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THE URBAN LEAGUE OF OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA

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THE URBAN LEAGUE OF OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to present an historical account of the origin, development, and activities of the Urban League of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, from the time of its inception in 1946 to the present. The Urban League is an interracial organization whose main function is that of improving racial relations and the economic conditions of the Negro.

This study will attempt to describe some of the conditions that served to stimulate the organization of an Urban League in Oklahoma City. Further, it will analyze and evaluate the activities in which the League has engaged, and record the progress made during the ten-year period of its existence (1946-1956).

This study is the first attempt to prepare an historical account of the activities of the Urban League of Oklahoma City and its impact upon the social, economic, and cultural development of the community. There have been studies of

certain aspects of Negro life in Oklahoma and in Oklahoma City which were of value in the preparation of this study. Outstanding among these is the study by Fulkerson. In the Fulkerson study reference is made to the survey of Oklahoma City conducted by the National Urban Research Division during the period 1944-45.[1] That study, however, was completed before the establishment of an Urban League in Oklahoma City.

The assumption underlying this study is that research into the origin, development, and activities of an organization that has as its aim the elevation of any group of people in American society is of significance in the field of education. The present study should be of service to the staff of the Urban League of Oklahoma City and the community, and of great significance to both public and private agencies concerned with improving the health, educational, cultural, and economic standards of all people.

The study will confine itself to the Urban League of Oklahoma City, and its auxiliary, the Urban League Guild, an affiliate of the National Urban League. A discussion of the National Urban League has been included in order to provide some insight into the conditions which led to the emergence of the Urban League. A brief review will be given of the extent of migration of Negroes from the South to northern

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[1]Fred G. Fulkerson, "Social Forces in a Negro District in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma" (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Oklahoma, 1946), p. 6

cities and of the conditions which caused this migration northward, thus leading to the organization of the Urban League.

Since some insight into the community structure is necessary in order to understand its needs and resources, this study will attempt to give a composite picture of the community, its population characteristics and other social and economic aspects. It is against this background that the contribution of the Oklahoma City Urban League will be analyzed. Its activities will be evaluated in terms of their contribution to the total progress of the community.

The data for the material in this study were derived from a number of sources. Published data were obtained from records, reports and publications of the National Urban League, newspapers and magazines, and research in related fields. Data provided by scholars and authorities in the fields of Negro life and history and of race relations were utilized. Analysis of the 1940 Census reports is also included in the study. Reports of the survey made of Oklahoma City during the year 1944-45, conducted by the Research Division of the National Urban League, were examined for pertinent data.

The executive director and members of the staff of the Urban League of Oklahoma City were very helpful in the development of the study. Materials from the secretarial files, reports to the National office, reports of the

executive secretary to the board of directors, periodical progress reports, and the library of the Urban League were all made available to the writer. The secretarial files of the Community Council, of which the Oklahoma City Urban League is a member, were also placed at the disposal of the writer.

Two months were spent by the writer, from March 4, 1957 to May 7, 1957, with the executive director and staff of the Urban League in Oklahoma City, during which time she sat in on meetings of various committees, planning groups, and interviews in order to gain further insight into the techniques and methods used by the League.

In addition, the Director of Research of the National Urban League was very cooperative in sending materials and information from the national office. He stated in a communication that this study is the first doctoral study of any phase of the Urban League and he was very generous with his assistance during the progress of the study. The director of the Southern Field Division located in Atlanta, Georgia, sent the writer a folder containing materials regarding the establishment of the Urban League in Oklahoma City.

Several persons were interviewed who were instrumental in the establishment of the Urban League in Oklahoma City. Some information of which there is no written record was gained from the interviews, and is included in the narrative. Portions of the study based upon this kind of information are

identified as the discussion unfolds.

In this study the topical approach is used in the presentation of data. Each area of the program of activities is treated in a separate chapter.

It is hoped that, from the data, answers to the following questions may be obtained: 1) What is the Urban League? 2) What is the main purpose of the Urban League and what methods does it use to achieve its aims? 3) What factors led to the establishment of the Urban League in Oklahoma City? 4) Who are some of the persons instrumental in the establishment of the Urban League in Oklahoma City? 5) What are the organizational, financial, and committee structures of the organization? 6) What is the history of the Urban League in terms of its physical growth and its specific accomplishments and failures?

The Migration of Negroes From the South to Northern Cities

After the emancipation the Negroes began migrating in large numbers from the South to northern cities. This migration which continued through the third decade of the present century was one of the most significant and crucial movements in the history of the Negro in the United States.[1]

Between 1860 and 1870 the Negro population of eight

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[1]E. Franklin Frazier, The Negro in the United States (New York: MacMillan, 1949), p. 527.

northern states increased fifty-one per cent.[1] According to Frazier, during the period from 1900 to 1940, the proportion of the Negro population resident in urban areas increased from 22.7 to 48.2 per cent. Between 1900 and 1930 about two and one quarter million Negroes left the farms and small villages of the South.[2]

Ross provides further evidence of the increase in the urban Negro population of the North:

> During the first decade of the present century the volume was somewhat over a third of a million and between 1920-30 nearly one and one quarter million. During the 30 years, the rural Negro population in the South decreased 262,921, while the urban Negro population in the country increased by 3,191,905.[3]

From 1910 to 1920, the Negro population in New York increased from 91,000 to 152,000.[4] In other cities the increase was even more overwhelming. Of ten northern cities with 25,000 or more Negroes in 1920, all except Pittsburg and Kansas City, Missouri, showed an increase of over 50 per cent in their Negro population.[5] The percentage is summarized in

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[1]George E. Haynes, The Negro at Work in New York City (New York: Longman, Green and Co., 1912), p. 15.

[2]Frazier, The Negro in the United States, p. 191.

[3]Frank A. Ross, "Urbanization and the Negro," Publications of the American Sociological Society, XXVI (April, 1947), p. 118.

[4]National Urban League, And the Pursuit of Happiness (New York: National Urban League, Inc., 1950), p. 15.

[5]Frazier, The Negro in the United States, p. 443.

Table I.

Rose makes the following observation concerning the distribution of the Negro population in the United States:

> The proportion of all Negroes living in the North and West rose from 10.4 per cent in 1910 to 23.8 per cent in 1940, a net migration of about 1,750,000 from the South. However because of the huge white population of the North Negroes constituted only 3.7 per cent of the total northern population in 1940. Practically all migrants to the North went to cities and almost all to big cities.[1]

The shift in the Negro population was due to changes in southern agriculture and the attraction of northern industry, though the latter was the stronger force.[2] The Negro found his chances in the South particularly discouraging. The Industrial Revolution, with its progress and opportunity, came to the South later than it did the North. The southern Negro was deprived of many of its advantages. In order to keep the Negro from sharing in many of the new occupations of the South, the tradition persisted that the Negro could not operate the new machinery. Not only was he prevented from sharing in the expanding opportunities of the South, but also the areas in which he lived declined from an economic standpoint. Southern agriculture had become worse, and the poorest owners and tenants, which included a disproportionate number of Negroes, were forced out. Many of them went on relief, but even that was denied Negroes. In many

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[1]Arnold Rose, The Negro in America (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948), p. 63.

[2]Franklin, From Slavery to Freedom, pp. 465-66.

TABLE I

NORTHERN CITIES WITH INCREASE OF OVER FIFTY PER CENT IN NEGRO POPULATION FROM 1910-1920*

City	Population 1910	Population 1920	Increase Number	Per Cent Increase
Detroit	5,741	40,838	35,097	611.3
Cleveland	8,448	34,451	26,003	307.8
Chicago	44,103	109,458	65,355	148.2
Indianapolis	22,152	35,063	13,011	59.2
Philadelphia	42,100	100,000	57,900	58.9
Gary	383	5,299	4,916	722.7
Akron	657	5,580	4,823	749.3
New York	91,000	152,000	61,000	509.9

*Compiled from data in: John H. Franklin, From Slavery to Freedom (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1947), pp. 468-470.

instances white persons who lost their farms and better jobs in the city began to move in on the Negro in heavy unskilled occupations, even in service occupations, the traditional job of the southern Negro.[1]

The vision of the North as a "Promised Land" which the Negro newspapers pictured to the southern Negro offered the southern Negro a solution to his economic problem.[2] In addition, the Negro heard of new openings from labor agents sent down by northern industries to seek the Negro as an unskilled laborer. A sharp decline in foreign immigration had created a labor shortage that sent agents from the North to the South to entice Negroes, as well as Whites, to move North to secure employment in industry.[3] It is no wonder, then, that the prospects of northern prosperity afforded great impetus to northward migration.

Although the fundamental cause of the exodus from the South was economic, there were also social forces which influenced the migration of the Negro to the North. The North was not only a place where the Negro would receive higher wages, but it was also a place where he would be freer, or where a "man was a man." In the South the Negro was subjected to injustices in court, lack of privileges, disfranchisement,

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[1]Rose, The Negro in America, p. 63.

[2]Frazier, The Negro in the United States, p. 589.

[3]Franklin, From Slavery to Freedom, p. 464.

segration, and lynching. The North offered freedom of movement, chance for employment, the right to vote, and the opportunity for his children to get an education.

Frazier describes the migration of the Negroes to the North in the following paragraph:

> ...As news of the North as a Promised Land spread among the Southern Negroes, whole communities picked up their meagre possessions and joined the hegira to the North. In fact, the leaders in the churches and lodges followed the masses instead of leading them to the Promised Land of the North. Even the intellectual leaders of the Negroes were unaware at first of the significance of the flight of the Negro from the feudal south to the freedom of northern cities.[1]

Woodson, one of the earliest and most distinguished scholars and authorities on Negro life and history, writes:

> While many were moved by the chance to amass fabulous sums, they all sighed with relief at the thought that they could at last go to a country where they could educate their children, protect their families from insults, and enjoy the fruits of their labor.[2]

In his discussion on the social implications of the migration of the Negro from the South, Rose makes the following statement:

> Allied with the desire for economic improvement was the desire for social improvement. Like many other oppressed people, Negroes place high premium on education. In the North Negroes not only could go to more and better schools but they could easily earn the money to go to them. Many Negroes also felt they could no longer tolerate their subordinate and restricted position. The general freedom, excitement and the anonymity of city life attracted many

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[1]Frazier, The Negro in the United States, p. 589.

[2]Carter G. Woodson, The Negro in Our History (Washington, D. C., The Associated Publishers, Inc., 1921), p. 310.

rural southern Negroes.[1]

However, living in northern cities presented many problems which the negro had not anticipated. Although he had escaped political disfranchisement, conditions which were conducive to illiteracy, and poor schools, there were other problems with which he had to contend. There were adjustments to be made to a faster pace and greater exactness of northern industry. Racial discrimination and social ostracism were found to be characteristic of the North no less than of the South. Race prejudice naturally put difficulties in the way of his entrance into industry. White employers sometimes refused to hire him and white employees sometimes refused to work with him. Between 1880 and 1900 there were thirty strikes reported against the employment of Negro workers, eight in the decade 1880 and 1890 and twenty-two in the decade 1890 and 1900. Where he did make temporary inroads in industry, advancement was not as rapid nor as frequent as he had visualized.[2]

As a result of racial barriers, and his inefficiency and lack of skill, the Negro was relegated to the most menial and lowest paid forms of unskilled labor and domestic service. In offices, stores, shops, factories, and even in unions there

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[1]Rose, The Negro in America, p. 67.

[2]Sterling D. Spero and Abram L. Harris, The Negro and the Labor Movement (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931), p. 385.

was no room for nonwhites. Consequently, poverty and pauperism were widespread among Negroes.

Unrest and racial hostility were further intensified by the problems of housing the rapidly expanding Negro population. With little money to spend, the Negro could not afford clean, decent accomodations. Therefore, he was herded into squalid, inadequate quarters and in many instances forced to live in slums.[1]

An official publication of the National Urban League carries this statement:

> The newcomers, ill-prepared, came pursuing the promise of a bright future based on a steady pay check, and were funnelled into squalid slums and exploited. Two to three thousand strange, friendless persons were being dumped at railroad terminals and wharves in New York area each year. The women became the prey of unscrupulous employment agencies.[2]

The Negro was left to shift for himself and to make whatever adjustments he could in his new economic environment. True, there were a few scattered efforts to solve some of the problems on a local level, such as the establishment of settlement houses and neighborhood associations in various cities. But the social disorganization of the Negro and his precarious economic position created a problem which, according to Franklin, was so broad in scope and deep in implications that a large scale attack on it was necessary to make

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[1]National Urban League, Pursuit of Happiness, p. 15.

[2]Ibid., p. 18.

more than a dent in solving it.[1]

Haynes, who made an extensive study of the economic and social problems of the Negro in New York, writes:

> Since these economic and social causes bid fair to continue their influence for an indefinite time, the concentration of Negroes in Urban centers makes imperative the need of knowledge and methods of dealing with problems that face the Negro and nation in these growing urban centers. These questions of how to live in a city are problems of health, of intelligence, and of morals. They are economic, social, political, educational and religious.[2]

It was under such conditions the program of the National Urban League was conceived. Persons who had sufficient practical foresight and spiritual insight realized that the future growth, progress, and prosperity of our nation depend upon an equal opportunity for all men of all races, colors, and creeds, to exercise their ability and skill for the advancement of their own welfare and the benefit of all.[3] Thus, the problem of improving the economic and social conditions of Negroes in urban centers became the main objective of the Urban League.

The National Movement

The Urban League, which is the oldest but least publicized organization in the field of Negro and White relations, owes its origin and development to the initiative of two

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[1]Franklin, From Slavery to Freedom, p. 443.

[2]Haynes, Negro...in New York City, p. 42.

[3]National Urban League, Pursuit of Happiness, p. 5.

people, George Haynes and Mrs. William Baldwin, Jr.

Negro migrants who were exploited by white employers became the special interest of a young social worker named Frances Keller, and a small, dynamic New Englander, Mrs. Ruth Standish Baldwin. In 1905, they founded the League for the Protection of Colored Women.[1] The following year the Committee for Improving the Industrial Conditions of Negroes in New York was organized. It had as its specific objects the promotion of education, the development of employment agencies for artisans and the coordination of social work among Negroes.

George Edmund Haynes, a young Negro, writing his dissertation for the Doctor of Philosophy degree at Columbia University, believed that the problem of adapting the rural southern Negro to his new industrial, northern environment involved more than finding jobs and saving the Negro women from "black slavery."[2] He felt that the Negro had a place in American society and economy and that this place could best be attained by broad social action including education and adjustment of the Negro to his new environment. He went to Ruth Standish Baldwin with his ideas. She became interested in his work and in 1910 they organized the Committee on Urban

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[1]R. W. Ries, "Answer to the Negro Problem," Coronet XXV (April, 1949), pp. 129-132.

[2]National Urban League, Story of the Urban League (New York: National Urban League, Inc., 1956), p. 7.

Conditions among Negroes.

Haynes made an extensive study of the social and economic conditions among Negroes in New York. Factors that called for remedial action were documented. He made a report of the results of this study to a joint committee meeting of the League for the Protection of Colored Women and the Committee for Improving Industrial Conditions among Negroes. Interest was so great in his findings, that a committee was formed to act as a coordinating agency. The purpose of the committee was to develop a larger program of community life for the Negroes in New York.[1]

Immediately plans were begun for improving the social and economic conditions of the Negro. In 1911 the Committee on Urban Conditions merged to form the National League on Urban Conditions now known as the National Urban League, with Dr. Haynes as its Director, and Eugene Finckle Jones of Louisville, Kentucky, as Field Director.[2]

Under the leadership of Haynes, the League began to expand the activities of the earlier organizations. It undertook to search for new opportunities for Negroes in industry, and to assist newly arrived Negroes in their problems of adjustment in the urban centers. Programs were instituted for meeting the migrants, directing them to jobs, lodging,

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[1]National Urban League, Building for the Future (New York: National Urban League, Inc., 1946), p. 23.

[2]Franklin, From Slavery to Freedom, p. 445.

and offering information on how to live in the city. Classes were organized in reading and writing, child care, and in semi-skilled and skilled trades. Play groups were organized for thousands of children. The movement grew so rapidly that by 1915 there were branches of the National Urban League in widely scattered cities, including Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia and Buffalo, New York. The League staff solicited the help of mayors, health commissioners, and boards of education in making public services available to all. It established fellowships to support students while studying at the school of Philanthropy in New York. Its program of training made possible the education of many of America's most distinguished Negro social work leaders in the past generation. In 1919 a Southern Field Division was set up in Atlanta, Georgia, in response to needs occassioned by intra-regional and rural-urban migration. The westward trend of the league movement, accelerated since 1940, reflects the influence of the effort to meet the needs occasioned by large-scale migration of Negroes to such communities as Denver, Phoenix, Portland, and San Francisco.[1]

There are local affiliates in 62 cities in 31 states. The relationship between the national and local organizations of the Urban League is based upon a high degree of respect for the integrity of the local community, attesting to the

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[1]National Urban League, Pursuit of Happiness, p. 27.

belief that communities, like individuals, have their differences.[1]

The National Urban League, as indicated earlier, is an interracial organization. It is governed by an executive board of twenty-one persons, of whom eight are Negroes and thirteen whites, and a National Committee of thirty-nine members, twenty-three whites and sixteen Negroes. It has 445 full time employers and over 4,000 volunteer board and committee members, and operates on an annual budget of nearly $1,250,000. It is financed by grants from funds, dues from memberships of corporations, individuals, memberships, businesses, and by local affiliates.[2]

For twenty-five years the Urban League has been a major force in promoting vocational guidance and training for in-school and out-of-school Negro youth and for young Negro workers. Each year for twenty years the League has sponsored a Vocational Opportunity Campaign known as (VOC). The League also offers a year-round vocational guidance service to educational institutions and social and civic organizations working with youth.[3]

In June of 1942, a small interracial group of young people met and formed an organization called the National

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[1]Franklin, From Slavery to Freedom, p. 443.

[2]Rose, The Negro in America, p. 63.

[3]National Urban League, Pursuit of Happiness, p. 23.

Urban League Guild. The group drew up a broad program of cultural and social activities, as a means of improving race relations and of focusing attention on the program of the National Urban League. In 1950 there were 26 affiliated guilds and two auxiliary organizations associated with local leagues throughout the country.[1]

The executive secretary of the National Urban League is Lester B. Granger, a graduate of Dartmouth College. Mr. Granger has served the American community for over 30 years, as both professional and volunteer worker in a variety of capacities. As Executive Director of the National Urban League, a position he has held since 1941, he has been in constant touch with social trends and developments throughout the country. His writings are familiar to many through articles in Survey and the Social Work Year Book.

During the first world war the northward stream of migration burst into a torrent when one half million Negroes migrated during the war and another half million between 1921 and 1924. In order to meet the demands by this new influx of Negroes, the Urban League broadened its program to include a Department of Industrial Relations.[2]

The National Urban League publishes two magazines, Opportunity, and the Secretariat, the one addressed to the

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[1]National Urban League, Pursuit of Happiness, p. 28.

[2]Ibid., p. 21.

general public, the other serving as house organ. The publication of Opportunity was initiated in 1923 as a means of bringing the work of Negro writers to recognition. Five years later, the editors felt their point had been accomplished and the content of the magazine was changed to cover conditions and trends affecting the Negro and the white in his contacts with Negroes. However, in 1949, when the objective had been achieved, the magazine was suspended.[1]

From the very outset, the League adopted as its policy study, persuasion, and education based on facts. It asks "not alms but opportunity" for Negroes. Its motto is "American Teamwork Works." It seeks to create through interracial goodwill and cooperation, social action and effective organization of community resources, an American society free from racial misunderstanding and social indifference. It is the belief of the League that:

> One cannot arrive at a goal unless that goal is clearly defined and the routes carefully laid out. For this reason all the Urban League's activities start with research...a determination of all the facts, and an understanding of all the factors which help or hinder arrival at the established goal.[2]

According to Kheel:

> The work of the Urban League calls for the skill of the educator, the housing expert, the psychologist, the economist and many others in specialized fields of knowledge and endeavor as well as people of goodwill

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[1]Ibid., p. 22.

[2]National Urban League, Yesterday is Here (New York: National Urban League, Inc., 1956), p. 15.

> everywhere...
> The work of the various experts must be properly coordinated, for the problems of housing, education, jobs and others are all intimately related, and the solution of one most often depends on what is done with the others.[1]

The growth of the National Urban League movement is shown in Table II.

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[1]Theodore W. Kheel, "An Analogy for Race Relations." An address accepting the Presidency of the National Urban League at the Annual National League Conference, Sheraton Gibson Hotel, Cincinnatti, Ohio, September 7, 1956.

TABLE II

GROWTH OF THE LEAGUE MOVEMENT*
(By Five-Year Intervals)

Year	No. Employees (Approximate)	No. Affiliates	Budgets		
			National Headquarters	Affiliates	Total
1910	2	0	$ 8,500	$ 0,000	$ 8,500
1915	15	9	24,900	20,000	44,900
1920	85	30	27,700	117,400	145,100
1925	125	28	58,600	400,000	458,600
1930	185	42	76,200	506,000	582,200
1935	210	44	63,200	441,600	504,800
1940	245	45	59,100	450,000	609,200
1945	320	51	100,500	924,080	1,034,580
1950	395	58	170,133	1,245,939	1,416,072

*National Urban League, Pursuit of Happiness, p. 23.

CHAPTER II

THE COMMUNITY

In order to understand the influence of the Urban League upon the community, it is first necessary to understand something of the background of the community in which the Urban League functions. In this chapter is presented a brief history of Oklahoma City and its cultural and economic advantages. The fact that Negroes did not share equally in these opportunities was the primary reason for the organization of the Urban League.

History of Oklahoma City

Oklahoma City was founded and grew to maturity in the lifetime of some of its present citizens. Its present site, which is near the geographical center of the great southwest, was included in the territory set aside by Congress in 1834 under the name of the Indian Territory as the possession of the five civilized tribes, the Cherokees, Creeks, Seminoles, Choctaws, Chickashas, and of the Quapaw Agency.

When the Civil War broke out the Indians of the five civilized tribes tried to remain neutral, but, because they

were a slaveholding people, the whites and some of their halfbreed members in the adjoining state of Arkansas were successful in committing factions of the Indian tribes to the cause of the South. As a result of their service with the Confederacy all five tribes were required to enter into Treaties of Peace in 1866 with the United States. They were compelled for a nominal fee of fifteen to thirty cents per acre to surrender the western half of their lands as a penalty for their defections.[1]

According to the terms of the treaty, the tribes gave to the United States government permission to settle other Indians and freedmen on the western half of their territory. There remained an unassigned tract of choice land of 1,887,800 acres in the center of the territory. Agitation for the opening of this portion to white settlement increased until, on March 23, 1889, Congress appropriated money to purchase title to this unassigned land. Immediately after the purchase was made, President Benjamin Harrison issued a proclamation announcing that the land would be opened for settlement at twelve o'clock noon on April 22, 1889.

On that date occurred the sensational "run" in which many thousands engaged in a wild scramble for land. The land thus occupied became substantially the present counties

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[1] "Oklahoma City Oklahoma," Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1951 edition, XVI, p. 757.

Cleveland, Oklahoma, Canadian, Kingfisher, Logan and Payne. The greatest number settled on what is now within corporate limits of Oklahoma City.

At the hour set for the opening approximately 20,000 people, who had traveled by wagon, train, horseback, two-wheeled carts, and on foot, from nearly every state in the union, were settled on the border, awaiting the signal. Cavalry men, stationed at elevated points along the line, sat on their horses, each with a watch in one hand and a pistol in the other. As the hands pointed to twelve, the soldiers fired their pistols into the air. With a great roar, the crowd dashed across the line in a wild rush for homes.[1]

Between noon and sundown of the first day a city of 10,000 persons had come into being on the rolling prairie along the banks of the North Canadian River. The place where only a small Santa Fe Station and three crude frame buildings had stood that morning, by nightfall was a seething community of outstretched huts and tents. Stores, shops, restaurants and banks were established in tents, and permanent wooden structures were in the process of going up. Thus, the citizens of Oklahoma City found themselves living together in a little city that had come into existence in the course of one single day.

The peculiar method of opening the land to settlement

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[1]Edward E. Dale and Morris L. Wardell, History of Oklahoma (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1948), p. 251.

attracted persons of widely varied interests and backgrounds. Most of them were of American stock, though there were a few of German and Scandinavian descent. Many of the early settlers were young people, restless, ambitious and eager for adventure. Also included in the number that made the historic run were professional men, lawyers, doctors, ministers, teachers, merchants and land speculators. It is to be expected that such an opening would bring the usual percentage of underworld characters, gamblers, confidence men and others of ill repute. However, since most of the settlers were poor, honest and conscientious, the undesirable population, after the excitement of the opening had passed, moved on to a more congenial atmosphere of "easy money." Thus, Oklahoma City was populated by a strong, youthful, aggressive people, cosmopolitan in origin, progressive in outlook, and in many cases, regarding economic advancement as the true standard of success.[1]

The Organic Act of May 2, 1890, provided for organized government in the newly opened lands. By a supplemental act of May 14, 1890, provision was made for $50,000 to be expended by the governor in temporary support and aid of common school education as soon as a system of public schools could be established by the territorial assembly.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 257-258.

Provisions For Public Schools in Oklahoma Territory

An act of the first Territorial Legislative Assembly provided for a system of public schools for Oklahoma Territory. Article XIII, which deals with the establishment of separate schools made the following provisions:

(6464) 1. Separate schools for the education of white and colored children may be established in the Territory as follows, and in no other way.

(6465) 2. In each county at the first election for township school officers and on the first Tuesday of April every three years thereafter, there shall be held an election where all persons who are qualified school electors may vote for or against the maintenance of separate schools for white and colored children in said county.

(6466) 3. If a majority of the votes cast at said election be against the establishment of separate schools in said county, then the white and colored children shall attend the same school in such county; but if a majority of the votes cast be in favor of the establishment of separate schools for white and colored, then there shall be established such separate schools for white and colored children as hereinafter provided.[1]

The election held in Oklahoma City to decide the question of separate schools gave the following results:

> Of the six hundred votes cast on this question, approximately one hundred were for the mixing of white and black races. There was never any doubt but that Oklahoma City would have separate schools.[2]

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[1]Oklahoma Statutes, 1890 (Guthrie, Oklahoma: The State Capitol Printing Co., 1891), Article XIII, Sections (6464), (6465), (6466), pp. 1142-1143.

[2]Mildred Crossley, "A History of Negro Schools in Oklahoma City," (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Oklahoma, 1939), p. 9.

