develop these desired attitudes on the part of the Negro worker.

Local 82 — Examiners and Bushlers²⁰ — organized in 1917. There never was a Negro member in this local which has at present 400 members. The manager-secretary stated that no Negro ever applied for membership, that the local had organized no shop in which Negroes worked and that it made no effort to organize any other Negro workers "because there was no necessity to do so."

²⁰ Interview with Mr. Rosenblatt, Manager-Secretary, August 15, 1935.

Local 89—Italian Dress and Waist Makers²¹—organized in 1919. Of the 43,000 members of this local, the largest in the I. L. G. W. U., there are no Negroes. Its manager explained, "In this trade there are many, many Italians, many of whom speak no English. To take care of this situation we have found it advisable to organize a special local for Italian workers." Membership in this local is definitely denied to all other racial groups.

Local 102—Cloak & Dress Drivers & Helpers²²—organized in 1933. Of the 1500 members of this union there are 500 Negroes—a high percentage; however, Negroes are not too active in the organization. Although they pay their dues regularly when they are working, they do not attend the meetings as they should. There is but one Negro, member of the Executive Board, who holds any position in the union. The secretary stated, "The policies of this local regarding Negro membership are the same as those of our parent organization, the I. L. G. W. U. You will recall that in 1934 it held its convention in Chicago. I was a delegate to this convention. Well, it so happened that the hotel in which it met at first refused to allow the Negro delegates to ride in the front passenger elevators but insisted that they use the rear freight elevators. Without losing any time, the convention voted to move—at a great expense—to another hotel where no such ridiculous thing was even thought of. I am happy to have cast an affirmative vote for that move." He concluded, "We are not Communist by any means, but we are socialistic in our views because we feel the brotherhood of men. Negro youth can do a lot for the labor union once they are organized and taught the principle of trade unionism. That is our present program."

There have been several strikes against discriminatory practices and firing of Negro men for no reason. Each resulted in the reinstatement of the workers with pay for the time lost and

²¹ Interview with Luigi Antonini, Manager, August 20, 1935.

²² Interview with Nat Wallace, Secretary, August 13, 1935.

in the creation of a better attitude on the part of both workers and employers.

Local 132—Button & Novelty Workers²²—organized in 1933. Mr. Feldman estimated that there are 50 Negroes in this membership of 450. These workers are experienced button makers and enjoy full memberships in the local. They are becoming more popular in the local because "they become the best members once they are convinced that the labor union can help them." "The Negro workers," said Mr. Feldman, "are more active than the white workers. They never refuse their duty and do what they are supposed to do in the shops and in the meetings." The relationship between the white workers and Negro workers is most friendly and brotherly. Although the Negro workers are in minority in all the shops, there are two Negro shop chairladies and one Negro shop chairman. Almost weekly there are individual shop strikes for this local. In these the Negro workers picket just as the other workers. None of these strikes have been called because of discriminatory practices in the shops. They have all been for purposes of organization of the shop or for demands to improve working conditions and better pay.

Local 142—Ladies' Neckwear Workers²⁴—Remarks of Mr. Tuvim indicate that Negroes are quite active in his local. Of the 2750 members, 375 (approximately) are Negroes. About 75% of the Negroes work as pressers. The other crafts—into which they are gradually shifting—are cutters, operators, hand-sewers, trimmers, gauge runners and fringers. "They are very slow about changing," he says, "because they feel more secure as pressers and are afraid to take the chance involved in a change." Most of the Negro workers enter the union as pressers.

Much is being done for all the workers in the union. Among these activities are classes and discussion groups held both at

²² Interview with Martin Feldman, Manager, August 15, 1935.

²⁴ Interview with Joseph Tuvim, Manager, August 14, 1935.

the meeting place of local 142 and at the Rand School of Social Science and the Brookwood Labor College. Negroes are members of all of these groups and classes. In fact, the leader of one of these group discussions on trade-unionism is Mr. Frank Crosswaith, the Negro general organizer for the I. L. G. W. U. In addition to being members of the classes, etc., Negroes participate on other business and organizational committees. There are three Negro Girls on the Executive Board. Several Negro girls serve as chairladies for many of the shops.

There are at all times a few or at least one shop strike—either for purposes of organizing the shop or to improve working conditions and pay. In these the Negro workers demonstrate their loyalty to the union by their untiring service as pickets. "Yes," concluded Mr. Tuvim, "they are hard and stubborn at the beginning, but make the best type of union members once they know what it is all about."

Local 177²⁸—Ladies Garment Alteration Workers—organized in 1934. Membership in this union is made of women's clothing alteration workers who are employed in the stores of the downtown section of Manhattan. It was reported that in these no Negroes were employed, hence, the absence of Negroes among the 100 members. The secretary feels, however, that Negroes would have no difficulty in obtaining membership if they applied.

GARMENT WORKERS OF AMERICA, UNITED: A general organizer of this union was interviewed.²⁹ Only after persuasion did he make a statement of three of the New York locals. Local 3—Tailors—coat makers, Local 8—Tailors—pants makers and Local 178—Tailors—overall makers. His remarks were: "I will cooperate with you as far as I see fit; that is, as far as what you ask relates to the Negro worker. We have no Negroes in these three locals; therefore, any other information about the local will not be of any benefit to you, as far as I see." Pressing him to state why there were no Negro members or what experi-

²⁸ Interview with Miss Gallack, Secretary, September 24, 1935.

²⁹ Interview with E. Kaufmann, General Organizer, September 17, 1935.

ence the locals had with Negro workers, the interviewer could get no more than the reply, "Oh, we do not bar them from the union; they do not apply; our dues are very nominal and the initiation fee is nothing prohibitive."

"I am a union man for forty-five years. Since I've been general organizer for the U. G. W. A., I've been all through the South. That's where there are many colored people working in this industry, and they are union members, too." Also, he stated that he did not know of any Negro member of the New York locals of the United Garment Workers. Apparently the 100 members reported by Reid⁸⁷ in 1930 had all discontinued membership, and no new ones had joined. It is probable, too, that the majority of the Negro workers turned to the more friendly Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America and the International Ladies Garment Workers Union.

**HATTERS, CAP & MILLINER WORKERS' INTERNATIONAL UNION,
UNITED:**

Local 7—United Hat Trimmers.⁸⁸ The secretary said, "As far as I know there are no colored people working in the men's hat trimming branches of this industry. I'm sure that you will find many of them in the millinery workers' branch, though." She then pointed out that since there are no Negro workers in that branch of the work, Local 7 had no Negro members.

The total membership of the local, which was organized in 1909, is 900. Its initiation fee is \$5.00 and dues 2% of wages.

Local 8⁸⁹—Men's Felt Hat Workers—organized in 1854—736 members—no Negroes. Its initiation fee is \$25.00 and dues 3% of earning. When pressed to give his opinion on why there were no Negroes in the union, the secretary-treasurer would say no more than, "This work is too arduous for Negroes, I guess."

Local 24—Millinery Workers⁹⁰—organized in 1910. Mr. Nathaniel Spector, Manager, made a few remarks. "Negroes

⁸⁷ Ira DeA. Reid, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

⁸⁸ Interview with Minnie Teitelbaum, Secretary, September 30, 1935.

⁸⁹ Interview with Louis Africk, Secretary-Treasurer, September 13, 1935.

⁹⁰ Interview with Nathaniel Spector, Manager, September 14, 1935.

first entered this union about fifteen years ago (1920)," he said. "Just what started them I don't know, but I suppose that's when they first got interested." The work under the jurisdiction of this local covers several crafts, among which are cutters, milliners and trimmers. All of the 200 Negro members of the local are trimmers—the least skilled workers.

The total membership of the local is 12,000. Initiation fee varies from \$10.00 to \$50.00, depending on the craft, and the dues are \$26.00 yearly for men and \$20.00 yearly for women, payable 50c and 40c per week respectively.

The local has no special programs in regard to Negro workers. Those who are members either applied directly to the office for membership or joined when the union organized the shop in which they were working at the time. According to Mr. Spector they are very poor members—few of them ever attending the meetings. There are no Negro officers of the union "because there are so few Negro members", Mr. Spector said. He also asserted that the union "does not bar or make it uncomfortable for any of its members and that the white and Negro members of Local 24 get along well, but, nevertheless, Negro members do not take an active interest.

The local has had two general strikes, 1919 and 1930. In the strike of 1919, no Negroes were involved; in the 1930 strike they participated as fellow unionists. At all times there are individual shop strikes. Very few Negroes have been involved in these.

Local 42—Millinery Blockers⁸¹—organized in 1916. Of the 300 members, 100 are Negroes—the largest number ever to hold membership at the same time. "As we find them in the shops, we take them in," continued Mr. Goldman. "These are all expert millinery blockers, are full members and are all employed at present." The initiation fee is \$75.00 when one applies for membership or \$35.00 when one comes in a group or shop organization. Both fees are payable in installments. Dues are 50c weekly. Negro workers on the whole are not

⁸¹ Interview with Max Goldman, Secretary-Manager, August 21, 1935.

very active in this local: the "more intelligent" ones are more active. Some serve as voluntary organizers on the organizational committees. Not any of them, however, hold official positions in the local.

There are at all times various shop strikes in which Negroes are involved. Some are called to organize the shop, some to demand better pay and working conditions, and some to protest discriminatory practices on the part of the employers. Mr. Goldman pointed out a specific case of the last. At the Abbott Millinery Shop, which was located on 30th Street, but which is now out of business, two Negroes who were employed there were discriminated against in hours and wages, obviously because they were Negroes. The union protested by a shop strike. "The funny thing about it," said Mr. Goldman, "was that eight or ten other Negroes tried to break the strike." This incident, of course, lessened the confidence of the other union men in the Negro as a good union member.

Mr. Goldman also told of an experience of local 24. At the time it was attempting to organize the workers at Kartigamo Company, Broadway near 8th Street, over 100 Negroes were employed there. "The men were willing to take a chance and participate in the strike, but the women were very reluctant. We had to get Mr. Frank Crosswaith, Negro general organizer of the I. L. G. W. U., to talk to them and on several occasions sent a committee of Negroes from Crosswaith's office to encourage them. But, as I said before, we have no trouble with the more intelligent Negroes."

TAILOR'S UNION OF AMERICA, JOURNEYMEN:²² This union has but one New York local, Local 1—Journeyman Tailors; therefore, the situation in this local is the sole representation of the union's relationship to Negro members and Negro workers in this city. A representative furnished the necessary information. This is another very old local, having been organized since 1883. In it Negro membership has always been negligible. Even at the present, there are only 3 Negro workers in the total member-

²² Interview with A. Hoffman, Representative, August 26, 1935.

ship of 1500. "And we have a hell of a time keeping those three," said Mr. Hoffman, "in spite of our left wing policy of protecting especially our Negro workers. In the ranks of our workers, there exists much chauvinism and we have a hell of a time combating it." Here and there when a shop is organized, a Negro worker may be employed. If so, he or she is taken into membership. No Negroes have ever come into this local, as far as Mr. Hoffman remembers, through direct application. They have all been contacted personally by the organizers. Although there are only three Negro members, one is on the shop committee at Bergman & Levy, 301 West 36th Street. "In this shop," continued Mr. Hoffman, "we had quite some trouble with two Italian women who were always bickering with the Negro girl. Italian women are most backward and their views are limited. We had to threaten to discharge them from the union before they become peaceable and worked with the Negro girl." In this same shop a strike was declared to get a dollar raise in the wages of the Negro worker, to bring her wages up to the union scale. The union won the strike. Mr. Hoffman remarked further that if more Negroes applied for membership directly to the union, their membership would be gladly accepted. "That is the only way," he said, "because the employers will not hire them as tailors but are willing to take them as porters or errand boys, etc. At present we are making plans to organize all the pressers in our industry. There are many Negroes among them. Also, in order to keep up with the Negro situation in labor, we send delegates to all of the special Negro Labor conferences, mass meeting, etc. We think that a lot can be done in the future through the organization of the Negro workers."

TEXTILE WORKERS OF AMERICA, UNITED:²⁸ Local 2440—Textile Trimmers—of this union was contacted. During the interview the chairman of the local read from the constitution the following statement from Article XII—Local Unions—Section 1:

²⁸ Interview with Jack Zuiberg, Chairman, August 6, 1935.

"Textile workers in any department or federation of the textile industry may become members of the United Textile Workers of America by the payment to the departmental organization of the required initiation fee, which includes first month's tax."

Then he said, "Everything is done by our Executive Board. I will present the matter to them, if you'll just say what you want, and we will then mail you a statement. But, I'll say this much. We don't make any difference with our workers whether they are black, white, red or even green. You'll hear from us." But, no such statement was issued. It is generally known, however, that the United Textile Workers of America and its locals are of an extremely "conservative policy". It does not believe in mixed locals; therefore, it is probable that it has no Negro members in New York. Ten years ago it had no Negro members in the United States according to a statement by its president, Thomas M. McMahon, on January 27, 1926.⁸⁴

TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATION

CONDUCTORS, ORDER OF RAILWAY⁸⁵—organized in 1868. This is one of the unions which excludes Negroes by a constitutional provision. When no information was obtained from the New York office, a communication was sent to the National office in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. An answer was returned with the excerpt from the statutes of the Order in regard to membership qualifications: "Sec. 19, Statutes, Any white men shall be eligible under the following conditions, . . . etc."

ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION, MARINE⁸⁶—Local 33. Pointing out that, by constitution, membership of this union was limited to Federal licensed marine engineers or commissioned engineering officers of the United States Navy, Mr. Korb said, "I don't believe there are any Negro licensed

⁸⁴ Ira DeA. Reid, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

⁸⁵ Correspondence with National Office, Order of Railway Conductors, November 6, 1935.

⁸⁶ Interview with Mr. Korb, Assistant Secretary, October 1, 1935.

engineers or commissioned engineers of the United States Navy. Although we have no bar against Negroes as the Masters, Mates and Pilots of America has, I believe that there are no Negro members of this union—if there should be any Negroes who can qualify—because the work under our jurisdiction is coast-wide and takes the members into the Southern ports—and you know the attitude toward skilled Negro workers in them. It has never had a Negro member.”

Local 33 of this independent union not affiliated with the A. F. of L. was organized in 1895. At present it has a total membership of 840, none of whom are Negroes. Its initiation fee is \$25.00, payable in installments, and its dues are \$18.00 yearly, payable quarterly.

In 1929 Local 33 participated in a general marine strike. In relation to its activities no Negroes were involved.

FIREMAN AND ENGINEERS, BROTHERHOOD OF LOCOMOTIVE—another union excluding Negroes by constitutional provision.⁸⁷ Communication with Albert Phillips, General Secretary-Treasurer, brought forth the following statement:

“ I am afraid that the questionnaire which you enclosed could not consistently be completed by this organization. You will understand that our membership consists only of engineers, firemen, hostlers, and hostlers’ helpers, working on the railroads, and colored men are not eligible for membership in our Brotherhood. . . . ”⁸⁸

LICENSED OFFICERS OF UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, UNITED⁸⁹—The New York Division was set up when the Union was organized in June, 1933. At present it has 1300 members, none of whom are Negroes. Its initiation fee is \$10.00 and dues \$18.00 yearly. A four-year apprenticeship is required for membership. A representative of the union remarked, “ Unfortunately, it so happens that there are no Negroes in this

⁸⁷ Spero, S. D. & Harris, A. L., *op. cit.*, p. 22.

⁸⁸ Correspondence with Albert Phillips, Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Engineers, November 11, 1935.

⁸⁹ Interview with Mr. Miller, Representative, September 26, 1935.

profession. I know of no Negro captain, mate, pilot or engineer who could qualify for membership. We bar no one, but anyone holding the certificate from the United States Steamboat Inspection Service is eligible."

LONGSHOREMEN'S ASSOCIATION, INTERNATIONAL:

Local 895—General Longshore Workers⁴⁰—Mr. Hussey, Secretary, said, "I've been working with colored fellows in this union for twenty years, and I'm here to say now they are fine fellows." Organized in July, 1915, Local 895 has at present 200 members, 20 of whom are Negroes. Its initiation fee is \$12.00 and dues \$12.00, payable \$1.00 monthly. Negroes have been members of the local since its organization in 1915. None, however, have been officers of the local.

In strikes the Negro members of the union participated as "100%" fellow unionists. Unorganized Negroes worked as scabs. Mr. Hussey mentioned the experience of some of the other locals of the I. L. A., saying that the steamship companies employed "professional strike breakers" from Harlem and from the South. He said that although such activity does breed race hatred, it did not affect his local.

Local 933—Tugboat Workers⁴¹—It was organized in 1933; it has at present 560 members, 10 of whom are Negroes; the initiation fee is \$8.00 and the dues \$12.00 yearly or \$1.00 monthly. Negroes have been members of the local since it was organized in 1933. Although they pay the same initiation fee and dues, they do not get the same wages because they are not skilled workers—deck hands, seamen, pilots, etc. They are firemen, cooks and general helpers. They were merely included when the tug-boat workers organized in 1933. However, Negroes are considered as full members of the local. There are no Negro officers in the local. The local has had no strikes since its origin.

⁴⁰ Interview with Mr. Hussey, Secretary, October 1, 1935.

⁴¹ Interview with Mr. Sampson, Delegate, September 12, 1935.