Section 223 of the Oklahoma School Laws state:

> The public schools of the State of Oklahoma shall be organized and maintained upon a complete plan of separation between the white and colored races with impartial facilities for both races.[1]

First Public Schools of Oklahoma

The first official year of public schools opened January 1, 1891, and closed September of the same year. During these months the territorial officials and the settlers cooperated to inaugurate a school system that expanded with the openings of new lands and the rapidly increasing population. The first Territorial Legislature enacted a law which required the teaching of spelling, penmanship, reading, arithmetic, geography, English grammar, United States history, the Constitution, and physiology and hygiene.

The first Negro school in Oklahoma City was started in March, 1891. The school census of Oklahoma City in 1891 shows that there were enrolled in the public schools 938 whites and 93 Negroes and one Indian. The first Negro high school started in 1901 and in 1903 the first high school class of 8 members was graduated.[2] Carrie L. Edwards, one of the founders of the Urban League of Oklahoma City, was a member of this first graduating class of Oklahoma City.[3]

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Dale and Wardell, History of Oklahoma, p. 257.

[3] The Douglas Informer (Douglas High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), May 29, 1953, p. 1.

The Cultural and Economic Opportunities of Oklahoma City

Metropolitan Oklahoma City covers 181.75 square miles. Greater Oklahoma City, including Bethany, Britton, Nichols Hills and Midwest City, has a land area of 253 square miles. The city is served by seven railroads (the Santa Fe; Frisco; Oklahoma City-Ada and Atoka; Rock Island; the Missouri, Kansas and Texas; the Northwest Pacific), a network of modern highways, and several major airlines. Oklahoma City is the most centrally located city of the great mid-continent oil field regions. More than a half of the state's oil production is within a 60 mile radius of the city. The second and third largest oil fields are within a radius of 10 miles of the city.

Because it is also situated in the center of a rich agriculture area, Oklahoma City is a great processing and distributing center of farm products. It is the leading commercial, financial, and industrial center of the state. Its manufactures include oil field equipment, iron and steel, food cottonseed oil products, flour and feed. It is the seat of a branch of the Federal Reserve Bank and the home of insurance offices writing 75 per cent of the policies written in the state.

Its major industry is meat processing. It is the chief market for the state's vast livestock industry and is the eighth largest cattle market in the United States. In

addition to the livestock industry, a number of other significant industries have grown up in Oklahoma City. The principle lines of industry include aircraft, manufacturing and maintenance, oil and gas production and processing, meat packing, steel fabrication, machine shop and foundry production, grain mill production, cottonseed oil processing, and oil field refinery supplies and equipment.[1]

Culturally the city offers modern public schools, a system of parochial schools, a Carnegie Public Library, State Historical Library, Oklahoma Historical Society Museum, Oklahoma City University, Oklahoma City College of Law and The University of Oklahoma School of Medicine. The city is recognized throughout the nation as a leading medical center of the southwest with a newly completed Medical Research Institute and a new Veterans Administration hospital.

The civic center of Oklahoma City contains four public buildings. The municipal auditorium is the center of many cultural attractions and theatrical events sponsored by various organizations of the city, among which is the annual appearance of the Metropolitan Opera. Eighty-two municipal parks are scattered throughout the city, of which 40 are supervised. There are 53 equipped with playgrounds

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[1]Fred G. Fulkerson, "Social Forces in a Negro District in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma" (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Oklahoma, 1946), p. 9.

and eight muncipally owned community centers. The city is essentially one of individual homes. A large percentage of the citizens are home owners although there are large apartment house sections.[1]

Oklahoma City has had a newspaper since before the opening of land to settlement. The first Oklahoma City newspaper is described by Dale and Wardell:

> The Oklahoma City Times first appeared December 29, 1888. The copy was written in Oklahoma City, then a railroad depot, and sent to Wichita, Kansas, for printing. The publishers were evicted by Federal Troops in February, 1889. They went to Purcell, continued publication, and returned to Oklahoma City in June, 1889...On May 9, 1889, the Oklahoma Times printed and published in Oklahoma City...made its first appearance...The Oklahoma City Times, in order to avoid confusion of names, became the Oklahoma Times-Journal...The Oklahoma City Times-Journal experienced various ownerships and ultimately came to be the present day Oklahoma City Times.[2]

Early Negroes of Oklahoma

Negroes were first brought to Oklahoma as slaves of the five civilized tribes.[3] They have lived in Oklahoma City since territorial days. The opening of Oklahoma territory attracted many other Negroes who came from Kansas, Tennessee, Arkansas, and Texas. They were identified with the five

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[1]"Oklahoma City" (Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce, Public Relations Division, 1956), p. 5. Mimeographed Bulletin.

[2]Dale and Wardell, History of Oklahoma, p. 507.

[3]Asa Dagley, "The Negro in Oklahoma" (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Oklahoma, 1929), p. 42.

civilized tribes mentioned earlier. Many of the Negroes participated in the tribal ceremonies of the Indians. Very frequently Negroes were used as intermediaries and as interpreters for the white man and are credited with gaining favorable agreements and more satisfactory contractual relations for the white settlers because of their friendly relations with the Indians.

As has been stated, Oklahoma City is situated in the midst of an oil and gas region. The first oil wells drilled in Oklahoma City were drilled on property either owned or being purchased by Negroes. The local interest in oil field development extends back to 1899. This accounts for the fact that the early life and interests of many of the Negroes were closely associated with the development of the oil industry in Oklahoma City. Many Negro and white leaders sought to deprive the Negro of his oil rights by encouraging him to sign worthless oil leases and contracts. In later years some of the residential sections in which Negroes lived were rezoned to permit the drilling of oil leases. Foreclosures on homes where the purchaser was delinquent in payment became numerous in those areas where wells were drilled and oil was produced. Rather than lose their homes, many of the Negroes sold their oil rights. The fact that there was no organization among Negroes was a factor in making them an easy prey to such practices.

The means of livelihood in which the majority of

early Negro residents of Oklahoma City engaged were domestic service, common labor, and a few business enterprises. Some served as porters in saloons. There were two Negro physicians during territorial days. They were I. Chisholm and W. H. Slaughter.[1]

In 1892, in an effort to develop religious life among Negroes in Oklahoma City, the American Baptist Home Missionary Society sent John Dunjee, a minister, to Oklahoma City. He worked there from 1892 to 1902, organizing churches in various sections of the city, as well as over the state. As a result, the present Tabernacle Baptist Church was organized. This was the beginning of organized life among Negroes in Oklahoma City.[2]

Population

In June, 1889, a census of Oklahoma City was taken by the Oklahoma City Times newspaper. This report revealed a total population of 4,178 persons. This number included 736 children, 721 women, and 2,681 men. Included in this number were 419 transients and 600 soldiers. It was estimated that approximately 10 per cent, or 439 persons, were omitted. In addition, there were 329 outside the city limits. Within the

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[1]National Urban League, A Study of the Social and Economic Conditions of the Negro Population in Oklahoma City (New York: National Urban League, June-July, 1945), p. 9

[2]Ibid., p. 8.

city limits there were 1,131 frame homes, and 472 tents or a total of 1,603 occupied dwellings. By 1910 the number of dwellings had increased to 11,195.

In 1890, the first United States Census of Oklahoma was taken. At that time Oklahoma had a total population of 258,657. The Negro population was 21,609 or 8.4 per cent of the total population. The population of Oklahoma City had increased to 10,037 with 1,219 Negroes representing 12.1 per cent of the total population of the city. The Negro population continued to increase until it reached its peak in 1930, when it numbered 172,198 or 7.2 per cent of the state's total population of 2,396,040. In 1930, the population of Oklahoma City consisted of 169,033 white persons and 14,662 Negroes.[1]

In 1940, Negroes constituted 7.3 per cent of the total population of the state. Out of a total population of 2,336,434 people in Oklahoma in 1940, 168,849 were Negroes. The larger percentage of these lived in the six principal cities of the state. (See Table III).

As is shown in Table III, Oklahoma City has the largest population in the state as well as the largest Negro population. Tulsa ranks second both in total population and in its Negro population. Muskogee has the third largest total population and also the third largest Negro population.

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[1]Mary L. Bellanti, "A History of the United Provident Association of Oklahoma City" (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Oklahoma, 1952), p. 4.

Ponca City, which is the fifth largest in total population ranks sixth in Negro population, while Okmulgee ranks sixth in total population and fourth in Negro population. Shawnee ranks fourth in total population and fifth in Negro population.

Approximately one tenth of all the Negroes who were living in the state in 1940 lived in Oklahoma City. Table IV gives information on the race and sex of the population of Oklahoma City, according to wards, in 1940. It is interesting to note from Table IV that there is a preponderance of females over males in the total population, and in all of the wards of all races with the exception of Ward 4. The Negro population of Oklahoma City seems to be concentrated in Ward 2. In that ward there are 7,464 Negro males and 8,163 Negro females. Ward 1 contains the smallest number of Negroes and the largest number of whites. In both races the females outnumber the males.

In 1950 there were 323,352 persons in Oklahoma County. Of these 243,504 or seventy-five per cent lived in Oklahoma City. Negroes constituted 7.98 per cent of the county population which numbered 25,989. Out of this number there were 22,664 Negroes who were living in Oklahoma City at the time of the 1950 census.

Table V shows the population growth of Oklahoma City according to decades from 1890 to 1950. The greatest percentage of increase as indicated by this table occurred from

TABLE III

POPULATION OF PRINCIPAL CITIES OF OKLAHOMA BY RACE, 1940*

City	Total	White	Negro	Per Cent Negro
Muskogee	32,332	25,736	6,596	20.4
Okmulgee	16,051	12,392	3,659	22.7
Oklahoma City	204,424	185,080	19,344	9.4
Ponca City	16,794	15,944	850	5.0
Shawnee	22,053	21,008	1,045	4.7
Tulsa	142,157	127,006	15,151	10.6

*United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Sixteenth Census, 1940, Population, pp. 927-931.

TABLE IV

RACE POPULATION IN FOUR WARDS OF OKLAHOMA CITY, 1940*

Ward	Total Population	White	Foreign Born	Negro	Other Races
1	55,856	53,653	928	1,205	70
2	49,001	32,851	414	15,627	109
3	44,222	41,952	829	1,328	113
4	55,545	53,432	856	1,184	73

*Ibid.

TABLE V

POPULATION OF OKLAHOMA CITY, 1890 TO 1950, SHOWING PER CENT OF INCREASE*

Year	Population	Per Cent of Increase
1890	4,151	
1900	10,037	141.8
1910	64,205	539.7
1920	91,295	42.2
1930	185,389	103.3
1940	204,424	10.3
1950	243,504	19.1

*Ibid.

1900 to 1910. The fact that Oklahoma City was becoming the center for trade and agriculture in the state accounts for this increase. The increase of 103.3 per cent, which occurred between 1920 and 1930 was due to further development of the oil industry. The increase of 10.3 per cent during 1940-1950 is attributed to war industries and military installations.[1]

Population figures since 1950 have been only estimates. The Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce estimated the population of Greater Oklahoma City in 1956 as being 400,000.[2]

Employment Status of the Negro Population Before Establishment of the Urban League

The Negro population has been seriously affected in its employment efforts due to a lack of equal opportunities in public utilities, in the city government, and in local offices of federal agencies.

The Negro population of Oklahoma City in 1940 represented approximately ten per cent of the total population. But they constituted twelve per cent of the active labor force. An examination of the Sixteenth Census of the United States reveals that a heavy concentration of Negroes is found

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[1]National Urban League, A Study of Social and Economic Conditions..., p. 74.

[2]"Oklahoma City" (Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce, Public Relations Division, 1956), p. 7.

in service and unskilled laboring occupations. In fact, practically 85 per cent of the Negro labor force consists of workers engaged in occupations which are the least secure and the lowest paid. Seventy per cent of all gainfully employed Negro males were found in these traditionally low paid marginal and submarginal jobs.

The above facts indicate occupational stratification of a very high order in Oklahoma City at the time the Urban League was established in the community. These factors, among others, which affect Negro life in the community, have been the concern of the Urban League in Oklahoma City.

CHAPTER III

THE OKLAHOMA CITY URBAN LEAGUE

Chapter II described the social and economic status of the Negro in Oklahoma City before the Urban League was organized. It is the purpose of Chapter III to report the major events leading to the establishment of the Urban League in Oklahoma City, and to explain its current organizational structure.

The Visit of William Y. Bell

The history of the Urban League in Oklahoma City began with a visit of William Y. Bell, Jr., to Oklahoma City early in the year of 1945. Bell was the Director of the Southern Field Division of the National Urban League in Atlanta, Georgia. His visit came as the result of an invitation from the Oklahoma City Negro Chamber of Commerce, whose members were interested in developing some form of organized approach to the solution of the problems affecting Negroes in the community.[1]

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[1]Minutes of Oklahoma City Urban League, March 2, 1945, p. 1. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

Meeting of Negro Citizens to Discuss the Organization of an Urban League

The history of the Oklahoma City Urban League began March 2, 1945, shortly after Bell's arrival in the city. On that date a group of Negro citizens met with Ragland in the office of the Universal Life Insurance Company to discuss the organization of an Urban League Affiliate in Oklahoma City. The members of the group, in addition to Ragland, were: Attorney R. McKinley Rowan; Dr. W. L. Haywood; Mr. Ed Jackson; Mrs. Zelia N. Breaux, Music Instructor at Douglas High School in Oklahoma City; Mr. George Ferguson, President of the Negro Chamber of Commerce; Dr. A. P. Bethel; Mrs. Carrie L. Edwards, Instructor of Mathematics at Douglas High School, Oklahoma City; and Mr. William Y. Bell, the National Urban League representative.[1]

Ragland gave a brief statement of the purpose of the meeting. He stated that the Negro Chamber of Commerce felt that the need for an expansion of those agencies which function in the interest of Oklahoma City's Negro population; and that the achievement of such an objective was contingent upon a better understanding between the Negro and white groups.

Bell suggested that an organization, known as the Urban League, might serve as the agency through which a

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[1]Minutes of the Sponsoring Committee for the Organization of an Urban League in Oklahoma City, March 2, 1945, p. 2. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

better understanding and a closer relationship between the two races might be brought about. He explained the types of services which the Urban League performs and gave the following specific areas: Investigation and Research, Community Organization, Employment, Housing, Health, Education and Research. Upon his arrival, Bell went to the office of Roscoe Dunjee, the editor of the Black Dispatch, one of the leading Negro newspapers in the state. He explained to Dunjee that the purpose of his visit was to discuss the feasibility of establishing an affiliate of the National Urban League in Oklahoma City with some of the leading representatives of both the Negro and white races as members. The need for support from the leading white citizens was of prime importance because of the interracial character of the Urban League.[1]

Presentation of Social Action Award to Vilona P. Cutler

Dunjee contacted Vilona P. Cutler, who at the time was the executive secretary of the Y.W.C.A. and who is now a Professor of Social Work at the University of Oklahoma. In 1946 the Norma and Murray Hearn Social Action Award was presented to Vilona P. Cutler for outstanding work in achieving better relations between white and Negro citizens in

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[1]Letter from William Y. Bell to Roscoe Dunjee, January 25, 1945. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League. Also from personal interview with Roscoe Dunjee, March 13, 1957, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Oklahoma City. The award is made annually by the Alumni Association of the New York School of Social Work to encourage wider participation by social workers in the solution of the problems of an expanding democracy. It is granted without regard to race, creed, sex, national origin, or political affiliation to a graduate of the school who has distinguished himself in the field of social action during the preceding year. Donors of the Award are Justice Murray Hearn and his wife, Norma Hearn. Among the activities which won the award for Miss Cutler was her active participation in the establishment of an Urban League Affiliate in Oklahoma City.

In November of 1950, the Oklahoma City Urban League established the Vilona P. Cutler Award "for meritorious and outstanding service in human relations and the general welfare of Oklahoma City." According to the rules of the committee on the Vilona P. Cutler Award, the award can be given only once every five years. The recipient of the award must be a person who has given at least twelve years of service in the field of human relations.[1]

Miss Cutler agreed to discuss the organization of an Urban League in Oklahoma City with some of the white citizens of the community.

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[1]Annual Report of the Oklahoma City Urban League, 1950, p. 7 (mimeographed).

George Ragland's Efforts to Organize the Urban League

In the meantime, Bell was introduced to the Negro Chamber of Commerce by George Ragland, District Manager of the Universal Life Insurance Company. Ragland worked very closely with Vilona Cutler, Jesse T. Owens, and Carrie L. Edwards during the process of the organization of the Oklahoma City Urban League. He was the first Vice-President of the League and has since served as a member of the Board of Directors. As has been stated, he introduced William Bell to the members of the Negro Chamber of Commerce. That organization, upon being informed by Bell of the Urban League program authorized Ragland to organize a committee composed of leading Negro citizens to study further the need of an Urban League in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.[1]

One of the issues on which the members of the group desired clarification was that of the similarity between the program of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and that of the Urban League. Bell contrasted the functions of the two organizations as discussed by Myrdal.[2] Although the two organizations came into existence at approximately the same time, and both had as their aim the

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[1]Interview with George Ragland, District Manager, Universal Life Insurance Company, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, March 17, 1957.

[2]Gunnar Myrdal, An American Dilemma (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1944), p. 828.

welfare of the Negro, the program of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is concentrated upon the legal aspects of the life of the Negro. Its program is centered upon civil rights and suffrage. A most important and the most spectacular part of its activity is its stress on legal redress work.[1] The Urban League, on the other hand, is concerned, in the main, with the social and cultural problems of the Negro. Whereas the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People operates within a legal framework, the League encourages the integration of the thinking of the two groups. Education, study, and persuasion are given major emphasis in the approach used by the Urban League in achieving its aims.[2]

The philosophy and approach of the Urban League have been aptly expressed in the following paragraph:

> The League creates what they call "a climate of understanding," in which both races and- are- working to solve mutual problems toward the mutual goal of community betterment.[3]

Formation of A Sponsoring Committee for the Organization of an Urban League

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[1]Minutes of the Oklahoma City Urban League, March 2, 1945, p. 2.

[2]Gunnar Myrdal, An American Dilemma, p. 838.

[3]Mary Goddard, "A Favorable Climate," Daily Oklahoman (Oklahoma City), November 4, 1956, p. 14.

After much discussion of the function of the Urban League, the members of the group felt that the Urban League might be the answer to some of the more pressing problems of the minority group. They, therefore, committed themselves to the task of working toward the establishment of an Urban League in Oklahoma City. Thereafter they were known as the "Sponsoring Committee for the Organization of an Urban League in Oklahoma City." However, the members felt it expedient to enlarge the group to include a more representative cross-section of the political, social, and economic life of Oklahoma City's Negro population. The following persons were invited to participate as members of the committee: Reverend E. W. Perry, Pastor of Tabernacle Church; Mr. F. D. Moon, Principal of Douglas High School; Mr. T. B. Watson, and active civic leader; Reverend H. Garnett Lee; Reverend Searcy; Reverend and Mrs. Hollis; Father Seth Edwards of the Episcopal Church; Mr. J. W. Sanford, Real Estate and Business; and Miss Annabelle Sawyer, Director of Stiles Street USO.[1]

Joint Meetings of White and Negro Groups Interested in the League

Meanwhile, the members of the white group who, as mentioned earlier, had been contacted by Miss Cutler, and who

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[1]"Early Records of the Urban League of Oklahoma City, 1945-1947" (ledger in the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), records for March, 1945.

appeared interested in the organization of an Urban League in the community, had scheduled a meeting for the following month, April of 1945. Bell agreed to return at that time to meet in a joint session with the two groups to help further the plans for the organization of an Urban League in Oklahoma City.

The two groups met as planned on April 26, 1945, at the Central Y.W.C.A. Vilona P. Cutler presided at this meeting. Other white citizens who attended the meeting were: Reverend H. P. Armstrong; Mr. Joe Dernoncourt, C.I.O. Representative; Mr. R. N. Evjen of the Community Chest; Miss L. N. Mann, Miss Odel Nelms, Mrs. W. K. West and Mrs. Walter S. Johnson, all four active in civic affairs of the community. Mr. J. T. Owens, Insurance Executive; the Reverend J. Howard Williams; Miss Faye Webb, Executive Secretary of the Council of Social Welfare Agencies, and Miss Edith Johnson of the Daily Oklahoman Press. At this meeting the following agencies and institutions were represented:

The Ministry (all denominations, both white and colored.)

Medical Profession

Business Men and Women

Legal Profession

Council of Churches

Department of Public Welfare

Labor Unions

Community Fund

United Community and War Fund

Chamber of Commerce, both white and colored

Council of Social Welfare Agencies

Young Women's Christian Association

United Service Organization

Federation of Women's Club

The Press[1]

Formation of the Provisional Committee

The Urban League did not come into existence in Oklahoma City overnight. Many meetings were held; long periods of discussion, thinking, and planning concerning the advantages of an affiliate of the National Urban League in Oklahoma City took place before the Urban League finally emerged as a definite organization in the community.[2]

The Joint Committees for the organization of an Urban League in Oklahoma City met again on June 22, 1945. It was at this meeting that the two Negro and white committees merged and formed what was called, "The Provisional Committee." Officers were elected to help further the plans for the organization of an Urban League in Oklahoma City. The following persons were appointed officers of the Provisional

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Interview with Miss Vilona P. Cutler, Professor of Social Work, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma, March 4, 1957.

Committee:

Mr. George Ragland	Chairman
Mr. Jesse T. Owens	Vice-Chairman
Mrs. Carrie Edwards	Secretary
Mrs. Harry Schaffer	Assistant Secretary
Mrs. L. H. Mann	Treasurer

Three committees were also established as follows:

Budget

Ancel Earp, Chairman
T. B. Watson
William Calvert
L. H. Mann
J. W. Sandford

Youth Committee

Father Seth Edwards, Chairman
Reverend H. G. Hollis
Mrs. H. G. Hollis
W. A. McCauley
T. B. Watson

Constitution

Mr. F. D. Moon, Chairman
Reverend N. Lee
Attorney J. J. Bruce
Dr. W. L. Haywood
Mrs. Harry Schaffer[1]

The Survey by the National Urban League

In 1944, the General Education Board of the Rockefeller Foundation made a grant of $110,000 to the National Urban League for the purpose of conducting surveys of the social and economic conditions of the Negro in various cities throughout the United States. Surveys were made in five cities where population increases and changes in social and economic conditions resulting from the war effort had created a need for special attention in the field of race relations.

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[1]Minutes of the Provisional Committee, Oklahoma City Urban League, June 22, 1945, p. 3. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

The surveys are referred to as the "Community Relations Project" of the National Urban League.

Bell acquainted the group with the aims and purposes of the National Urban League's Community Relations Project, mentioned above. The project was launched by the National Urban League in September, 1944, to assist local community leadership in improving race relations and Negro welfare as a means of avoiding post-war racial conflict.[1] It was an attempt on the part of the League to eliminate racial friction which might be inherent in post-war reconversion and redevelopment programs.

The members of the Provisional Committee became interested in the Community Relations Project. And, as a result of further conferences with Faye Webb, the executive secretary of the Council of Social Welfare Agencies, the National Urban League Office in New York City was apprised of Oklahoma City's interest in the Project. In May, 1945, Miss Webb wrote the National Office that the Project had been discussed in the Council of Social Welfare, and that the Council had voted to invite the Project staff to make a study of the welfare problems as they relate to the Negro population in Oklahoma City.[2] On May 25, the National Urban League

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[1]National Urban League, Description of the Community Relations Project (New York: National Urban League, Inc., 1945), p. 1.

[2]National Urban League, A Study of Social and Economic Conditions..., p. 2.

recommended that Oklahoma City's invitation be accepted. Oklahoma City thus became the fifth city to receive the project services.

Instructions were sent from the National Advisory Committee of the National Urban League concerning necessary steps to be taken by the Council of Social Welfare Agencies in Oklahoma City to help with the implementation of the study. The study, very intensive in nature, involved social and economic situations, health, housing, education, crime and juvenile delinquency, recreation, churches, civic and cultural opportunities, race relations, social welfare agencies, labor and job opportunities. Included in the instructions was a request that a local advisory committee be appointed. The purpose of the local advisory committee was to give guidance and information to the members of the Research Staff of the Community Relations Project sponsored by the National Urban League.

During the month of June, 1945, Mr. J. Harvey Kerns, Assistant Director of Research, of the National Urban League was selected to serve as Director of the Study. Following his arrival, the Council of Social Welfare, in compliance with the earlier request, appointed a local advisory committee composed of representatives from the Community Chest, Council of Social Welfare, public agencies, business, industry, the clergy (both white and Negro) and white and Negro representatives of the general community. Many of the persons who

were serving on the Provisional Committee for the Organization of the Urban League were asked to serve on the local advisory committee.

The research aspect of the study extended from June 25 to July 28, 1945. During this period the advisory committee met three times. The first meeting was focused upon the outline of the study with opportunity provided for suggestions and criticisms by the advisory committee. At the second meeting a review of the progress of the study was presented. Any questions concerning the methods and techniques employed were clarified by the Director of the Study. The third meeting was concerned with a general review of the findings of the survey.

During the months of October and November of 1945, specialists in various fields came to the community from the National Urban League office in New York to advise and assist agencies in putting into operation the recommendations and suggestions based on the initial study report.[1]

The staff of specialists included: Ewell L. Newman, a social case work specialist, Dr. Paul B. Cornelly, medical doctor and Doctor of Public Health, Edward F. Boyd, housing specialist and Ethel R. Clark, recreation specialist.

Some of the findings and recommendations of this study as they relate to the activities of the Urban League,

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[1]National Urban League, A Study of the Social and Economic Conditions..., p. 2.

will be referred to throughout the remainder of this discussion.

On July 16, 1945, at a meeting of the Provisional Committee, the constitution committee was approved by the Provisional Committee as temporary, since there was not yet an official organization.[1] Later they were adopted as the Constitution and By-Laws of the Urban League of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

The budget committee was instructed to set up a tentative budget for the operation of the Provisional Committee. Since there were no available funds from any source, the members at this meeting agreed to assess themselves $25 each. Those paying the $25 were to be known as the charter members. (See Appendix A).

A membership committee was appointed to write to those persons who had attended any of the committee meetings on the discussion of an Urban League, asking that they pay a membership fee. Mr. T. B. Watson was appointed chairman of the committee. He selected as members of the committee Reverend Colen, Reverend Searcy, and Reverend Lee.[2]

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[1]Minutes of the Provisional Committee for an Organization of an Urban League in Oklahoma City, July 16, 1945, p. 3. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

[2]Minutes of the Provisional Committee, Oklahoma City Urban League, p. 2. Also interview with Miss Vilona P. Cutler, Professor of Social Work, University of Oklahoma, March 4, 1957; interview with George Ragland, Universal Life Insurance Company, March 17, 1957.

The secretarial files do not contain any record of any further action concerning the Urban League until November 9, 1945, at which time the Provisional Committee met with Mr. Kerns in the library of the Central Y. W. C. A. Mr. Kerns reviewed some of the findings of the survey made by the National Urban League of the conditions in the community as they affect the life of the Negro population.

It was apparent that very little could be done by the Provisional Committee without an increased number of participants. A membership committee was selected from the group to formulate plans and procedures for stimulating interest and encouraging wider community participation in the work of the Urban League. (This committee was concerned with members at large or a general membership, and is not to be confused with the committee on charter membership mentioned previously.) However, Mr. T. B. Watson was also appointed chairman of this committee. Reverend Howard Williams and Reverend Colen agreed to work with Watson.

Kerns offered suggestions for activities which the Provisional Committee might sponsor while completing final arrangements for affiliation with the National Urban League. One of these suggestions was to begin making plans to bring a speaker to the community, preferably Lester Granger, the National Executive Secretary.

The small planning group on membership held a meeting on November 4, 1945, at which time plans were outlined for

acquainting persons of both races with the philosophy, program, objectives and methods of the Urban League, in order that they might be intelligent when approached for assistance and particpation in such a program.[1]

A letter containing a request for support was drafted by Miss Sawyer and Mrs. Edwards to be mailed to members of the Negro group. Miss Cutler drafted the letter to be mailed to members of the white group. Included in the letters were brochures of literature pertaining to the Urban League and membership cards indicating the type of memberships available. Letters were mailed to ministers, civic and social leaders, professional and lay people, and various organizations including clubs, fraternities, and sororities.[2]

For several months following the two meetings held in November, 1945, there was a lull in the activities for affiliation. During this time, Nelson G. Jackson had replaced Bell as Director of the Southern Field Division of the National Urban League in Atlanta, Georgia.

Late in the spring of 1946, Mrs. Carrie Edwards began correspondence with the National Office and the Southern Field Division of the National Urban League. Correspondence

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[1]Minutes of the Planning Group for Membership in Urban League of Oklahoma City, November 14, 1945, Oklahoma City Urban League, p. 3. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

[2]Ibid.

was also carried on between the National Office and the Southern Field Division concerning the steps Oklahoma City had taken toward the organization of an Urban League in that community.

On May 13, 1946, in response to a communication from Mrs. Carrie Edwards concerning action on the findings of the Community Relations Project, Jackson, the new director of the Southern Field Division, wrote that, in view of the fact that no action committee had assumed responsibility for the follow-up of the study's findings, steps to be taken to immediately organize an Urban League with formal application being presented to the Community Chest for approval and financial support.[1]

In June, 1946, Mrs. Edwards was informed by Lester Granger, the National Executive Secretary, that Jackson was planning a field trip to Oklahoma.

Jackson visited Oklahoma City during the month of July, 1946, and during that time he met with Rudolph Evjen, President of the Community Chest. Evjen informed Jackson that a number of the Community Chest board felt that there was a definite need for an Urban League in Oklahoma City. Evjen further suggested that since the Provisional Committee had been in operation for a year, the committee make formal

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[1]Letter from Nelson C. Jackson to Mrs. Carrie Edwards, May 16, 1946, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

application to the Community Chest for inclusion in the Community Chest budget for the following fall. He further suggested that a budget and a brief outline of the program be included with the application.[1]

Affiliation of the Oklahoma City Urban League With the National Urban League

Jackson gave advice and guidance to the Provisional Committee on the necessary steps for affiliation with the National Urban League. He assisted in the preparation of the budget request for support and approval of the Community Chest. Under his direction and guidance the application for financial support to the Chest was submitted to Rudolph Evjen on August 8, 1946.[2] (A copy of the letter of application is contained in Appendix B.)

Also under the supervision of Jackson, "Terms of Affiliation" were prepared and formal application was made to the National Urban League on September 3, 1946, for the establishment of an affiliate of the organization in Oklahoma City. (A copy of the application is found in Appendix C.)

On September 12, 1946, Lester Granger, the National

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[1]Report of Director of Southern Field Division of National Urban League to National Urban League Office, August, 1946. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

[2]Minutes of the Provisional Committee, Oklahoma City Urban League, p. 4. Letter to Rudolph Evjen, Director of Community Chest of Oklahoma City, from the Provisional Committee, August 8, 1946. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

Executive Secretary, in a communication to Mrs. Carrie Edwards, stated that, at its monthly meeting on September 10, 1946, the Board of Directors of the National Urban League had accepted the application of the Provisional Committee of Oklahoma City to become an affiliate of the National Urban League Incorporated. (See Appendix D.)

The Provisional Committee, after receiving notification from Granger that Oklahoma City had been accepted as an affiliate of the National Urban League, met to complete the plans for an Urban League of Oklahoma City. Those who attended this meeting were: George Granger, Vilona Cutler, Carrie Edwards, H. G. Lee, George Ferguson, M. L. Bethel, Zelia N. Breaux, R. George Bailey, Joe Dernoncourt, Faye Webb, Freda Ameringer, Harry Schaffer, Charolette Donnell, J. M. Littlepage, D. Green, Earl Miller, Mrs. Earl Miller, and F. D. Moon.

These persons declared themselves members of the Oklahoma City Urban League, affiliate of the National Urban League, Incorporated, fully qualified to select and nominate from their membership those individuals who, in the judgment of those present were qualified to act as members of a Board of Directors.[1] The formal declaration read:

We, the body assembled, now declare ourselves members of

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[1]Minutes of the Provisional Committee, November 11, 1946, Oklahoma City Urban League, p. 4. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

> the Oklahoma City Urban League, Affiliate to the National Urban League, Incorporated, and as such vote to accept the above listed individuals (upon their acceptance) as members of the Board of Directors.[1]

Members holding executive positions in other agencies or in the Council of Social Agencies, were excluded from membership on the Board of Directors of the Urban League. Rather, such persons were to serve in an advisory capacity, as consultants, or as committee chairmen.[2]

The first president of the Board was Jesse T. Owens. Owens, an insurance executive, is a graduate of the law school of the University of Oklahoma where he received his undergraduate training. At the time of his election as president of the Urban League, of which he is now Honorary President, Owens was president of the Council of Churches and was chairman of the membership committee of the Council of Social Welfare Agencies, both of Oklahoma City.

Election of the First Board of Directors

Mrs. Freda Ameringer, Mrs. Carrie L. Edwards, and Mr. L. D. Lacy constituted the first nominating committee to recommend nominations for membership on the Board of Directors. The first persons nominated for board membership were:

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[1]Minutes of the Provisional Committee, November 14, 1946, Oklahoma City Urban League, p. 2. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

[2]Ibid., p. 1.

Three Year Term

Jesse T. Owens, C. L. Edwards, L. D. Lacy, N. L. Bethal, M. B. Glismann, Rev. H. G. Lee, W. K. West, Z. N. Breaux, Harry Schaffer, George Ragland and J. F. Burton.

Two Year Term

Corinne Breeding, George Ferguson, Jesse Todd, Sr., Ira Hall, Bela Halpert, J. M. Littlepage, Elmer Peterson, C. W. Morgan, Earl Miller, F. D. Moon.

One Year Term

Freda Ameringer, LeRoy Blanton, George Bailey, Joe Dernoncourt, Frances Edwards, Enoch J. Percival, H. McKinley Rowan, J. W. Sandford, Abraham Stewart, T. B. Watson.

Selection of an Executive Director by the Board of Directors

In keeping with the policy of the National Urban League, the local branches employ the services of an Executive Director, who supervises the activities of the organization. The newly organized League made no effort to secure the needed professional leadership immediately. Instead, the members felt that it would be of greater advantage to study carefully the qualifications of persons who might be interested in the position. So from November 11, 1946 until January 1, 1947, the League functioned without an executive director. Later two personnel records were submitted to the Board of Directors of the Oklahoma City Urban League from the National Office. On November 26, 1946, the Board of Directors met to discuss these personnel records. George Ragland moved and Freda Ameringer seconded that the name of

Cernoria Johnson whose:

> qualifications as to training, experience and achievement meet the requirements of the Board, be selected and submitted to the membership for approval at an annual salary of $3,000.[1]

The Certificate of Affiliation had not been received from the National Headquarters. Therefore, the Board was not authorized to enter into any contractual agreement with Mrs. Johnson at that time. But by the time the Board met again on December 3, 1946, the papers of affiliation had been received. At this meeting F. D. Moon moved and George Ragland seconded that the recommendation of the Board of Directors in the previous meeting for Executive Director be approved and accepted.[2]

There were some who were not in accord with the idea of employing a woman executive, but after this opposition was overcome the members voted to accept the recommendation that Mrs. Johnson be employed as Executive Director of the Urban League of Oklahoma City. Mrs. Johnson began her duties as Executive Director of the Oklahoma City Urban League on January 1, 1947.[3]

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[1]Minutes of the Board of Directors of Oklahoma City Urban League, November 26, 1946, p. 4. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

[2]Minutes of the Board of Directors of Oklahoma City Urban League, December 3, 1946, p. 2. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

[3]Minutes of the Board of Directors of Oklahoma City Urban League, February 12, 1947, p. 4. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

Cernoria Johnson is a native of Oklahoma and is a graduate of Langston University, Langston, Oklahoma, with an A.B. degree in 1943, and holds a Master's degree in Social Work granted by the Atlanta University School of Social Work in 1946.

The first application for office secretary was made on February 6, 1947 by Frances Jackson, who received a B.S. degree from Langston University. The application was accepted by the Board of Directors on February 10, 1947. Mrs. Jackson thus became the first office secretary of the Urban League.[1]

Organizational Structure of the Urban League

The approach and techniques used by the Urban League and the success enjoyed therefrom are the results of active participation on the part of interested citizens who served on the staffs, the Board of Directors and committees of the various local communities.

The local affiliates are self-governing and through their boards and communities formulate their programs in accordance with the local needs and resources. Their standards of performance must, however, be the same as those maintained by the National Urban League. These include the requirements that the local board be interracial; that the

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[1] Ibid.

staff be supervised by professional social workers; and, that the agency must accept the general objectives and philosophy of the Urban League movement.[1]

Like the parent body, the National Urban League, the Oklahoma City affiliate is governed by a Board of Directors of interracial constituency, composed of representatives from many fields of endeavor, including religion, business, education, social work, labor, and the professions. The revised constitution of the Oklahoma City Urban League provides for an interracial board of not less than 21 nor more than 27 members elected upon recommendation of a nominating committee by the membership at its annual meeting. (See constitution in Appendix G.) According to Section 3, Article IV of the original constitution, one-third of the members of the board shall be elected each year to serve for a term of three consecutive years. However, this section was amended in October of 1950 to permit the Board members to serve two years of three terms each. The expiration of one year after termination of service on the board is required before a board member may seek re-election.[2]

The functions of the Board of Directors are outlined

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[1]Cernoria Johnson, "A Study in the History and Development of the Urban League Program in Fort Worth, Texas, 1944 and 1945" (unpublished Master's thesis, Atlanta University, Atlanta, Georgia, 1946), p. 31.

[2]Revised Constitution of Oklahoma City Urban League, 1950 (mimeographed).

in Section 6, Article IV of the constitution. Primarily, they are to exercise general direction and supervision of the activities and property of the League, employ the executive secretary, define the duties and fix the compensation of same, and establish the salary range of other staff members. Originally, the Board met once quarterly. Because of the expansion of activities of the League, it became necessary to meet more frequently. Consequently, the revised constitution provides for monthly meetings of the board.

Article V, Section I of the constitution outlines the duties of the officers of the Board. The officers and their duties are as follows: (1) a president, who presides at all meetings of the Urban League and of the Board of Directors, calls meetings of the League or Board, and appoints chairmen of all committees; (2) a vice president, who performs the duties of the president in the event of his absence, serves as ex-officio member of all special programs and project committees; (3) a secretary, who keeps a record of the proceedings of all meetings of the membership, the Board of Directors, the executive committee, and all other matters of which a record is requested by the agency. The secretary also notifies the officers and all members of committees of their election or appointment; (4) an assistant secretary, who performs whatever duties that are assigned to him upon occasion and who assumes the powers and duties

of the secretary in the case of the absence of the secretary; (5) a treasurer, who is responsible for all agency funds, and, under the direction of the Board of Directors, disburses all funds of the League. Other officers shall perform such duties as are outlined by the By-Laws upon the creation of their offices.

The Oklahoma City Urban League maintains a staff of three persons to carry on the work of the agency. Its personnel consists of an Executive Director, an Administrative Secretary, and an Industrial Relations Secretary.

Final execution of plans and policies made by the Board of Directors is the duty of the executive. The Executive Director is responsible for the direction of the organization and the supervision of its various committees and board activities. A program of publicity and community organization are her prime responsibilities. The success of the agency in its relationship with other organizations and institutions in the community depends upon the Executive Director. The Executive Director also employs and defines the duties of whatever additional personnel is needed to assist with the work of the League.[1]

It is the responsibility of the Industrial Relations Secretary to promote and coordinate the industrial relations

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[1]National Urban League, Handbook on Personnel Practices (New York: National Urban League, Inc., 1955), p. 14.

activities of the organization relative to vocational guidance, training; labor; personnel relations problems; employment, workers' education and veterans' activities. He assists the Executive Secretary in the promotion and initiation of various types of programs and projects, and cooperates and collaborates with the Department of Industrial Relations of the National Office in the programming and expansion of job opportunities.

The Administrative Secretary acts as secretary to the executive, bookkeeper, stenographer, and general assistant to the executive.[1]

Committee Structure of the Urban League

It is the objective of the Urban League to plan for better living involving every phase of activity touching the people's well-being. To accomplish this objective interracial committees with community-wide representation, attempt to ferret out facts about community conditions and plan specific approaches to their solution.[2]

The constitution provides that the committees of the Urban League of Oklahoma City shall be of two types, including their sub-committees. (See Section I, Article V of the Constitution.) The two types are project committees and

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Johnson, "A Study of the Urban League...in Fort Worth, Texas," p. 32.

standing committees. Project committees are those created by the Board for a definite and specific purpose, for a stated period of time. The standing committees are those that may be required for the administration of the functional work of the Urban League. The following are committees through which the work of the Urban League is carried on:

1. Committee on Public Relations (This committee is concerned with the coordination and cooperation services of the Urban League)
2. Community Services
3. Committee on Industrial Relations

Financial Structure of the Urban League

The Urban League receives the major protion of its income from the United Fund of Greater Oklahoma City. The United Fund is the successor organization to the Community Chest which was founded some 30 years ago by the citizens of Oklahoma City to coordinate their efforts to raise funds for needed services. The United Fund is an enlargement of the Community Chest principles and was organized in 1952. It is the machinery set up by the citizens of the community to combine the needs of essential voluntary health and welfare agencies into one annual campaign, and to distribute the funds thus secured on a sound budgetary basis. Not only does it combine the local agencies which were united for so many years under the Community Chest, but it also embraces

the financial needs of national appeals which formerly conducted separate campaigns.

The United Fund assumes the responsibility for raising funds, its member organizations, and appropriating the funds according to the basic needs and the relative urgency of various programs in the community.

The United Fund of Greater Oklahoma City is governed by a board of 41 directors, who represent the leading citizens of the community and who are elected by the community at large.[1]

The Urban League of Oklahoma City has been a member of the United Fund for nine years. At the time of the establishment of the Urban League, before membership in the Community Chest was granted an organization, the organization seeking membership had to be observed by the Community Chest in operation on its own resources for a period of two years. But, because it was felt by the officials of the Community Chest that the type of program the League sponsors was so vital and necessary to the community, the Urban League was not requested to wait for the two year period. Instead, membership in the Community Chest was granted to the Urban League at the time it was accepted as an affiliate of the National Urban League. The Chest allocated the Urban

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[1]United Fund of Greater Oklahoma City, "Purposes and Functions of the United Fund" (Oklahoma City; 1956), p. 1.

League $6,000 for its first year of operation.[1]

Table VI shows the financial growth of the Oklahoma City Urban League according to contributions from the United Fund for the 10 year period from 1947-57. In 1947 the United Fund appropriated $6,000 to the League. In 1956-57, the appropriation from the United Fund was $16,000, which is a total increase of $10,000 over the 10 year period. This is an average increase of approximately $1,000 each year.[2]

Any agency making application for membership in the fund is restricted from conducting financial drives until after it has functioned in the community for at least five years. Thus, furing the first five years of its operation, the Urban League of Oklahoma City operated on the amount allocated by the United Fund and on membership fees, contributions, gifts, and donations from interested persons.

In 1954, the League conducted its first "all out" membership campaign. Since that time it has had an annual membership drive. Table VII shows the financial growth of the League according to membership fees. In 1947, the League received a total membership fee of $599.50. The 1957 membership campaign netted a total of more than $6,700. The

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[1]Interview with Cernoria Johnson, Executive Director of Oklahoma City Urban League, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, March, 1957.

[2]Auditor's Reports of the Oklahoma City Urban League for the Years 1947-1956 inclusive. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

TABLE VI

FINANCIAL GROWTH OF URBAN LEAGUE DURING 10-YEAR PERIOD ACCORDING TO UNITED FUND CONTRIBUTIONS*

Year	Contribution
1947	$ 6,000.00
1948	6,310.00
1949	6,837.98
1950	7,735.00
1951	8,700.00
1952	10,100.00
1953	11,300.00
1954	12,400.00
1955	13,900.00
1956	14,500.00
1957	16,000.00

*Compiled from Auditor's Reports for the years indicated.

TABLE VII

FINANCIAL GROWTH OF URBAN LEAGUE DURING 10-YEAR PERIOD ACCORDING TO MEMBERSHIP FEES*

Year	Membership Fees
1947	$ 599.50
1948	383.85
1949	348.00
1950	592.50
1951	500.00
1952	550.00
1953	683.00
1954	3,737.25
1955	4,360.00
1956	4,529.00
1957	6,730.00

*Annual Budgets for Years Indicated 1946-1947 through 1956-1957.

total amount of finance collected in membership fees by the League during its first five years did not exceed $600 in any one year. In 1954, the total amount collected in membership fees was five times as much as that collected during the previous year. This stupendous increase is attributed to the success of the first membership campaign.

Table VIII shows the financial growth of the League each year including contributions from the United Fund and membership fees. In 1947-1948, the Urban League operated on a budget of approximately $6600. The 1956-1957 program of the Urban League necessitates a budget of approximately $23,000. The financial growth of the Urban League is indicative of the growth in appreciation of the citizens for the services the League renders the community.[1]

Membership of the Urban League

The constitution of the Urban League of Oklahoma City provides for four types of membership in the League. They are: (1) Charter memberships which were granted to those persons who contributed $25 to the League in its initial state of development; (2) Associate memberships which refer to those persons who contribute $25 or more to the League; (3) Sustaining memberships are those memberships which include contributions from $5 to $25; and (4) Contributing

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[1]From correspondence and statements to the Urban League Office from various persons contributing to the Urban League. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

TABLE VIII

FINANCIAL GROWTH OF URBAN LEAGUE ACCORDING TO TOTAL FINANCIAL RECEIPTS* (MEMBERSHIP FEES AND CONTRIBUTIONS FROM UNITED FUND)

Year	Membership Fees and Contributions
1947	$ 6,599.50
1948	6,693.85
1949	7,285.98
1950	8,327.52
1951	9,200.00
1952	10,650.00
1953	11,983.00
1954	16,137.25
1955	18,260.00
1956	19,029.00
1957	22,673.00

*Annual Budgets for the Years Indicated, 1946-1956 Inclusive.

memberships are granted to those persons contributing $1 to $5 to the League program.

As is true of the Board of Directors and the Committees, the membership of the Urban League is interracial and represents a cross-section of community interests. The membership campaign which ended in February of 1957 shows a present membership of more than 2000 persons.

Table IX shows the growth of membership of the Urban League during the ten year period.

The sudden increase in membership in 1954 was due to the fact that the year 1954 marked the beginning of membership drives conducted by the Urban League. From Table IX it can be seen that the membership of the Urban League has increased from 51 in 1947 to 2156 in 1957.

Urban League Headquarters

The first office of the Urban League of Oklahoma City was located in the Stiles Street Y.W.C.A. building on the corner of Stiles and Northeast Second Streets. However, because many people were prone to think of the Urban League as an extension of the Y.W.C.A., the Urban League, after remaining in the building for almost five years, moved to its present headquarters in the Finely Building on the corner of Northeast Second and Walnut Streets. This present location is at the midway point between the Negro and white business section.

TABLE IX

GROWTH IN MEMBERSHIP OF THE URBAN LEAGUE OF OKLAHOMA CITY DURING THE 10-YEAR PERIOD FROM 1946-1956, INCLUSIVE*

Year	Membership
1947-1948	51
1948-1949	119
1949-1950	193
1950-1951	198
1951-1952	203
1952-1953	240
1953-1954	1116
1954-1955	1383
1955-1956	1883
1956-1957	2156

*Compiled from reports for the years indicated of Membership Committee, Oklahoma City Urban League. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

In the ten year period from 1947-1956 inclusive, the Urban League headquarters has grown from a two room office in the Y.W.C.A. building on Stiles Street to an office of seven rooms and two baths with the most complete office furnishings and equipment.

Officers of the Urban League

During the ten years since its inception, the Urban League of Oklahoma City has had five presidents, four of whom were white and one of whom was a Negro.

Mr. Jesse T. Owens

Dr. Bertha Levy

Reverend Frank O. Holmes

Mr. F. D. Moon

Mr. Purcell Graham

The first officers of the Urban League were:

Mr. Jesse T. Owens, President

Mrs. Carrie Edwards, Secretary

Mr. L. D. Lacy, Treasurer

The present officers of the League are:

Purcell Graham, President

Mattie Zeltz, Secretary

Della McCane, Assistant Secretary

Leo S. Code, Treasurer

CHAPTER IV

ACTIVITIES OF THE OKLAHOMA CITY URBAN LEAGUE-- COMMUNITY SERVICES

In Chapter III the organization of the Urban League of Oklahoma City was discussed. This chapter and the following two chapters are devoted to a consideration of the three areas of activities of the Oklahoma City Urban League: Community Services, Industrial Relations and Cooperation and Coordination Services.

According to the Terms of Affiliation, the Oklahoma City Urban League was accepted as an affiliation of the National Urban League on September 10, 1946. It did not come into being as a result of a desire to experiment with a new organization. The impact of two tragic eras in the history of Oklahoma City (1) the depression of the 1920's and the 1930's, and (2) the second world war, had the effect of arousing social consciousness to meet human needs more effectively.[1] Out of this awareness came a deep and profound realization on

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[1]National Urban League, A Study of the Social and Economic Conditions of the Negro Population in Oklahoma City (n.;.: June-July, 1945), p. 64.

the part of interested citizens, of the need for a strong interracial organization through which community problems affecting the Negro might be met. As a result of the recognition of this need, the Urban League was established in Oklahoma City. Persons believing in the principles in which this country had its origin, that all races and faiths could live side by side in complete harmony, were motivated by a desire to improve the social conditions of the minority group. They realized that:

> Minority race groups in many places have developed a spirit of bitterness and resentment against the injustice of the existing order which makes wholesome relations difficult...The death rate, the crime rate, the proportion of ignorance and inefficiency among repressed races are nearly always higher than among the majority race. Thus, society carries the burden of its own neglect and exploitation.[1]

They were also aware of the fact, as was Franklin Roosevelt, that:

> Today we are faced with the preemminent fact, that if civilization is to survive, we must cultivate the science of human relationships--the ability of all peoples of all kinds to live together and work together in the same world at peace.[2]

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[1]Cernoria Johnson, "A Study in the History and Development of the Urban League Program of Fort Worth, Texas, 1944 and 1945" (unpublished Master's thesis, Atlanta University, Atlanta, Georgia, 1946), p. 24.

[2]Rose Schneideman, Democratic Education in Practice (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949), p. 1.

Program and Philosophy of Oklahoma City Urban League

The purpose and program of the Urban League of Oklahoma City are based upon those of the National Urban League. While the basic philosophy and objectives of the Urban League have remained the same as they were at the time of the organization of the League, changing social conditions have necessitated changes in the expression of that philosophy and in the approach to the objectives. Not only have changes in society made necessary changes in the approach of the Urban League, from time to time, but also from community to community.

The programs of the affiliates, although planned in the light of local problems and needs, are under the supervision of the Southern Field Division, located in Atlanta, Georgia. This office, with the assistance of strong, local interracial groups, supervises the work of the League affiliates in thirteen states.[1]

Once the newly organized League had been formally and officially declared an affiliate of the National Urban League, and had cleared away all details essential to the functioning of an organization, such as the selection of an Executive Director, a Board of Directors, committee appointments, and the adoption of a Constitution and By-Laws, the League was ready to launch upon the task of developing a program of community services and improvement.

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[1]Johnson, "A Study of the Urban League...in Fort Worth, Texas," p. 24.

If an organization is to work constructively in a community, it must know something of the community of which it is a part. In recognition of this fact the Urban League of Oklahoma City early sought to acquaint itself with all aspects of the community, its institutional life, its resources, its social needs, the nature of its leadership, the attitudes, sentiments, and beliefs of the people, as well as its factional life. The factional life of a people often disorganizes a community and impedes progress, hence, a knowledge of this aspect of the community had great significance for the League in developing its program. In addition to providing insight concerning the type of organization that should be adopted, information about the community affords the necessary background for the initiation of projects agreed upon, and to some extent, influences the development of such projects.

Any contribution which the Urban League of Oklahoma City has made to the well being of the community is attributed, in the main, to a knowledge of the community, its resources, and its needs. At the very outset, the League turned to the findings and recommendations of the Study of the Social and Economic Conditions of the Negro Population in Oklahoma City as the nucleus around which to build its program. Many meetings of the Board of Directors were devoted to a study of the needs of the community as revealed

by this survey.[1]

After thorough examination of the recommendations made by the staff of experts who conducted the study, the League felt it could best serve the interests of the community by organizing its program around three broad areas. These areas, as outlined by the Executive Director, are: 1) Community Services with emphasis upon health, child and family welfare services, housing, recreation and neighborhood improvement; 2) Industrial Relations which is concerned with job development, vocational guidance, public information and training; and 3) Cooperation and Coordination Services. This involves a working relationship with other groups of the community whose interests are similar to those of the League. These groups include civic and religious organizations, public schools, welfare groups, state and governmental agencies, and city officials.

Many churches and civic groups turn to the League for information, leadership, and service in problems relating to racial matters.[2] They find that the League is available at all times for consultation with agencies, organizations, and individuals who need assistance in any phase of their

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[1]Minutes of Board of Directors of Oklahoma City Urban League during the year 1947. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

[2]Oklahoma City Urban League, "Urban League Promotes Better Understanding Between the Races" (Oklahoma City; 1953), (mimeographed).

work involving the Negro Community, or race relations.