Local 1124 — General Cargo Workers⁴³ — This local union is one of the "most reasonable" in the International Longshoremen's Association. As compared to the checkers' local's initiation fee of \$500.00, this local required only one fiftieth or \$10.00. Yearly dues are \$12.00 payable \$1.00 monthly. Of the 600 members there are 12 Negroes, some of whom have been members since the organization of the local. The Negro membership has always been small and approximately the same throughout the years since 1919. As there are several Negro locals, this one makes no special effort to organize Negro workers; however, when they are encountered by organizers on the piers, they are invited to join. Usually, they go into the union gladly and without any protests. Mr. Porto said, "When they are union men, they are good; but, when they are not, they are terrible." In the many individual strikes and stoppages "the Negro union men were sympathetic and left their jobs just as other workers." "But," said Mr. Porto, "we catch hell from the unorganized Negroes—the strike breakers. There are companies which bring them in from other sections of the country just for that purpose. When the strike is over and their hell done, they leave the city for some other section on strike. When we rid ourselves of these, a lot can be gotten through strikes." "Why not organize them?", the interviewer asked. "They just can't be organized," he replied. "That bunch is not interested in the union."

Local 1171—Coopers & Cargo Repairmen.⁴⁴ Mr. B. McMahan, President, has been a member of the local since its organization in 1880. In 1928, the Coopers and Cargo Repairmen's local affiliated with the I. L. A. Mr. McMahan remarked: "At one time, this was a real occupation. There was great need for our men when goods were shipped in barrels. Now, with improved shipping methods, there is only need for anyone who can nail a few boards together in repairing crates and the like. We realized long ago that we all got to live and let live, so we

⁴³ Interview with Tony Porto, Secretary, August 13, 1935.

⁴⁴ Interview with B. McMahan, President, September 26, 1935.

took in a Negro worker in 1920. And, this fellow, Louis, who lives up there in Harlem somewhere, is a real mechanic—a cooper from the old school. He can really make 'em and break 'em."

The total membership is 350—1 Negro. The one and only Negro member holds no office in the union. To be classified as a cooper, one must have at sometime served an apprenticeship of 5 years. The general cargo repairmen need no apprenticeship. The initiation fee, payable in installments, is Twenty-five (25) dollars and the dues \$16 yearly payable \$4 quarterly.

Local 1258—Coastwise Longshoremen⁴⁴—Local 1258 is a recent organization—July 14th, 1934—of Coastwise longshoremen. It has at present 1900 members, 500 of whom are Negroes. Its initiation fee is \$25.00, payable in one installment before membership is granted; dues are \$12.00 yearly or \$1.00 monthly. Negroes, having joined the local through its organization of workers on the piers have been members since its inception; nevertheless, there are no Negro officers.

RAILROAD TRAINMEN, BROTHERHOOD OF: The position of this one of the "Big Four" railroad unions in regard to Negro membership is clearly shown by the reply to a letter sent to the Grand Lodge in Cleveland, Ohio, when the New York representative insisted that all information regarding the union is issued through that office.

"This will acknowledge receipt of your letter of November 6th, attaching a form captioned "LABOR UNION SURVEY—NEW YORK CITY", which has to do with data in connection with employment of negroes.

You will please be informed that this organization does not admit men of that race. Therefore, it would be useless to attempt to give you any information in connection with their performance of labor.

Yours truly,"⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Interview with Peter J. Hussey, Representative, October 1, 1935.

⁴⁵ Correspondence with G. W. Anderson, General Secretary and Treasurer, Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, November 11, 1935.

SEAMEN'S UNION OF AMERICA, INTERNATIONAL:

Boatmen's Local Union ⁴⁶—This local was organized in 1933 and affiliated with the I. S. U. of A. in 1934. At present it has a total membership of 1400 of whom 30 are Negroes. For membership it requires no apprenticeship: any boatman who accepts the constitution of the I. S. U. of A. is eligible for membership. The initiation fee is \$2.00 and the dues \$12.00 yearly or \$1.00 monthly.

Mr. Wall, secretary, commented, "With us, there is never a question about color or creed or anything; as we would go on the boats or meet the workers on the boats, we invited and accepted all into the union from its very beginning; we have made no special efforts to help any one group or to bar any one group." However, Negroes do not hold any offices in the union.

This union has had one strike in June 1934—on the O'Brien and Goodwyn-Gallagher Lines. In it Negro members proved great loyalty and participated only as fellow unionists.

Firemen's Union, Marine ⁴⁷—Negroes were members of this union since its origin in 1892. Their number has been gradually decreasing. At present there are 3,000 of the 12,000 total membership. For membership an apprenticeship of one half year must be served. The initiation fee is \$5.00 and the dues \$12.00 yearly or \$1.00 monthly. By the constitution of the union, membership is limited to male *unlicensed* firemen, oilers, or water tenders. Practically all of the Negro members, as others, have joined the union through its organizational activity among the ship crews. While Negroes have been enjoying full membership, that is enjoying the increased wages and shorter working hours, they have never held offices in the union.

The Marine Firemen's union has conducted two general strikes—in 1914 and 1921—both for organizational purposes and for getting better working conditions. Also, there have been many individual ship or company strikes. There never were Negro strike breakers.

⁴⁶ Interview with M. Wall, Secretary, September 26, 1935.

⁴⁷ Interview with Mr. Thompson, Keeper of Records, September 26, 1935.

Mr. Thompson, record keeper, asserted, "Negroes don't take to the sea any more. They like night life more now. We used to have many thousands of Negro workers—most West Indians—but now we only have about 3,000. Most of the coal-burners use Negro crews and the oil-burners white crews, but sometimes you find the opposite. The greatest competitors of the Negroes now are the Filipinos; they cut in on both Negro and white workers."

SHIPPING CLERKS, LADIES' APPAREL, LOCAL 19953 A. F. OF L.⁶⁸—Negroes in this union—400 Negroes out of the total membership of 1000—were extraordinarily well represented. The president, secretary-treasurer and chairman of both the Finance Committee and Organizational Committee are Negroes; there are five Negroes on the Executive Board of seventeen members—three of whom were elected from the membership and the other two, officers of the union, are ex-officio members. "The finest possible spirit exists among us. As officers of the union, we get the best of cooperation and respect from other officers and members. There has never been displayed any feeling or racial antagonism." This local is the result of an amalgamation of two independent groups of workers—one a Negro group from Harlem and the other a white group from lower Manhattan. The work of these men was mainly the transportation of goods through the garment district of Manhattan and the shipping of the manufactured products to distributors over all of the country. Since most of the transportation work is done by the use of push carts rather than trucks, the workers have been generally called "push boys." Continuous effort to get a charter from the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union failed; consequently, the groups applied for and obtained a charter from the A. F. of L. Under this charter they have worked together in the manner explained by Mr. Harrigan. "We are making great progress and expect to continue in the future." Of very great significance among the activities of the union was the strike of August 26-September 11th, 1935 called

⁶⁸ Interview with L. E. Harrigan, Secretary-Treasurer, August 13, 1935.

by the above union.⁴⁹ The union was demanding from the employers' associations of the garment industry covered by this local a minimum wage of \$23.00 weekly and a maximum working week of 35 hours. After three weeks of strike activity the union and the associations came to an agreement establishing a minimum wage of \$15.00 weekly and a working week of a maximum of 44 hours. Although these terms were below the demands of the union, Mr. Harrigan stated that the strike was a "great success because it at least proved the power of the union to call and manage a strike." Also it gave the union recognition to deal through collective bargaining with the employers' associations. Another accomplishment was the increase in membership. By the end of the strike the total membership had increased from 1,000 to 4,000 and the Negro membership from 400 to 1900.

Mr. Harrigan asserted that the employers' associations used the fact that Local 19953 had several Negro officers, President, Secretary-Treasurer and several Executive Board members, to try to prevent recognition of the union. "Of course, they didn't say that openly," he remarked. Making a few other remarks, Mr. Harrigan stated, "We got good cooperation from the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. The daily papers told of that. But, local 102 of the I. L. G. W. U.—the truckmen and drivers—actually scabbed on us although they promised to help us out." Continuing, he said, "The colored and white members of the union worked together wholeheartedly. The colored members worked harder because they know that this is their industry and they had to fight for it. The white members of this local are only using it as a means to getting to higher positions in the garment industry."

TAXI CHAUFFERS' UNION 19795⁵⁰—Prior to October, 1934, the Taxi Chauffers of New York City were organized into a union under the name of Taxi-Drivers Union of Greater New York.

⁴⁹ Interview with L. E. Harrigan, Secretary-Treasurer, October 25, 1935.

⁵⁰ Interview with Jack Butler, Special Harlem Organizer, August 30, 1935.

Because of Communistic activities in this organization, it fell in the bad grace of the A. F. of L. Subsequently, it dissolved. In October, 1934 the A. F. of L. granted a charter to the above named union. The constitution states that: "The membership of this union shall be composed of and restricted to competent licensed taxi chauffeurs over the age of twenty-one years, regardless of race, color, creed, or sex." Stated Mr. Butler, "No real effective union can exist until all discrimination is completely abolished. In our case, we know that plain common sense compels the two groups to organize. I am not trying to make anyone believe that we joined because it is of our love or benevolent feeling which prompted us. It is a sound economic and business reason." Continuing, he stated that he finds Negro workers hard to organize. "They are very suspicious and don't realize that they've got to fight for their rights. The greatest obstacle they put before me is their indifferent attitude. Very often I am pushed away with their usual remark: 'Aw, what the hell! I'm doing pretty good now. You fellows don't mean what you say, anyway.'"

Mr. Butler further stated that because there was no way of telling the race or nationality of the members from their record card in the office, he could merely estimate that there were about fifty (50) Negro members. The total membership of the Union was not disclosed. The initiation fee is \$2.00 and the dues \$12.00 yearly or 25 cents weekly. Although Negroes have been members since the inception of the local, they have not yet begun to take an active part in it. Said Mr. Butler, "They are very inactive; they do not attend the meetings and it seems that they pay their dues just because they couldn't work if they didn't."

Since the Charter was granted, this local has had one strike—The Marshall Garage Strike, February to April 1935, which was called to get union recognition. "It's too bad," remarked Mr. Butler, "that 99% of the scabs on this strike were Negroes. They couldn't realize that they were cutting their own throats because it is only in the non-union garages that they are discriminated against." "But" he reflected, "they thought they

had good reason to scab because they felt that they were being discriminated against." In spite of this activity the union won the strike and has overlooked the incident by continuing to keep the Negro members and to encourage them into great union activities. Now they are much more active as union members and are enjoying the full advantages of union protection. The greatest number of the Negroes are employed through the Marshall garage, 60th St. and 111th Avenue. The Terminal Company definitely does not hire Negroes as taxi chauffeurs and the Parmelee Company has set up a special garage at 140th Street and Fifth Avenue for its Negro employees. Both of these companies are yet unorganized. "That Parmelee Company definitely discriminates against the Negro hack-drivers is a fact. Besides putting them all at that 140th Street garage, it has painted the cabs the colored chauffeurs drive a different color. It is the present program of the union in regard to Negro members to organize the Parmelee garage at 140th Street and to wipe out any tracts of discrimination and rough treatment."

TEAMSTERS AND CHAUFFEURS, INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF:

Local 138—Furniture and Bakery Supply Drivers⁸¹—organized in 1910 and composed of 1200 members of whom 300 are Negroes. The union officials boast of the fact that 25% of its membership is Negro. The joining fee is \$50.00, but since it is payable in installments arranged "by the discretion of the officials," poor workers are able to join; hence, the large Negro membership (they say).

New members are admitted upon the recommendation of old members in good standing. "Some white workers even recommend their Negro friends and vice versa," asserted the business agent.

Every working day there is at least one minor strike in some small shop. In these strikes, Negroes participate as fellow unionists. As a result the workers get along together, and

⁸¹ Interview with Samuel Schoor, Business Agent, William Goldis, President, and William Maynard, Negro shop chairman, July 30, 1935.

some unorganized workers in open-shops get recommendations for union membership.

Mr. Maynard stated that in the years of his experience, he found no discriminatory practices in the union. He said that the Negro members take active parts in all meetings and other affairs concerning the members. The shop in which he is shop chairman has over 66% white members.

Local 167—Poultry Drivers⁶³—organized in 1913 and composed of 500 members of whom 10 are Negroes. Officials of this local merely declared that the Negro members were "ten of the finest in character in the union." Some Negroes have been members since the origin of the local and have "shared sympathetically" all the difficulties which the union faces.

Local 185—Cleaning and Dye House Drivers⁶⁴—"We have just taken a Negro member in April, 1935," he said. "He had been helping one of our drivers for a long time. When this driver gave up his route, this colored fellow took it over and then joined the union. He is still serving his period of probation and I feel that he will make an extra good man."

Organized in November, 1924, Local 185 has at present 450 members one of whom is a Negro. The initiation fee is \$25 payable in convenient terms and the dues are \$36 yearly payable \$3 monthly. Membership is open to any driver in the cleaning and dyeing industry. Mr. Cohen remarked further, "There are many Negroes working on the inside in the cleaning and dyeing plants, but they didn't seem to take to driving. You know, of course, that a driver does not merely drive a truck,—at the same time he collects and marks clothes, collects money, etc. Perhaps that's why Negroes didn't take to it."

Local 272—Garage Washers and Polishers⁶⁴—This is a mixed local with both Negro and white officers. Negro workers first made definite efforts to get a local organized. Together with

⁶³ Interview with David Diamond, Secretary, July 26, 1935.

⁶⁴ Interview with Julius G. Cohen, Secretary, September 24, 1935.

⁶⁴ Interview with Harry Jacobs, Vice President, September 3, 1935.

the white garage workers they succeeded in 1929 in having local 272 organized. At that time—so that all of the workers could join—no initiation fee was charged them. At present the fee has been definitely established at \$99.00 payable in one sum in order “to protect the union from becoming infested with undesirable transient workers.” The dues are \$24.00 yearly payable \$2.00 monthly. Although most of the Negro members are residents of Harlem, they are employed in the Bronx. Eighty-five percent of the Bronx workers are Negroes and fifteen percent of the Manhattan workers are Negroes. In some sections of Manhattan there are few Negro workers because the garage customers do not want them, and after all the customers are the “bosses”. As to discrimination in the garages by employers or fellow employees, there is none. The union is too strong to allow any such thing, Mr. Jacobs remarked. In the local there are 2,000 Negroes in the total membership of 5,000.

Special efforts are made to organize Negro workers and garages in which they work. The method used is personal contact by organizers—both Negro and white and contacts by mixed organizational committees. All workers encountered readily join and soon become good and regular union men.

The Negro membership in this local is very active. At the meetings the Negro members are always present and ready to engage actively in the discussions and activities. On the Executive Board there are two Negroes, and there is a Negro business agent.

Local 643 — Funeral Chauffeurs ⁸⁸ — Organized in 1903 and composed of 1100 members of whom none are Negroes. In 1933 Negro funeral chauffeurs of Harlem (there are none in other sections of Manhattan over which this local has jurisdiction) applied to this local for membership. A mixed organizational committee was created by the local to organize these workers and to plan a strike for that area to get union recognition in the establishments in which these chauffeurs worked. According to the Secretary of the local, they were made mem-

⁸⁸ Interview with William Cohen, Secretary-Treasurer, July 25, 1935.

bers of the local in 1934. As the downtown Manhattan funeral directors did not hire Negroes, they remained unemployed until the strike was called in late 1934—for union recognition in Harlem funeral parlors. Then, the Negro members “got the cold feet, failed to cooperate in the strike,” thereby causing its failure. Finally, these sixty Negro members quit paying their dues and dropped out of the union. Nothing has been done in the way of organizing Negro funeral chauffeurs since that time.

TELEGRAPHERS' UNION OF NORTH AMERICA, COMMERCIAL—NEW YORK EASTERN BROKERS DIVISION:

The New York division of this union has 250 members, none of whom are Negroes. A few remarks of the secretary are an adequate explanation of that condition. He stated, “Our members are the telegraphers of the brokers' offices and stock exchange buildings, and we don't have any Negroes. I don't see why you are interested in this union if we have no Negro members and if we have no dealing at all with Negroes, but since you insist I will say that our constitution states that any *white* person working in the telegraphic work is eligible for membership.”⁶⁶

TRANSPORT WORKERS' INDUSTRIAL UNION, MARINE:⁶⁷—This union, an affiliate of the Industrial Workers' of the World, follows the policy of organizing every worker in a trade or industry regardless of craft, race, color, creed, political or religious affiliation, or any other distinction. Thus, in the Manhattan Branch Number 510 of the Transport Workers, the membership includes common deck hands, porters, etc., as well as captains, mates, pilots or masters. There was no way of telling from the records what race or color any worker was; however, an estimate that about one third of the union's membership was Negro was ventured. Of the 7,000 members, approximately 2,300 are Negroes. The initiation fee is \$2.00 and the dues are \$12.00 yearly or \$1.00 monthly.

⁶⁶ Interview with William J. Ryan, Secretary, September 26, 1935.

⁶⁷ Interview with John S. Morgan, General Organizer, September 26, 1935.

In its organizational work on the ship Branch 510 uses both Negro and white organizers. While no discrimination of members exists in any form whatsoever, according to Mr. Morgan, the branch realizes that it must use various or different means to get different groups of people into its membership; therefore, to make contact among the Negro marine workers, a Negro organizer is used. As members of the union all workers are equal in privileges and obligations. Although there are no Negro officers at present, stated Mr. Morgan, there has been one in the past. There was a member of the General Organizing Committee and of the Executive Board, too. His term has expired.

TRANSPORT WORKERS' UNION:⁶⁶—This union is based on the principle of one union in one industry, comprising all the crafts and occupations employed in the transit field in New York, such as motormen, switchmen, signal men, conductors, guards, agents, porters, track men, structure men, all the crafts in the repair shops, inspection barns, power houses, clerks, office workers, platform men, bus drivers, trolley operators and conductors. Unfortunately, Negroes in the transit field in Manhattan are employed in few of these crafts—many porters, few agents and few platform men. Because of that reason the 100 Negro members in the 4,500 membership of this recently organized union, 1934, are all porters. Despite that fact, the union considers organization of Negroes imperative to the success of the labor movement and has, therefore, made definite efforts to get Negro members. The methods used are contacts of prospective members by mixed committees and distribution of literature on the subject of Negroes in organized labor. The contact methods seem to be the better. Greatest objection raised by Negroes encountered is the expression of fear of the insincerity of the union. But, it has a definite program on foot to try to get its Negro members into the skilled position of the trade—such as engineers, motormen, conductors, etc. The union maintains that the objection is not with the union but with the employers

⁶⁶ Interview with Austin Hyan, General Secretary, July 25, 1935.

who cannot really be forced to take Negroes into the better class positions. Great prospects are held for the accomplishment in the near future of these efforts.

This union seems to be quite genuine in its aims and policies regarding the Negro member. Three Negroes are on the General Executive Board—The Delegates' Council; one Negro is on the Affairs Committee (Social); one Negro is on the Editorial Board of the Union paper—Transport Workers' Bulletin; some Negro members contribute to each issue of the Transport Workers' Bulletin.

DOMESTIC AND PERSONAL SERVICE

BARBERS' INTERNATIONAL UNION, JOURNEYMEN:

Local 9—Journeyman Barbers:⁶⁹—Early in 1935 a group of 31 old barbers, including one Negro, all of whom have been members of the International Union through one local or another for about 25 years, decided to retire from active work. Desiring to hold on to the benefits which the union offered to active union members, they banded themselves together in Local 9 so that they could maintain the status "active member". The acting secretary of the local stated, "We organized for one purpose—to save our insurance. The International Union gives all of its members an insurance death benefit of \$500 if they are active members of a local when they die. We paid dues for all these years, and all of us have only a few years to go, so we organized into a local to save that \$500."

BUILDING SERVICE EMPLOYEES' INTERNATIONAL UNION:

Local 32A—Manhattan Superintendents⁷⁰ organized in 1924. Local 32A consists only of "high class" superintendents, janitors or assistant superintendents—that is, those who make over \$50.00 a week. Those low paid janitors and superintendents and those who work merely for their rent belong to the Harlem Council. Although Negroes have been members from the very beginning of Local 32A, the union had difficulty in organizing

⁶⁹ Interview with Mr. Epstein, Acting Secretary, September 18, 1935.

⁷⁰ Interview with E. Clausen, Secretary, September 6, 1935.

them. Because of this, a Mr. McLeod, a Negro organizer, now chairman of the Harlem Council, thought that he could organize the Negro workers. He was given the opportunity to do so, which resulted in the establishment of the Harlem Council in April, 1934. "But," said the secretary of Local 32A, "this is only a temporary arrangement for the purpose of organizing the Negro workers. Now that they are organized, we expect to consolidate the two groups. Negroes have been fooled so much by white men that they have no faith in them; nevertheless, McLeod did a good job." However, before the Harlem Council was organized, some of the Negro members of local 32A claimed that "they were not at home in local 32A." As an effort to solve that problem a charter was granted to these members to organize another local. They then organized Local 14, B. S. E. I. U. Within a few months' time the whole project failed, and its leaders have disappeared. Although most of the Negro building service workers belong to the Harlem Council, there are quite a few in Local 32A. Stating that he had no accurate means of telling the exact number, he estimated that there were about 125 in the total membership of about 3,700. Few of these are very active in the meeting and activities of the Union. "One is a sticker. He's in everything we put on." There are no Negro officers because none can qualify to hold office, the qualification being three continuous years of membership in good standing. "There are always Negro members," he said, "but none of them hold continuous membership. They come and go." The initiation fee is \$10.00 and the dues are \$24.00 yearly, payable \$2.00 monthly.

Local 32C—Hotel and Hotel Apartment Workers⁶¹—Organized in May 1935, Local 32C now has 1,472 members of whom 2 are Negroes. The initiation fee is \$2.00 and the dues \$12.00 yearly, payable \$1.00 monthly.

The jurisdiction of this local extends over bell boys, elevator operators, doormen, porters, chamber-maids, etc. who are employed in hotels and hotel apartments, and membership is

⁶¹ Interview with C. Haulian, President, October 16, 1935.

limited to workers in these groups who are employed at the time of making application. All members enter the union through the organization of Hotels and Hotel apartments by the union. At such times, all workers at any given hotel or apartment are made members. Negroes working in such places are, therefore, made full members of the union. But two Negroes have been met under these conditions. According to the president they are "excellent" members.

Local 135—Wardrobe and Checkroom Attendants.⁶³ Membership in this local is composed of wardrobe and checkroom attendants of night clubs. The initiation fee is \$5.00 and dues are \$13.00 yearly, payable 25 cents weekly. At present the membership is 500, no Negroes. Mr. Jacobs, the business manager of the local, explained, "Our work is limited to night clubs. So far, we have organized only two hot-spots in Harlem, the Cotton Club and the Ubangi Club. Both of these use white wardrobe and check room attendants; therefore, we have no Negro members yet. Maybe later we'll organize some of the club where they work."

Local 149—Building Office Cleaners.⁶⁴ Local 149 was organized in August, 1934 at which time it affiliated with the B.S.E.I.U. Its membership was at first composed of cleaners working in office buildings; later, it extended its jurisdiction to cover domestic workers. This move was taken when the Domestic Workers' Union Local 149B., B. S. E. I. U., organized in early 1935, became non-self-sustaining and, consequently lost its charter in September, 1935. Practically all of its members—mainly Negroes—then became members of Local 149, swelling the Negro membership of this local to its present figure of 150. The total membership of Local 149 is 2500.

The initiation fee is \$2.00, and the dues are \$12.00 yearly payable \$1.00 monthly. "There are very few Negroes working as office cleaners in the big office buildings," said Mr. Schwarz,

⁶³ Interview with Ben Jacobs, Manager, October, 1935.

⁶⁴ Interview with Mr. Schwarz, Business Manager, October 17, 1935.

the manager. "Most of our Negro members are domestic workers. It is one of the greatest problems we have ever faced to organize domestic workers because they are so scattered, usually just one to a family house. If they worked in big groups we would be able to contact them and their employers and do some real work, but as it is now, they are not very active and come to meetings only once in a while. Just how we can tackle that problem is still another problem for us."

Local 149 has had no general strikes. Several individual office buildings strikes were called to demand better working conditions. No Negroes were involved in these.

Local 155—Exterminators and Fumigators.⁶⁴ There is but one Negro in this local, and he joined in July, 1935. The total membership is 400. While no apprenticeship is required, a 90-day experience period is. The initiation fee is \$10.00, payable in one sum, and the dues are \$24.00 yearly, payable \$2.00 monthly. The additional requirement that each member must be a New York licensed exterminator is a definite check on the number of applicants. Mr. Burns stated, "But there is only one licensed Negro exterminator in Greater New York. We only take in licensed workers."

Since its inception this union has had but one strike—a strike in July 1935—to organize the workers in the Permo Exterminatory Company on Clinton Street. It was in this shop that the Negro member was then working. This Negro worker did not want to join the union and, consequently, remained at work in the shop as a non-union man when the strike was on. Later, however, he joined.

Local 164—Office and Loft Building Superintendents. An interview with the president evoked a few statements of the relations of Negroes to this local.⁶⁵

"We don't give a — whether a man is black, brown or yellow. As long as he pays his dues and does his work, he's O. K. with

⁶⁴ Interview with T. E. Burns, Secretary-Treasurer, August 22, 1935.

⁶⁵ Interview with James A. Corrigan, President, August 29, 1935.

us." He continued, "So far as our records go, we have no way of telling the activities of the Negro members from the other members. All I know is that they get along well." He estimated that out of 1210 members of the local, 121 are Negroes and stated that the same dues and fees go for all applicants and members.

As this is a recently organized local, 1934, it has not yet completed its constitution; nevertheless, he stated that it is the policy so far to admit any qualified building superintendent to membership. Also, he read the pledge each member takes when initiated. In addition to swearing his support to the rules and regulations, etc. of the local, each member states: "I promise never to discriminate against a brother on account of race, color, creed or nationality." Negroes in this local are in every sense full members enjoying all the privileges and sharing all the obligation of membership. There is a Negro organizer and one Negro Executive Board member.

THE BUILDING TRADES

ARCHITECTS, ENGINEERS, CHEMISTS AND TECHNICIANS, FEDERATION OF:⁶⁶ A section of the constitution of the Federation—Article V, Section 2, reads, "The Federation shall make no discrimination or restriction because of private or public belief, political, religious or other affiliation, sex, race, color, creed, or nationality." This Federation, organized about the end of 1932, claims a membership of approximately 3,500 of which not more than 50 are Negroes. The initiation fee is the equivalent of 2 months' dues which range from \$3.00 to \$12.00 yearly. Negroes have been members since the inception of the New York chapter. "They have been very active and loyal," stated the general organizer. "One of our early moves was to get a Negro engineer, Louis, who was working on a P. W. A. job as a laborer reclassified and given work as an engineer—the work for which he was qualified." A Negro member is secretary of one of the craft sections of the Engineers' section, and

⁶⁶ Interview with Marcel Scherer, General Organizer, October 26, 1935.

five Negroes are on the Executive Boards of the various sections.

This Federation has applied for affiliation with the A. F. of L. It is the belief of the organizer that the charter has been delayed mainly because the Federation has an Industrial Section which includes in its members all laborers and non-skilled work used regularly to assist workers in the crafts covered by the union.

BRICKLAYERS', MASONS' AND PLASTERERS' INTERNATIONAL UNION OF AMERICA:

Local 52—Tile Layers⁶⁷—That qualifications for membership in this union are rigidly enforced was pointed out. The four year apprenticeship is usually served in the Tile Layers Helpers Union. Also, an efficiency test is administered the applicant by three expert mechanics of the union. In addition, an initiation fee of \$100.00 payable as the applicant can afford, is enforced. The dues are \$60 yearly or \$5 monthly. "These qualifications are so determined that they protect the union members and let in only the expert mechanics." The one Negro member out of the total membership of 1,200 served an apprenticeship in the Tile Layers' Helpers' Union and then entered this union in 1903. A few years ago, another Negro—accepted as a transfer member—was in local 52; however, after a few good jobs, he dropped out in 1933. The two Negroes who gained membership to this union are both expert mechanics. As union men, they were "about as active as the average fellow." The old one "never aspired to holding an office" in the union; thus, he is now just an ordinary member although he has been in the union for many years. In the lockout of 1933 and the general strike of 1904, no Negroes were involved.

Local 84—Journeyman Stone Setters⁶⁸—There are no Negroes in this local of 275 members. In fact, there never were any Negro members. Mr. Watson, the President stated that there are a few Negro workers in this trade in the south. "I worked

⁶⁷ Interview with Andres Brady, Secretary, August 8, 1935.

⁶⁸ Interview with James Watson, President, September 3, 1935.

with one in Lexington, Kentucky," he said, "but I have never come across one in New York. Not even have I had a transfer or traveling member to come to this local." Continuing, he stated that he thought no Negro worker would have difficulty getting membership in New York, not because discrimination is prohibited by the constitution but because the men themselves had no feeling of racial antagonism or superiority. "If they only applied, they would be admitted. The fact is that there is evidently not one Negro stone setter in New York City."

Local 84 requires an apprenticeship of four years for beginners, an initiation fee of \$100.00 payable in installments and yearly dues of \$48.00 payable \$4.00 monthly. Before applicants who are expert stone setters are admitted to membership they must pass a qualifying examination.

BRIDGE AND STRUCTURAL IRON WORKERS, INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF:

Local 170—Riggers and Machinery Movers⁶⁰—Organized in 1903 and affiliated with the I. A. B. & S. I. W. in 1915. Membership is 102—no Negroes. Of the situation the secretary of the union remarked, "I've tried like hell to organize Negro workers and get them into this union, but they never cared to advance themselves. They stick right under the arms of the employers. They just won't join the union." For a long time this local has been trying to organize the workers of the Belmont Rigging & Hoisting Company of Brooklyn, the Harlem River Trucking Company of Manhattan and the United Rigging Company of Brooklyn—all companies owned by white men who employed many Negro workers—and the Howard Contracting Company, a Negro company employing Negro workers only. The greatest obstacles met in this organizational work were the attitude of satisfaction the Negroes had and their unwillingness to take a chance for improvement in working conditions and increased wages through unionization.

⁶⁰ Interview with Louis Kelter, Secretary, September 26, 1935.

Local 447—Ornamental and Architectural Iron, Bronze and Metal Specialists ⁷⁰—This local reported that it had 601 members—no Negroes, and that its initiation fee and dues were \$100 and \$73.50 yearly, respectively. It has never had Negro members.

Local 455—Ornamental and Architectural Iron, Bronze and Metal Specialists ⁷¹—organized in 1914. The official of this union was L. Smetana, Secretary. At the beginning he estimated that about 50 or 60 of the total membership of approximately 900 were Negroes. Wishing to show that these were well represented on the official staff of the union, he pointed out that there are two Negro shop chairmen, James Sell and Jene Gadson; that the recording secretary, Charles Isaac, is a Negro; and that the ex-recording secretary, James Reed, was a Negro. "Negroes are good workers and good union men," he stated, "but they do not attend meetings regularly. Instead, they prefer to ask me, when I make my round of the shops, what happened at the meetings, and they are always eager to know." He explained also that special efforts are made to encourage and organize the Negro workers. Usually, mixed committees direct organization drives. "The success of the labor movement," he said, "depends on the cooperation and organization of all workers, whether white or black, and in our union they all work together in a swell way."

From the employers and their representatives no discriminatory practices are tolerated. In the strike of 1935—the only one called to protest against discrimination—a foreman was charged with discriminating against and firing Negro workers in the Grand Iron Works merely because they were black. The local called a strike which lasted several weeks. Finally, the workers were reinstated and the company was made to sign an agreement not to practice any further discrimination.

⁷⁰ Correspondence with John M. Schilling, Secretary-Treasurer, September 18, 1935.

⁷¹ Interview with L. Smetana, Secretary, August 5, 1935.

CARPENTERS AND JOINERS OF AMERICA, UNITED BROTHERHOOD
OF:

Local 135—Carpenters ⁷²—This local merely reported 550 members—No Negroes. It has had no experience with Negro workers except as strike breakers on several occasions.

Local 246—Shop Woodwork and Machine Man ⁷³—Organized 1917. This union has only one Negro member out of its total membership of 670. This Negro member is the only Negro shopman in Greater New York. He works at The Superior Fireproof Door and Sash Company, Bronx. He is very active in the meetings and is considered one of the union's righthand men; however, he holds no office or official position in the union. He has been with the union since its origin. "When I was a workman in the shops and a delegate, Cornell and I used to work together. I never met a finer fellow. All of the brothers liked him too," spoke the secretary about the Negro member.

Local 385—Outside carpenters ^{74a}—Organized in 1901. Early in the interview, Mr. Castelli, secretary-treasurer, pointed out that "We have a Negro local in Harlem, Local 1888 I think, at 30 West 129 Street. That is the main reason why we have such few Negro members in local 385." Local 385 has a total membership of 600, of which 7 are Negroes. The Negro membership has been as high as 14, but since they are inactive and fail to pay dues regularly, many have been automatically expelled from membership. No special efforts are made to organize Negro workers; however, when they are employed in a shop which is being organized by the union, they are brought into union membership if they so desire. The union had a general strike in 1916 and has had many individual shop strikes at all times. These strikes have been mainly for the purpose of getting better working conditions and for organizing or "closing" a shop. In all of these strikes where Negroes were in-

⁷² Correspondence with the Secretary, August 15, 1935.

⁷³ Interview with Gus Damstadt, Financial Secretary, August 12, 1935.

^{74a} Interview with B. J. Castelli, Secretary-Treasurer, August 12, 1935.

volved, they were quite loyal to the union. "I find Negro workers among our best workers," said Mr. Castelli. "If they were more active in the meetings, they would be the best."

Local 608—Carpenters⁷⁴—Organized in 1914. At one time, there were about 20 Negroes, but most of these lost their membership because of their inability to pay their dues when they were unemployed. "The Negro membership is so small," said the financial secretary, "that they are inactive and hold no offices. You can't expect them to hold offices if there are only 3 among the 1,097 whites." This union has had few strikes. There was one in 1932 and there is now the Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.) strike in which Local 608 is participating. In reference to the 1932 strike, he stated, "I'm sorry to say that the Negroes worked as strike breakers. These unorganized Negroes seem to shine as strike breakers, and the Negroes more than any other group like to work as strike breakers." The Negro members of the union at that time, however, participated in the strike as fellow union workers.