Many times projects are started on the initiative of the League. In these instances, groups are invited by the Urban League to share in the planning, execution and benefits of the projects. In this way, the League coordinates the services of all groups in various phases of planning for community improvement.

As in the case of other affiliates, the tools of the Oklahoma City Urban League are research and fact finding. A study of community conditions is necessary in order that social problems might be located. In many instances, the League has conducted the surveys. In other instances, it has utilized the findings of investigations made by other agencies.

Group discussion is also basic to the program of the Urban League. This is one of the most important safeguards of democracy and is fundamental to the democratic form of government. Realizing this fact and the fact that group discussion is one of the best mediums through which misconceptions and erroneous ideas are clarified, the League makes great use of this technique in the form of public meetings, forums, and open discussions.

The success of the Urban League movement is dependent upon a sound public relations program. One of the greatest handicaps in the progress of better race relations in America is the unfortunate lack of information suffered by

an overwhelming majority of the population, both white and Negroes. Therefore, the League has included in its program the use of opinion makers of the country--national radio and television networks, important metropolitan newspapers, the Negro weekly press, scientific and professional journals and the League's own publications.[1]

Interpretation of the Urban League Program to the Community

From the very beginning, the Oklahoma City Urban League accepted as one of its major responsibilities the task of interpreting to the general public the work of the Agency. The idea of the Urban League movement was relatively new to the community. True, some vague generalizations concerning the League program were formed in the minds of many people, but the general public had no real understanding of the purpose, the philosophy, nor the approach of the organization. In fact, there were some who were definitely opposed to its organization in the community.[2]

One of the major problems, then, with which the League was confronted during its earlier period was that of devising ways and means of interpreting to the public the philosophy

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[1]Johnson, "A Study of the Urban League...in Fort, Worth, Texas," p. 30.

[2]Letter from Faye Webb, Executive Secretary of Council Welfare Agencies to Mr. William Y. Bell, Director of the Field Division of the National Urban League, April, 1945.

and purpose of the organization. It was hoped that a well-planned program of public education and interpretation might help increase the membership of the organization. The early minutes of the Board of Directors reveal that an increase in membership was of major concern to the League. The League began immediately to seek the cooperation of the churches, the press, and the radio. Ministers were asked to inform the members of their congregation of the existence of the League in the community, and to enlighten them on its purposes. News releases were sent regularly to the press, both white and Negro. Information pertaining to League activity was mailed to various organizations, institutions, and agencies throughout the city. Members of the League were encouraged to discuss the League program in other organizations in which they held membership. Other approaches were made through a weekly news item under the caption, "View Your Urban League." This was carried in the Negro press. Another was made through a series of broadcasts, "Know Your Urban League," over station KOCY in Oklahoma City. The broadcasts were held each Sunday afternoon for a period of six weeks beginning the first Sunday in July, 1947, and continuing through the second Sunday in August, 1947.[1]

As a result of these approaches, the public gradually

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[1]Minutes of Board of Directors, Oklahoma City Urban League, February, 1947 through December, 1947, p. 3. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

began to accept the Urban League program as part of its community services. Through a committee set up for the purpose of developing sound public relations, the League has sought to maintain a continuous program of public education and interpretation.

At a meeting held on December 3, 1946 the consitution and by-laws which had been temporarily adopted by the Provisional Committee were given final approval as those of the Urban League of Oklahoma City. To successfully achieve its purpose as outlined in this constitution, the newly organized League felt that too much emphasis could not be placed upon the training and experience of the person selected to carry out the directives of the Board. So, at this same meeting, the Board of Directors agreed to send the Executive Director of the Oklahoma City Urban League to a two weeks National Urban League Conference at Camp Atwater in Boston, Massachusetts, and to the National Urban League office for a ten day orientation course during the months of July and August of 1947. Expenses and the regular salary of the Executive Director were paid by the local League.[1]

Promotion of understanding between the races, providing a meeting ground for discussion of interracial problems, and providing services to the Negroes in a bi-racial pattern are

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[1]Minutes of the Board of Directors, Oklahoma City Urban League, December 3, 1946, p. 4. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

some of the aims and purposes of the Oklahoma City Urban League.[1]

Race Relations

In order to understand and evaluate the nature of the activities of the Urban League, it is first necessary to understand something of the relationship which existed between the Negro and white races prior to the establishment of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

The race question has always been a burning issue in Oklahoma City. The early legislatures passed several laws limiting the citizenship rights of Negroes. The Federal District and the United States Supreme Courts, later, declared those laws unconstitutional. According to the Community Relations Project report, the American Guide Series reveal that the first record of the Negro as an issue in state affairs was the projection of the question into the political controversy at the beginning of statehood:

> The Jim Crow Law was one they first adopted. The Grandfather Clause, which would have deprived the Negro of suffrage, was adopted in 1910. It was declared unconstitutional by the Federal District Court in 1915. An attempt to initiate a literacy test as a substitute was defeated by popular vote in 1916.[2]

It is not to be inferred, however, that the Negroes

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[1]Oklahoma City Urban League, "Urban League Promotes Better Understanding Between the Races," p. 2.

[2]National Urban League, A Study of the Social and Economic Conditions..., p. 61

in Oklahoma City remained passive during this period. On the contrary, they were active in fighting for their citizenship status. The Community Relations Project revealed that:

> The press and pulpit joined in what many of the older residents termed, 'a refusal to be politically enslaved by people who had come to the state seeking a larger freedom for themselves.'[1]

The Research Staff of the Community Relations Project was interested in the relationship existing between the Negro and white races. In order to obtain a cross-section of opinions regarding this relationship, one hundred and fifty questionnaires were mailed to Negro and white social, civic, and business leaders. The questionnaires contained two items. The first was: What do you consider the outstanding interracial problems in this city? The second was: What suggestions would you offer to improve these conditions?[2]

Replies from both races indicated that problems resulting from economic conditions of the Negro were some of the most outstanding interracial problems of the city. Naturally, the low status of the Negro in the economic sphere bred other problems.

Following are typical of the replies received by the Research Staff:

> Housing, the need for better recreational facilities for Negroes of all ages, larger and better parks.

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid.

Housing and health segregation.
Fear and racial intolerance on the part of both races.
The Negro section does not receive the proper attention as to Physical and social health needs...
Health, housing, recreational and utilities problems, especially transportation facilities.
Economic problems and transportation conditions.
Denial of fair employment.
Segregation and discrimination.
Lack of mutual understanding of the problems which affect both races.[1]

The following are illustrative of the suggestions offered for the improvement of race relations:

Provide adequate facilities for housing, recreation and education.
A broad educational program.
Fair consideration of the part the Negro community can play in the city's development.
Provide same type of service for all.
Open door policy of employment regardless of race or color.[2]

Health and Welfare Services

The foregoing illustrations of responses indicated a need for a program of broad, social action. But because of the unfamiliarity of the Urban League program in the city, the League made no attempt to begin with such a program. Rather, the League felt it wise to begin with a limited program in which a few successes might be achieved. Later as the idea gained in acceptance, the program of activities was expanded.

A study of the results of the Community Relations

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid., p. 64.

Project revealed that the health and welfare services available to Negroes in the community were woefully inadequate. This condition, as stated by Dr. Paul Cornely, the consultant for the health phase of the study, was attributed to a lack of health education, limited facilities, and inadequate hospitalization.[1] Since this area represented one of such pressing needs, and one in which immediate attention to those needs was desirable, the early efforts of the League were directed toward the improvement of health and welfare services for Negroes in the community. The fact that this question was one of a less controversial nature also had its bearing upon the decision of the League to pioneer in that area.[2]

Of special concern to the League was the report of the study which revealed the lack of attention given to the health needs of Negro children by their parents. The report revealed "an alarming parental neglect or inability to look after the physical well being of their children."[3]

In 1943-1944, the Oklahoma City Superintendent of Schools, Dr. H. Bruner, authorized a survey of health conditions of the students of seven separate schools in the

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[1]Oklahoma City Urban League, Five Year Progress Report (Oklahoma City; 1951), p. 5 (mimeographed).

[2]Interview with Cernoria Johnson, Executive Director of Oklahoma City Urban League, April 15, 1957.

[3]National Urban League, A Study of the Social and Economic Conditions..., p. 22.

community. Upon completion of the study, it was found that the health defects were not all of recent origin. Many were of several years duration. Moreover, these conditions existed in spite of the fact that they had been called to the attention of the pupil, and the parent or guardian. The hesitancy of the parents to take any remedial action concerning the health needs of their children was due, in part, to the fear of the effects of corrective measures. But the major portion of the defects were reflected by children who came from environments of squalor, misery, and poverty where the unequal struggle for existence left little time in the lives of the parents to think of the child's health conditions in relation to his school adjustment and his adjustment to later life.[1] In Table X can be seen the results of the health survey in the seven separate schools.

It is apparent that from the health conditions which existed among Negro children, as those cited above, there was a definite need for a broad program of health education as well as the need for a coordination of all community health resources and services, including those of the schools, doctors, nurses, city and county health departments, parents, dentists, and civic organizations.

Concerning the health needs of children Ragan writes: The health needs of children can be met only as the

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[1] Ibid., p. 22.

TABLE X

RESULTS OF HEALTH CONDITION OF STUDENTS IN SEPARATE SCHOOLS OF OKLAHOMA CITY 1943-1944*

School	Number Enrolled	Number Examined	Heart Defects	Under-weight	Cavities	Vision Defects	Immuni-zations
Dunbar	740	560	34	6	107	56	202
Page	696	632	32	28	73	22	140
Orchard Park	183	168	10	1	25	2	36
Garver	112	96	1	4	12	2	16
Wheatley	100	76	-	1	6	4	14
Choctaw	67	54	3	2	4	1	20
Edwards Addition	54	53	2	7	8	7	-

*National Urban League, A Study of the Social and Economic Conditions..., p. 13.

> community as well as the school becomes a healthful place in which to live...The development of a functional program of health instruction involves cooperation between the school and community.[1]

The above statements are in accord with the recommendations made by Dr. Cornely:

> Encouragement of various civic, religious and fraternal groups to include health instruction and education as a definite part of their year round program...Organization of a city-wide health committee representatives of various interest groups in the community, which would serve as an advisory cooperative committee in a year round program.[2]

The Urban League believed, as did Faye Adams, that:

> A healthy, functioning organism is every child's birth right...No matter how intelligent or how academically successfully a child may be, he cannot fully meet his need for belonging, preeminence, and security, if the depressing and distressing effects of health difficulties are permitted to operate.[3]

Well-Child Clinic

The League therefore began to explore some avenues through which some of the problems attendant upon inadequate health services and facilities might be alleviated. At the suggestion of Dr. J. F. Burton, at a meeting of the Board of Directors in October, 1947, the idea of a well-child clinic was discussed as one of many possible solutions to the

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[1]William B. Ragan, Modern Elementary School Curriculum (New York: Dryden Press, 1953), p. 415.

[2]Oklahoma City Urban League, Five Year Progress Report, p. 5.

[3]Faye Adams, Educating America's Children (New York: Ronald Press, 1947), p. 158.

problem. A committee on health, was appointed to study the feasibility of establishing such a clinic for Negroes in one of the Negro neighborhoods. This committee composed of Bela Halpert, Onnie McGee, Opaline Wadkins, Alma Gideon, J. F. Burton, Jesse T. Owens, J. H. Dalton, Father Seth Edwards, Ardelle Llewllyn, and C. D. Johnson, met on November 24, 1947, to discuss a well-child clinic as one of the health projects which the League might sponsor. In order to carry out such a project successfully, it was necessary to secure the cooperation of the Negro physicians. Dr. Burton suggested that if the Negro physicians manifested interest themselves, he and Mrs. Owens would make the necessary contacts with persons of the majority group.[1]

Following this meeting Mrs. Onnie McGee met with the members of the Negro Medical, Dental and Pharmaceutical Society at which time Mrs. McGee solicited the cooperation of the society in the development of the well-child clinic in some of the more needy Negro neighborhoods. She asked the members of the organization if they would provide full, free, medical examinations for children who attended the two day nurseries, the West Side Nursery and the East Side Nursery, in the city. McGee was also interested in knowing if, in the event the Urban League was successful in

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[1]Minutes of the Board of Directors of Oklahoma City Urban League, October 18, 1947, p. 4. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

establishing a well-child clinic in the Fairground area, the members of the group would cooperate in giving volunteer service in the clinic. The physicians readily agreed to help in the development of any health program, not only for pre-school children, but for all indigent persons. Moreover, they agreed to give periodic check-ups in the nurseries and immediately arranged a schedule for the same.[1]

McGee reported the results of the conference with the Negro Medical Society to the Health Committee at a meeting on February 18, 1948. However, the idea of the clinic did not meet the approval of all of the persons present. The City Health Director, W. H. Miles, strongly opposed the idea. He informed the group of the city's inability to assist financially in the establishment of any clinic in any part of the city. He discouraged the idea and emphasized the importance of making full use of the city health clinic at 9 Wall Street, and the one maintained at the Variety Club Health Center. Dr. E. G. Green, Director of the Variety Club Health Center was of the same opinion as Dr. Miles, though he did deplore the fact that Negroes from the East Side and other parts of the city might find it difficult to get to the Variety Club Health Center.[2]

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[1]Minutes of the Health Committee, Oklahoma City Urban League, November 24, 1947, p. 2. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

[2]Minutes of the Health Committee, Oklahoma City Urban League, February 18, 1948, p. 2. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

As further proof of the need of the services of a well-child clinic, Johnson cited the following statistics obtained from the city health nurse:

> The Public Assistance Division, Oklahoma County, has under its care 136 indigent families containing 159 pre-school children in the area bound by Lindsay to Eastern from First to Seventh Street. These figures do not account for the pre-school children in borderline or low income families. Inasmuch as only twenty-five or thirty children can be adequately cared for in one clinic, and only three one day well-child clinics are held for all children each week, the total Negro children per week for the total Negro population will run about seventy-five or ninety children.[1]

The opposition encountered from the above sources did not deter the Urban League in its plans to set up a well-child clinic. Johnson conferred with S. S. Farley, Pastor of the Fairview Baptist Church, during which time she acquainted him with the need for a well-child clinic in that community. Farley, convinced of this need, offered the basement of the church to be used for the clinic. He asked no charges. However, the committee agreed to donate $10 per month for the use of utilities.

Meanwhile, Opaline Wadkins, of the University Hospital, contacted various organizations in an attempt to secure co-sponsors for the clinic. Members of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority were interested in the project and agreed to provide funds for its operation.

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[1]Minutes of the Subcommittee on Child Health Conference, Oklahoma City Urban League, March 3, 1948, p. 4. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

Wadkins and Johnson made visits to the City Health Department to check on appropriate forms and records. However, the nurse, in showing the forms, emphasized the fact that they were very expensive. Because of the expense attached to the forms, Levy was asked to contact Miles to see if the League might expect any cooperation from the City Health Department. (It will be remembered that Miles opposed the idea of the clinic from the beginning.) However, he did agree to furnish a nurse on Thursday of each week, but stated that the City Health Department would not be able to furnish drugs, record forms, nor any other form of assistance. Wadkins, thereupon, called upon the State Health Department. She was assured by Grady Matthews, Director of the State Health Department, that drugs for the immunizations would be made available through the State Health Department, and offered his own services and assistance in any other way possible.[1]

Masterson of the Alexander Drug Company, in a response to an appeal from Bertha Levy for assistance in the project, offered to contribute some drugs free, and others at cost.[2]

The Negro caseworker of the County Department of Public Welfare, volunteered to certify persons to the clinic to assure the Doctors that only indigent persons were served.

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid.

The League further decided that inasmuch as many cases actually require treatment it would be better to call the clinic a Child Health Conference, and give all children, regardless of age, the immunizations.

Although Green was of the opinion that maximum use was not being made of the facilities at the Variety Club Health Center, he commended the Urban League for its interest in the well-child clinic and felt that it should continue its efforts in that direction because the project would strengthen the present health program and the cause of child health.

Dr. Mark Everett, Dean of the University of Oklahoma School of Medicine, offered to send a resident doctor to serve in the clinic, if needed.

Referrals and follow-ups on children attending the clinic were made to private physicians and existing hospitals.

It was the League's objective to undertake the project on a demonstration basis for one year to show the need for the services rendered the community by such a project.[1]

In order to publicize the clinic, the Committee on Education of which F. D. Moon was chairman arranged to send speakers to the various churches to make brief statements on

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[1]Minutes of the Committee on Health, Oklahoma City Urban League, April 21, 1949, p. 1. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

the availability of the services of the clinic; and, arranged for publicity in daily and weekly newspapers, and for radio time.

Finally, in August, 1948, the clinic was ready to open for services with the following sponsors and contributors:

Fairview Baptist Church	Housing
Oklahoma County Medical Society	Nurses
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority	Funds
State Health Department	Drugs and Literature
Urban League's Women's Division	Volunteers
Negro Medical Society	Doctors and Samples

A report of the activities of the clinic for the first three months from August through October, 1948, is presented below. This covers a period of twelve days. The clinic operated four days each month.

Children enrolled	86
Number of visits made	176
Immunizations given	118
Volunteer hours (including doctors and nurses)	220

The following represents the report of the clinic from August, 1948 to May, 1950:

	Number
Children enrolled	244

Visits to clinic	844
Immunizations	561
Mothers registered	213
Volunteer hours	1112½
Sponsoring groups	7

As can be seen from a comparison of the two reports, the clinic proved to be a successful and needed project. It was through this channel that many parents were made to realize the importance of starting early in giving their children a chance to develop strong, sturdy bodies and thus assuring for them a better mental outlook, a happier social adjustment, and the prospects for greater economic security. The public's reaction to the clinic was so enthusiastic that more interest was manifested in the development of a Health Center. The increased attendance necessitated a new and better location; serious diseases were diagnosed early enough to heal the children involved, and individuals were made aware of the benefits which were derived from their voluntary services.[1]

It is not the function of the League to duplicate the function of another agency. On occasions it has been necessary for the League to provide a direct service where such a service is lacking or totally inadequate, (as was the case

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[1]Committee on Health, Oklahoma City Urban League, "Report of Well-Child Clinic from August, 1948, through May, 1949" (mimeographed).

of the inadequate health services for Negroes in Oklahoma City); or where it is necessary to demonstrate the need for such a service; or where it is necessary to provide such a service during a period, when the appropriate agency or organization is preparing to expand its own facilities or services in that area. Whenever a direct service is provided, however, it is done on a temporary basis, with every effort being made to have the appropriate existing agency to take over that function.[1] The original purpose of the well-child clinic which the Oklahoma City League sponsored, was to demonstrate to the City and County Health Department the need for increasing the health services available to Negroes. After accomplishing that purpose the League directed its efforts toward the solution of other problems.

Negro Crippled Children

Further evidence that the Urban League has always been vitally interested in the health of children was reflected in the League's interest in the care given Negro crippled children at University Hospital. At one time the children were housed in the Crippled Children's Hospital. They had been removed from the Crippled Children's Hospital, and, at the time of the organization of the Oklahoma City Urban League, were being serviced in what was called the South

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[1]National Urban League, A Handbook of Operations for Urban League Personnel, Part I, History and Philosophy (1953; pamphlet).

Ward. While the type of care given the children in that location was commended by the League, the members were also cognizant of the fact that they could not receive those special services which were being given at Crippled Children's Hospital.

Dr. J. M. Littlepage, a member of the Health Committee and Mr. Jesse Owens, president of the Oklahoma City Urban League, conferred with the hospital officials, Dr. Mark Everett, Dean of the University of Oklahoma School of Medicine, and Mr. Paul Fesler, Hospital Administrator, regarding this situation. They were informed that the children had been removed upon the advice of a Negro committee. When questioned as to whether or not the Negro crippled children were getting as adequate care in the South Ward as they would were they in the Crippled Children's Hospital, the officials answered in the affirmative. Later, they finally agreed that the children perhaps should be housed in the Crippled Children's Hospital.

The Urban League, through its Committee on Health, based its opposition to the continued service of Negro children in the South Ward on the fact that the trained technicians, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, and plastic surgery specialists were housed in the Crippled Children's Hospital, and, therefore, all patients needing this special care should be housed there.

Again, the League sought the cooperation of the Negro

Medical Society, as it did in the establishment of the Well-Child Clinic.

Communications were sent to Dr. Mark Everett from the Negro Medical, Dental and Pharmaceutical Society explaining the awareness of the Society concerning the situation of the Negro crippled children, in the South Ward of the University Hospital, and offering the services and cooperation of the body in arranging for the transfer of the children to the Crippled Children's Hospital. They stated that:

> This Society is composed of men who realize the need for the various types of therapeutic services that can be given only at Crippled Children's Hospital. Hence, the Society wishes to urge you and the officers in charge to return the Negro crippled children to Crippled Children's Hospital.[1]

Originally, Mrs. Johnson, the Executive Director of the Urban League of Oklahoma City, planned to confer with officials of the Crippled Children's Commission, but Joe N. Hamilton, Director of Crippled Children's Hospital, suggested that more could be accomplished through the Dean of the University of Oklahoma School of Medicine and University Hospital, and the hospital administrator. Mrs. Johnson, then directed her communications to Dr. Everett. In a letter to Johnson on November 8, 1948, Everett made the following

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[1]Letter from Boston Thomas, Secretary of Negro Medical, Dental, and Pharmaceutical Society of Oklahoma City to Dr. M. Everett, Dean of the University of Oklahoma School of Medicine, April 21, 1948. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

observation:

> ...I wish to assure you...that the administration and Hospital Board of this institution favor the policy of transferring the Negro children from the South Ward to the Crippled Children's Hospital and they are desirous of effecting this action as soon as possible. .,.There are at present no vacant facilities in the Crippled Children's Hospital so that it would be necessary to transfer one of our services from that hospital...It will also be necessary to employ four additional graduate nurses and certain other personnel to give adequate care after the transfer...At the earliest moment at which the stated problems can be solved, the administration will proceed to effect the policy of moving these children back to the Crippled Children's Hospital. Meanwhile, you may be assured that the clinical patients receive professional care by the staff physicians the same as at Children's Hospital.[1]

The basic philosophy of the Urban League movement has always been that the best way to accomplish its purpose is through broad social and welfare action, rather than through agitation. Its tactics are study and persuasion; and its main weapon is public opinion. The League makes no attempt to bring about sudden or drastic changes. Its working formula is so simple that its real significance is often overlooked. The formula consists of arousing the active interest of people in social problems which grow out of racial contacts and differences; exploring and analyzing underlying facts and devising means of using them; developing a cooperative teamwork among interracial leaders; and thus contributing

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[1]Letter from Dr. M. Everett, Dean of the University of Oklahoma School of Medicine to Mrs. Cernoria Johnson, Executive Director of Oklahoma City Urban League, November 5, 1948. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

to the solution of the social problems.[1]

The League continued quietly in its effort to bring about the transferral of the Negro crippled children from the South Ward to Crippled Children's Hospital. On December 8, 1951, Dr. Everett wrote Mrs. Johnson that the transferral had been made and that the Negro crippled children were housed in the Crippled Children's Hospital. Since that time the League has been interested in the teaching and recreational opportunities of Negro children placed in Crippled Children's Hospital.

Nursing Education

During the time the committee on the Health of the Urban League was engaged in conferences with the hospital authorities concerning the removal of cripped children to the Crippled Children's Hospital, the hospital authorities conveyed to the League representative data indicating that there was an acute shortage of qualified Negro registered nurses, and especially public health nurses. They also expressed the desire to have the League cooperate with the administration in recruiting nurses. Further, the findings and recommendations of Dr. Paul Cornely, the health consultant, indicated the same situation.

The situation among Negroes was more acute because

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[1]Johnson, "A Study of the Urban League...in Fort Worth Texas," p. 31.

there were no available facilities for nursing education opportunities among Negro women. This, coupled with the fact that the Negro nurses who were recruited from the Northern and Eastern states, did not remain in Oklahoma very long because of the segregated pattern which prevails in the state greatly augmented the acuteness of the situation.

The minutes of the Health Committee of the Urban League covering the period from March, 1947 to January, 1950, reveal that much consideration was given to possibilities for developing nursing education opportunities for Negro women.[1] At a meeting of the health committee on July 1, 1947, Dr. Gray of the University of Oklahoma School of Medicine discussed the nursing situation among Negroes at great length. When questioned as to whether there was any possibility of establishing a nurses training school for Negroes, Dr. Gray informed the committee that there were too few beds available, and that the appropriation available to the Medical School was not sufficient for that purpose. He was of the opinion, however, that nurses aids might help relieve the situation.[2]

At a later meeting of the health committee, July 27,

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[1]Minutes of the Health Committee, Oklahoma City Urban League, March 26, 1947, p. 1. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

[2]Minutes of the Health Committee, Oklahoma City Urban League, July 27, 1947, p. 3. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

1947, the possibility of initiating a training program for nurses aides on an integrated basis was proposed by Dr. Burton. At the time, the only course of that nature that was offered was a home nursing course which was not open to Negroes. In response to a query from Dr. Burton relative to the interest of Negroes in a home nursing course were such a course made available to them, Mrs. Johnson stated that the League would accept the responsibility of obtaining that information.

In January of 1950, the State League on Nursing Education held a two-day conference in Oklahoma City. The Health Committee, under the chairmanship of Dr. Bertha Levy sent a communication to the Nurses Conference stating that in a meeting of the Committee on Health of the Oklahoma City Urban League on January 3, 1950, that body went on record as "being in favor of the establishment of nursing education for Negro women which meets the standards of national accreditation." They further stated that:

> ...This opinion, of course, was expressed with the hope that any already established acceptable nurse training facilities will eventually become available to Negro women on an integrated basis. Further, the group strongly opposed the establishment of a separate school of nursing especially in view of the terrific struggle already being made by your group and others to improve standards in this field in the State of Oklahoma. We...are anxious to follow your guidance in helping to solve the problem...[1]

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[1] Ibid.

Following this communication to the State League on Nursing Education, the Urban League, through the Committee on Health, outlined a plan for developing nursing education opportunities for Negro women. This included working with the groups and persons listed below:

Oklahoma County Medical Society

State League on Nursing Education

Dr. Hinman, Public Health Director at the University of Oklahoma

National and State Association of Colored Graduate Nurses

Negro Medical Society

Although the League was interested in the efforts to develop nursing education opportunities for Negro women, it also recognized the immediate need for recruiting nurses to help relieve the shortage of nurses. One of the first steps the League took to help relieve this situation was to make appeals for nurses through national organizations such as the National Urban League, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and the National Nurses Association. It gathered information concerning the requirements for nurse training which it made available to young Negro women who might be interested in nursing education.