Local 1456—Dock and Pier Carpenters⁷⁵—Charles Johnson, President and Business Manager, spoke about his Local. "Negroes make some of the best union men I have had. They pay dues and attend meetings. One of our Negro members was a trustee of the local and a foreman on the job where he worked. Right now we have several Negro workers on the 38th Street tunnel job."

The local was organized in 1889. Soon after in 1895, Negroes became members by making application directly to the office of the local. The number of Negro members has always been small because "very few Negroes work as dock carpenters."

Local 1456 has conducted general strikes in 1932, 1920 and 1921, 1915, 1914 and at several other times. All of these have been called to maintain union conditions. In all of them Negro members of the local participated as loyal fellow-unionists.

⁷⁴ Interview with David Scanlan, Financial Secretary, August 21, 1935.

⁷⁵ Interview with Charles Johnson, President and Business Manager, October 4, 1935.

However, in the 1932 strike Negro members of other locals of the U. B. of C. & J. of A. worked "unknowingly" as strike breakers. "They were brought in from Baltimore and Philadelphia and not told that a strike was going on. As soon as we told them of the strike, they quit the job and went home. In fact, we paid their fares home. That's what I call real union loyalty and cooperation and that's why I say they make the best members," said Mr. Johnson.

Local 1536—Timbermen¹⁶—Local 1536, organized recently in February, 1935, has 166 members, 1 of whom is a Negro. The initiation fee, payable in installments, is \$75.00, and the yearly dues are \$24.00, payable monthly at \$2.00. All members of the union have joined through the organization of all workers on the various jobs.

"Strange as it seems", said Mr. Geffen, Secretary-Treasurer, "although the work of the members of this union is merely rough and semi-skilled, the kind you usually find Negroes doing, this local is made up almost entirely of Italians. Most of the Negro workers in the subway and tunnel construction work are laborers. As soon as they become timbermen, we will get them in the union."

Local 1657—Carpenters¹⁷—Andrew Wood, Financial Secretary stated, "Our work is cabinet making, trim-work, etc. We have only three colored members and they are good paying members who attend meetings regularly." From his other few remarks it was pointed out that the local was organized in 1923 at which time some Negroes joined. In the following years of prosperity the membership—both Negro and white—was very high, but since the depression the total membership of the local has decreased to its present number of 480. There are no Negro officers.

The apprenticeship term is four years. Initiation fees are \$10.00 for apprentices and \$30.00 for journeymen. Dues are \$24.00 yearly for journeymen and \$18.00 for apprentices.

¹⁶ Interview with Mr. Joseph Geffen, Secretary-Treasurer, October 4, 1935.

¹⁷ Interview with Andrew Wood, Financial Secretary, October 4, 1935.

Local 2090—Carpenters ⁷⁸—Organized in 1918. There are no Negroes in this local of 800 members. There were some up to five years ago, but they all dropped out because of non-payment of dues. This was caused by the depression, stated Mr. Schwuchow, financial secretary. The Negroes who were members were full-fledged members, but "they were passive members. They had little interest in the affairs of the union."

Local 2725—Carpenters ⁷⁹—Local 2725, organized in 1920, has always been a very small local of all white members. Its total membership at present is 80. Its initiation fee is \$30.00 payable in installments and dues \$24.00 yearly payable \$2.00 monthly.

Mr. Carr, Secretary, stated, "We make no bar against Negroes. We haven't any in our membership because they never applied for membership. Since the beginning, this local has been made up of a group of friends. That's why it's so small."

ELECTRICAL WORKERS, INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF:

Local 3—Electrical Workers ⁸⁰—Organized in 1902. Speaking of some of the activities of this local in regard to Negro members, its President, Mr. Kirkman, said, "I can sum up the whole situation for this union in one sentence. We have no Negro members. As far as I know, Negroes never applied for membership in this union; therefore, we have had no occasion to deal with them." Further conversation brought to light the fact that this is a very large union, having about 6000 members. One of the qualifications for full membership is a very long term of apprenticeship—seven years; however, boys sixteen years of age are accepted as apprentices. Negro youths do not get in as apprentices; consequently, they cannot later qualify for membership. Mr. Kirkman states that as far as he knows, no effort was ever made to encourage Negro youths to join as

⁷⁸ Interview with Edward Schwuchow, Financial Secretary, August 30, 1935.

⁷⁹ Interview with Robert Carr, Secretary, October 17, 1935.

⁸⁰ Interview with Mr. Kirkman, President, August 9, 1935.

apprentices, and, in fact, no thought was even given to the matter.

In the Subway strike in 1935 and in the many individual strikes held over a period of years, no Negroes were involved. This accounts in part, believes Mr. Kirkman, for the fact that the union has never had brought to its attention the question of the Negro worker.

ELEVATOR CONSTRUCTORS, INTERNATIONAL UNION OF:⁶¹

Local 1—Elevator Constructors—Organized in 1894. William J. Facon, Acting Secretary, stating that this is a very dangerous type of work requiring a high degree of skill and accuracy, added that because of these conditions in elevator construction, there were no Negro members in this union. He estimated that the total membership is 1500. An initiation fee is \$200.00, and yearly dues are \$54.00, \$13.50 quarterly. Although membership is opened to all citizens of the United States, the union feels that it is not necessary to organize the Negro workers or to train them in this type of work. "Since they offer no problem to the union as a possible strike breaker," the union does not in any way concern itself about the possibility of a Negro membership and, consequently, makes no effort to encourage Negro workers to do this type of work. In the last strike of the union, over 20 years ago, no Negroes were involved. Mr. Facon feels that not even in the distant future will Negroes become competent at this work and join this union.

HOD CARRIERS', BUILDING AND COMMON LABORERS' UNION OF AMERICA, INTERNATIONAL:

Local 6A—Cement and Concrete workers⁶² Organized in 1929 and composed of 600 members of whom 10 are Negroes. Although Negroes have been admitted to full membership in this mixed local since its inception in 1929, the secretary reported that they have been very inactive. Because of this condition which he thinks prevails in many mixed locals he proposes that,

⁶¹ Interview with William J. Facon, Acting Secretary, August 27, 1935.

⁶² Interview with N. J. Cuner, Secretary, July 29, 1935.

when there is a small number of Negro workers in any industry, they should be organized along with the other workers in one mixed local and when there is a large number of Negro workers, they should be organized into a separate local. His reason is that in an entirely Negro local, the members would feel freer to take the floor, speak, ask questions, and, in general, take a more active part in the union activity. In mixed group as his local he feels that Negroes are timid and inactive and always shy about speaking. The fact that a few take active part or even hold offices does not justify keeping the majority in a position where they are uneasy. When asked if something could be done to develop the majority, he stated that he had not thought of that, but that, further, he felt that the Negro would always feel depressed when in mixed groups.

Local 10—Bricklayers' Helpers ⁶³—Organized in 1930 and composed of 1200 members of whom one tenth or 120 are Negroes. It is reported by the President of the local that since the origin of the local Negroes have been "good" members who found it possible to pay the initiation fee of \$52.00 and find it convenient to maintain the dues of \$1.25 per month. They are fairly regular in attendance at meetings, and although there are no Negro officers, "the Negro members are treated just like the other workers and they are getting a fair break."

Local 30 — Plasterers' Helpers ⁶⁴ — Organized in 1891. The Negro members of this union were at one time very active. During the years of 1928 and 1929 there was a Negro recording secretary. Since that time the number of Negroes has decreased to 4 from 50. The present total membership of the local is about 1,100. Many of the Negro members, like the others, dropped out of the local because there was a scarcity of work. Not being able to get work, they did not pay dues and, finally, just quit going to union meetings.

Up to 1926, the union had strikes almost yearly. Since then there were two, one in 1932 and the other in 1935. All of the

⁶³ Interview with Mr. Guardio, President, August 28, 1935.

⁶⁴ Interview with Mr. Suazzo, Secretary, September 4, 1935.

strikes were called to improve some phase of the working conditions, hours, wages, etc. Negro members of the union were usually loyal; however, at times some of them would not quit with the union. The proportion was not greater than the proportion of white members. At the close of the strikes those members who worked as strike breakers paid the fine imposed upon them by the union and retained their membership. In every case many of the unorganized workers who served as strike breakers were organized and made members of the union. These incidents did not cause racial ill feeling because "both Negroes and whites worked as strike breakers."

Local 45—Compressed Air Workers ⁸⁵—In July, 1935, this local was organized, being the outcome of an amalgamation of three locals of the I. H. C. & C. L. U. of A. These locals were #63—organized in 1918, #67—organized in 1927 and #68—organized in 1931. Two of these locals, 67 and 68 were Jersey City locals and one, 63, a New York local. In each of them the membership had decreased to such an extent that the amalgamation was necessary. During the years of the individual existence of these locals, there was a high percentage—40% of Negroes. Since those boom times—1921 to 1931—the Negro workers and the others, too, have not had any work; consequently, the union dropped their names because they did not pay dues. Now, only about 15% are Negroes. The initiation fee is \$50.00 payable in three months, and the dues are \$12.00 yearly, payable \$1.00 monthly.

The secretary-treasurer stated that the Negro and white members of the union get along together in a very fine way. "In fact," he said, "There are at times colored bosses. There's one now at the 38th Street Tunnel." At this juncture, he explained that the union does no hiring or firing. This is done by the bosses who are union men employed by the contractors. It is up to the boss to take whom he pleases and to fire whom he pleases. He is not supposed to discriminate on account of

⁸⁵ Interview with Pat O'Malley, Secretary-Treasurer, September 12, 1935.

race, or color. In addition to the Negro bosses there is a Negro member of the Executive Board. The other Negro members are not so very active—not attending the meetings often or displaying any interest in the union's problems.

There are several types of workers in this local. Among them are electricians, blasters, drillers, iron workers and common laborers. Most of the Negro workers do the blasting, drilling and iron work; there are no electricians, and few common laborers as most of this work is done by ex-miners—Irish and Welsh for the most part.

Local 95—Housewreckers⁶⁶—Organized in 1911 and composed of 1,600 members of whom 200 are Negroes. Records of the local show that Negroes have been members since 1911 when it was organized and that they have always been at least 10 percent of the total membership. The business manager who has been a member since 1911 reported, however, that to the best of his memory he could not recall a Negro's holding an office in the union. On the other hand, they have at all times been good dues-paying members. During the two big strikes of the local in 1911 and 1932 Negro members of the local were "100% loyal—more than can be said of other members." But, many imported Negroes and others were used to break these strikes. Because the local feels that these men were merely professional strike breakers no efforts have been made to organize them.

HOUSEWRECKERS' UNION, INDEPENDENT:⁶⁷ This independent union, not affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, was organized in 1932 by a Negro. At that time Negro membership was high, far above that of the whites, but today the whole situation has changed. Of the 450 members 10 are Negroes. The secretary, now a white man, stated that soon after the founding of the union the Negro membership began to decrease "in spite of the friendly attitude among the workers." "The Negro members seemed not to feel altogether at home in the

⁶⁶ Interview with Peter Cassidy, July 27, 1935.

⁶⁷ Interview with Mr. Marionoff, Secretary, July 26, 1935.

meetings and social functions of the union and they slowly fell out." The organizer of the union cannot be located, and the ten Negro members seldom attend the meetings. As a matter of fact, the whole union is now in a very quiet and inactive stage.

INSOLATORS AND ASBESTOS WORKERS, HEAT AND FROST, INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF:

Local 12—Asbestos Workers ⁸²—This local was organized in 1903 and has not had in its 32 years of existence any Negro members. Its present membership is 563. Among the qualifications for membership is a four-year apprenticeship and an initiation fee of \$100.00. The fee is payable \$25.00 quarterly during the first year of one's membership. A few years ago the International Association of which this local is a member made a survey to determine the number of workers in this trade. Throughout the United States, Mexico and Canada only nine Negro workers were found, and all of these nine were members of some local of the International. "As for New York," said the secretary, "there are no Negroes in this work and not any have ever applied for membership." He explains further that each local has its own constitution and points out that the constitution of this local reads in its membership clause that "any white man who is a citizen of the United States or has declared his intentions of becoming a citizen and is over 21 years old" is eligible for membership. "Back in 1903," he stated, "when the constitution was written, there was no idea of protection of workers or of discrimination when the words 'white man' was put in the constitution. There were no Negroes in the work and no one thought of that. If the occasion arose, I am sure that that phrase would be either overlooked or scratched out." As pointed out above there are very few workers in this trade. All the shops in New York are "closed" and, consequently, the only way one can get to work in them is through the union. A high percentage—about 82%—of the workers are unemployed. Dues have been suspended for most of these and unemployment benefits are given as far as possible. As a result of this situ-

⁸² Interview with Joseph Flynn, Financial Secretary, August 19, 1935.

ation, the union is not at present taking in any new members. Thus, there is little prospect for Negroes' joining.

**MARBLE, SLATE AND STONE POLISHERS, RUBBERS AND SAWYERS,
TILE AND MARBLE SETTERS' HELPERS AND TERRAZZO HELPERS,
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF:**

Local 5 — Machine Stone Workers, Rubbers and Helpers ⁸⁰ — Organized in 1880. The membership of this local has taken a great fall from about 900 to the present 200. Among these are no Negroes, but there were four, three sawyers and one rubber, before the World War. At that time they left the local to work in the ship yard where work was more abundant. No other Negro has applied for membership. The president remarked, "Negroes are not made for this kind of work anyway." Because he believes in that assertion, he as president of the union has never encouraged the soliciting of a Negro membership and probably will never foster any such move. Then came the contradictory remark that those Negroes who were members were expert mechanics at their work. They were full fledged members of the union and got along well with their fellow union members.

Other formal information of the union is:—Initiation fee is \$55.00, payable in installments, yearly dues of \$36.00, payable \$3.00 monthly; the strikes were general strikes of 1884, 1898 and 1904 and in which the Negro members of the union participated as fellow unionists.

Local 35 — Mosaic and Terrazzo Workers' Helpers ⁸⁰ — John Olivari, secretary, explained that the mosaic and terrazzo work are Italian arts and are done solely by Italians; therefore, the entire membership of the Local 35 is Italian.

The local was organized in 1890 and affiliated with the above International in 1921. It has 360 members. The initiation fee is \$178.00 payable in three months and the dues are \$24.00, \$2.00 monthly.

⁸⁰ Interview with Joseph John, President, and Samuel Lazarus, Executive Board Member, September 3, 1935.

⁸⁰ Interview with John Olivari, Secretary, September 16, 1935.

Local 88—Tile Layers' Helpers⁸¹—Organized in 1883 and composed of 750 members of whom none are Negroes. The records of the organization show that one Negro was a member about 1900: he transferred to the Tile Layers Union. Another was recently a member, but he dropped out. Membership is usually given on the recommendation of employers of workers in their shops or through personal application. Since there are no Negroes in the Helpers' Union and since the four year apprenticeship and efficiency test requirements are rigidly enforced, there is obviously little or no chance of a Negro's getting into the Tile Layers' Union.

PAINTERS, DECORATORS AND PAPER HANGERS OF AMERICA,
BROTHERHOOD OF:

Local 51—Painters⁸²—A trustee 32 years, a member of this local reviewed the situation of the local, saying among other things, "I've been in here a long time, and I've seen them come in and go out. This union was only three years old when I entered, and as long as I can remember, there always was at least one or perhaps two Negroes among us." The union was organized in 1900. It has today 930 members—6 of whom are Negroes. For beginners a four-year apprenticeship is required; the present initiation fee is \$15.00 and the dues are \$18.00, \$1.50 monthly. Most of the Negro members came in as full fledged painters through direct application to the union.

There are no Negro officers in Local 51. On this point, he said, "Well, you can't expect any of them to be an officer because they don't come out to meetings regularly. All they do is keep their dues paid up." Local 51 had one big strike in 1934 and several before that date. In all of these the Negro workers "just did like the rest of us." "We don't have any trouble with our Negro members," concluded Mr. Fox. "We have more trouble with the foreigners. They'll work for practically nothing."

⁸¹ Interview with James Cronin, Secretary, August 8, 1935.

⁸² Interview with Mr. Fox, Trustee, September 11, 1935.

Local 261 — Decorators and Painters⁸³ — Organized in 1904. This local is described by the secretary as "a radical Socialist group." He said that his union was not hostile to Negro members, but it, on the other hand, did not encourage them. The problem is with the employers and in turn the people whom they serve. "The white employers will not take Negroes, because the tenants in the apartments altered and decorated object." Even if there were no hindrances to the Negro workers, not many of them could qualify for membership because "they don't get a chance to work on the outside so that they can meet the requirement of long experience for membership."

There are 1,300 members of the local, none of whom are Negroes. The initiation fee is \$15.00 and the dues are \$18.00 yearly, payable \$1.50 monthly. While no apprenticeship is required for membership, an applicant must be an experienced worker.

Despite this indifferent attitude, it does cooperate with Negro labor movements. In this connection it sent a delegation to the Negro Labor Conference, July 20, 1935, New York City. It also assists such groups financially.

Local 829 — United Scenic Artists⁸⁴ — Organized in 1918. First, it was explained that this local has jurisdiction over all workers in Eastern United States. In its membership there were at one time two Negroes. One, a New York man who joined in 1918, dropped out in 1925. He was one of the first members. The other Negro member now in the union is a resident of Pittsburgh.

In the local there are 339 members. The initiation fee is \$500.00, \$250.00 with application and \$250.00 with initiation, and the yearly dues are \$48.00. Membership is open to "any person who follows any branch of work within the jurisdiction of the scenic artists crafts for a livelihood."

The two Negroes who were admitted to membership got in when some theatre and shop workers among whom they were

⁸³ Interview with Max Gaft, Secretary, September 3, 1935.

⁸⁴ Interview with Fred Marshall, Business Agent, August 29, 1935.

organized. The union has also a plan of taking in students by application. No Negroes have applied. On the outlook for the Negro worker in this field the Business Agent said, "To be perfectly frank I don't think that there is much for the Negro worker to look for. This is not an employment in which big groups of workers are hired but a work where one is on his own; therefore, I think Negroes will not do well in it."

Local 1087—Glaziers⁸⁸—organized in 1915 and composed of 362 members of whom none are Negroes. This is another local which reports never having had any experience with Negro workers because there are none, according to its knowledge, in the line of work it covers.

PLASTERERS AND CEMENT FINISHERS, OPERATIVE, INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA:⁸⁹

Local 780—Cement Masons. Of the 750 members there are 50 Negroes. The initiation fee of \$211.00 is conveniently payable in installments determined by the ability of the applicant to pay, and the yearly dues, \$18.00, are payable \$1.50 monthly. If one is not a full fledged mechanic when making application, a three-year apprenticeship term is required of him.

Since its origin in 1916 Negroes have been members of this local and have been very active as members. "They take part in all of the union activities," said Mr. Christina, secretary. "Last term, 1930-1933, there was a Negro member of the Executive Board." There are at present, however, no Negro officers.

PLUMBERS, STEAM FITTERS AND HELPERS, ALTERATION:⁹⁰ In this independent union, not affiliated with the A. F. of L. or any International union, there are 450 members of whom 4 are Negroes. It has an initiation fee of \$3.00 and requires dues of \$13.00 yearly for mechanics and \$8.10 for helpers. Two

⁸⁸ Interview with William Flasher, Record Keeper, July 26, 1935.

⁸⁹ Interview with James J. Christina, Secretary, September 9, 1935.

⁹⁰ Interview with M. Kahme, Organiser, September 13, 1935.

of the Negro members are mechanics and the other two are helpers.

During the first year of organization in 1933 it had a "great Negro leader," Fred Welsch. He, a member of the Executive Board, was "best strike leader" and "half of the brains of the union." He died in November, 1934. Since his death the few Negro members have lost interest in the union. The organizer remarked, "You've almost got to club them in to the meetings. They won't come around, and they will not accept any offices in the union." He said he wished that he could come across another man like Welsch because the task of organizing Harlem workers in this line—which Welsch had quite ably begun—is now going undone. However, he plans to put forth definite efforts to resume the organization work in Harlem.

The union had an organizational strike in 1933 and several small strikes in 1934 and 1935, called for improvement of working conditions. When the Negro members were involved, they struck with the union. No Negro scabs were encountered.

SLATE, TILE AND COMPOSITION ROOFERS, DAMP AND WATER PROOF WORKERS' ASSOCIATION, UNITED:

Local 8—Composition Roofers:⁸⁸ Reporting 700 members none of whom are Negroes, the office record keeper of the union made one further statement, "We don't bar Negroes by constitution or ritual. There may be many of them in this trade, but none are members of this union—in New York anyway."

STONE CUTTERS' ASSOCIATION OF NORTH AMERICA, JOURNEYMEN: New York Division.⁸⁹ This is another union in which there are no Negro members. Its total membership is 650. It has an initiation fee of \$75.00 and dues of \$2.50 monthly. After sharpening his memory a bit, the charter member, Mr. Martin, recalled that about forty years ago there was one Negro member in the union. "I don't know what became of him," Mr. Martin

⁸⁸ Interview with office Record Keeper (name withheld), October 26, 1935.

⁸⁹ Interview with Mr. Martin, Charter member and Executive Board Member, September 3, 1935.

said. "He may be dead by now." He believes that there are no Negro stone cutters in New York and that there were no applications from any whom they might not have known. Further, he seemed to think that the prospect for Negro membership is dull because of the long apprenticeship requirement. In order to qualify for membership, one must be an expert stone cutter or must serve an apprenticeship. "But since Negroes do not go in for apprenticeship, they will probably never gain membership."

FOOD, LIQUOR AND TOBACCO INDUSTRIES

BAKERY AND CONFECTIONERY WORKERS' INTERNATIONAL UNION OF AMERICA:

Local 1—Bakers¹⁰⁰—Organized in 1886. At present there are 560 members of the union—no Negroes. The initiation fee is \$3.00 and the yearly dues are \$32.40, payable \$2.70 monthly. The union has no program regarding Negro workers and does not plan to start one in the future. In fact, it does not really feel that it is necessary to organize the Negro workers in this trade.

Mr. Haberer, Secretary, commented, "About 12 or 13 years ago, there were two Negroes in our union. They were working in a bakery shop on Lenox Avenue when we organized it. They disappeared and we have neither seen nor heard anything of them since they left."

Local 50—Baking Factory Workers¹⁰¹—Although this union had been affiliated from 1929 to 1934 with the Factory Workers Branch of the Amalgamated Food Workers Union, it has become a local of the B. & C. W. I. U. of A. since May 6, 1934. Local 50 has done a "good job" in organizing the workers in the baking factories and in securing for them better working conditions and higher wages. It organizes on the industrial basis and takes in all of the workers in a factory regardless of what they do. Most of these factory workers are unskilled:

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Mr. Haberer, Secretary, September 3, 1935.

¹⁰¹ Interview with Mr. Gund, Secretary-Treasurer, September 13, 1935.

they merely do mechanical work. One or two master bakers can control over a hundred of these unskilled machine operators. In two of the factories organized by this local—Gottfried Bakeries at 51st Street and 11th Avenue and at 165th Street and Union Avenue—there are a few Negro workers. They do the same unskilled work as the other workers.

The two shops mentioned were among the first organized by the union. It was then that Negroes first became members of Local 50.

In Local 50, there are 6 Negroes in the total membership of 700. The initiation fee is \$3.00 and the dues \$18.00 yearly or \$1.50 monthly.

Since its organization in May 1935, Local 50 has had but one strike—the Gottfried Bakery Strike of May 20-June 18, 1935, which was called to get union recognition and better working conditions. The Negro members of the Local participated as fellow unionists. "No Negroes scabbed in this strike," reported Mr. Gund, the Secretary-Treasurer. "The truth is that he (Gottfried) used white scabs. He could get plenty of them. I suppose that if he couldn't, he would have gone to Harlem to get some workers to exploit. In spite of that we won the strike and are now getting along fine."

Local 505—Bread and Roll Bakers¹⁰²—Organized in 1930. Its present membership is 1045 of whom none are Negroes. Its initiation fee is \$25.00 payable in terms, and the dues are \$62.40 yearly, payable \$5.20 monthly.

Although by constitution membership is open to any baker who is over 18 years old and who is a citizen of the United States, there never was a Negro member in Local 505. Mr. Kerman, the Secretary, stated, "No Negroes made application for membership. We have organized only bakery shops and factories in the lower East Side of Manhattan. No Negroes worked in these shops. Most of our members are Jews."

¹⁰² Interview with Louis Kerman, Secretary, September 24, 1935.

Local 50579—Cake Bakers¹⁰⁸—It has never had a Negro member since its organization in 1930. The territorial jurisdiction of this local is also limited to the Lower East Side of Manhattan; therefore, its membership, too, is mainly Jewish. Just as other union officials have done, Mr. Bless, secretary, asserted that no color bar is put up against applicants for membership and that no Negroes worked at the industry in shops over which the local has jurisdiction.

Local 50579 has at present 400 members, none of whom are Negroes. Its initiation fee is \$25.00, payable in installments, and its dues are \$74.00 yearly or \$6.20 monthly.

BAKERY WORKERS, INSIDE, LOCAL 19585 A. F. OF L.¹⁰⁹ This is a federal local organized in 1934, of employees of the National Biscuit Company. It has 3,000 members of whom 2 are Negroes. It should be noted, however, that these 2 Negro members are not regular employees of the company such as bakers, packers, etc. One is a cook for the company plant, and the other is a warehouse hand (porter). Since the constitution of the local specifies that *all* employees of the company had to be included in the union, the two Negro unskilled workers were made regular members of the union. Whether or not the union will have other Negro members who are regular employees depends on the policy of the company in selecting its employees.

BREWERY, FLOUR, CEREAL AND SOFT DRINK WORKERS OF AMERICA,
INTERNATIONAL UNION OF:

Local 1—Brewers¹⁰⁹—Organized in 1884. In this union there were any Negro members. "They don't seem to take an interest in it", stated the financial secretary. "It takes a long period of time to learn the trade. There are many Negroes working around the brewers as porters and helpers who could very easily learn, but as I said, they are apparently not interested."

¹⁰⁸ Interview with Mr. Bless, Secretary, September 24, 1935.

¹⁰⁹ Interview with the Secretary (name withheld), July 25, 1935.

¹⁰⁹ Interview with Mr. Fred Schwab, Financial Secretary, August 30, 1935.

In the union there are 450 members. A 2½ year apprenticeship is required of beginners. To skilled brewers membership is granted upon the payment of an initiation fee of \$50.00 payable in installments. The dues are \$18.00 yearly.

Local 23 — Beer Drivers ¹⁰⁶ — Organized 1884. There are 12 Negroes in the total membership of 400. Initiation fee is \$50 payable in installments and dues are \$18.00 yearly.

Negroes have always been members of the union and have enjoyed the same privileges as the other members. As the work increased or decreased with the seasons, the number of Negro members likewise increased or decreased. Negroes are inactive members not attending the meetings or taking part in any of the activities of the union. However, they pay their dues regularly.

Local 59—Brewery Workmen ¹⁰⁷—Henry Drew, Secretary, remarked, "We positively do not have any Negro members in this union. I've been a member for forty-two years now and never knew of a Negro who applied for membership." In the few years before 1900 and before Drew became a member of the local, it was known as Local Assembly 8390 of the Knights of Labor. Its actual origin was in 1886, but it has been affiliated with the U. B. F. C. & S. D. W. of A. since 1900.

At present the membership of the Local, 300, is just about entirely German and Irish. Mr. Drew asserted, however, that membership was not limited to any one group but by constitution to any citizen of the United States. He said that Negroes have never shown an interest in that kind of work.

The initiation fee is \$52.50 and dues \$24.00 yearly, payable \$2.00 monthly.

CIGAR MAKERS' INTERNATIONAL UNION OF AMERICA:

Local 144—Cigar Makers ²⁰⁸—Organized in 1879—When the large cigar factories were in the North, many Negroes were

¹⁰⁶ Interview with George Reysen, Financial Secretary, August 30, 1935.

¹⁰⁷ Interview with Henry Drew, Secretary, September 12, 1935.

¹⁰⁸ Interview with Jack Melhado, Secretary, August 30, 1935.

members. Now, there are very few in the unions. In local 144, which has a total membership of 340, there are 3 Negroes. Special efforts to organize Negro workers and "to instill into their minds that they were equal in every way to the white members" have been made. Negro members, like others, drop out of the union in slack seasons because the initiation fee and dues are so small—the initiation fee being \$3.00 and the dues \$1.00 monthly—that it is easy for the members to get reinstated. The few Negroes in this union are not very active and seldom attend meetings. They hold no offices. The secretary commented, "Negro workers don't take kindly to unions. They don't understand the importance of organizations to them. Their action in strikes when they do not hold out as long as the other workers shows this."

Local 389—Cigar Makers¹⁰⁰—Organized in 1909. This is a very small local, 100 members made up almost entirely of Porto Ricans and Cubans. Membership is, nevertheless, open to any worker in the cigar making industry. But, because they speak the same language, many of them not being able to speak English, the members of this local found it wise and practical to organize separately. All fees, privileges, wages, working hours, etc. are the same as in their sister Local 144.

EGG INSPECTORS' UNION, LOCAL 11254 A. F. OF L.:¹¹⁰ This is a very old Federal local organized in 1903 when candles were used to inspect eggs. In all of these years there have never been Negro members. The total membership at present is 425.

Mr. Siegel, the business manager, stated that the Daniel Reeves chain stores of New York employ Negro women as egg handlers. "I wanted to organize them," he said, "but the union did not approve of female workers because it felt that they could not command the wages set by the union. They did not refuse to have them organized because they were Negroes. The Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company employs white women egg

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ Interview with Charles Siegel, Business Manager, October 1, 1935.

candlers and the union refused to let me organize them for the same reason."

FISH WORKERS INDUSTRIAL UNION, LOCAL 106¹¹¹—Organized in 1931. Until very recently this local was affiliated with the Food Workers Industrial Union. After its separation from this union it applied for a charter from the Amalgamated Meat Cutters of America. Action on the application by the Amalgamated Meat Cutters is still pending.

Of the 400 members of this union there are 3 Negroes. "I don't think that there are over 35 or 40 Negroes working in the retail shops in New York. At any rate, we have only come across three in the shops we organized," said Mr. Hutt, Organizer. He continued, "We have been making special efforts to organize the Negro workers in retail fish shops in Harlem. To make it easy for them to join we will charge them an initiation fee of 50c and dues of 5c weekly. Most of them work as porters, delivery boys and what-nots as well as at cutting and serving fish." The regular initiation fee is \$5.75 and the dues 15c to 75c varying with the amount of the wages received.

The three members of the union are all in good standing, attend the meetings regularly and are quite active. One of them is the secretary of the district in which he works. Mr. Hutt feels that his union will be able to do a great deal for the Negro workers in the Harlem areas as soon as it gets its new charter. Then it will be more powerful and can make greater demands from the employers.

FOOD WORKERS' INDUSTRIAL UNION :

Local 119—Hotel and Restaurant Workers¹¹²—Although Local 119 has been affiliated with the F. W. I. U. only since 1929, it had been in existence long before, since 1912. Then it was a local of the Amalgamated Food Workers and The International Catering Workers. This union soon realized that the Negroes "made an important part of the food industry." The strikes

¹¹¹ Interview with R. Hutt, Organizer, September 10, 1935.

¹¹² Interview with M. Obermier, General Secretary, September 11, 1935.

of 1912, 1918, 1924 and 1929 thoroughly convinced the union "that the Negro workers could not be overlooked." "So we welcomed them into the union and made special efforts to organize them," declared Mr. Obermier, General Secretary. Although these efforts are more recent, Negroes, at least a few, have always been members of the union. At present there are 250 in the total membership of 3,000 in local 119. Of this number the greatest proportion is unskilled. Mr. Obermier distributes them among the various crafts of the industry as follows: dish washers and kitchen helpers—200; waiters, counter-men or bus boys—about 30; chefs and cooks—20. Negro workers are put and kept, it seems, in the work which keeps them away from the public—the customers, except when a shop is exclusively Negro. This system is not "consciously carried out," Mr. Obermier explained. The majority of the Negro workers are in the kitchens when the hotel and restaurants are organized. "Naturally," he said, "they remain on their same jobs." Although the initiation fees, \$4.00 for skilled workers—waiters, counter-men, chefs—and \$2.00 for unskilled workers—bus boys, dishwashers, kitchen helpers, and dues, 15c to 35c weekly, 2c for the unemployed, vary according to the degree of skill, all members have the same privileges and rights.

As further evidence of the "brotherly spirit of mutual aid and equality," Mr. Obermier made mention of the Negro officers of the local—vice-president, two Executive Board members and two shop chairmen.

In all of the strikes of Local 119—in 1934, '29, '24, '18 and '12, Negroes participated. Those who were members of the union walked out as fellow unionists, but unorganized Negroes worked as strike breakers. As a result of this activity the "union was made to realize that it had to consider the Negro worker"; consequently, it began making special efforts to organize all Negro workers whom it encounters.

Local 134—Butchers, Poultry Handlers and Meat Cutters¹¹³—Organized in 1934. The parent of this local was "the pioneer

¹¹³ Interview with J. Schein, Organizer, August 5, 1935.

in the battle against discrimination of Negro workers and union men." This local makes no difference as to who shall be members, as long as they are competent workers. Negroes are granted full privileges of membership and have under such conditions been good members since the origin of the union. As to the organization of Negro workers, the union, yet young and poorly financed, has to use the shop chairmen as organizers; therefore, "our three Harlem shop-chairmen contact and propose Negro workers for membership." The Negro section chairman (Harlem section) serves also in this capacity. This is not a special method for Negroes as shop-chairman in other areas do the same thing. In fact, no special effort is made to get Negro membership although great interest is shown.

There are always little strikes in one or a few small shops. In one case a strike was ordered on account of discrimination against a Negro employee, a member of this local. The strike lasted for two weeks in early July, 1935. The worker was reinstated and received an increase of \$9.00 in salary, from \$31.00 to \$40.00 per week. "As yet, we cannot put Negroes in all-white neighborhoods because we are not strong enough; but it is my hope that we will be able to put Negroes in any shop and say to the employer, 'These are the union men we send to your shop' and the employer will not be able to say, 'We don't want that fellow because he is a Negro'."

**HOTEL AND RESTAURANT EMPLOYEES' INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE
AND BARTENDERS' INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE OF AMERICA:**

Local 16 — Restaurant Employees and Bartenders ²¹⁴ — Organized in 1925. The members of this local are employees of hotels and restaurants located in the downtown section along Broadway. In 1933, being inspired by the chances N.R.A. gave workers to organize, this group put on an extensive organizational drive. At that time, Negroes became members because they were employed in the restaurants and hotels when they were organized. "Our membership is open to any culinary worker who is a citizen of the United States, and we look upon

²¹⁴ Interview with Aladar Retek, General Organizer, August 29, 1935.