As a result of the cooperative interracial teamwork among the various groups interested in the welfare of all people, the University of Oklahoma Schools of Medicine and

of Nursing opened their doors to eligible Negro applicants. Also by 1951 there were twenty-five Negro nurses employed by hospitals, the City and County, and the public schools. At the time the survey was made by the Community Relations Project Research Staff, only eight nurses were employed in Oklahoma City.[1]

The League gave its support and cooperation in an effort made by the Negro physicians of the city to treat their patients at the white hospitals. One of the recommendations of the Community Relations Project Staff was:

> that the hospitals which serve the needs of Negroes be encouraged to provide staff and courtesy privileges for Negro physicians.

As a result of the "climate of understanding" which the League has helped to create, two hospitals serving persons in both groups have Negro physicians on their staffs and another hospital is staffed entirely by Negro physicians.[2]

Juvenile Delinquency

Meeting the needs of children has always been of major concern to the Urban League of Oklahoma City. As early as March of 1947, the Study Committee on Child Welfare,

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[1]Oklahoma City Urban League, Five Year Progress Report, p. 6.

[2]Oklahoma City Urban League, Ten Year Progress Report (Oklahoma City; 1956), p. 48 (typewritten).

which was a sub-committee of the overall Committee on Welfare, began a study of the welfare services available to Negro children in the community. They found Oklahoma City faced with many lacks in its facilities for the care of these children. The committee, through the Council of Social Welfare, invited the directors of the community agencies serving Negro children to study problems in that area cooperatively with the Study Committee on Child Welfare of the Urban League. Representatives of these agencies met with this committee on June 11, 1947. Among the representatives present was Mr. George Bailey, the Juvenile Delinquency Officer. He described the deplorable conditions that existed in attempting to meet the needs of Negro children. There were no facilities for detaining children under twelve years of age who showed signs of delinquent behavior patterns. The children were either released to the family or to some interested person or placed in jail with hardened criminals to await the hearing on their case.[1]

The Urban League immediately began cooperating with the Council of Church Women and the League of Women Voters in trying to establish a receiving or a detention home for dependent, neglected and delinquent children. While they were successful in securing some improvements in child welfare

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[1]Minutes of the Study Committe on Child Welfare, Oklahoma City Urban League, March 26, 1947, p. 3. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

facilities in the community, they did not succeed in getting a receiving cottage for Negro children. However, Judge Blinn and the county commissioners did approve an inclusion in the budget of a supplement of seventy-five dollars a month with which a foster home could be subsidized. It was not until 1956 that a detention home for delinquent children became somewhat of a reality. In that year Judge William A. Berry worked for floating bonds for the purpose of erecting a county juvenile detention home. The Urban League was instrumental in bringing together community organizations to support this bond issue. As a result of the many efforts put forth in the interest of child welfare by various agencies and organizations, $265,000 in bond issue funds is to be used for the erection of a home for delinquent boys and girls.[1]

Recreation

Realizing that a well-planned program of recreation is basic to the prevention of delinquency in young people, the Urban League of Oklahoma City has made every effort to cooperate with the officials of the City Recreation and Park Departments, in planning a recreation program that will reach all segments of the population.

In the summer of 1945, there were seventeen parks

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[1]"Juvenile Home to be Erected," The Daily Oklahoman (Oklahoma City), November 29, 1956.

operated for whites and three for Negroes. There were forty-one white persons and seven Negroes employed in these parks. The Board of Education of Oklahoma City operated sixteen playgrounds on school grounds and employed thirty-one directors of the playgrounds of whom six were Negroes. Mrs. Ethel R. Clark, the Recreation Specialist for the National Community Relations Project, made the following observations concerning recreational facilities for Negroes:

> Only one park equipped with adequate facilities; no club houses for winter activities; no swimming pools; little value to group programs and activities because of the ineffectiveness of most of the agencies among Negroes.[1]

The Urban League Committee on Welfare, in a meeting on April 14, 1948, prepared a list of recommendations for the improvement of recreational facilities. These recommendations were presented to additional Negro groups and leaders, through a Coordinating Council of Negro Organizations, for their approval, after which they were presented to the following city officials: City Park Superintendent, Chairman, City Recreation Commission, Director, City Recreation Department, City Councilmen and the Superintendent of Public Schools.[2]

As a result of these coordinated efforts of various

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[1]Oklahoma City Urban League, Five Year Progress Report, p. 11.

[2]Minutes of the Welfare Committee, Oklahoma City Urban League, April 14, 1948, p. 1. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

groups, organizations, agencies, and city officials, according to the Ten Year Progress Report of the Oklahoma City Urban League, there are now ten community centers which are kept in operation during the entire year. The program is integrated, following the transition from separate to integrated schools. Three of the year-around centers are located in the northeast section of the city. One serves Negro children, primarily with white recreation leaders, while the other two are entirely colored. During the summer forty-five playgrounds and ten pools are maintained.

The major changes that have been made in improving recreation sites in areas where colored persons reside, have been the construction of several club houses, the provision of tennis courts, the construction of a swimming pool, and the acquisition of the new Douglas Center and golf courses. The most significant change, however, has been the opening of all facilities to everyone, and the programming of the recreational activities on a city-wide basis for an integrated set-up.[1]

Neighborhood Improvement Program

The interest of the League in the area of neighborhood improvement goes back to 1947. On May 24 of that year, the Committee on Welfare, in its regular meeting held on

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[1]Oklahoma City Urban League, Ten Year Progress Report, p. 32.

that date, discussed the need for the development of a neighborhood improvement program in the Walnut Grove Community. This neighborhood, it will be recalled, was the area in which Negroes settled when they first came to Oklahoma during territorial days. At the time of the organization of the Urban League in Oklahoma City, it was the most neglected area in the city. The lack of sewers, limited utility services, poor health and housing conditions, recreational needs, juvenile delinquency, inadequate school facilities, the low economic and employment status of the residents, were all discussed at this meeting with a view toward initiating plans to remedy the situation. Inasmuch as research and fact finding are basic to the League movement, the Welfare Committee, upon the suggestion of Miss Breeding, agreed that a survey should be made to determine the actual conditions in the community before any remedial steps should be taken by the League. The committee submitted to the Board of Directors a request for a survey to be made of the Walnut Grove community.[1] The project was initiated in 1949, but it was not until 1951 that it was completed.

To conduct a survey, the League felt that it should have expert guidance and supervision. So, it called upon the School of Social Work and the Department of Sociology

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[1]Minutes of the Welfare Community Committee, Oklahoma City Urban League, May 24, 1949, p. 3. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

at the University of Oklahoma. In October of 1951, nineteen students from the two departments came down from the University and made the survey. These students spent one Saturday on the project. The Urban League provided lunch and transportation for the students.

The survey revealed that the homes in the area were in a deplorable condition, and the area was a very depressing sight. The majority of the families were in very strained financial circumstances. Many of the workers in the community were semi-skilled and others were dealers in junk and derived only a small income from their work.

The children from the community attended Wheatley School at 200 East California. The Wheatley School census taken early in 1947 lists an enrollment of 121 children from the area, representing 62 families. This same census also states that there were in 1947 some 229 persons between the ages of 6-21 in the Walnut Grove Area. School attendance was very irregular among the children because both parents were at work during the day and the children were left at home to care for the younger children. Illiteracy was prevalent throughout the community.[1]

Following a report of the survey, the League brought to the attention of seventeen public and private groups that

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[1]Council of Social Welfare Agencies, "The Walnut Grove Survey" (Oklahoma City; 1951), p. 5 (mimeographed).

serviced the area either directly or indirectly the conditions that existed in the community as revealed by the survey. All of these groups expressed a desire to work cooperatively with the League in an effort to improve these conditions. The League contacted the Board of Education, explained the situation, and urged that a new school be built for the community. Communications were sent to the City Commissioners, regarding the sewers, utilities and other public services. They sought the cooperation of the Coordinating Council of Negro Organizations in requesting the Neighborhood Clubs and the City Park Department to operate jointly a recreational and community center program in Walnut Grove.[1]

The Women's Division of the Urban League, under the leadership of Mrs. Z. N. Breaux, sponsored a book drive for the community. The group realized that the closest library to the community was two miles, so they accepted the responsibility of developing a small library for the community. More than five hundred books were collected and classified for the community. The volumes included all types of books ranging from children's books and light fiction to books on the serious problems of world affairs. Moreover, a half dozen subscriptions were donated by Women's Clubs and church auxiliaries. These included magazines for growing children

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[1]Minutes of the Welfare Committee, Oklahoma City Urban League, October 5, 1947, p. 3. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

and adults.

As a result of the activities of the various agencies, a new school building was constructed in the area. School attendance among the children increased considerably. The Walnut School P.T.A. was reactivated and has since been a vital factor in the community. Through the Job Placement Program of the League (which will be discussed later), the economic status of many of the families was improved.[1]

The League has continued its interest and emphasis upon neighborhood improvement. Presently, it is engaged in organizing Neighborhood Councils. A Neighborhood Council is a group of people in a geographical area who have decided to plan and work together to make their homes, streets, schools, playgrounds, and places of business better places in which to live, work, play and grow up. All residents within the specified geographical area who are in accord with the aims and objectives of the organization are eligible for membership in the council.

The community which the Urban League selected as the one in which to organize the first council is the Creston Hills community. This community includes the area bounded by 16th Street on the North; 23rd Street on the South; Eastern Avenue on the East; and Miramar Boulevard on the West.

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[1]Report of Activities of the Oklahoma City Urban League, 1951. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

This community was chosen to be used as a demonstration because it was one in which the racial composition was rapidly changing. Since the claim has always been made that property value decreases when Negroes move into a residential section, the Urban League, under the direction of the Executive Director, Mrs. Johnson, has undertaken to encourage Negroes to keep up the appearance of their neighborhood, and thus dispel the old myth that "property depreciates when Negroes buy in quantity."[1] The Council is in the initial stage of organization.

The Council is made up of Block Units and Street Organizations. A Block Unit is composed of residents living on both sides of the street within a single block. All residents in a block are eligible for membership whether they are home owners, renters or roomers. There are no racial or religious restrictions to memberships. The Street Organizations consist of representatives from the various Block Units that constitute a City street.[2]

At the first meeting of the 19th Street Block on August 10, 1956, Mrs. Johnson explained the purpose of the project which is, as has been stated, to help disprove the

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[1]Minutes of the 19th Street Organization, Neighborhood Council, Oklahoma City Urban League, August 10, 1955. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

[2]Oklahoma City Urban League, Handbook on Neighborhood Councils (Oklahoma City: April, 1957), p. 8 (pamphlet).

claim that Negroes cause property value to decrease when they move into white areas.

The residents that were present at the meeting suggested some of the facilities, such as stop signs and stop lights at certain intersections, as well as "Children are Playing" signs, which are needed in the neighborhood. They were also aware of the need for library facilities, more police protection, and a neighborhood park.

The enthusiasm of the 19th Street organization is representative of the majority of the Block Unit and Street organizations. In fact, so enthusiastic was the response from the Creston Hill residents that the residents in the Garden Oaks Community have asked for the program in that community.

Housing

Housing represents one of the chief concerns of the League, especially as it affects the Negro owner. Urban slums breed sickness, death, crime and delinquency. They are financial wastes to the community. However, in spite of the problems which are attendant upon inadequate housing, according to Stratemeyer:

> ...As great architectural skill and as good housing as the world has ever known are in our country. Yet one third of the nation is ill-housed.[1]

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[1]Florence Stratemeyer, Developing a Curriculum for Modern Living (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers' College, Columbia University, 1947), p. 42.

Housing for the minority group of Oklahoma City is a social problem which has been of major concern to both the minority and majority groups for many years. Availability of adequate housing for the Negro population has been limited by the artificial barriers which have made it difficult for Negroes to expand outside of clearly defined areas. President Eisenhower, in his message to Congress in January, 1954, expressed concern for the lack of opportunity of members of the minority group to acquire good homes.

> ...Many members of minority groups, regardless of their income, or their economic status, have had the least opportunity of all our citizens to acquire homes.[1]

During World War II, the Tinker Air Force Base, which is one of the largest repair and supply facilities in the world, was built southeast of Oklahoma City. East of this plant was built the Douglas Aircraft Company. The Will Rogers Air Field, near the Municipal Airport was located southwest of Oklahoma City, and located west of the city was the Cimmarron Field, an air cadet training station. These military activities caused a serious housing shortage in the community.[2]

The return of the war veterans has helped to make the

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[1]Irwin D. Rider, "The Housing of Negroes in Milwaukee" (Milwaukee: Intercollegiate Council on Intergroup Relations, 1955), p. 2 (mimeographed).

[2]National Urban League, A Study of Social and Economic Conditions..., p. 31.

problem more acute. The Urban League of Oklahoma City has taken definite steps to help alleviate some of the housing problems among Negroes. It sponsors Housing Forums and Luncheons to which are invited representatives from various Housing and Home Builders, and Realtors Associations, to discuss the operations of their building programs, and the ways in which they can help minorities in the purchase of homes. On August 18, 1955 such a Housing Luncheon was held. At this time Mr. Chester L. Wolfe, the Executive Secretary of the Voluntary Home Mortgage Credit Program of Kansas City, Missouri was invited to discuss the operation of his program in light of the benefits which may be accrued to Negroes in securing adequate housing. To carry out such projects, in relation to the housing situation, the Urban League secures the support of the Federal Housing Administration, the Veteran's Administration, individual financiers, and others who are interested in helping to solve the housing problems of the Negro.[1]

Among the difficulties encountered by the Negro in trying to obtain suitable housing are the low incomes earned by the Negro worker; the manner in which the Negro is exploited by landlords; payment of excessive rent for substandard housing; the exorbitant prices demanded for old

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[1]Minutes of the Housing Committee, Oklahoma City Urban League, July 28, 1955, p. 3. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

houses; the hesitancy of lenders to invest in property for Negro families; and the unwillingness of builders to build for low income families.

The Urban League has from the beginning conferred with representatives from many white and colored groups, composed of representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, the local Real Estate Association, Home Builder's Association, the Federal Housing Authority, and religious, civic and social welfare groups concerning the problem of housing for the minority group.[1] It has continued to promote programs which keep Negroes informed about methods of financing available for the construction of homes as well as keeping the Home Building Agencies informed concerning the ability of the Negroes to purchase homes, their credit rating and pay record which have been termed as good by the Federal Housing Authority.[2]

Urban Renewal

During the past several months the League has been interested in working with the Urban Renewal program. On May 14, 1956, Mayor Allen Street appointed a fifty member

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[1]Correspondence to Veterans Administration Central Office, Washington, D. C., from Executive Director of the Oklahoma City Urban League, September 19, 1955. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

[2]Interview with Cernoria Johnson, Executive Director, Oklahoma City Urban League, April 15, 1957, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Urban Renewal advisory board to plan a face lifting for Oklahoma City, a part of an Urban Renewal program. The Urban Renewal Program began in 1949. It has as its purpose the clearance of slums and blighted areas in cities. It involves the home life and way of living of hundreds of thousands of families. Negroes constitute the majority of those who are involved. The program is designed to rebuild the decayed sections of cities, replan them for more convenient living and to provide better housing for the many families in the various middle and low income groups.[1] The

The purpose of the committee appointed by Mayor Street is to make plans for the initial steps in a broad, long-range urban renewal program in Oklahoma City. The committee is composed of Business and Professional men, merchants, builders, financiers, schoolmen, realtors and city and utility officials. The Urban League has two representatives on the committee. They are D. F. S. Felton and Mr. F. D. Moon.

The Urban Renewal program is aimed at protecting areas still developing, conserving areas where blight is beginning to show, rehabilitating blighted areas, and redeveloping areas so badly deteriorated they need a completely fresh start. Urban Renewal was authorized in Oklahoma by

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[1]National Urban League, Proceedings, Second Urban Renewal Institute, Warren, Ohio, June 7-8, 1955. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

the last state legislative assembly session. Under the plan of Urban Renewal, the city is directed to encourage private enterprise to help carry it out, but permits the city to participate either with or without federal aid.

CHAPTER V

ACTIVITIES OF THE URBAN LEAGUE OF OKLAHOMA CITY-- INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

It has been indicated previously that one of the areas in which the Urban League of Oklahoma City functions is that of Industrial Relations. However, it was several years after the establishment of the Urban League in Oklahoma City that this department, as such, was created. Prior to that time the activities in that area were performed by a Vocational Services Committee. The function of the Vocational Services Committee was to secure new employment opportunities for Negroes.

The ability of any group in the community to obtain and hold regular employment at a living wage determines to a very great extent the security and the general welfare of that group. This is especially true of the Negro group, on whom generations of economic insecurity have left their mark of poor and inadequate housing, high mortality and crime rates.[1]

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[1]National Urban League, A Study of the Social and Economic Conditions of the Negro Population of Oklahoma City (n.p.: June and July, 1945), p. 22.

The importance to a community of how its people get their living cannot be over-emphasized. The main employment opportunities, or the lack of such, color the life not only of the wage earner, but of the entire community. Health, housing, education and recreation are provided according to what local industry makes possible. Where there are unemployment and economic insecurity, there are also inadequate housing, ill health, poverty, ignorance, delinquency and illegal occupations.

The Community Relations Project Study of 1945 revealed that limited opportunities of public and private employment were among the major problems which had created strained race relations in Oklahoma City. Reference has already been made to the heavy concentration of Negroes in the service and unskilled laboring occupations. The staff of the Community Relations Project further noted:

> As a rule governments of municipalities of the size of Oklahoma City afford a wide variety of jobs necessary for efficient operation of their various departments. The city manager of Oklahoma City reported that in July of 1945, there were 1,017 persons employed by the city exclusive of public school teachers. Fifty of these (4.9 per cent) were Negroes employed in the following departments: library, water, garbage, health, street and police. With the exception of those in the library, health and police departments, the Negroes in the employ of the city government are laborers and semi-skilled workers. Considering that Negroes constitute approximately 10 per cent of the city's population, the low proportion of Negroes in municipal employment indicates a serious lag in employment opportunities for Negroes in this area.[1]

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[1] Ibid., p. 16.

The Vocational Services Committee, as just stated, was responsible for the creation of new work experiences for Negroes. The committee was composed of the following persons: F. D. Moon, Jesse T. Owens, Elsie Kelly, Theota Davis, Frances Gibson, R. W. Gauchli, Carrie L. Edwards, Virgil Doughtery, John B. Herring, Mattie Jeltz, Blanche Paul, J. H. Bruce, Susie Haywood, Vilona P. Cutler and Annabelle Sawyer.[1]

The Plan of Cooperation between the National Urban League and the United States Employment Office

The early meetings of the Vocational Services Committee were devoted to a study of the employment status of the Negro in the community as revealed by the survey of the Community Relations Project, and to the Plan of Cooperation between the National Urban League and the United States Employment Service. According to the plan of cooperation, the National Urban League and the United States Employment Service share with each other information pertinent to employment practices and policies that have been helpful in eliminating discriminatory practices. The Washington office of the United States Employment Service shares with the National Urban League regularly released materials published by the Bureau of Employment Security including such items as

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[1]Minutes of the Vocational Services Committee, Oklahoma City Urban League, February 27, 1948, p. 1. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

counseling and testing materials; Veterans' Employment Service Pamphlets; the Six Point Program; Employment Security Activities; The Labor Market; Veterans' Employment Service Annual Report; and Training Unit Number 33, Sections A and B, Service to Minority Groups.

Case histories of national importance describing procedures used in changing discriminatory patterns of firms are sent from the United States Employment Office to the National Urban League headquarters. The Washington office also cooperates with the National Urban League in any pertinent national conference which the National League sponsors.

On the other hand, the National Urban League shares with the Washington office various published materials released by the League. Illustrative of these materials are materials of a technical, pertinent nature that are sent to Industrial Secretaries of the local Urban Leagues for purposes of assistance in eliminating discriminatory hiring.

The annual reports of the National Urban League are also mailed to the Washington office. In addition, the National Urban League cooperates with and assists the United States Employment office in the recruitment and placement of highly trained minority group workers.

On the local level, the plan of cooperation between the Urban League and the Employment Service Office involves

a working relationship between these two agencies.[1]

The Pilot Placement Program

Before going further into the discussion of the employment phase of Urban League program in Oklahoma City, it might be well at this point to emphasize the fact that the Urban League does not operate as an employment agency as such. Its emphasis is upon what is termed by the League as "pilot placements." Through this process the League selects young people with highly skilled technical or professional training and places them in jobs commensurate with their qualifications. The League makes no attempt to place persons in positions for which they are not prepared. The positions in which the League seeks to place persons who are exceptionally well trained and well adjusted are usually new work situations, that is, situations that have been entirely closed to Negroes. These first placements are "pilot placements." The pilots, by their excellent performance and attractive personalities, pave the way for others to follow.[2]

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[1]Bureau of Employment Security, United States Employment Service, "Employment Services Program Letter, No. 51, March 28, 1949," pp. 1-4. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

[2]National Urban League, A Handbook of Operations for the Urban League Personnel, Part III, The Program of the League (1953; pamphlet).

The Employment of Negro Firemen

One of the most outstanding pilot placements made by the Vocational Services Committee of the Oklahoma City Urban League was the employment of Negro firemen on October 8, 1951. The story goes back to a meeting of the Vocational Services Committee on April 18, 1951. Up to that time the League had approached the employment phase of its program with great hesitancy. But national security demanded that such organizations as the Urban League pursue a more aggressive program in the area of job opportunities for Negroes. Further, the Oklahoma City Urban League, since its beginning had been approached by community leaders, as well as Negro applicants, who declared that Negroes were being denied employment. Especially was this allegation made concerning employment in the skilled fields, such as in the building trades. Labor and industry were charged with equal responsibility in the restriction of opportunities to non-white workers. On the other hand, many Negroes failed to understand employment service regulations and procedures for making referrals and placements. Others did not possess adequate skills to compete in a highly organized business and industrial community. There were others who showed resistance to cooperating with Employment Service Personnel in the matter of giving true information regarding background experiences and other necessary data. All of these factors were emphasized by Mrs. Johnson at a meeting of the Vocational

Services Committee on April 18, 1951. The members of the committee began to realize the need for expanding its program of employment and training.[1]

During the early months of 1951, the city officials were making plans for the construction of new fire stations under the Bond Improvement Program. The proposed expansion of the Fire Department would naturally necessitate, so the committee reasoned, additional personnel to man the new stations. The committee also reasoned that, since the fire station at Ninth and Stonewall Streets was completely surrounded by the Negro population, that station might be the logical place for the employment of the first Negro firemen.[2]

Under the leadership of Frank O. Holmes, the Board of Directors of the Oklahoma City League made a survey of southern and border states to determine their policy in regard to the employment of Negro firemen. Holmes, president of the Oklahoma City Urban League at that time, is a minister of the First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City.

As previously mentioned, the Board of Directors of the Oklahoma City Urban League, under the direction of Holmes

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[1]Oklahoma City Urban League, "1951 Program Prospectus for Vocational Services Committee" (Oklahoma City: January, 1951), p. 2 (mimeographed).

[2]Minutes of the Vocational Services Committee, Oklahoma City Urban League, April 18, 1951, p. 1. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

made a survey of southern and border cities regarding the employment of Negro firemen in those cities. On June 26, 1951 the representatives of the League staff presented the results of the survey to the chief of the Fire Department, G. R. McAlpine. McAlpine commended the League for the organized presentation showing where Negroes are employed by the Fire Departments in the South. He was also interested in knowing how many Negroes were employed in the Police Department and in the United States Post Office. Moon informed him that the League would make that information available to him at the earliest possible moment. This the League did. There were between fifty and sixty Negroes employed inthe Post Office according to information received by the Vocational Services Committee on June 30, 1951. However, information concerning the classification of the Negro postal employees was not made available to the League office at that time. The post office authorities did state that included among the number were mail carriers, clerks and custodians.

On July 6, 1951, the League secured the classification of the Negro postal employees. There were three clerks, twelve Negro letter carriers, fourteen Negro mail handlers and twenty-three Negroes in the custodial staff.[1]

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[1]Minutes of the Vocational Services Committee, Oklahoma City Urban League, July 6, 1951, p. 1. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

Having won the support of McAlpine, the League representative held closed sessions with Mayor Allen Street, the city manager Ross Taylor, and city councilmen Robert Constant and E. R. Dickerson. In these conferences, the first of which was held July 2, 1951, Street told the committee that he would bring the matter to the attention of the council in a private meeting previous to an open meeting of the council. When the city manager brought up the question of finance and the city's inability to employ additional firemen, Street told the committee from the Urban League that he was certain the city would be able to maintain the new fire stations.

Constant refused to commit himself until he could make a more intensive study of the findings of the survey presented to him by the Urban League, after which he wanted to confer with McAlpine and the board.[1]

Again on August 3, 1951, the committee met in conference with McAlpine at which time he suggested that Moon and another representative from the League become members of a screening committee to serve with him in studying the applicants for the positions and in making recommendations for the best twelve. Mrs. Jeltz, the head of the United States Employment Office in Oklahoma City, offered to help recruit and screen applicants for the positions so that the strongest Negro personnel might be considered. Therefore,

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[1] Ibid.

her name was added as a third member of the committee. Through her cooperation, sixty-seven young men were recruited and screened for the position. Their ages, height, weight, character references, work habits and other factors were considered carefully.

Finally, the names of twenty-four applicants were sent to the Fire Department where after personal interviews the final twelve were chosen.[1]

Special Tribute to McAlpine

The League, in an endeavor to express appreciation to McAlpine, paid special tribute to him as its annual meeting in November, 1952.

Each year, usually in November or December, the Oklahoma City Urban League has an annual meeting at which time the progress and achievement of the Urban League during the preceding year are brought before the public. The meeting is usually a dinner affair and is attended by some six hundred or more guests. As a highlight of the program, the League makes every effort to secure a speaker of renown in the field of race relations. Among some of the speakers the League has presented are Archibald J. Carey, Jr., whose accomplishments are presented in a later section of this study; Congressman Adam Clayton Powell; and Dr. James Robinson, a

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[1]Minutes of the Vocational Services Committee, Oklahoma City Urban League, September 4, 1951, p. 2. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

world traveler, and one of the founders of the Interracial Fellowship of Greater New York and the Syndenham Hospital--the first interracial institution in the United States. Robinson is a graduate of Lincoln University in Pennsylvania and earned the Bachelor of Divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary, New York City in 1938. In that same year he was ordained to the Christian ministry and founded the Church of the Master and Morningside Center in Harlem, New York. In 1952 Robinson was invited to serve as the opening convocation speaker for Religious Emphasis Week at the University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma. A widely acclaimed autobiography of Robinson entitled, Road Without Turning, was published in 1950 and is now in its second printing.[1]

On the occasion of its sixth anniversary, the Oklahoma City Urban League had the privilege of presenting Robinson as its guest speaker. The theme of the meeting was "Building Better Human Relations is Everybody's Business." It was at this meeting that the League paid special tribute to McAlpine for the role he had played in employing Negro firemen. The Mayor and Mrs. Street, City Councilman and Mrs. Constant and seven Negro firemen were special guests at the dinner.