Negroes as citizens and not as Negro workers." There are 10 Negroes in this local of 3000 members. All of these are chefs. Among the other types of workers are waiters, bus-boys, bartenders and miscellaneous kitchen help. Mr. Retek, general organizer also stated that these Negro members are "fairly good union men," meaning that they pay their dues regularly and on several occasions have walked off the jobs when the union called individual strikes for improvement of working conditions. "Our workers get along well together." Of course, there are no Negro officers yet, but I feel that as time passes and as they become more active, they will get positions as officers in the union."

Local 89—Cooks and Kitchen Workers²¹⁸—Organized in 1935. The local has 400 members, ten of whom are Negroes. It set up an initiation fee of \$10.50 for cooks and \$5.50 for kitchen helpers: the dues are \$36.00 yearly for cooks and \$18.00 for kitchen helpers. Practically all of the Negro members are kitchen workers and helpers, porters, vegetable cleaners, etc. They gained admittance to the union when the establishments in which they worked were organized, as it is the policy of the local to organize all workers encountered in any given hotel or restaurant. They are full-fledged union members.

"It is definitely stated in our Constitution that there is to be no discrimination on account of color, creed, race, religion or anything else," stated Mr. Garriga, representative. "We take all the workers we find at a restaurant or hotel into our union. Of course, you say that there are no Negro officers. That's because of the small number of Negro members. Also, to protect ourselves against agitators and troublemakers, we require that candidates for offices should have kept one year's continuous membership and given one year's service as an Executive Board member." (The officers referred to in this last statement were those of president, vice-president and secretary-treasurer.)

²¹⁸ Interview with Miguel Garriga, Representative, September 11, 1935.

Local 89 has had a few individual shop strikes since its organization in 1935. In these the Negro workers involved quit work when the other members did. No Negroes worked as strike breakers.

Local 219—Waiters¹¹⁸—Organized in 1912. The membership of this local is entirely Hungarian and German, explained by the reason that in the geographical area, Yorkville and East Harlem, over which this local has jurisdiction there are no restaurants which hire Negro waiters. The membership is made up of only those who work in these restaurants in that area. The membership is 270.

MEAT CUTTER AND BUTCHER WORKMEN OF NORTH AMERICA,
AMALGAMATED:

Local 174—Butchers¹¹⁷—Organized in 1900. Although there are no Negroes in this local now, there were about 10 during the years 1919, 1920 and 1921. The local lost the shops in which these Negroes were working and, consequently, the Negro membership was lost because of the lack of employment. In these years, the membership of the local was between 800 and 900; now it is 450. As pointed out above, the Negroes who were members entered the local not by direct application but by being employed in a shop which was organized by the local.

Local 234—Butchers¹¹⁸—This local is divided into three sub-units, (1) the Kosher Workers, (2) the Non-Kosher Workers and (3) the Delivery Clerks. The membership of the Kosher Workers, 800, is all Jewish. This is the case, of course, because that trade, due to its religious nature, automatically limits its membership to Jews. "The people (Jewish) want Kosher killed meat handled by and sold by Jews only," Mr. Belsky, secretary, explained. "In this case we have no control over the membership." The Non-Kosher Workers' unit, organized just three months ago, May, 1935, has one Negro member. Mr.

¹¹⁸ Interview with Gernard Kahn, Secretary, August 28, 1935.

¹¹⁷ Interview with Alex Drefke, Secretary, August 30, 1935.

¹¹⁸ Interview with Joseph Belsky, Secretary, August 5, 1935.

Blesky stated that he expects that many more Negro workers will apply for membership when the union becomes known. Since his experience with Negro workers has been exceedingly limited, he felt that he is not in a position to speak with any degree of validity on the problem of Negroes in unions or in his local. This one member has been with this section since it was organized. The third unit, the Delivery Clerks, has a total membership of 200, 6 of whom are Negroes. The short life of these newly added units in which Negroes are full members has allowed little experience with Negro workers. A note should be made about a strike held by the Non-Kosher Workers. The one Negro member of this section was transferred to a Westchester market. The employer did not want him; however, a one-day protest strike by that section of the local changed the employer's mind.

Local 662—Salesman and Poultry Workers¹²⁸—Organized in 1931. This is another case where workers must be able to handle kosher-killed poultry. Also, because all of the purchasers of this meat are Jews, it is necessary for the workers to be able to speak the Hebrew language. On these scores Negroes do not qualify for membership; therefore, among the 500 members of this local there are no Negroes.

MEAT CUTTERS UNION (Local 134)¹²⁹—This independent union which seceded from the Food Workers' Industrial Union was organized separately in 1934. Negroes have been members of this local for about seven months, first joining in February, 1935. There are 20 in the total membership of 250. Most of these are employed in the meat shops along 8th Avenue between 114th and 145th Streets. "We became interested in the Negro problem and started to organize the shops in which they work along 8th Avenue. So far we have 20 Negro members. For them the union has obtained an increase of from 15% to 30% in wages and a cut of 35 hours a week in their weekly working hours," remarked the secretary. He explained further that be-

¹²⁸ Interview with I. Rand, Secretary-Treasurer, July 30, 1935.

¹²⁹ Interview with Conrad Kaye, Secretary, September 10, 1935.

fore the union became active, the Negro worker had to work about 85 hours a week and then remain in the stores after closing hours to clean them. Also, they now get 13 holidays per year with pay. All hiring and firing is done through the union after two weeks' notice to the worker. The employer must furnish a good reason (inefficiency, drunkenness, etc.) to the Executive Board of the union before any action is taken against the worker.

There are no Negro officers of the union; however, there is a Negro district chairman. He is to work along with the white organizer in organizing the other Negro workers in the meat industry in the Harlem area. To become eligible to hold an office a member must have been in good standing for at least six months before election. There are no Negro officers because none were in the union for six months when the election was held three months ago.

RESTAURANT, CAFETERIA AND CULINARY EMPLOYEES¹²² — Affiliated with the American Labor Alliance as Local 1—Organized in 1934 and composed of 1700 members of whom none are Negroes. It has had no experience with Negro members or Negro workers as it has not yet organized a cafeteria or restaurant in which Negroes were working and, therefore, has had no occasion to contact Negro workers. No Negroes have applied for membership.

SEA FOOD WORKERS, UNITED, LOCAL 16975 A. F. OF L.:¹²³— Organized in 1919. The New York Local 16975 still has 5 Negro members, 2 luggers and 3 fish cleaners. Its total membership is 650. "One of our colored members," said Mr. Skillen, President, "is a 100% fish cleaner and a 100% union member." Further remarks showed that by a "100% union man" Mr. Skillen meant one who paid his dues, came to meetings sometimes and worked hard at all times. All of the Negro members are "full members," but there are no Negro officers.

¹²² Interview with James J. Ryan, President, August 12, 1935.

¹²³ Interview with Charles F. Skillen, President, September 26, 1935.

PAPER MANUFACTURING, PRINTING AND PUBLISHING

BOOKBINDERS, INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF:

Local 9—Paper Rulers¹²⁸—Organized in 1900. Because of the great use of machinery to rule paper now, the membership of this local has dwindled to hardly enough to maintain a local. At present the local has 30 members. Those who are members are "old timers", and there are no Negroes among them. In fact, there never were Negro members in Local #9.

Local 25—Bookbinders.¹²⁹—The two Negro members of this local are among its oldest, both having been members for about thirty years. One of them, now employed at the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, joined the union through a direct application to the local headquarters, while the other, now employed at Tapley's on Court Square, Long Island City, joined when a group of shop workers were organized. Neither of these men hold any office at present, but one has been a member of the Executive Board and also a shop chairman.

Local Number 25 was organized in 1890. It has at present 385 members, two of whom are Negroes. For membership an apprenticeship of four years is required if the applicant is not a journeyman bookbinder. Initiation fee is twenty-five dollars, payable in installments, and dues are \$36 yearly, payable \$3 monthly.

Local 43—Bindery Women¹²⁸—Organized in 1895 and composed of 500 members, one of whom is a Negro woman. Twenty-five years ago the local organized Tiebel Brothers in Brooklyn. There were two Negro women, sisters, employed there at the time. Both became members of the union, but since then one died. The other is still employed at Tiebel Brothers. She is elderly now and, therefore, does not attend meetings. She held no office in the union in spite of her long term of membership and seniority over many other members.

¹²⁸ Interview with M. McGrady, Representative, September 20, 1935.

¹²⁹ Interview with M. McGrady, Secretary, September 20, 1935.

¹³⁰ Interview with Mary J. Murphy, President & Organizer, September 20, 1935.

Local 66—Bindery Women ¹²⁶—In local 66, which was organized in June, 1931, there are 170 members, none of whom are Negroes. For membership there is required an apprenticeship of 2 years for beginners; an initiation fee of \$10.00. The dues are \$18.00 yearly, \$1.50 monthly. Membership is by constitution open to any female worker in any branch of the book-binding trade. The local has made no effort to organize any Negro bookbinders because it has never come in contact with Negro workers and "never had occasion to consider organization of the Negro worker."

LITHOGRAPHERS OF AMERICA, AMALGAMATED:—Local 1—Lithographers ^{126a}—organized in 1884 and composed of 2,600 members of whom two are Negroes. The secretary of this local reported that the two Negro members joined in 1920 when they applied for membership—the first Negroes ever to apply or to be encountered by the local. Since 1920 both of these Negro members have been very live workers, taking active parts in the business and social meetings. Neither has held or is holding an office in the union, but both enjoy the usual privileges of membership.

PHOTO-ENGRAVERS' UNION OF NORTH AMERICA, INTERNATIONAL:—Local 1—Photo-Engravers.¹²⁷—This local has five "very excellent" Negro members, entering with the expansion of the photo and gravure work just after the War began. Since then one or two other shops employing Negroes have been organized. Some of the Negro workers who joined the union discontinued their memberships as they changed to other types of work. Others stuck with the union. At present there are 5 Negroes in the 2,400 members of Local #1.

Beginners in this type of work must serve an apprenticeship of 5 years. Journeymen workers may join the union upon payment of an initiation fee of \$50.00. The dues are \$39.00 yearly and \$3.35 monthly.

¹²⁶ Interview with Catherine Harrington, Secretary, September 10, 1935.

^{126a} Interview with Albert E. Castro, Secretary, July 25, 1935.

¹²⁷ Interview with Edward White, President, September 20, 1935.

The president praised highly the quality of the work of the Negro members; however, he complained that they do not attend meetings regularly. Although Negroes are full members in every respect and have held such a status since 1921, there are no Negro officers.

PRINTING PRESSMEN'S AND ASSISTANTS' UNION OF NORTH AMERICA, INTERNATIONAL:

Local 1—Paper Handlers and Sheet Straighteners¹²⁸—Organized in 1903. When the membership of Local #1 was about 1,000 in good times before machinery was used so extensively to straighten out and fold large sheets of paper, there were about 100 Negro members. With the greater use of machinery came a great decrease in need for man power and skill; thus, the membership dropped because of the lack of work. At present, Local #1 has 650 members, 25 of whom are Negroes.

The local reported one experience with discrimination against a Negro worker. A Negro member—"about as black as coal"—was sent on a job. The foreman refused to accept him and finally admitted that the only reason for his action was that the worker was a Negro. Then, the local called a shop strike. Now the foreman and this Negro worker are actually good friends.

The union is at present engaged in some organization work in a shop in which six Negroes and one Italian are working. Through such means as this, organization of all workers in shops, most of the Negro members have joined the local. They do not usually object to union membership, and when they do join, they become "the best members." Although Negroes have been full members of the local since its organization, no Negroes are now officers. In fact, to the best knowledge of the officers interviewed, Negroes have never held offices in the local.

Local 51—New York Printing Pressmen¹²⁹—Organized in 1898 and composed of 300 members of whom 6 are Negroes. In the past 20 years there have been a few Negro members of

¹²⁸ Interview with Thomas P. Gill, Secretary, September 20, 1935.

¹²⁹ Interview with the Secretary (name withheld), July 29, 1935.

this local. At present there are only six Negroes employed in the union printing shops of the city. These are the members of Local 51. As members, they are somewhat active. From time to time two or three have served on committees, but none have held executive offices. Outside of the union headquarters some have served as shop chairmen. One official of the union described them as "ideal members in every way."

For the past few years the union has been attempting to organize the Negro owned and operated printing shops in Harlem where the majority of the Negro printers work. These efforts have been quite unsuccessful because the volume of business carried on by these shops could not support the employment of union pressmen and compositors.

In recent strikes sponsored by the local Negro members have all cooperated as other-workers.

STEREOTYPERS' AND ELECTROTYPERS' UNION OF NORTH AMERICA, INTERNATIONAL: In Manhattan there are two divisions of this union, Local 100—New York Electrotypers and the New York Stereotypers. Local 100¹⁸⁰ has two Negro members, one a journeymen electrotypewriter and the other an apprentice, both employed at the National Electrotype Company. The journeymen has been a member for about 29 years while the apprentice is just doing his fifth and final years of his term of apprenticeship. The union has had no other experience with Negro workers because "none besides those two applied for membership."

Since its origin in 1888 Local 100 has been involved in but one labor dispute—a lockout in 1906. In it, the one Negro member at the time participated as a fellow unionist.

The New York Stereotypers¹⁸¹ merely reported that its constitution has a "policy conservative" in regard to Negro members, that it had one Negro member in its total of 1,184 and that this "Negro member [is] a loyal one."

¹⁸⁰ Interview with Joseph A. Carroll, President, September 20, 1935.

¹⁸¹ Interview with the President (name withheld), October 5, 1935.

TYPOGRAPHICAL UNION, INTERNATIONAL:

Local 6—Typographical Workers¹⁸²—This is the oldest and most powerful local in the printing industry in New York City. Organized in 1850, it has today 9,621 members of whom 25 are Negroes. Its records show that Negroes first joined fifty years ago in 1885. From that time there have always been a few, 25 representing the greatest number of all times. Like other locals, this one makes it a policy to accept all members in a shop, "providing that they are thoroughly competent," when it organizes it. Similarly, through this means Negroes gained membership. After becoming members, though, they have never advanced or been allowed to advance, as the case might be, to executive positions. On the other hand, they do serve as shop chairmen and committee members. On the whole, they are passive members in this Local.

Local 6A—Mailers' Union¹⁸³—In this forty year old union, having a membership of 845, there is one Negro who is now employed at the World-Telegram Newspaper Company. He became a member of the union in 1923 through an application submitted at that time. "Then," stated Mr. O'Hara, business representative, "there was a shortage of men for the work we were handling, so we put aside the five-year apprenticeship requirement and took in inexperienced men. That's when Antenez joined." The work of this union consists of packing and preparing for shipment and mailing periodicals, newspapers, magazines, etc. As far as he can judge from records, the one worker named above has been the only Negro to apply for membership in the union. Although Antenez is a full member, getting union wages and working union hours, he is not very active in the organization. He pays his dues regularly and attends meetings seldom; he holds no office in the local. Said Mr. O'Hara, "He is so docile and quiet that one would never know he was in the union."

¹⁸² Interview with L. H. Rouse, President, July 29, 1935.

¹⁸³ Interview with Gran O'Hara, Business Representative, August 20, 1935.

Local 83 — Hebrew-American Typographical Workers¹⁸⁴ — Hyman Bloom, President, explained that the membership of this local is entirely Hebrew. "Our work", he said "is to set type by hand and by linotype machine for Jewish newspapers and commercial advertisements. A member must know Hebrew, Yiddish and English. This is a linguistic union and I doubt if any Negro or other groups, too, could qualify for membership."

AMUSEMENTS AND PROFESSIONS

ACTORS AND ARTISTS OF AMERICA, ASSOCIATED: There are two affiliated organizations of this association in New York, the Actors' Equity Association¹⁸⁵ and the Hebrew Actors Union, Inc.¹⁸⁶ The former reported that 8 percent of its 3,500 members is Negro. Expressed in the statement, "We accept as members those [Negroes] who play in white companies, but we do not attempt to organize the average Negro company," is the policy of the union in regard to the membership and organization of Negro actors and artists. The latter is a union whose membership is by constitution limited to Jewish performers; therefore, it has no Negro members.

MOTION PICTURE OPERATORS' UNION, ALLIED:¹⁸⁷ This is an independent union not affiliated with the A. F. of L. Organized in 1933, it has a total membership of 300, of whom 7 are Negroes. The initiation fee is \$300.00 and dues 5% of earnings weekly. No organizers are sent out to recruit members: the person desiring membership must of his own initiative go to the office of the union and make application. No down payment is required with the application. The applicants' names are put on a list, and when there is a call to the union for operators, the top man is selected and sent on the job. At that time he pays one half of the initiation fee (\$150.00). When he

¹⁸⁴ Interview with Hyman Bloom, President, September 24, 1935.

¹⁸⁵ Interview with the President (name withheld), September 10, 1935.

¹⁸⁶ Interview with the President, Jean Greenfield, September 10, 1935.

¹⁸⁷ Interview with Benjamin F. De Agastina, President, September 11, 1935.

has been on the job long enough to prove his competency as an operator, he pays the other half of the fee or signs a note for installments and then goes through the initiatory ritual. Then, he maintains weekly dues of 5% of his earnings. No Negroes have joined through this procedure. All are charter members.

There is one Negro member on the Executive Board of 14 members. The president of the union remarked, "We confine our colored members to Harlem and the Bronx because that's where they live and that's where they get along better. You can take it from me there is no animosity among us because of color or race. All the members are equal in power : all get along o. k."

SOUND AND PROJECTION ENGINEERS, UNITED:¹²⁸ In this small, recently organized — 1932 — independent union, not affiliated with the A. F. of L., there are no Negro members. Qualifications for membership are: (1) being a sound and projection engineer, (2) being able to pay an initiation fee of \$75—one-third down and balance in installments, and (3) being able to maintain yearly dues of \$60, payable \$5 monthly. There was at one time one Negro member. He has changed his affiliation to the Allied Motion Picture Operators Union. Apart from him the union has had no experience with Negro workers.

**STAGE EMPLOYEES AND MOTION PICTURE MACHINE OPERATORS
OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA, INTERNATIONAL
ALLIANCE OF:**

Local 52—Motion Picture Studio Mechanics.¹²⁹ This has 388 white members and 1 Negro. Until recently, there were 2 Negro members, but one dropped out on account of old age and general inability to work. The present member is employed at the Eastern Service Studio. At one time, he was one of the union's head property men. The initiation fee is at present \$250.00, which must be paid in one sum before membership is granted. The yearly dues are \$30.00, payable \$2.50 monthly.

¹²⁸ Interview with Mr. O'Sullivan, Representative, August 26, 1935.

¹²⁹ Interview with Mr. Delaney, Secretary, August 21, 1935.

Local 669—Film Technicians¹⁴⁰—At present this union has no Negroes in its membership of 380. There was one Negro who joined in 1929 at the inception of the local, but he dropped out in 1930 without stating reasons. He could not be located at a later date.

THEATRICAL FEDERATED UNION, NATIONAL:¹⁴¹ There are no Negro members in this union of 300 stage hands, musicians and motion picture machine operators. This is an independent union not affiliated with the A. F. of L. Although there are no Negroes members at present, there were a few between 1933 and 1934. These have changed their affiliation to either Local 306 of the I. A. T. S. E. or the Allied Motion Picture Operators Union.

THEATRICAL WARDROBE ATTENDANTS, LOCAL 16770 A. F. OF L.:¹⁴² Miss Ocker states that when the local was affiliated with the A. F. of L. in 1919, there were about five Negro members "who were working in the theatres when we organized." Gradually all of these members have dropped out of the union without giving any definite reason for so doing, but Miss Ocker believes that "they weren't exactly interested in the union." At present the total membership is 308.

PUBLIC SERVICE

FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES, NATIONAL:¹⁴³ Local 4—Organized in 1916, Local #4 has at present a total membership of about 1,000. It was impossible to even estimate the Negro membership because positively no record of racial identity is kept on the records. However, there might be as high as one-fifth Negroes in the membership. The general organizer remarked, "Negroes are not usually good union members. They are not union or not organizational conscious. If any of them

¹⁴⁰ Interview with S. Harrison, Secretary, August 21, 1935.

¹⁴¹ Interview with Rudolph Kramer, Business Agent, August 26, 1935.

¹⁴² Interview with Miss A. Ocker, Business Agent, August 23, 1935.

¹⁴³ Interview with John D. Cloud, General Organizer, October 4, 1934.

who are Federal employees are not members of the union, it's their own fault because we would be glad to have them come in." There is no separation in the North, but in the South there are separate locals. Local #4 of New York is a mixed local. It has a Negro Executive Board member, a laborer in the Customs House. Most of the other Negro members are unskilled workers — hospital attendants, kitchen helpers, charwomen, porters, laborers, etc.

POST OFFICE CLERKS, NATIONAL FEDERATION: Local 10—New York Post Office Clerks.¹⁴⁴ Organized in 1910, Local #10 has grown in membership to the present number of 3,000 of whom 500 are Negroes. As always, it charges no initiation fee: dues are \$26.00 yearly, payable 50c monthly. In order to qualify for the sick and death benefit, which is optional, the members must pay an additional 50c monthly. Negroes have been members of Local #10 "from its very inception." All are, of course, full fledged members. At present, the vice-president of the local is a Negro. There are six Negro delegates, all of whom are also members of the Executive Board.

"Our Negro members, especially those at the General Post Office, are intelligent boys," said Mr. Harris, Chairman of Legislative and Publicity Committee. "They are intelligent but not organization conscious. They are so concerned with the color question that they overlook such vital issues. That is true about other members, too, but it's more noticeable with our colored boys."

POSTAL WORKERS OF AMERICA: Local 9—New York Postal Workers.¹⁴⁵ "Our union believes in industrial unionism, so that all workers are given a chance. I guess the A. F. of L. will not issue us a charter because this is one of our fundamental principles." Thus spoke the National Organizer of this Union. The union and all of its locals are organized along industrial

¹⁴⁴ Interview with Mr. Harris, Chairman of Legislative and Publicity Committee, October 27, 1935.

¹⁴⁵ Interview with R. Fishbein, National Organizer, October 27, 1935.

lines. They include every worker who has anything to do with postal work—clerks, carriers, laborers, drivers, and charwomen. All charwomen are Negroes—about 25—and one of them is vice-president of the local. "We didn't elect her officer because of color. She merited it". In addition to the Negro officer as vice-president, Local #9 has five Negro delegates who also serve as organizers for the workers. Negro members are on the whole active and interested.

Local #9 has 1,200 members, 350 of whom are Negroes. It charges no initiation fee; dues are \$3.00 yearly for workers earning more than \$1,000 yearly and \$1.20 for workers earning less than \$1,000. "That gives the charwomen and laborers a fairer break because they earn less than \$1,000 a year." Most of the Negro male members are clerks. Few of the drivers belong to this union.

SANITARY CHAUFFEURS AND DRIVERS PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION:¹⁴⁶ Negroes have been members since the inception of the union in 1918—many of them being charter members. Some have held offices, none executive offices, however. There are at present two Negro delegates. Others in official positions have been two trustees.

TEACHERS, AMERICAN FEDERATION OF: Local 5¹⁴⁷—New York Federation of Teachers. For the past four years a group in Local #5 which disfavored the program and policies of the Local—criticizing its offices as being too conservative and criticizing their failure to take definite stands on certain issues—continuously heckled and antagonized these officers through firm opposition to the programs of the Local. This activity resulted in the resignation of these officers who also withdrew from the Local #5 along with many who agreed with them and organized a new body known as the Teachers Guild, which is not at present with the A. F. of L. This final break occurred during September of 1935. Shortly afterward, Local

¹⁴⁶ Interview with A. Kassof, President, November 6, 1935.

¹⁴⁷ Interview with the Secretary (name withheld), November 2, 1935.

#5, then controlled by this "more radical group" called a meeting to be held at Wadleigh High School in the Harlem area. At this meeting the conditions under which the teachers and students of Harlem worked were deplored—factual informations on such conditions having been obtained from the Preliminary Report of the Sub-Committee on Education of The Mayor's Commission on Conditions in Harlem. As a result, it appointed a Committee on Harlem Conditions composed of the teachers who work in the Harlem area. At this time the Committee has not yet had an opportunity to meet and formulate a definite program.

The membership of this reorganized body is 2,100, "a small number" of whom are Negroes—the actual number not being determined because of no records by racial groups. Except for those on the Committee on Harlem Conditions no Negroes hold any offices in the local.

UTILITY EMPLOYEES OF AMERICA, BROTHERHOOD OF: Local 100—Equity Local. The secretary of this local reported as follows:

"The Brotherhood of Utility Employees is a national industrial union, not affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. Equity Local 100 has jurisdiction over the employees of the New York Edison, Inc., and the Consolidated Gas Company of New York. Membership is open to all employees, regardless of race, color, creed, political beliefs, etc., but at the present time we regret to say that none of the Negro employees of the above mentioned companies are members of this local."¹⁴⁸

MENTAL AND MACHINERY INDUSTRIES

ELECTROPLATERS' INTERNATIONAL UNION: Local 26—Electroplaters¹⁴⁹—Until 1933 when it affiliated with E. I. U., the Electroplaters' Union was an independent organization, organized in 1903 and set up along lines of industrial unionism until 1933. For the past twenty years the union has always had at least 3 or 4 Negro members. At present there are 6 Negroes, 2 helpers and 4 journeymen, in the total membership of 248.

¹⁴⁸ Correspondence with P. B. Ewing, Secretary, September 20, 1935.

¹⁴⁹ Interview with Fred Brenner, Business Agent, October 29, 1935.

The local is attempting to organize "the biggest shop in New York" in which about 40 Negroes, the majority of the workers, are employed. "It will be a great thing, especially for our Negro membership, if we succeed on that job," remarked the Business Agent. Negro members are somewhat active—attending meetings, participating in discussions, etc., but, nevertheless, there are no Negro officers or committeemen in the local.

ENGINEERS, INTERNATIONAL UNION OF OPERATING:

Local 3—Marine Engineers—organized in 1934.¹⁸⁰ It has at present 600 members, 20 of whom are Negroes. Membership in this local is limited to licensed engineers, a Federal license being required for workers on self-propelled vessels and a City license for workers on non-self-propelled vessels. Before one can take the examination for the license of a third assistant engineer, the lowest rank of engineers, he must have served an apprenticeship of three years and before he can take the examination for a license of chief engineer, he must have served an apprenticeship of seven years. There have been Negro members since the inception of the local. A number of them hold licenses for chief engineer, but none of them work as chief engineers except on a vessel where there is but one engineer—and he is the chief, the assistant, the firemen and everything else. There are no Negro chief engineers on ocean-going steamers. There are no Negro officers of Local 3.

Local 30—Operating Engineers.¹⁸¹ Local 30 has had very little experience with Negro workers. There seems to be very few colored licensed engineers in New York. From time to time, however, the Local has encountered one or two here and there as it organized shops. There are 10 Negroes in the membership of 1400. The main requirement for membership is that one be an engineer licensed by the City of New York. On jobs where many men are working together the Negroes and whites

¹⁸⁰ Interview with William Gallagher, President, September 26, 1935.

¹⁸¹ Interview with Mr. Daly, Secretary, September 17, 1935.

get along in a very friendly manner. The Negroes are practically all hoisting engineers.

Local 125—Portable and Hoister Engineers¹⁸³—Organized in 1896 and composed of 491 members—12 Negroes. Requirements in this union for membership are hard to satisfy. In the first place, one must be a licensed engineer—the license being granted by the City. Then, two members of the union must recommend the applicant who must have five years of experience and must be able to pay \$100.00 initiation fee within 90 days. These requirements account for the small membership, both Negro and white. The Negro workers are all full-fledged members who are somewhat active in the union. They attend meetings from time to time and pay their dues regularly. Among the Negro members there are no officers, and as far as the records show, there have never been Negro officers of any kind.

FIREMEN AND OILERS, INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF: Local 56—Firemen and Oilers¹⁸⁴—Organized in 1896. Most of the Negro members of this local are employed as firemen in the coal yards. There they were working usually, when they joined the union. In Local 56 there are about 25 Negroes in the total membership of 1,000. The initiation fee is \$25.00, and the dues are \$21.00 yearly, both of which are payable in installment. Negroes have always been members of the union, but not in "large numbers" as at the present. There are no Negro officers. "They are not active enough or interested enough to become officers. And, too, their membership is so small that they could not really elect an officer." These remarks were made by the secretary.

METAL AND ALLIED UNIONS, FEDERATION OF: Parent of two New York Locals. Local 302—Silver and Metal Fabricated Workers¹⁸⁴—"In our union, which is not affiliated with the

¹⁸³ Interview with John T. Irwin, Secretary, August 12, 1935.

¹⁸⁴ Interview with Mr. Shanley, Secretary, September 9, 1935.

¹⁸⁴ Interview with James Lustig, New York District Organizer of the Federation of Metal and Allied Unions, August 6, 1935.

A. F. of L., it is quite different. We make special efforts to see that the Negro is given a fair break because we know that he is usually discriminated against." Negroes have recently been made members of this local (early 1935), although the local has been in existence since 1931. Until early 1935, no shops having Negro workers had been organized by the union.

In 1935, at present, a strike is being held at the United Wire Goods Company at 420 East 106 Street. Here Negroes who are members of the local are loyal and are participating as fellow-unionists. On the other hand, Negroes in the company who do not belong to the union are sticking together against the unionization of the company shop. "Most of these Negroes do not understand the advantages of trade unionism. They are from the South and still feel distrustful towards us. If we could only prove our genuine attitude, we could win the strike."

Local 303—Metal Novelty Workers¹⁵⁶—This newly organized local, not affiliated with the A. F. of L., has had Negro members since its beginning in 1933. Both the total membership and the Negro membership have increased to the present standing of 1000 and 75, respectively. Special appeals are made to Negro workers to join the union. Many times Negro organizers of other union are used to give talks to the prospective members. When they are organized, every possible effort is made to encourage their attending and participating in the meetings. There are several Negroes on the Executive Board of the Local and there is one Negro Department Chairlady. Because the Negroes are in great minority, it is significant that they hold offices in the local. "On the whole, I am proud of my experience with Negro workers. I emphasize equality of working conditions and wages and see to it that Negroes are treated like all other workers."

METAL WORKERS' INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION, SHEET:

Local 137—Sheet Metal Workers¹⁵⁶—In 1933 this local organized a shop in which three colored men worked. They were

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ Interview with Mr. Rosen, Secretary, September 30, 1935.

specialists in ash-can making and had worked in the factory for about six months. With the other workers they joined the union but dropped out about three months later. They had not even finished paying their initiation fees.

Local 137, organized in 1912, has at present 450 members, none of whom are Negroes. The initiation fee ranges from \$62.50 to \$160.00 according to the craft, and the dues vary from \$42.00 to \$60.00 yearly according to the amount of wages of the member. Initiation fee is payable \$50 down and \$10.00 monthly for those having to pay \$160.00 and \$25.00 down and \$5.00 monthly for those having to pay \$62.50, dues are payable monthly.

POLISHERS' INTERNATIONAL UNION, METAL: Local 8—Metal Polishers¹⁸⁷—Although Local #8 was organized in 1885, it did not begin to take in Negro members until 1933 when it, stimulated by N.R.A., promoted an intensive organizational campaign by organizing all workers in metal polishing shops in New York City. During this campaign six Negro workers were made members of the union. All six are still employed under better working conditions of wages and hours. Before that time no Negro metal polishers had ever been encountered by the organizers of Local #8, and none ever applied for membership.

SPINNERS OF NEW YORK, METAL¹⁸⁸—Most of the workers here are Jews. In 1931 a Negro metal spinner from South America came to New York and immediately became a member of this union. Shortly afterward, though, he became very sick. The fellow unionists picked up a big additional collection of \$75 to help him go home. Last year, they wrote to him and asked him to come back because they had a job for him; he answered and said that he preferred to remain in South America because of his sickness. Thus was the account of the union's only experience with a Negro member. This union is independent—

¹⁸⁷ Interview with George Jacobs, Executive Board Member, October 4, 1935.

¹⁸⁸ Interview with John Caruso, President, October 22, 1935.

not affiliated with the A. F. of L. It was organized in 1897. Its present membership is 255.

LEATHER INDUSTRIES

LEATHER WORKERS' INTERNATIONAL UNION, UNITED: Local 48—Suitcase, Bag and Portfolio Makers¹⁹⁰—This local too, requires an exceptionally long apprenticeship—6 to 7 years. Most of the Negro members served their terms of apprenticeship while working about the shops as helpers, floor men, shipping clerks, etc. When the shops were organized, they were taken into union apprenticeships and finally into full membership. The Negro members take active parts in all meetings and activities of the union. "And as workers you can't find any better ones anywhere. They are among the best element."

This union is now out on a general strike (8/8/35) in all shops in New York City. All of the Negro members were at that time on picket duty. It seems unusual that the 36 Negro members of the 1,200 members should be on picket duty at the same time. In the many other general strikes and the continuous shop stoppages, Negroes have "worked very well indeed. They are faithful and fight it out to the end." The union has no definite or separate plan or program regarding its Negro membership. Such is not necessary since "all get along like brothers."

SHOE AND LEATHER WORKERS' UNION, UNITED: District 23—New York Workers¹⁹⁰—Organized in 1933 and composed of 3,000 members of whom 30 are Negroes. This union, an independent organization not affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, declared that its program is "one and the same" for all workers and that to it Negroes were "just workers." In fact, its extremely "liberal policy" has caused it to be looked upon as a left-wing organization. In one of its departments, the Repairing Department, Negro members are of particular prominence. Although the majority of members of this depart-

¹⁹⁰ Interview with Mr. Risenberg, Organizer, August 8, 1935.

¹⁹⁰ Interview with Mr. Rosenberg, Secretary, July 29, 1935.

ment are not Negroes, its chairman is a Negro and several of its Executive Board Members are Negroes. This department is "almost completely run" by Negroes.

MISCELLANEOUS UNIONS

BILL POSTERS AND BILLERS OF AMERICA, INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF: Local 2—Bill Posters¹⁶¹—Organized in 1896 and composed of 300 members—no negroes. Records show that this union has never had Negro members and that Negroes have never sent in application for membership. Also, they show that the initiation fee is \$500, payable \$250 with application and \$250 at time of initiation.