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[1]Oklahoma City Urban League, Reports of the Annual Meetings of the Urban League of Oklahoma City from January, 1947 through December, 1956 (mimeographed).

In a communication to Street, Cernoria Johnson stated that:

> ...Because of the progress made under your administration, the Board of Directors wishes to publicly acknowledge some of the improvements made by the city government. Consequently, Chief G. R. McAlpine will be especially honored for the role he has played in the employment of Negro firemen. Under his competent supervision these men have been integrated, without incident, into the Department. We are aware that many criticisms come to the city officials, but very few words of commendation...Therefore, we should like to express our appreciation on this occassion...[1]

The same careful factual and unemotional approach demonstrated in the firemen project represents the way in which the League works in the community through interracial teamwork to get at the roots of community problems. It was what the League considered as one of its "firsts" in its employment program. Now the Vocational Services Committee was ready to focus its attention on other pilot placements.

The Bricklayers Project

At a meeting of the Vocational Services Committee on October 2, 1951, Mrs. Johnson presented the question of the employment of Negro bricklayers on the new Veterans Administration Hospital. Johnson explained that the project was granted through a government contract. Under a government contract the contractors are forced to employ skilled workers whether they are union members or not. Robert

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[1]Letter from Cernoria Johnson, Executive Secretary of the Oklahoma City Urban League to Allen Street, Mayor of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, November 29, 1952.

McKee was the contractor in charge and E. L. Bailey was the bricklayer in charge.

A survey of the community was made to ascertain the number of skilled Negro workers in building trades. The survey revealed that there were approximately forty workers who were particularly discouraged over their inability to join the labor unions covering their skills. A few of the carpenters and bricklayers had been employed by white contractors but later fired because white workers who were members of unions refused to work with them.

Prior to this time several bricklayers had made application for membership in the Bricklayers Union Number 1. They were told by the business agent representing the Union that while Negroes could not be denied membership in the Union, in the present situation it would be practically impossible for them to get work on union jobs because union foremen definitely would not hire Negro bricklayers. He recommended that the Negroes seek employment in other states where there were no barriers preventing them from getting work on union jobs.

The League elected two highly skilled carpenters and two competent bricklayers to make application to Carpenters Local Union 329 and to the Bricklayers Union. Membership was refused in the Bricklayers Union, on the grounds that employment was first necessary before a membership card could be issued. The fact that no foreman would

employ Negroes prevented the Negro from securing a membership card in the union.[1] There is no record in the files of the Urban League concerning the results of the applications made by the Negroes to the Carpenter's Union.

The League did not experience the same degree of success in the employment of Negro bricklayers as it did in the employment of Negro firemen. It was not until 1953 that the first Negro was accepted in the Bricklayers Union and received a contract for union work on the New Douglas High School with Lippert Contracting Company.

F. D. Moon as President of the Oklahoma City Urban League

In 1953 F. D. Moon was elected president of the Urban League. He was the first Negro to be elected president of the Urban League of Oklahoma City and was the first member of his race to serve on the Board of Directors of the United Fund.

The Employment of Negroes in New T. G. and Y. Store

During Moon's administration as president of the Oklahoma City Urban League, a new T. G. and Y. Store was opened in the Negro area. Prior to the opening of the store, Moon and Mattie Jeltz, a member of the Vocational Services Committee, conferred with the T. G. and Y. officials

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[1]Minutes of the Vocational Services Committee, Oklahoma City Urban League, October 2, 1951, p. 1. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

concerning the employment of Negroes. As a result of the conference, there are at present six Negroes and six whites employed on the staff at the store. Four of the six Negroes were recommended by the Urban League through the cooperation of the employment service under the supervision of Mrs. Jeltz. Robert Kelly, manager of the store issued the following statement regarding the integrated staff:

> Seven of our twelve employees have been here since the store was opened, the other five have been here from 12 to 18 months. The length of time we have all worked together is a clear indication that by being sincere, fair, and by giving proper respect to one another that racial differences cease to be a problem. The combined efforts of all our employees both Negro and white have made our store one of the best operated units in our company...[1]

In spite of these achievements there was still much to be desired in developing job opportunities for Negroes. People were coming to the League in larger numbers for assistance in securing training and job opportunities. Complaints regarding restrictions of the Negro in certain occupations were still constantly coming into the office. Because of community concern and because the Urban League is engaged in helping to make democracy a reality, its role is that of alerting employment service officials toward perfecting some sort of plan whereby job opportunities are made available to the Negro worker.

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[1]Oklahoma City Urban League, Year End Report, 1953, p. 4 (mimeographed).

The Appointment of Lisbon Tillman to the Position of Industrial Relations Secretary

In February, 1954 Lisbon Tillman, a former Oklahoman and a Harvard Law School graduate, came to Oklahoma City to secure employment until he could start his law practice. He was appointed to the position of Industrial Relations Secretary of the Oklahoma City Urban League. However, Tillman resigned on September 1, 1954 after six months' tenure of office. The League was again in need of an Industrial Relations Secretary. The Executive Secretary contacted the National Office for information on available personnel.[1]

Selection of Edward Smith as Industrial Relations Secretary

At a meeting of the Personnel Practices Committee on March 11, 1955, the personnel profiles of several persons were examined by the committee members. Among the profiles examined by the Personnel Practices Committee was that of Edward Smith. The committee members were favorably impressed with Smith's profile and recommended to the Board of Directors that Smith be invited to come to Oklahoma City for an interview with the Personnel Practices Committee and the Board of Directors of the Oklahoma City Urban League.[2]

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[1]Minutes of the Vocational Services Committee, Oklahoma City Urban League, October 4, 1954, p. 2. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

[2]Minutes of the Vocational Services Committee, Oklahoma City Urban League, March 11, 1955, p. 3. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

Smith came to the Urban League office in Oklahoma City for the interview on March 23, 1955. The members of the Board of Directors and the Personnel Practices Committee were agreed that Smith was the individual who could best fill the position of Industrial Relations Secretary. Smith began his duties as Industrial Relations Secretary of the Oklahoma City Urban League on April 18, 1955. In accepting the position he assumed the responsibility of assisting the Executive Director in planning and carrying out a program of industrial relations and vocational guidance.

The Industrial Relations department of the Urban League has adopted a policy which parallels that of the minority groups policy of the United States Employment Service.

The following objectives are an indication of this policy:

1. To promote employment opportunity for all applicants on the basis of their skills, abilities and job qualifications.
2. To make definite and continous efforts with employers with whom relationships are established to the end that their hiring specifications be based exclusively on job performance factors.[1]

[1]Minutes of the Industrial Relations Committee, Oklahoma City Urban League, May 29, 1955, pp. 3-4. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

That there is a nation-wide need for highly trained professional, semi-professional, business and industrial personnel is without question. In addition, it is growing increasingly difficult for persons lacking in educational qualifications to find suitable employment. Realizing that there is a growing demand for more and better trained persons in every occupation, the Urban League of Oklahoma City seeks to encourage Negro youth to prepare themselves for positions which are in accord with their qualifications and potentialities.

Skill Betterment Program

Smith, after making a study of job opportunities available in Oklahoma City, discovered that there was a demand for efficient clerical personnel. He further discovered that many of the Negro applicants seeking positions did not possess the necessary skills to fill positions in the clerical fields. This lack of efficiency on the part of the applicant, according to Smith, was due to the facts that: 1) the applicant had not had the opportunity to develop the skills because business schools in Oklahoma City were not open to the Negro; and 2) many applicants reasoned that there was no incentive to prepare themselves for such positions because the opportunity was not made available to them to use the skills once they were acquired.

At a meeting of the Industrial Relations Committee

(formerly the Vocational Services Committee), Smith presented to the members of the committee an outline for a training program which he felt was fundamental in establishing a reservoir of qualified persons in the clerical field. He termed his program a "Skill Betterment Program." Emphasis was to be on those skills related to secretarial work. The clerical field was given prime consideration because, as just stated, there was a demand for qualified personnel in that field, and because it was felt by the Industrial Relations Secretary that it was a field in which the least opposition would be encountered in seeking placements for Negro women. The members of the committee agreed that such a program was definitely needed.

During the summer of 1955 Smith consulted agents of business companies and representatives of business schools for suggestions for materials and equipment in developing the program. The use of machines including primary instruction in them, was offered by Clarence Faulkner of the Remington-Rand Company; Orville James of the A. B. Dick Duplicating Machines; and Clyde Showers of the Underwood Corporation. James Swaggerty, Director of Adult Education in Oklahoma City, Roy Blackwood of Blackwood College, Elmer Young of Hills Business College and Neil Pierce, Director of the Douglas Vocational School assisted with the development of the curriculum. Moon, principal of Douglas High School recommended the following persons as members of the teaching

staff: Frances Jackson, typing and business machines, L. C. Williams, business English; and Geneva Johnson, shorthand.[1]

Classes in the "Skill Betterment Program" are currently being offered at Douglas High School. A fee of $4.25 is required for a twelve-week course to help defray the expenses of the instructors.

The course is designed for the purpose of self-improvement. The object is to help the individual perfect those skills which he may have acquired but which have not been developed to the extent that the applicant can be assured of satisfactory performance. Therefore, it is desired that a person interested in the course be able to do some elementary typing.

Tests of the same pattern as those of the civil service are administered to a student at any given time upon the recommendation of the instructor. These tests are used in the evaluation of the students' achievement. The student in this way, is allowed to progress at his own rate.

The Skill Betterment Program has been in operation for two years. Originally, provision was made for forty-five students. The enrollment for the first period numbered fifty-four. The second year forty persons were enrolled in the course. At the end of the first year eight of the students in the program were placed as typists. Four of these were

[1] Ibid.

placed with the Federal Service and four of the eight students were placed in private offices. Several placements have been made since that time.[1]

The success of the Skill Betterment Program led to the establishment by the Industrial Relations Secretary of an Information and Referral Center. The Urban League maintains a relationship with industries, employers and agencies who keep the Urban League office informed of any available openings for positions they might have. The Urban League, in turn, refers applicants to those agencies seeking qualified personnel. Placement depends much on the personality and appearance of the applicant, the skills he possesses, and his ability to handle minor incidents in a mature manner.[2]

In March, 1955, Smith conferred with Earl Simon, the Personnel Director of Oklahoma City Employees. During the conference, Smith and Simon formulated a plan whereby qualified persons for positions in the municipal government are screened in the Urban League office. Their application is then evaluated by Simon and Smith, after which steps are taken toward placing the applicant.[3]

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[1]Interview with Edward Smith, Industrial Relations Secretary of Oklahoma City Urban League, March 4, 1957, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Minutes of the Industrial Relations Committee, Oklahoma City Urban League, June 29, 1955, p. 3. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

Some of the significant placements in technical and skilled positions which have been made through the Urban League include: mathematician in electronics at Tinker Field; a lithographic engraver with the Dick Stout Engraving Company; Secretary to Dean S. Felton of the University of Oklahoma School of Medicine; Research Chemist at the Medical Research Foundation; X-Ray Technician at the University Hospital; Administrative Secretary in the office of the county judge; Medical Social Worker at the University Hospital; Administrative Secretary in the office of the county judge; Medical Social Worker at the University Hospital; and an Industrial Chemist at Tinker Field. Yet, in many cases company officials have shown their unwillingness to cooperate with the League in the matter of employing skilled Negro help. Urban League reports indicate that the Aero Design Company has been especially evasive in regard to employment of Negroes. The reports also indicate the unwillingness of the Bell Telephone Company and the Oklahoma Gas and Electric Company to "take the lead in setting a pattern" in the matter of employing skilled Negroes as operators and clerical workers.[1]

The Employment of Negro Bus Drivers

According to the report of the Industrial Relations

[1] Ibid., p. 3.

Committee, as of December 10, 1956, the first Negro was employed by the City Bus Company of Oklahoma City. On December 31, 1956 Robert Harris completed his training and was assigned as a regular driver. The Oklahoma City Times newspaper, on May 3, 1957, carried this report:

> The city Bus Company's six month old driver desegration policy is working well and three Negroes are now on the roster...Doug Bowers, assistant General Manager, said two Negroes have been hired since Robert Harris, 21 year old Douglas High School graduate, blazed the trail in December, 1956. At that time Bowers announced the firm would in the future accept applications of qualified men without regard to race...Negro applicants for jobs come to the bus company after preliminary screening by the Urban League, a procedure worked out before the first one was hired...The firm's decision to employ Negro drivers followed a series of conferences between Bowers and Eastside leaders. The bus official said Harris has worked every route in the city...[1]

The conference between the Eastside leaders and the city officials to which the above news quotation refers had their beginning nearly ten years ago. In August of 1947 it was called to the attention of the League and other organizations that Negroes might be employed as bus drivers on those buses which serve the Negro district. Immediately, a survey was made of opinions of Negroes to determine their reaction regarding the issue. According to the results of the survey, the Negroes felt that Negroes should be employed as bus drivers.

The Executive Director of the Oklahoma City Urban

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[1]"City Bus Drivers," Oklahoma City Times, May 3, 1957.

League, Kenneth Johnson of the WKY Radio Station, and Dolphin Thompson of the Veterans Administration consulted with Clarence Jordan, president of the Oklahoma Railway Company. As a result of the conference, Jordan later wrote the League and the other representatives who conferred with him that he was of the opinion that Negro drivers should be given the jobs as bus drivers in areas populated almost entirely by Negroes. This led to a series of conferences which extended over a period of almost ten years.

In the early conferences the officials emphasized the fact that the bus company did provide employment for Negroes in the shops. The League and the representatives from the other organizations based their contention on the premise that inequality of opportunity existed in that the Negro was denied the privilege of aspiring to the job of driver. His only aspiration could be to work in the shops.[1]

Activity which culminated in the hiring of the Negro bus drivers was begun under Jesse T. Owens, first president of the League, but the effort to convince the bus company on the good "human and industrial relations" value of employing Negro drivers gained its greatest impetus under the administration of F. D. Moon. The Negro Chamber of Commerce of

[1]Report of Conference with Officials of the Oklahoma City Railway Company regarding the employment of Negro bus drivers, Oklahoma City Urban League, December, 1947. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

Oklahoma City, as well as other organizations, worked closely with the League in the promotion of the project.[1]

Vocational Guidance Services

In addition to creating new positions for skilled Negro workers and encouraging the promotion of those already in positions, the Oklahoma City Urban League offers vocational guidance and counseling services to individuals, schools, colleges and other groups interested in preparing and encouraging young people to prepare for vocations in line with their interests and abilities. In March, 1947, shortly after the League was organized, the members of the staff participated in the vocational guidance program at Douglas High School. Through the courtesy of the Urban League a film was shown during the assembly hour of Vocational Guidance Week Observance at Douglas High School. The consultants in various occupations were secured through the efforts of the Urban League. Since that time the League has provided vocational guidance services to both Negro and white schools in Oklahoma City, to Parent Teacher Association groups, to sororities and fraternities and to Langston University.

In the spring of 1955, the Urban League, in conjunction with the guidance department at Douglas High School,

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[1] Oklahoma City Urban League, Year End Report, 1955, p. 3 (mimeographed).

initiated a county-wide Vocational Guidance program. The Industrial Relations Secretary contacted superintendents of schools, teachers who were assigned to vocational guidance, county home agents, and industrial teachers to solicit their support in developing such a program so that guidance services might be extended to more students. Students in the rural area were invited to participate in the conference and transportation for their attendance was arranged by the League.

The following year, 1956, Douglas High School sponsored a "Senior Day" to which students were invited from schools over the state to hear representatives from various colleges throughout the nation discuss the nature and purpose of the colleges and universities which they represented.

Because the Oklahoma City Urban League is called upon in so many instances for information regarding speakers for various occasions, it maintains a "Speakers Bureau." Through its Speakers Bureau Services, the League provided the resource people for the Douglas High School Senior Day in 1956.[1]

Current Projects

The League, through its Industrial Relations

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[1]Narrative Report of the Industrial Relations Meeting, Oklahoma City Urban League, May 21, 1955, p. 4 (mimeographed).

Department, is currently engaged in efforts to secure employment of Negroes with the State Highway Patrol. Several conferences have been held with Lieutenant Lookabaugh, Director of the State Highway Patrol, regarding the question of employing Negroes in that department. To date no placements have been made. The Industrial Relations department of the League is encouraging eligible Negroes to continue to try for positions with the State Highway Department.

The League is focusing much of its attention on helping Negro teachers who have been displaced because of the integration of the public schools. From the results of the survey made of the number of displaced teachers, the Industrial Relations Secretary compiled a master list of such teachers. A News Letter was mailed to them. The News Letter contained information concerning job opportunities in and out of the state of Oklahoma. Although it will exhaust all possible resources in behalf of the teachers, the League has made it quite clear to all concerned that it cannot guarantee placement. Some of the resources which are being utilized in efforts to secure employment for Negro teachers are the Oklahoma Employment Service, the State Department of Public Welfare, the State Employment Services of other states, the Department of Public Welfare of other states, affiliates of the National Urban League and the Regional and National offices of the Civil Service.

CHAPTER VI

ACTIVITIES OF THE URBAN LEAGUE--COORDINATION AND COOPERATION SERVICES

In Chapters IV and V of this study, two major areas of the activities of the Urban League of Oklahoma City were outlined in detail. Throughout the discussion, attention was directed to the importance which the League places upon the cooperation and coordination of its activities with those of other community agencies. The process of cooperation and coordination has been utilized in the planning and execution of all League activities. It is the belief of the League that no single organization has the resources and equipment to do an effective job of community improvement in isolation. Therefore, the League makes no attempt to approach a community problem alone. Rather, as a community agency, it works in conjunction with all groups interested in the welfare of the community. The policy of the League is to solicit the cooperation of all groups who are concerned with community improvement and to work jointly with these groups on the solution of problems affecting the life of the minority group. Further, it is the belief of the Urban

League that cooperation with existing agencies helps avoid duplication of services and at the same time enables each organization or agency to work in the area in which it can make the greatest contribution.[1]

The program of the Urban League is based upon the following principles:

1) The problems of the Negro community are problems of the common community.
2) These problems can be met only through equal awareness and joint planning and action of all groups.
3) Duplication of existing services is wasteful and unwarranted.
4) No community can progress beyond the progress of its various elements; service to a large element is a service to the community.
5) Any service performed for a segment of the population should be treated as a community service.[2]
6) Group discussion is basic to the success of a program of community improvement.

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[1]Interview with Cernoria Johnson, Executive Director of the Oklahoma City Urban League, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, May 13, 1957.

[2]National Urban League, A Handbook of Operations for Urban League Personnel, Part I, History and Philosophy (1953; pamphlet).

The Library Project

One of the earliest projects which the League undertook shortly after its organization in Oklahoma City was the library project. This was in 1947. The outcome of the project was twofold: 1) securing Negro representation on the Citizens Advisory Committee in Oklahoma City for the first time, and 2) opening the facilities of the main library to the Negro segment of the community.

During the time the Urban League was in the process of completing its organization the city was interested in improving and expanding its library program. The city administration authorized a survey of the existing library facilities to determine in what respects they were in greatest need for improvement. A Citizens Advisory Committee consisting of 100 persons had been appointed by the mayor. The function of the committee was to decide upon a site for the new library and to assist in the preparation of a budget necessary for the proposed program of the library. There was no Negro representation on the advisory committee. Prior to this time no Negro had participated in the planning of services which affected Negro life. Ewell Newman, casework consultant for the study on the social and economic conditions of the Negro in Oklahoma City, made the following observation:

> Agencies should recognize the value of Negro participation in the planning of services which so vitally affect

> Negro life. Any community group would protest ready-made decisions from the outside as to what its members did or did not need...if social agencies are to be sounding boards for the democratic process, their boards should be representative of the total community.[1]

The League was intensely interested in securing Negro representation on the Advisory Board. It mapped out what it called a "telegram campaign." The League secured the cooperation of civic, religious, fraternal and social organizations. These organizations included, among others, the City Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and the Young Women's Christian Association. These groups were encouraged to direct requests to the mayor and city officials asking that qualified and competent Negro leadership be placed on the Advisory Committee. As a result of this cooperative undertaking, the names of thirteen Negroes were included in the list of the Citizens Advisory Committee.

Before plans for the improvement and expansion of the library facilities in Oklahoma City were begun, the use of the city library facilities for Negroes had been on a segregated basis. While the Negroes were allowed to check books from the library, they were denied the privilege of the reading room facilities, even on a segregated basis. The question concerning the use of the facilities of the new

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[1]National Urban League, A Study of the Social and Economic Conditions of the Negro Population in Oklahoma City, (n.p.: June and July, 1945), p. 61.

library was one which had not been settled at the time the League was organized in Oklahoma City. The Executive Director of the Urban League offered the services of the League to Walter Gray, the president of the Library board, in helping to solve the problem.

It cannot be overemphasized that League activities begin with fact-finding and research. The basic policy of the Urban League is to collect current factual data in all phases of the problem. On the basis of these facts the League works with all social, business, labor and other agencies for the expansion of opportunity for the Negor.

The League's initial step in approaching a solution to the problem of securing use of the city library facilities for Negroes was to survey the patterns of library usage for Negroes in other southern cities.

The survey revealed that the patterns of library usage for Negroes ranged from no reading room facilities to provision for separate facilities including separate rest rooms. Although this was the case, the number of cities providing adequate facilities for Negroes was greater by far than the number providing minimum facilities.

The findings of the survey were directed to the attention of the members of the library board in Oklahoma City. The members of the board considered these findings in formulating administrative policies for the operation of the new library. As a result, Negroes were granted use of all

library facilities. In addition, a branch of the main library was established in the Negro residential section for citizens in that area.

Desegregation of the Municipal Auditorium

For the past ten years the Young Women's Christian Association of Oklahoma City has presented annually an Interdenominational Choir Concert. The choir is composed of members of the various Negro churches throughout the city, and is under the direction of Evelyn LaRue Pittman, a teacher in one of the elementary schools in Oklahoma City. Mrs. Pittman received her Master's degree in music from the University of Oklahoma and is now a student of music at the University of Paris, Paris, France. The purpose of these concerts is to raise funds for the construction of a new YWCA building.[1]

The concert is always held in the Municipal auditorium in Oklahoma City. Prior to 1952, church and welfare groups were permitted to arrange the seating of Negroes as they wished. In the fall of 1952 during the time the YWCA, in cooperation with the Council of Churches, was making preparations for the annual concert, Ethlyn Christensen, executive of the Council of Churches, was informed by the

[1]Interview with Cernoria Johnson, Executive Director of the Oklahoma City Urban League, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, May 13, 1957.

auditorium manager that the concert would have to be on a segregated basis. When reminded by Christensen that the Council of Churches did not encourage segregation, D. Fuller, the auditorium manager, offered very little hope for any change in the policy. In fact, he stated that if the affair were held in the auditorium it would have to be on a segregated basis.

Frank Holmes, president of the Urban League, approached the Ministerial Alliance with the problem. That body agreed to support a movement for the desegregation of the auditorium facilities on the condition that the Urban League act as the coordinating agency. Thereupon, the League immediately began to direct its effort toward securing the use of the auditorium on a non-segregated basis. It first called together a Citizen's Committee composed of representatives from organizations and agencies in the community to discuss some possible approaches to the problem. This meeting was held on October 31, 1952. The members of the committee felt that the decision as to whether a meeting should be held on a segregated or non-segregated basis should not be left to the auditorium manager. William Harvey suggested that the plan used in Kansas City and in St. Louis might be followed in Oklahoma City. According to this plan, the decision relative to the use of the Municipal Auditorium on a segregated or non-segregated basis is left with the persons who rent the auditorium. The plan used by those cities permits

groups who wish to hold non-segregated meetings to do so. However, the members of the committee felt this was an unsound plan. James Stewart expressed the opinion of the majority of the members of the group in stating that a definite policy against discrimination should be established. Other members of the group were of the opinion that the League should start with a non-segregated policy as the ideal toward which to work, and if necessary, accept the compromise that groups who wish to use the facilities on an non-segregated basis may do so. Gradually, the League hoped, however, to eliminate the policy of segregation altogether.[1]

In the meantime the League had followed its usual procedure of securing information relative to the use of municipal facilities in other southern cities. The League has discovered that in many instances city officials are more willing to take definite stands on interracial policies if they find that other cities in their vicinity have taken positive action on those same questions.[2]

Other meetings of the Citizens Committee were held, out of which came plans to meet with Oklahoma City's Mayor

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[1]Minutes of the Committee on Desegregation of the Municipal Auditorium, Oklahoma City Urban League, October 31, 1952. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

[2]Letter from Cernoria Johnson, Executive Director of the Oklahoma City Urban League to the Executive Secretary of the Urban League of Gary, Indiana, October 28, 1952. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

Allen Street. A committee of twenty was selected to meet with the mayor. But when the committee requested a conference with Street he suggested that a group consisting of only two or three persons meet with him. In compliance with this request, Jesse T. Owens, chairman of the committee, F. D. Moon and McFerrin Stowe met with Street on November 3, 1952. Moon presented the information from the survey of other southern and border cities which showed the procedures followed in the use of municipal auditoriums in those cities. Street, after an examination of the findings of the survey, agreed to an open Council meeting to be held on Wednesday, November 12. However, the open council meeting was later cancelled. In its stead, the Committee was informed by the mayor that approval had been granted for use of the auditorium for religious and political purposes on a non-segregated basis. On November 18, 1952, the following letter was written by the Executive Director of the Urban League to Street in commendation for the step taken regarding the desegregation of the municipal auditorium:

> ...Representatives from fourteen religious and welfare organizations instructed me to convey to you and the City Manager Ross Taylor, an expression of commendation for the forward step you have taken in establishing the policy that the auditorium be used on a non-segregated basis by religious and political organizations and conventions. These groups are confident that this experiment will help immeasurably in the promotion of better understanding between the two races. They conceded, however, that this is but a step in the right direction and that we must never be satisfied until every citizen enjoys the privilege of full integration...

> The community is privileged to work with such understanding and fairminded city officials...[1]

Community Education for Desegregation of Schools

In an age, in a world, in a nation and in a section of the country where change and upheaval have marked every phase of Western civilization, the one revolution that has caused the greatest controversy with internation implications is the historic decision rendered by the Supreme Court of the United States on May 17, 1954 regarding the desegregation of the races in the public schools of the United States. The reactions to this decision were varied and violent. There were radicals who demanded that the change made overnight; the conservatives who advocated gradual transition; and the diehards who swore that there could never be and would never be integration of the races.

As this battle waged verbally, and in many instances physically, enlightened groups and organizations set to work to determine just what course should be followed, not to set aside the court's decision, but in the face of the finality of the edict, how this change could be wrought with the least amount of bloodshed and the greatest amount of benefit to all races.

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[1]Letter from Cernoria D. Johnson, Executive Director of the Oklahoma City Urban League to Allen Street, Mayor, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, November 18, 1952. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

The Urban League of Oklahoma City was quick to see that the transfer from a dual system to a democratically organized system of education could give rise to many problems of maladjustment. It further recognized the fact that no other decision than the one rendered by the Supreme Court was possible if the enduring and universal principles enunciated in our constitution were followed to the ultimate. Its reaction to the Supreme Court's decision was one of concern that the League play its part in helping the community to recognize the need for taking steps to facilitate the desegregation of public schools.

Since the time of the ruling of the supreme court regarding the integration of the public schools, the Oklahoma City Urban League has functioned as an adjustment agency in the transition from a segregated pattern of public school education to an integrated one. The approach of the organization has consistently conformed to democratic patterns of community life. There has been no forcing of minority points of view on majority groups or conversely. There has been a continuous meeting of minds, a search for a consensus in which are merged the rights of the minority and the rights of the majority groups. The constructive developmental program which has been promoted by the Urban League has avoided the explosive elements of community conflict and the destructive aftermath of emotional controversy.

Dissemination of information with reference to

successful programs from segregated patterns of education to integrated patterns have provided a basis on which a local community could formulate its own approach to this vital issue. Examples of factual data utilized by the Urban League in building a program to assist in the effective adjustment from segregated to integrated public schools include: the objective and conservative reporting of the Southern Education News Service, the studies of the Oklahoma Association of Negro Teachers, the St. Louis story, the Baltimore story and, in particular, the integration of Negro and white students in the public schools of Phoenix, Arizona.[1]

In an effort to give guidance and direction to the community regarding the implications of the Supreme Court decision, the Executive Director of the Urban League of Oklahoma City called the Board of Directors in session on November 11, 1954 to discuss the possibility of forming a Citizens Committee on problems of integration in the public schools of Oklahoma City. As a result of this meeting the Board of Directors instructed its Public Relations Committee to study ways in which the question could be brought to the attention of the public.

On October 26, 1954, the Urban League committee on

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[1]Minutes of Committee on Education for Desegregation, Oklahoma City Urban League, October 31, 1954, p. 3. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

Public Relations called together representatives of some eight or ten community groups. Included among these representatives were: Lelia Lovejoy, Oklahoma City Elementary Public Schools; Mary Goddary, a reporter on The Daily Oklahoman and Times; E. R. Reno, Executive, Oklahoma City Council of Churches; Marie Garner, Executive of Stiles Street Y.W.C.A.; T. J. Griffin, minister and representative, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; J. T. Abram, minister and president, Separate Schools Parent Teachers Association.

The purpose of this meeting was to present a plan for initiating a community education program on desegregation of the public schools of Oklahoma City.

One of the outstanding recommendations made in this group meeting was that a representative group of lay-leaders be organized into a Citizens Committee whose purpose should be that of educating and enlightening the community on the implications of the Supreme Court's Decision. The group was composed of civic, religious, education and business representatives.

From the citizens committee three sub-committees were appointed. The primary function of the overall committee was the coordination of the activities of the three sub-groups. The three sub-committees were: 1) a sub-committee on resource materials; 2) a sub-committee on youth participation and 3) a sub-committee on workshops and seminars.

The sub-committee on resource materials had as its function the gathering and dissemination of information, including printed materials and exhibits, which were made available to community leaders for help in meeting their needs for information regarding race relations, desegregation, and related human relations activities. This committee worked with the schools, churches, civic groups, and fraternal organizations. In order to carry out its function effectively, it was necessary that the members of the committee keep themselves informed of the progress made in the area of desegregation of public schools in other sections of the country.

The sub-committee on youth participation was created for the purpose of sponsoring activities for young people on integration and clarifying their thinking on the role of young people on the desegregation of schools.

On November 19, 1954, the Urban League had as its guest speaker for its annual meeting Archibald Carey, a religious civic and political leader of international renown who was mentioned in a previous section of this report. Carey is pastor of Chicago's Quin Chapel A.M.E. Church, one of the largest Methodist churches in the city of Chicago. He is a practicing attorney and serves as alderman on the Chicago City Council. Carey is the alternate delegate of the United States to the United Nations. A dynamic speaker, Carey serves in many official positions with national welfare,

civic and religious bodies.[1] During his visit to Oklahoma City, the Urban League in cooperation with the council of Churches, the Christian Youth Council, the National Council of Christians and Jews, the Young Women's Christian Association, the Young Men's Christian Association and the Girl Scouts, arranged for Carey to meet with young people of the community in a city-wide youth workshop on desegregation. The workshop was planned for the afternoon of November 19, 1954 from 2:00 to 4:00 at Douglas High School. The Executive Director of the Urban League secured permission for students to be excused from classes to attend the workshop. The participants in the workshop were student representatives of the various high schools over the city. The leaders of the Youth Workshop were: Betty Beatty, Douglas School; Ann Booth, Northeast; Carl Fagin, Classen; Janice Hall, Douglas; Larry Barrell, Grant; David Kelsey, Grant; James Pratt, Southeast; Jean Pravis, Capitol Hill; Gale Turner, Central; William Walker, Douglas; Sarah Mae Wiley, Classen; James Williams, Wanda Williams, John Marshall.

In addition to the youth leaders, there were two delegates from each Protestant church and two each from the Catholic and Jewish groups. Other groups within the various schools who so desired were extended the privilege of

[1]Brief Biographical Sketch of the Life of Archibald Carey, November 19, 1954. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

attending the conference. Minutes of the conference reveal that 150 young people were in attendance at the workshop.[1]

The theme of the workshop was, "What is My Responsibility in the Process of Integration?"

There were six discussion groups centered on the following questions:

1. How can I prepare myself for this change?
2. Knowing integration is right, how can I stand by my own convictions?
3. How can I educate my parents on integration?
4. What kind of answers can I give to help interpret integration to others?
5. Shall we have integration of teachers?
6. How shall integration affect extra-curricula activities?

According to an evaluation of the city-wide youth workshop, the response of the young people was very enthusiastic. In fact, a report of the sub-committee on Youth Participation indicated that members who attended the Youth Workshop, upon their own initiative, formed a temporary committee with city-wide representation for the purpose of outlining plans for another similar meeting to discuss projects and activities which might help them in meeting problems

[1]Minutes of Committee on Community Education for Desegregation of Schools, Oklahoma City Urban League, November 23, 1954. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

of integration in their own high schools and in their own communities. The following recommendations were made by the Youth Participants at the workshop:

1. That the city-wide student council become more inclusive, thus including representatives from Douglas High School and the private schools.
2. That similar workshops be held and plans devised for bringing parents into the discussion.
3. That radio broadcasts pertaining to desegregation and integration policies be sponsored by the Committee on Youth Participation and that such broadcasts be held over the schools broadcasting station at Classen High School.[1]

The interest of the Citizens Committee was not confined to the students of high school level. The committee on Resource Materials reported that requests were received from the majority and minority schools for materials pertaining to integration and desegregation of schools which were suitable for pupils of elementary level. Among the suggestions the committee prepared for the elementary schools included: puppet shows protraying the history and achievements of the Negro; the compilation of bibliographies of Negro life and history appropriate for the elementary level; and a list of suggestions for panel discussions.

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[1] Ibid.

The third committee which grew out of the overall committee on community education for desegregation was a sub-committee on Workshops and Institutes. This group conducted seminars and workshops to equip individuals with the necessary skills and information to fill speaking engagements throughout the city. Those persons who participated in the seminar constituted a Speakers' Bureau. Upon request, the services of the speakers were made available to civic, religious and education groups.[1]

All of the above activities on desegregation and integration began with a visit made to Oklahoma City by Harold V. Gear, superintendent of the public school systems at Phoenix, Arizona. During the fall preceding the Supreme Court's mandate of May 17, 1954, the Board of Education of Phoenix decided to abolish segregation in the public schools of that city. The decision was made calmly and deliberately in the face of tradition and long accepted prejudice without the authorization of a law or a court decision. The city won national acclaim for the quiet and uneventful way in which integration of the schools was accomplished. Portions of the story as carried in an issue of Look magazine read:

> ...After having doged the issue for several years, last summer the Phoenix school board suddenly approved a compromise plan for gradual integration of Negro students

[1]Report of the Committee on Resource Materials, Oklahoma City Urban League, November 28, 1952. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

> with whites in the city's white schools.
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> .....
>
> Phoenix may become a model for other communities. Its example indicates that the end of segregation may be less painful than most people anticipated.
>
> .....
>
> Pupils in the first three grades of Negro elementary schools and students of Carver High had a choice of enrolling in white schools near their homes or returning to Negro schools. The board hoped that a few of the boldest would pioneer the movement the first year and that more would make the change each year until full integration was quietly and uneventfully accomplished.
>
> .....
>
> At the end of March the principal and the high school board agreed that desegregation was not much of a problem. They closed Carver High School, segregation in Phoenix Schools came to an end.[1]

In an effort to exhaust all possible resources to aid in the enlightenment of the citizenry of Oklahoma City concerning ways in which the community might implement the ruling of the Supreme Court with the least amount of friction, the Urban League invited several organizations to co-sponsor a public program on "education for desegregation." As the high-light of the occasion, Gear was invited to come to Oklahoma City to share with the citizens his experience in meeting the problem of desegregation of schools in his community. The groups which agreed to co-sponsor the meeting were: The National Conference of Christians and Jews; The Oklahoma City Council of Churches; the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance and the Citizens Action Committee.

On May 24, 1954, the Executive Director sent a

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[1]Josephine Stoker, "What Happens When Segregation Ends," Look, XVIII (May 4, 1954), p. 25.

communication to Gear explaining the proposed plans of the Urban League for the program on education for desegregation and inviting Gear to appear as guest speaker on the program. Before accepting the invitation Gear wanted assurance from the Executive Director that the meeting was approved by the superintendent of schools of Oklahoma City. Upon reassurance from the Executive Director that the school officials of Oklahoma City had given enthusiastic approval for such a program Gear wrote the Executive Director accepting the invitation.

Gear came to Oklahoma City on June 10 and 11, 1954. The meeting was highly publicized through the regular channels of publicity. Wide coverage was given the program by both the Negro and white press, radio and other mediums. While in the city the press, radio and other organizations were eager to have Gear appear in conferences, and over radio and television networks. He arrived in the city on June 10, 1954. On the afternoon of that date he was invited to confer with the Board of Education and administrative staff of the Oklahoma City public schools in a closed luncheon meeting. Later that evening he spoke at an informal dinner meeting at the Y.M.C.A. On that same night from 8:00 to 8:30 Gear, William E. Bittle, University of Oklahoma professor and F. D. Moon appeared over WKY television in a discussion on the problems of integration of the public schools. Gear was interviewed by Prissey Thomas over WKY-TV

on Friday, June 11 at 12:45 p.m.

The public program which was held on Friday night June 11, was also televised. That was an interracial meeting attended by more than six hundred persons. At this meeting Laurence H. Snyder, Dean of the Graduate College of the University of Oklahoma, F. D. Moon and Leo S. Cade, a member of the Public Relations Committee of the Urban League of Oklahoma City, were presented in a panel discussion on the problems involved in the desegregation of schools. In addition to his appearance on television while in the city, Gear was also invited to discuss his experience in meeting the problems of desegregation in the Phoenix Schools over radio stations WKY and KOCY.[1]

Education

The interest of the Urban League in education is apparent in all phases of the League program. The Urban League believes that every individual should be given the opportunity to develop to his optimum. During the time the Urban League has functioned in Oklahoma City it has endeavored to cooperate with the schools and other institutions in providing for the education of its youth.

The study of the social and economic conditions of

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[1]Report of the Committee on Education for Desegregation to the Southern Field Division of the National Urban League, February 25, 1955. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

the Negro in Oklahoma City made by the National Urban League in 1945 revealed that the results of the various tests administered to the children of Oklahoma City show that greater effort should be exerted in the interest of and by Negro children. A review of the test scores of selected tests given in the fourth, sixth, and eighth grades indicate that the socres made by Negro children were from 0.9 to 1.8 below the scores of children in the white schools. In addition to the lower scores among the Negro children the range in scores among the Negro children was not as great as among white children. The results also revealed that the Negro children make better scores on tests which they take by themselves than when tested in a group.

Realizing that such conditions may be the result of any factor or the combination of several factors as emotional problems, health problems, inefficient instruction or poor home environment, the League cooperated with other agencies in requesting that the Board of Education employ a visiting teacher for the separate schools in order that there might be established a closer relationship between the home and school. At the time the survey was made in 1945, there was no provision for visiting teacher services in the city schools. Since that time there have been ten such teachers employed. Two of these are Negroes. Also the League worked in cooperation with the public school in seeking an expansion

of special education services in the separate schools.[1]

The Speech Tournament

The League has cooperated with the schools in attempting to encourage young people by presenting awards and trophies for outstanding achievements. For several years the Douglas High School sponsored an interstate Forensic meet. Various outstanding organizations were asked to contribute trophies and awards to the winners. The Urban League was one of the first to agree that such a meet was of inestimable value in the development of the individual; that the acquiring of proper speech habits played such a significant role in his future success. Therefore, the League urged the directors of the meet to put the Urban League on record as giving financial and moral support to such a tremendous undertaking. Each year, until the discontinuance of the speech tournament because of the integration of schools, the League not only purchased a trophy, but delegated its executive to make the presentation.[2]

Integration of Negro Teachers

During the summer months of 1955, prior to the opening of school in September, the Oklahoma City Urban League

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[1]Oklahoma City Urban League, Ten Year Progress Report, 1956, pp. 64-70 (typewritten).

[2]Oklahoma City Urban League, "Activities of the Urban League" (Oklahoma City; 1951), p. 4 (mimeographed).

concentrated on devising some ways in which it might meet some of the problems posed by the displacement of Negro teachers because of integration of schools. One of the plans was a request for a conference with Governor Gary and state department of education officials in an effort to secure the integration of displaced Negro teachers into existing schools and industries in the state. The conference was held in March of 1955. Among the state officials and department heads present were: Harold Freeman, of the State Cooperation Commission; Senator George Miskovsky; Clarence Birch, chairman of the State Board of Affairs; Morris Leonard of the State Employment Service; C. A. Stokes, of the State Highway Department and Governor Raymond Gary. Gary pledged himself to:

> Use every persuasive method at his disposal to help bring about the integration of qualified Negro teachers in jobs and positions which may be opened in state departments and state agencies.

The Executive Director of the Urban League suggested that the governor and his state department officials could help meet the problem by working to:

> 1) Retain and absorb Negro teachers on the facilities throughout Oklahoma on the basis of merit and not racial identification.
> 2) Open new doors of opportunity to them through employment by state departments of government and private industry.
> 3) Develop a general campaign of enlightenment and education which employs mass media of communication.[1]

[1]Oklahoma City Urban League, Year End Report, 1956, p. 4 (mimeographed).

Recognition of Services of Outstanding Citizens of the Community

The activities of the League include the co-sponsorship of dinners and banquets honoring citizens who have made outstanding contributions in service to the Negro and to the community. In November of 1952, the cooperation of the League was solicited by a group of citizens in planning some appropriate means of expressing appreciation to E. E. Jones who had served for a number of years as a police officer. Jones was promoted to rank of Lieutenant. The Negro citizens of the community wanted to express their appreciation not only to Jones for his efficient services, but to the city officials for the recognition of his services. A banquet was held in honor of Jones at which time he and his wife were presented a silver tea service by friends and members of the community. In the spring of 1955, the Urban League was asked to share in the sponsorship of a dinner honoring F. D. Moon. The purpose of the occasion was to present Moon with a contribution toward a summer European tour. Moon's tour included a meeting of the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession, a visit to the Holy Land and the Near East. Community leaders of both races joined in expressing appreciation and esteem for the type of leadership Moon had exhibited during the time he has been in the community.

In the fall of 1955, a group of citizens composed of local and state representatives, met to discuss some tangible

way tribute and recognition could be paid to Roscoe Dunjee on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of his newspaper, the Black Dispatch. Immediately, the League was called upon to serve as one of the co-sponsors of this affair. A testimonial banquet was held on November 18, 1955 in the cafeteria of the new Douglas High School. At the banquet Dunjee was presented a purse containing gifts and contributions from local, state, and national groups which enabled him to visit on the African continent for six months--a dream long cherished by Dunjee. The presentation was made to Dunjee for outstanding services in defense of civil rights for the Negro.[1]

[1]Minutes of the E. E. Jones Testimonial Banquet, Oklahoma City Urban League, November, 1952, pp. 1-2. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

CHAPTER VII

THE URBAN LEAGUE GUILD OF OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA

In the three previous chapters of this study the program of activities of the Urban League of Oklahoma City was discussed.

It is the purpose of this chapter to report on the function, origin, development and activities of the Urban League Guild of Oklahoma City. The Urban League Guild is an auxiliary of the Urban League.

Development of the Urban League Guild in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

In the spring of 1949, before the official organization of an Urban League Guild in Oklahoma City, a group of women organized a Women's Division of the Urban League. This group consisted of thirty women who performed the functions of a Guild auxiliary.

The members of the Women's Division realized that cooperation with other agencies in the community, whose interests are related to those of the League, is basic to the success of the League program. The group, therefore, worked with such projects as the Community Chest Campaign

and the Red Cross Drive. They recruited approximately 100 volunteers for the Red Cross Campaign in 1949. During the Christmas season of that same year, they served as hostesses for the annual children's Christmas party which the Salvation Army sponsors, and prepared Christmas packages for aged Negro residents of the Oklahoma County area. Mention has already been made of their work with the Walnut Grove Project and the Well-child Clinic. Several weeks prior to the opening of the Well-child Clinic, the women made a house-to-house campaign to inform the community of the plans for the clinic.[1]

Through these and other services, the Women's Division of the Urban League helped to educate and enlighten the public concerning the program of the Urban League in the community. The Women's Division of the Urban League, as we shall see later, was absorbed by the Urban League Guild.

On June 28, 1950, an interracial group of twenty-eight women who were affiliated with the Urban League movement in Oklahoma City met to discuss ways in which they might become more effective in promoting the program of the Urban League. Among this group were the members of the Women's Division of the Urban League. The organization of an Urban League Guild affiliate was discussed as one of the possible

[1]Report of Activities of the Women's Division of the Oklahoma City Urban League, January, 1950. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

channels through which they might contribute more to the overall program of the League.[1]

Function of Urban League Guilds

Guilds are auxiliaries of the Urban League which function in the interest of the League on both the local and national levels. In addition to providing financial support to the League, the Guilds also help to interpret the philosophy and program of the League to the community.

Inasmuch as Guilds are considered auxiliaries of the Urban League, the establishment of a Guild in the community is contingent upon securing the permission of the local Urban League, and assurance from the National Urban League Guild that the contemplated local program is consistent with the general national program. There are also certain other standards which the local Guilds must meet. Among these are the provisions that there shall be only one Guild in a city in which there is an Urban League, and that no restriction shall be placed upon membership because of race, creed or color. Membership in the Guild is open to any person who has demonstrated a genuine interest in the League movement, and who subscribes to its policy and program and who pays the membership dues, if there are any, as voted upon by the local guild.

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[1]Minutes of the Urban League Guild, Oklahoma City Urban League, June 28, 1950. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

Guilds are autonomous in their relationship to the Urban League, but function in keeping with the League's philosophy, policy and program. It is essential, however, that a close relationship between the Guild and the local League Executive Board be maintained because the Executive Board of the Urban League is responsible for the league activities in each area.[1]

Dr. Bertha Levy, the president of the Urban League appointed a committee of five to study plans for a membership meeting to be held in August, 1950.[2] Dr. Levy is a well-known pediatrician of Oklahoma City and an associate professor of Pediatrics at the University of Oklahoma School of Medicine. She was elected to the presidency of the League in January of 1950. She left, however, in September of 1950 to do post-graduate work at Crippled Children's Hospital in Cincinnati, Ohio.[3]

The study committee appointed by Dr. Levy met during the early part of August and outlined a proposed constitution to be presented at a later meeting of the group. The group met again the latter part of August, 1950. At this meeting

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[1]National Urban League, And the Pursuit of Happiness (New York: National Urban League, Inc., 1950), p. 25.

[2]Minutes of the Urban League Guild, Oklahoma City Urban League, June 28, 1950. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

[3]Interview with Bertha Levy, Pediatrician, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, May 15, 1957.

there were forty-seven persons present. The proposed constitution was presented but formal acceptance of the constitution and the election of officers were deferred until fall.

On Saturday evening, October 21, 1950, twenty-two members of the group met to approve the constitution and elect officers. According to the constitution, Article IV, Section I, the officers of the Urban League Guild shall be a president, Vice President and Secretary-Treasurer. Other officers shall be elected as needed and as designated by the Executive Committee. The officers elected were: President, Mary G. Smith; Vice President, J. M. Littlepage; Secretary, Alma Gideon; Treasurer, Corrine Breeding.[1]

Section I of Article V of the Constitution of the Urban League Guild provides for three types of committees in the Urban League Guild. They are: an Executive Committee, a Program Committee and a Membership Committee. The Executive Committee consists of the officers of the Guild, the chairmen of the standing committees and the past president as an ex-officio member. It is the function of the Executive Committee to give general direction to the Guild's affairs and to supervise and authorize the expenditure of all funds of the Guild. The Executive Committee also sets the time and place of the meetings of the Guild membership.

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[1]Minutes of the Urban League Guild, Oklahoma City Urban League, October, 1950. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

According to the constitution of the Urban League Guild, the objectives of the Guild are to:

> Promote, encourage, assist and engage in activities of cultural, civic and social nature which will publicize and further the general well-being of the Urban League movement locally and nationally. This can be accomplished by sponsoring banquets, forums, lectures, dinner meetings, exhibits, dances, teas, concerts, plays, parties, and the distribution and interpretation of League literature and materials, etc. The activities of this organization will in no way interfere with bona-fide social fund raising organizations in the community. At least 50% of the net funds accrued during the fiscal year shall be forwarded to the National Urban League.[1]

The Guild is scheduled to meet once each quarter according to the Constitution unless called into session for some particular purpose.

At a meeting on January 21, 1951, the members of the Executive Committee discussed the necessity of limiting the membership. The members recognized the fact that limitation of membership is not in accord with the provisions for membership as outlined in the constitution. But they felt it expedient to do so because the meetings of the Guild are held in the homes of the members or in the Urban League office. At present there are sixty-two members of the Guild including persons from Langston University and from Oklahoma City.[2]

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[1]Constitution of the Urban League Guild, Oklahoma City Urban League, 1950 (mimeographed).

[2]Minutes of the Urban League Guild, Oklahoma City Urban League, January 21, 1951. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

Affiliation of Oklahoma City Urban League Guild with the Coordinating Council of Urban League Guilds

The Oklahoma City Urban League Guild is a member of the Council of Urban League Guilds. At the annual conference of the National Urban League in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1952, the Guild delegates established a coordinating organization called the Council of Urban League Guilds. This organization is composed of an Executive Committee and the affiliated local Guilds throughout the country. The function of the Council is to plan a program for Guild delegates at the annual conferences such as workshops on fund raising, interpretation to local communities, and program making. It is also the purpose of the Council to assist in the setting up of new local Guilds and to impress upon the local Guilds their responsibility to provide financial support to the National Urban League. The Urban League Guild of Oklahoma City was represented at the National Conference of the Urban League at the time the Council of Urban League Guilds was organized. Hence, the Urban League Guild of Oklahoma City has been a member of the Coordinating Council since that time.

Affiliation with the Council of Urban League Guilds necessitates an annual per capita fee of twenty-five cents to help finance the Guildscript, the official organ of the Council of Urban League Guilds.

Activities of the Urban League Guild

The activities of the Urban League Guild of Oklahoma City are of three types: 1) fund-raising activities; 2) cultural activities; and 3) social activities. The Guild sponsors each type of activity annually. Plans for the first fund-raising activity were outlined in a meeting of the Guild on November 9, 1951. In discussing the type of activity to sponsor, the Guild members considered activities that were not only of commercial value but also those activities that would afford the public some cultural advantages as well. The members agreed that inasmuch as this was their first public project it might be well to begin with a simple one. That was a Benefit Tea which was held in November of 1951 at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Isiah Booker. The funds from the tea were used to assist the Urban League in its community welfare program.

Since the Guild members are interested in the cultural aspect of the project as well as the financial gains, plans for the fund-raising activities include the presentation of some outstanding talent. At times the Guild has invited local artists to appear; again they have featured persons of talent from other localities.

Mitchell B. Southall of the Music Department of Langston University was guest artist at the Benefit Tea held in 1951 during which time Mary G. Smith was president of the Guild. The Guild members, because of the success of the

first Benefit Tea, agreed to sponsor another Tea the following year as its fund-raising activity. That was held on November 25, 1952 in the home of Dr. and Mrs. C. W. Morgan. The guest artists were Freddye M. Wray of the Douglas High School Music Department and James Neilson of the Oklahoma City University Music Department. This was under the presidency of Mrs. J. M. Littlepage.

The third annual tea was held at the Governor's Mansion on February 28, 1953 with the Governor of Oklahoma and his wife, Johnston and Willie Murray, as co-host and co-hostess. At the time the Tea (which was referred to as a Brotherhood Tea) was planned, the Guild members hoped to establish a scholarship fund at the University of Oklahoma School of Social Work. But the proceeds from the Tea were not sufficient to carry out such plans.[1] The plans for the Brotherhood Tea were carried out under the administration of L. C. McFarland.

In 1955, the members of the Guild decided to sponsor a different type of fund raising activity. That year, under the leadership of Dr. Lorna Langmore Curtis, the Guild sponsored a rummage sale which was held at the Progressive Club Hall in the Green Pastures community.[2]

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[1]Minutes of the Urban League Guild, Oklahoma City Urban League, March 8, 1953, p. 1. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

[2]Oklahoma City Urban League, Year End Report, 1957 (mimeographed).

On January 14, 1957, the members of the Guild, with Cora Price as president, started the years activities with the sponsorship of a Mayde Mack Mummers' presentation of Shakespeare's "Macbeth." The proceeds from this project, as from all other fund raising activities of the Urban League Guild, were ear-marked for the promotion of the activities of the Urban League.