BILL POSTERS AND USHERS, JEWISH:¹⁶² The membership of this union is limited to Jews because back in 1890 the union was organized for those workers who could speak only the Hebrew language. There are in the union 95 members.

BOOKKEEPERS, STENOGRAPHERS AND ACCOUNTANTS, Local 12646 A. F. of L.:¹⁶³ Leo Rosenblum, organizer, remarked, "We are very much concerned about our Negro members and about Negro workers in this field. As organizer I am making every possible effort to interest our Negro workers in taking a greater part in the union's work and to interest those who are not members to join. I take this attitude because I realize that in office work, Negroes are discriminated against more than in any other kind of employment."

Before full qualification for membership is reached, the applicant or not fully qualified member must have completed two years of experience, either with union or in some other reputable organization. All fifteen of the Negro members have met that requirement and are, therefore, receiving union-scale pay and working union-standard time where it prevails. Two of them are staff-chairladies in the offices where they work.

¹⁶¹ Interview with Mr. Lyon, Representative, September 16, 1935.

¹⁶² Interview with Office Record Keeper (name withheld), September 10, 1935.

¹⁶³ Interview with Leo Rosenblum, Organizer, August 7, 1935.

In addition to getting Negro members from the shops organized, recommendations of persons by the Harlem Labor Committee are accepted. This local sent Mr. Rosenblum and a Negro member to the recent Negro Labor Conference of July 20, 1935.

CLEANERS', DYERS' AND PRESSERS' UNION, Local 18232 A. F. of L.:¹⁶⁴—Organized in 1914, this local reported that "Negro members from 1914 to 1933 always received wages equal to white members. Since then the employers use them to cut wage standards, but there is no discrimination in the local against them." At the present it has 125 Negro members in the total of 600. Negroes still enjoy "equal rights and privileges" and serve as shop chairmen in several union shops.

CLERKS' INTERNATIONAL PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION, RETAIL:

Local 743—Hardware, House Furnishing & Plumbing Clerks¹⁶⁵—In this very small local of 65 members there is one Negro, and he is not a clerk—but a driver. There were two clerks in a Harlem store at one time, but they dropped out of the union when they quit the jobs.

The initiation fee is \$14.70, and the dues are \$36.00, payable \$3 monthly. These have been the fees since the inception of the local in October, 1933.

The present member joined the local when the shop in which he worked was organized. So did the Negro ex-members. He has been somewhat active; however, he holds no office in the local.

Local 830—Retail Radio Salesmen¹⁶⁶—This local is attempting to organize all the Vim Radio Stores, one of which is on 125th Street. At that store the managers are fooling the Negro public; they took the porters, dressed them up like salesmen and took their pictures. Displaying these pictures in the window,

¹⁶⁴ Correspondence with the Secretary, September 16, 1935.

¹⁶⁵ Interview with Mr. Goldman, Business Manager, September 18, 1935.

¹⁶⁶ Interview with Mr. Silverberg, Secretary-Manager, September 18, 1935.

they put up a sign reading — "We don't discriminate against Negro clerks." When Negroes go in the store the Negro men meet them and take them in the store. After fumbling around for just a moment they will turn the customer over to one of the white salesmen. In the mornings and evenings these same Negro men sweep and mop the floors and do all the porter work. To do away with that situation and install in the shop—or make the same fellows—some real Negro clerks is the immediate program of the local.

The local was organized in May, 1934. It has at present 175 members, 1 of whom is a Negro. There are no Negro officers, but "the one Negro member is the best in the union."

Local 906—Cigar Clerks ¹⁸⁷—The membership of this local is made up exclusively of cigar and tobacco salesmen and handlers of the Schulte Cigar Stores. No store has Negro clerks, but several of them have stockroom men who are Negroes. Since the jurisdiction of the local covers all cigar and tobacco handlers in the Schulte Stores, these men have been admitted.

The local was organized in October, 1934. It has 450 members, 20 of whom are Negro stockroom workers. They are full members but none are officers.

The local has not yet considered the possibility of making some of these Negro members clerks or salesmen. It is satisfied to keep them working at the type of work in which they were when the stores were organized. Their activity is little because they do not attend meetings regularly, but the relationship between white and Negro members is "quite friendly."

Local 1006—Retail Clothing Salesmen ¹⁸⁸—The Business Agent of this local tells of its experience with Negro workers. "It's too bad that we have not been able to organize the colored salesman on 125th Street yet. All of the white clerks there are organized. Although we find it difficult, we will continue until every salesman or clerk on 125th Street is organized." He as-

¹⁸⁷ Interview with Mr. Cooney, Secretary, September 18, 1935.

¹⁸⁸ Interview with D. M. Schombrum, Business Agent, September 10, 1935.

serted that the Negroes were afraid to risk being caught organizing by their employers. In order to make their jobs "what they think secure", they stick to the employers and consequently "suffer terrible working conditions and wages." So far not one Negro has applied for membership in the union, he said.

The union has a membership of 500, none of whom are Negroes. The initiation fee is not yet definitely determined since the local was just affiliated with the R. C. I. P. A. in June, 1935 and has been undergoing a period of reorganization to continue to meet the requirements which the R. C. I. P. A. makes of its locals.

Local 1102—Dry Goods Clerks¹⁶⁹—So far, it has one Negro member who was admitted when it organized a shop in the Bronx. Organized in April 1935, it has just begun real active work. Among its definite plans is the effort to organize the Negro and white worker in the Harlem area, especially on 125th Street. It is planning to use Cecil Crawford, its colored member, to contact most of the colored clerks because when they see white men coming to talk to them about unions, they feel that all they want is the dues. "We are confident that Crawford can do the job because he is of a very good element. A few days ago in our membership meeting he was very active, taking the floor for discussion several times."

The employer-union agreement of Local 1102 has a clause making the employer agree that he will not discriminate against any member of the union "because of race, color, creed, religion, age, sex or political affiliation."

DOLL AND TOY WORKERS' UNION, Local 18230 A. F. of L.:¹⁷⁰—Organized in 1932, the Union has 2,000 regular members, 15 of whom are Negroes. Although this is a mixed local where "each member is the same as his fellow member," there are no Negro officers or Executive Board members. This is accounted for by the local secretary who declared that Negro members are

¹⁶⁹ Interview with J. Schaffron, Business Agent, September 10, 1935.

¹⁷⁰ Interview with Miss Larkin, Secretary, September 25, 1935.

not "over interested about attending meetings"; consequently, they never get elected to office.

HARDWARE AND CROCKERY WORKERS' UNION, WHOLESALE, Local 18943:¹⁷¹—This local union merely reported that among its 1,000 members there are 8 Negro members who are "very quiet" and who hold no offices.

JEWELRY WORKERS' UNION, INTERNATIONAL:¹⁷²—Two New York locals of this union furnished information.

Local 1—Jewelry Workers—There are three Negro members in this local. They began work as porters and helpers about the work shops where they learned to smelt and press metals. Exhibiting a high degree of skill at this they were taken into union membership. They enjoy all the privileges of the members, pay the same dues, get the same wages as members in these crafts and take an active part in the meetings and activities of the local. The total membership figures were withheld.

Local 89—Optical Jewelry Workers¹⁷³—Organized in August 1933, it has now its original membership of 427 whites and 23 Negroes. Since its origin, it has not taken in any new members because all those who are now in are not employed and because it wanted to somewhat establish itself firmly. The Negro members are "o. k. to work with." "They are good members, attend the meetings and pay up their dues." In the local there are no Negro officers, and they do not serve on any committees.

LATHERS' INTERNATIONAL UNION, WOOD, WIRE AND METAL: Local 8—Metal Lathers¹⁷⁴—The president of this local reported that it was organized in 1899; that it has 350 members of whom 10 are Negroes; and that Negroes have "the same rights as anybody else without any prejudice."

¹⁷¹ Interview with Joseph Ellin, Secretary, September 24, 1935.

¹⁷² Interview with Peter Garcia, President, August 23, 1935.

¹⁷³ Interview with Sebastian Sebalde, Organizer, August 12, 1935.

¹⁷⁴ Correspondence with Terderico Quinto, President, September 19, 1935.

MINERAL WATER WORKER'S UNION:¹⁷⁶ The organizer of this little independent union reported, "Our membership is a very small one, only 55 members confined to syphone filling. We have no Negro members."

OFFICE WORKERS' UNION:¹⁷⁶ This is an independent union accepting as members bookkeepers, accountants, typists, stenographers, switchboard, telephone and telegraph operators, office boys, department store clerks, and other "white collar" workers. Practically all of its 150 Negro members are office boys, department store clerks and workers and miscellaneous "white collar" workers. The total membership is about 2,200. One Negro is an Executive Board Member. This union is making definite efforts to organize Negro workers. It has set up a Harlem committee to do special work in organizing the "white collar" workers in Harlem, especially on 125th Street.

PAPER BOX MAKERS' UNION, a Local 18239 A. F. of L.:¹⁷⁷ The box-making industry is divided mainly into two divisions—the set-up box industry and the fibre box industry. Local 18239 is composed of set-up box makers—among whom the percentage of Negro workers is generally very small. In this local there are 25 Negro members in the total membership of 1,000.

The Business Agent commented, "We appeal to all workers who are box-makers. All are invited to our mass meetings and lectures, and all are organized alike. Negroes in our union are very active members and very good members."

There are three Negro shop chairmen who are over shops in which the majority of the workers are white.

PHARMACISTS' UNION OF GREATER NEW YORK:¹⁷⁸—In Harlem most of the drug stores owned by whites employ white or Spanish pharmacists. The Negro drugstore owners are usually their own pharmacists. Of the 1,550 members of the union, 2

¹⁷⁶ Correspondence with M. G. Walpert, Organizer, October 4, 1935.

¹⁷⁶ Interview with J. Stone and G. Lane, Organizers, September 18, 1935.

¹⁷⁷ Interview with Mr. Weinber, Business Agent, September 13, 1935.

¹⁷⁸ Interview with Leon J. Davis Organizer, August 22, 1935.

are Negroes, both of whom have joined recently—one in January, 1935 and the other in May, 1935. Both are "quiet and easy going" and attend the meetings only once in a while. Neither of them holds an office but both are full-fledged members and registered pharmacists. The union is definitely planning at present to recruit Negro members and to attempt to place them in all the drug stores in the Harlem area.

POCKET BOOK WORKERS' UNION, INTERNATIONAL:¹⁷⁹ — Of the 2,000 members there is an estimate of 23 Negroes, all of whom are unskilled workers—common helpers. There are not any cutters, framers, makers or operators. Mr. Ladermen, Manager, states that they never attend meetings—"not even the membership meeting"—and never did hold office. "They let their dues lag, and we have to suspend them at times."

SALESMEN'S UNION OF GREATER NEW YORK, PROVISION:¹⁸⁰ — Organized in 1934 and affiliated with the United Hebrew Trades, this union has 200 members, all of whom are Jews—because "the business is all Jewish." Because of the nature of the business the officers of this union feel that "Negro membership would be undesirable and unwelcome."

SALES PEOPLE'S UNION OF GREATER NEW YORK, RETAIL WOMEN'S APPAREL:¹⁸¹ — In this independent union, organized in 1933, there are at present no Negroes in its membership of 500. It reported that it had a Negro member in 1934, a girl who worked in a Harlem department store, and that it has under consideration at present applications from several others. "After a short while" the Negro member dropped out of the union despite its efforts to encourage her to remain. Notwithstanding this experience, it is putting on a definite program of organization of Harlem stores.

¹⁷⁹ Interview with Mr. Laderman, Manager, August 5, 1935.

¹⁸⁰ Interview with the Secretary (name withheld), July 26, 1935.

¹⁸¹ Interview with Mr. Laskowitz, Secretary, September 19, 1935.

UPHOLSTERERS', CARPET AND LINOLEUM MECHANICS' INTERNATIONAL UNION OF NORTH AMERICA:

Local 44—Upholsterers¹⁸²—The crafts covered by this union are custom upholsterers, high-class furniture workers, curtain, drapery and wall covering workers. Since 1899 this local has been engaged in this work and has never had Negroes in its membership which is at present 550. "We have no Negroes in this union because the customers we serve wouldn't accept them. Of all the upholstery workers this is the highest class. Why, none of us could imagine a Negro being sent to do upholstery work in the Park Avenue mansions," was the secretary's opinion.

Local 45—Women Upholsterers¹⁸³—Organized in 1916. The craft covered by this local is interior decorating. As indicated by the name, the work of this local is done by the women upholsterers. There were four Negro members of this local just after it organized, but "for some reason or other" they have all dropped out. Although they were quiet at the meeting and "never said a word", they were among the "most efficient workers."

Local 70—Carpet and Linoleum Layers¹⁸⁴—Organized 1902. This local, too, has never had a Negro member, because, asserted its business representative, it has never received an application from any Negro workers of this craft. Interesting to note in passing are the high initiation fee of \$300 and the three-year apprenticeship term set up by this local as a condition of membership.

Local 70B — Carpet and Linoleum Layers¹⁸⁵ — Organized in early 1935. In this young local which was recently affiliated with the U. C. & L. M. I. U of N. A. there are three Negroes

¹⁸² Interview with James A. Weaner, Secretary, August 27, 1935.

¹⁸³ Interview with Mrs. Nora Long, Secretary, August 28, 1935.

¹⁸⁴ Interview with Mr. Kelly, Business Representative, August 28, 1935.

¹⁸⁵ Interview with Ben Goldberg, Business Representative, August 28, 1935.

in the total membership of 135. As an independent organization the local existed for several years before the above affiliation in May, 1935. When it affiliated, two of its present Negro members were members, and later the other joined in July, 1935. Unlike the case of Local 70 special efforts have been made to organize the Negro workers in the Harlem area. "The boys in Harlem are not given so much to labor unions. Before we affiliated with the International we conducted special organizational campaigns in that area, but we never could convince the workers. They stick with the employers."

Local 71—Carpet Sewers¹⁸⁶—In this small local of 1845 members, there are no Negroes. "Since our organization in 1916 we have not come in contact with any Negro carpet sewers. The local has had no dealings with Negroes."

Local 76—Wholesale Upholsterers.¹⁸⁷ Out of a membership of 500 in the local, there is only one Negro. This Negro gained membership when a branch of the Industrial Furniture Workers' Union, a Communist organization, merged with this local on July 1, 1935, bringing with it 150 members including this one Negro. The Negro member is not an upholsterer; he is just a cushion maker; therefore, he does not receive the same wage as the skilled upholsterers.

Local 76B—Furniture Workers¹⁸⁸—Prior to July, 1935, this local was known as the National Industrial Furniture Workers' Union. At that date, it merged with local 76 of the U. I. U. and through it affiliated with the A. F. of L. There are 50 Negroes in the total membership of 500, and they have been with the local since its origin. The recording secretary remarked, "I find some no good Negroes among us just as I find no good Irishmen or Italians, or Jews, but the number of bum Negroes is higher, in proportion." He points out further

¹⁸⁶ Interview with Miss H. Cahill, Business Agent and Secretary, August 28, 1935.

¹⁸⁷ Interview with Mr. Brandler, Secretary-Treasurer, August 7, 1935.

¹⁸⁸ Interview with Mr. Zelben, Recording Secretary, August 7, 1935.

that Negroes in this local do not attend meetings and consequently, hold no offices. However, they do pay their dues regularly because they know that they would be suspended "just as we do all the other workers."

Local 140—Mattress Makers¹⁹⁰—organized in 1914 and composed of 300 members, 15 of whom are Negroes. Since 1931 Negroes have been "fairly good" members. In addition to attending meetings regularly they take active part in the other local activities. None are officers.

Local 140B — Metal and Spring Workers¹⁹⁰ — Organized in 1933 and composed of 1,000 members of whom 450 are Negroes who have been members since the inception of the local. Practically all of these members, residents of Harlem, were employed at the same place—the Spring Product Corporation of the Bronx—when they were organized. On June 25, 1935 they went out on strike, seeking union recognition, wage increases and better working conditions. Although the local has supported these to the fullest extent, little progress had been made up to October because of strike-breaking by other workers. At first the Corporation used white strike breakers, mainly Italians. Finding this a costly method because of the high wages demanded by the workers, it then turned to Negro strike breakers from Harlem. It is reported that at that time the Corporation brought to its factory these workers daily in curtained trucks. Despite these obstacles the local and its members are still engaged in a valiant fight at the time of this writing.

WINDOW CLEANERS' PROTECTIVE UNION: Local 2—Window Cleaners¹⁹¹ organized in 1916 and composed of 500 members of whom 50 are Negroes. According to the secretary-manager Negroes have always been strong, active members of this local.

¹⁸⁹ Interview with Mr. Sirota, Business Agent, July 26, 1935.

¹⁹⁰ Interviews with Mr. Gordon, Business Agent, July 26, 1935 and October 7, 1935. *The New York Amsterdam News*, August 8, 1935, September 16, 1935 and October 5, 1935.

¹⁹¹ Interview with Abe Rosenblott, Secretary-Manager, July 26, 1935.

Today, the recording secretary is a Negro, and he follows another Negro who held that position for five years. No other Negro members are officers.

From year to year the local has held strikes. Although members of the local usually remained faithful, it suffered from both Negro and white strike breakers. Those who were residents of New York were organized while those who were imported were not asked to join.

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V I T A

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