The cultural activities of the Urban League Guild are usually held on what is referred to by the Guild members as "Guest Night." On this occasion each member of the Guild invites from one to three guests (depending upon the size of the home in which the meeting is held) to a meeting of the Urban League Guild. The purpose of Guest Night is to acquaint the visitors with the program of the Urban League Guild. Special features at Guest Night include the presentation of book reviews, interesting and outstanding speakers and panel discussions. At Guest Night on May 18, 1952, Mary Marable, a member of the library staff of the University of Oklahoma, gave an interesting review of the book, The Lady in the Pulpit. Mrs. Marable is the mother of Mary G. Smith who was the first president of the Urban League Guild in Oklahoma City.[1]

On May 18, 1953, Guest Night was held at the home of

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[1]Interview with Mrs. Cora Price, President of the Urban League Guild, April 19, 1957, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Sam Powers. Christopher K. Dutt, a student at the University of Oklahoma, spoke on "India: Its People and Its Customs."[1]

Reid Powell, Professor of Sociology at the University of Oklahoma, was the guest speaker on Guest Night in 1956. In 1957, a special feature of Guest Night was the presentation of Royal Gibson, a woman evangelist, who spoke on the "Desegregation issue as handed down by the Supreme Court of the United States."

So far, the Urban League Guild of Oklahoma City has sponsored only one type of social activity. That is an all-family picnic which is held each year at the W. H. Slaughter estate.

In addition to the scheduled activities of the Urban League Guild, the members of the organization assist the Urban League in the promotion of its membership campaigns, its annual meetings, its public programs and its many projects which are designed for community improvement. The members of the Guild are always willing to work with the League in whatever capacity their services are most needed.

The Guild members also assumed as one of its projects, assistance with the Vilona P. Cutler Award. The recipient of the award must be a person who has given at least twelve years of service in the field of human relations.

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[1]Minutes of the Urban League Guild, Oklahoma City Urban League, May 27, 1953, p. 2. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

Two persons have received the award; Jesse T. Owens, the first president of the Oklahoma City Urban League, and Zelia N. Breaux, who for thirty years was a music instructor in the public schools of Oklahoma City.

According to the Committee on the Vilona P. Cutler Award, Miss Breaux is believed to have contributed financially and spiritually to the success of more youth, perhaps than any other one person in Oklahoma City. At different times she has organized, promoted and directed orchestras, mixed choruses, a highschool band, drum and bugle corps, girls' quartet and a mixed quartet. The Community band, which has played for many public meetings, conventions and parades, is one of her chief projects.[1]

Other activities of the Urban League Guild include forums, luncheons and in many instances meetings, to entertain outstanding citizens who are brought to the city by other organizations or agencies. One such activity was a luncheon meeting at which time Mr. Raymond Brown of Akron, Ohio was guest of the Guild. He discussed the current trends and status of adult education in which field he was doing research for the Ford Foundation.

Nelson C. Jackson, Director of Community Services of the National Urban League in New York City (Jackson was

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[1]"Awards to Honor Two Top Women," The Daily Oklahoman (Oklahoma City), November 2, 1953, p. 9.

formerly the Director of the Southern Field Division of the Urban League at Atlanta, Georgia.) was guest of the Guild at an informal forum hour on January 28, 1953. Jackson discussed the Urban League program both locally and nationally.[1]

As can be seen from the above discussion the Urban League Guild of Oklahoma City functions in the interest of the Urban League. All of its efforts are directed toward the interpretation and promotion of the League's program.

[1]Minutes of the Urban League Guild, Oklahoma City Urban League, February 9, 1953, p. 1. In the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League.

CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study is concerned with the history and development of the Urban League of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, from the time of its inception in 1946 to the present. Specifically the purpose of the study is to present an historical account of the origin, development and activities of the Urban League of Oklahoma City. The study is confined to the Urban League of Oklahoma City and its affiliate, the Urban League Guild. A short discussion of the National Urban League is presented in order to give the reader clearer insight into the purpose and background of the Urban League movement.

Data for the study were secured from the files of the Oklahoma City Urban League, the Southern Field Division of the National Urban League, the files of the Council of Social Welfare Agencies. Published data were obtained from records, reports, and publications of the National Urban League, newspapers, and magazines. Research in related fields was also utilized. Data offered by scholars and authorities in the field of Negro life and history and race relations were

utilized. Reports of the survey of Oklahoma City during the year 1944-1945, conducted by the Research Division of the National Urban League, were examined for pertinent data.

The Urban League is a professional, social work organization of interracial constituency whose purpose is the improvement of living conditions among Negroes and the development of better race relations between white and Negro citizens. Specifically, its program consists of: (1) research and fact-finding; (2) employment; (3) housing; (4) health; (5) education and recreation; and (6) vocational guidance.[1]

Development of National Urban League

The National Urban League was organized in 1910. In that year a group of prominent citizens of the Negro and white races, under the leadership of George Haynes, a doctoral student at Columbia University, and Ruth Standish Baldwin, met in New York City and established the National League on Urban Conditions Among Negroes. (This organization later came to be known as the National Urban League.) This step was taken to meet the problems which developed at the beginning of mass migrations of Negroes from southern rural to northern urban and industrial communities. Conditions under which the Negro was forced to live in the south were the main causes of his exodus from that section of the

[1]National Urban League, A Handbook of Operations for Urban League Personnel, Part I, History and Philosophy, p. 1 (1953; pamphlet).

country. The Negro felt that in the North he would find a solution to his economic and social problems.

Living in the North, however, posed many problems which the Negro had not anticipated. There he found racial prejudices and ostracism just as he had experienced in the south. Employment was difficult to secure except for the lowest paid and menial tasks. With little money to spend he could not afford clean, decent housing accomodations. In many instances he was forced to live in inadequate quarters and in filthy slums. As a result of such conditions poverty and illiteracy were widespread among the Negroes.

These were conditions which gave impetus to the organization of the Urban League movement. Once the organization was established, the Negro was given guidance and assistance in adjusting to the new and complicated pattern of living in urban communities. This included help in securing employment, adequate housing, medical services, recreation, and help in providing an education for his children.

The Urban League movement spread quickly to other large cities over the country. Baltimore, Buffalo, Philadelphia, Detroit, and Chicago were among those cities which established Urban League affiliates as a result of the increase in Negro population. Today, there are sixty-two affiliates in thirty-one states of the union. The Urban League is financed by grants from foundations; business

enterprises, and labor organizations; by corporate and individual memberships; and by dues from local affiliates. The Executive Director of the National Urban League is Lester Granger, a graduate of Dartmouth College.

Development of the Urban League in Oklahoma City

The development of the Urban League in Oklahoma City came as the result of the National Urban League Community Relations Project in June and July of 1945. In 1944, the General Education Board of the Rockefeller Foundation made a grant to the National Urban League of $110,000 for the purpose of making surveys on the economic and cultural problems of the Negro in various cities throughout the United States. The purpose of the Community Relations Project was to assist local community leadership in improving race relations and Negro welfare as a means of avoiding post-war racial conflict. It was an effort on the part of the League to eliminate racial friction resulting from post-war reconversion and redevelopment programs of American industrial centers.

The Council of Social Welfare Agencies and Negro and white representatives of Oklahoma City were acquainted with the Community Relations Project through William Y. Bell, the Director of the Southern Field Division of the National Urban League located in Atlanta, Georgia. William Bell came to Oklahoma City in February of 1945 to study the possibility

of establishing an Urban League in the city. He was invited to come to the community for that purpose by some of the leading Negro citizens who were interested in developing some form of organized approach to the solution of community problems affecting this minority group. Mr. Bell provided the initial guidance in the steps to be taken in the organization of the Urban League in Oklahoma City. He organized committees, composed of representatives of both the Negro and white races, to facilitate the establishment of an Urban League affiliate in Oklahoma City.

Before plans for the organization of an Urban League were completed, however, Nelson C. Jackson replaced William Bell as Director of the Southern Field Division of the National Urban League. The development of the organization was completed under the supervision and direction of Nelson Jackson.

The Oklahoma City Urban League, through the concerted effort of white and Negro citizens over a period of several months, became an affiliate of the National Urban League on September 10, 1946. Under the supervision of the Southern Field Division, the Oklahoma City Urban League subscribed to the purposes and program of the National Urban League. It sought through the Terms of Affiliation to become a member of the National Urban League movement.

Under the supervision of Nelson Jackson, an interracial Board of Directors composed of representatives from

many fields of endeavor including religion, business, education, social work, labor and the professions was selected. A constitution for the new affiliate was modeled after that of the National Urban League, and on January 1, 1947, an Executive Director was employed. Until that time, the League functioned without an Executive Director.

For several years, the agency employed two persons on the staff; a professional social worker who serves as the Executive Director, and an administrative secretary who handles the reports of the League, and acts as secretary to the executive. The policies and plans of the organization are made by the Executive Director with the assistance of certain standing committees, which are also of interracial character.

In April of 1955, an Industrial Relations Secretary was added to the personnel staff of the League. The Industrial Relations Secretary devotes full time to the employment phase of the League program.

The major portion of the income of the Oklahoma City Urban League comes from the United Fund, which is the machinery set up by the citizens of the community to combine the needs of essential voluntary health and welfare agencies into one annual campaign and to distribute the funds thus secured among the various agencies on a sound budgetary basis. Since 1954, approximately one-third of the income of the Oklahoma City Urban League has been derived from

membership drives. According to the Report of the Membership Campaign for February, 1957, the membership of the Urban League numbers over 2,000 persons.

Activities of the Oklahoma City Urban League

Once the League had been formally and officially declared an affiliate of the National Urban League, it was ready to launch upon the task of developing a program of community services and improvement.

The League recognizes the fact that if an organization is to work constructively in a community, it must know something of the community of which it is a part. Therefore, it early sought to acquaint itself with all aspects of the community, its resources, and its needs. At the very outset, the League turned to the findings and recommendations of the Community Relations Project as the nucleus around which to build its program. After thorough examination of the recommendations made by the staff of experts who conducted the study, the League felt it could best serve the interests of the community by organizing its program around three broad areas. These areas are: 1) Community Services with emphasis upon health, child and family welfare agencies, housing, recreation and neighborhood improvement. 2) Industrial Relations which is concerned with job placement, vocational guidance, public information and training; 3) Cooperation and Coordination Services. This involves a working

relationship with other groups of the community whose interests are similar to those of the League.

These groups include civic and religious organizations, public schools, welfare groups, state and governmental agencies and city and state officials.

An examination of the files of the Urban League of Oklahoma City reveal that among the activities of the League in the area of Community Services have been:

1. The establishment of a Well-child Clinic. This project was initiated because of the lack of attention given the health needs of Negro children. It was through this channel that many parents were made to realize the importance of starting early in giving their children a chance to develop strong, sturdy bodies, thus assuring for them a better mental outlook, a happier social adjustment, and the prospects for greater economic security. Serious diseases were diagnosed early enough to heal the children involved.

2. The Removal of Negro crippled children to Crippled Children's Hospital. At the time of the organization of the Urban League in Oklahoma City, Negro crippled children were housed in what was called the South Ward of the University Hospital. While the type of care given the children in that location was recommended by the League, the members of the League were also aware of the fact that the children could not receive the various types of therapeutic services that could be given only at Crippled Children's Hospital. The

League worked in conjunction with the Negro Medical, Dental and Pharmaceutical Society in securing the transfer of the Negro crippled children from the South Ward to the Crippled Children's Hospital.

3. Recruitment of Negro Nurses. To help relieve the shortage of Negro nurses, the Urban League cooperated with the following groups in establishing nursing opportunities for Negro women: the Oklahoma County Medical Society, the State League on Nursing Education, the National and the State Association of Colored Graduate Nurses, and the Negro Medical Society. Appeals by the Urban League for nurses were made through the National Urban League headquarters, the National Red Cross Organization, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

4. The Juvenile Detention Home. The Urban League joined ten other civic, religious and professional organizations in endorsing the juvenile detention home bond issue. The League called the groups together to organize a community education program for informing all citizens about the need for a juvenile detention home in Oklahoma county.

5. Neighborhood Improvement Programs. The Urban League, in an attempt to disprove the claims that property value decreases when Negroes move into neighborhoods, had undertaken to encourage Negroes to keep up the appearance of their neighborhood, and thus dispel the myth that "property depreciates when Negroes buy in quantity." The League,

under the direction of the Executive Director, is presently engaged in organizing Neighborhood Councils among the various Negro communities in order to encourage the Negroes in the neighborhoods to cooperate in raising the standard of living in their neighborhoods.

6. Housing. Housing for the minority group in Oklahoma City represents a social problem which has been of major concern to both the majority and minority groups for many years. The Urban League has taken some definite steps to help alleviate some of the problems of the minority group in Oklahoma City. It is sponsoring housing forums and luncheons to which are invited representatives of various Housing and Home Building Associations. These representatives discuss their building programs and the ways in which they can help minority groups in the purchase of homes.

7. The Urban Renewal Program. The Urban League of Oklahoma City is represented on the Mayor's Advisory Committee for an Urban Renewal Program. This is a program sponsored by the federal government to clear slums and blighted areas in cities. It is designed to build decayed sections of cities, replan them for more convenient living and to provide better housing for the many families in the various middle and low income groups.

8. Recreation. The Urban League, through its Committee on Welfare, prepared a list of recommendations for the improvement of recreational facilities for the Negro

segment of the population. These recommendations were presented to additional Negro groups and leaders through a Coordinating Council of Negro Organizations for their approval, after which they were presented to the city officials. As a result of the coordinated efforts of various groups, there are now ten community centers which are kept in operation during the entire year. The program of the community centers is integrated.

The Industrial Relations program of the Urban League in Oklahoma City is concerned with job opportunities and vocational guidance of the Negro. Prior to the employment of an Industrial Relations Secretary in 1955, the services in this area were performed by a Vocational Services Committee. Perhaps, the most outstanding accomplishment of that committee was its success in securing the employment of Negro firemen in Oklahoma City. Emphasis of the Industrial Relations Department is upon "pilot placements." The League attempts to select qualified persons and endeavors to place them in positions which have previously been entirely closed to Negroes. The firemen project was illustrative of this type of placement, as well as the employment of Negroes as city bus drivers.

The Industrial Relations Secretary initiated a Skilled Betterment Program for young Negro women who are interested in clerical work. Instruction in some of the clerical subjects, including typing, business English, and shorthand are

offered two nights each week at Douglas High School. After the student has attained the necessary degree of proficiency in the skills he is recommended for job placements. Thus far, eight of the students have been placed. Four of these were with the Federal services, and four with private agencies.

To help promote the activities of the Urban League of Oklahoma City, an affiliate of the National Urban League Guild was organized in Oklahoma City in 1950. This is an interracial organization of young women whose purpose is to promote the activities of the League and provide it with financial assistance. The activities of the Urban League Guild are of three types: 1) Those of a cultural nature; 2) Fund raising activities and 3) Social activities. The fund raising of the Oklahoma City Urban League Guild consist of Benefit Teas, Rummage sales, and the sponsorship of one of the Mummers plays. The cultural activities usually consist of the presentation of outstanding speakers, book reviews, panel discussions and sometimes artists in the field of music. The Guild sponsors only one type of social activity. That is an annual all-family picnic at the end of the season. The Guild does not function during the summer months.

The Urban League of Oklahoma City emphasizes the importance of coordinating its activities with those of other organizations. It is the belief of the League that no one

organization alone is prepared to do an effective job of improving the living conditions of any segment of the population. The degree to which this is apparent is reflected in the success the League has experienced in its efforts to carry out a program of community improvement. This success has been evident in the opening of many avenues which, before the establishment of an Urban League in Oklahoma City, had been closed to Negroes. Significant among these, in addition to the several that have been discussed, were use of the library facilities by Negroes on a non-segregated basis, the desegregation of the municipal auditorium, and the inclusion of Negroes on advisory committees and policy making boards.

The Urban League has also shown great concern in the implications of the Supreme Court's decision of May 17, 1954. The impact of the League's program of community education for desegregation was felt throughout the entire county. The program served to arouse the citizens of the community and county of the need for continued guidance, direction and enlightenment concerning the decision so that the mandate of the Supreme Court of the United States might be carried out in the community in such a way that it will be acceptable to all.

The Urban League of Oklahoma City has exerted a tremendous influence for goodwill among all racial groups in the community. Because of its sound and thorough program of

action, not only has it been an agency of goodwill between the races, but it has also discharged its responsibilities of getting for Negroes new and better job opportunities, and has contributed to the over-all development of the total community.

It is the opinion of the writer that the achievements of the Urban League during the ten years of its existence in Oklahoma City reflect the ability of the organization to carry out the purposes for which it was organized--the improvement of the economic and social conditions of the Negro, and the improvement of race relations between the white and Negro groups.

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APPENDIX A

Charter Members of Oklahoma City Urban League

Mrs. Zelia H. Breaux

Miss Vilona P. Cutler

Mrs. Charlotte Donnell

Mr. Roscoe Dunjee

Mrs. Carrie L. Edwards

Mr. George Ferguson

Mr. L. D. Lacy

Mr. Jesse T. Owens

Mr. George Ragland

Miss Annabelle Sawyer

Mrs. Harry Schaffer

Mr. T. B. Watson

Miss Faye Webb

Reverend J. Howard Williams

APPENDIX B

Copy

August 8, 1946

Mr. P. N. Evjen, Director
Oklahoma City Community Fund
Oklahoma City 2, Oklahoma

My Dear Mr. Evjen:

A committee composed of the above mentioned names, believe that there are conditions prevailing in this community that make it desirable to provide means for amicable discussion of conflicting interests between the majority and the minority racial groups.

There is an organization, the National Urban League, that has provided this resource in many cities. We, the members of this Provisional Committee, have been working for more than a year toward the promotion of a chapter of the Urban League. We believe that the organization should be activated more adequately under professional leadership during this period, and we request that the Community Fund make available an emergency budget for this purpose.

We advised the field worker of the Urban League that such a budget, should provide a salary of $4000.00 and a fund for an

office, and for the development of a socially valuable program, totalling about $7000.00.

There is office space available in the Stiles Street Community Center and this program should provide a suitable Unit of the Community Center.

We urgently request your favorable consideration of this matter.

Sincerely yours,

_____

Chrm. Provisional Committee

_____

Sect. Provisional Committee

_____

Chrm. Membership Committee

APPENDIX C

Copy

September 3, 1946

Mr. Lester B. Granger
Executive Secretary
National Urban League
New York City, New York

Dear Sir:

The provisional committee on "Organization of an Oklahoma City Urban League" is now ready to make application for membership in the National Urban League upon the basis of the following achievements:

1. We have operated as a Provisional Committee for over one year, during which time we have been under the guidance of our Director of the Southern Division, Mr. Bell, and his successor Mr. Nelson C. Jackson. The former having made two visits to our city.
2. As a Provisional Committee, we served with the Advisory Committee, to the Director of Research Mr. Harvey Kern and his group of Specialists in their work with our Council of social welfare on

the Economic and Cultural Conditions of our Negro population in Oklahoma City.

3. We concerned ourselves primarily with a program of education to the end that it might be made clear to the interested White and Negro citizens of our community, that an Urban League would be the most likely organization through which we could accomplish the following:

   (a) Better race relations

   (b) Raise the economic condition of Negroes

   (c) Lower the death rates of Negroes through the promotion of better health facilities, increased recreational facilities and better housing.

   (d) Discover, train and mobilize the Negro leadership.

   (e) Give interpretation and evaluation to our white friends which will make it easier for them to cooperate with us in the accomplishment of those objectives for which the Urban League exists.

4. We have been accepted as a member agency of the Council of Social Welfare and have received a very cordial and sympathetic hearing before the Budget Committee of the Community Chest. And we are herewith submitting to you a copy of the application,

the budget, and the first year's suggested program which was submitted to the Director of Community Funds and upon the basis of which we have been favorably considered by that Board.

5. We have raised some funds from the payment of Charter Membership fee of $25 per Charter Member.
6. Our Provisional Committee personnel is representative of about thirty of the finest and the most responsible as well as the influencial men and women of both white and colored citizens. It also represents a "cross section" of our community life and interests.
7. Our Board of Directors will be headed by a most outstanding and influencial white minister and will consist of White and Negro members of wealth and influence.

It will be very gratifying to us to be able to have as early a reply to our application as possible, since we are soon to launch our drive for the Community Chest and there will be more work for us to do to get the hearty response from our Community we are anticipating. Trusting we are in line for a favorable reply, we are,

_____

Chrm. Provisional Committee

APPENDIX D

Copy

Administration Department
National Urban League

For Miss Edwards.

September
Twelfth
1946

Mr. George R. Ragland, Chrm.
Oklahoma City Urban League
Y. W. C. A. Building
230 N. W. First Street
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Dear Mr. Ragland:

It is my pleasant duty to notify you on behalf of the Executive Board of the National Urban League that the Board, at its meeting held on September 10, 1946, voted unanimously to accept the Urban League of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, in affiliation with this National Organization.

I need not assure you of the warm welcome extended to your organization as our fifty-sixth local affiliate, and as our first Oklahoma connection. The League movement is now established in twenty-nine states of the union and the District of

Columbia, and serves city populations totaling approximately forty-five percent of the Urban Negro population of the United States.

As the only national social service organization concerned primarily with Negro welfare and race relations and offering professional plus leadership in local communities, the Urban League movement has an important responsibility to discharge. We feel sure that the future activities of our Oklahoma City affiliate will justify the excellent planning and considerable sacrifice of time and effort provided by Oklahoma City leadership.

Within a few days, your Committee will receive several nominations from this office from which you will be able to choose your first executive secretary. Our fullest cooperation along this and other lines is yours for the asking.

I hope very soon to have the opportunity to cement this acquaintanceship which has begun so pleasantly.

Very sincerely yours,

Lester B. Granger
Executive Secretary
LBG/nib

Certificate of Affiliation

of

URBAN LEAGUE OF OKLAHOMA CITY, INC.

with the

NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE

Incorporated

Our goal: equal economic opportunity for all regardless of race.

Our method: American teamwork through interracial cooperation.

Date of Affiliation September 10, 1946

Issued March 22, 1954

National President

National Executive Director

SERVING THE WHOLE AMERICAN COMMUNITY SINCE 1910.

APPENDIX F

CONSTITUTION OF THE URBAN LEAGUE OF OKLAHOMA CITY AND COUNTY, INC.

Adopted November 28, 1950

ARTICLE I

NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Urban League of Oklahoma City and County.

ARTICLE II

OBJECTS

The purpose of this organization is to improve the general welfare of Negroes; by co-operation with existing social welfare agencies and encouragement for the evolution of other needed agencies or services; by studies and evaluations of Negro economic, educational and social conditions and problems; by educational and interpretative programs of Negroes to whites and whites to Negroes; by fostering sympathetic co-operation, mutual understanding and respect among all citizens of this area; by the development of harmonious and just race relationships; and in general to cultivate and to assist in any sound and progressive program for the

improvement of conditions among Negroes.

ARTICLE III

MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 - Any person may become a member of the Urban League upon recommendation of the Membership Committee and election by the Board of Directors, and upon compliance with the requirements for dues as stated in the By-laws.

Section 2 - The classes of membership shall be Charter, Associate, Sustaining and Contributing. All classes of membership shall be defined by the membership of the Urban League at an Annual Meeting in the form of a By-Law.

Section 3 - Each member shall have one vote on any matter before the Urban League.

Section 4 - The name of any candidate approved for membership by the Membership Committee shall be submitted to the Board of Directors for election to the Urban League at any meeting of the Board. A favorable majority vote shall elect a candidate to membership, which shall continue as long as some class of membership is maintained.

ARTICLE IV

BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Section 1 - There shall be an interracial Board of Directors of not less than twenty-one nor more than twenty-seven persons, of whom one-third shall be elected at each annual meeting for a term of three years.

Section 2 - A member of the Board of Directors who has served two consecutive terms shall not be eligible for another term until one year shall have elapsed since the expiration of his last term.

Section 3 - All meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held at such time and place and upon such notice as may be determined by proper resolution of the Board.

Section 4 - Eleven members of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting, but any number present may adjourn if a quorum is not present.

Section 5 - The Board of Directors shall exercise general direction and supervision over the activities and property of the Urban League. It shall establish such broad and general policies for the direction and supervision of these as it may deem best and that are in conformity with this Constitution and By-Laws. The Executive Director may make recommendations on policy matters to the Board.

Section 6- The Board of Directors shall employ an Executive Director of the Urban League, define its duties and fix his compensation. The Board shall also establish the salary range of other staff members. The Executive Director shall be responsible to the Board for the operation and execution of policies and functions of the Urban League, and shall have immediate charge and supervision of Urban League activities, and properties. The Executive Director shall employ such

persons and define their duties as may be necessary to carry on the work of the Urban League, but professional workers shall be employed only after consultation with the Personnel Committee.

Section 7 - All members of the Board of Directors shall be elected upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee by the membership at the annual meeting. Vacancies of Board membership shall be filled in an election by the remaining Board members, upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee and the person or persons elected shall hold office for the remainder of the unexpired term.

Section 8 - The office of any member of the Board of Directors who is absent for three or more consecutive and unexcused meetings (regular or special) of the Board shall be considered vacant. In such instances the Board shall fill the unexpired term as directed by Section 7 of this Article. The Board may excuse any member from meetings, upon written request of the member, for a period not to exceed six months and such authorization for absence may only be granted once in the course of any members term of office.

Section 9 - The President of the Urban League Guild of Oklahoma City shall be an ex-officio member of the Board of Directors and shall not be included in the maximum number of twenty-seven Board members.

ARTICLE V

OFFICERS

Section 1 - The officers of the Urban League shall be a President, two Vice Presidents, a Secretary and a Treasurer, each of whom shall be members of the Board of Directors. Officers shall be elected by the Board of Directors, upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee, at the first meeting of the Board following the annual meeting.

Section 2 - The officers shall be elected for a term of one year and shall serve thereafter until the election and qualification of their successor. No officer who has served three consecutive terms in the same office shall be eligible for another term in that office until one year shall have elapsed.

Section 3 - The President shall preside at all meetings of the Urban League and of the Board of Directors, and shall call all meetings of the League or the Board as directed by a resolution on this matter adopted by the Board. He shall appoint chairmen of all committees (subject to confirmation by the Board) shall appoint all committee members in consultation with committee chairmen, and in general shall exercise all powers customarily lodged in this office, or as directed by the Board.

Section 4 - The Vice Presidents in their order shall perform the duties of the President in the event of his absence.

Section 5 - The Secretary shall be responsible for the keeping of the minutes, records and seal of the Urban League,

and for such other duties as may be directed by the Board.

Section 6 - (a) The Treasurer shall be responsible for the proper keeping of the financial records of the Urban League, and shall annually report in full on the financial condition of the agency to both the membership and the Board, or at such lesser intervals as the Board may direct.

(b) All disbursements from the funds of the Urban League shall be by checks signed by the Executive Director and countersigned by the Treasurer.

(c) The Treasurer shall have all Urban League accounts audited annually by a certified public accountant who is approved by the Board.

ARTICLE VI

COMMITTEES

Section 1 - The Committees of the Urban League shall be of two types, including their sub-committees, Project and Standing Committees. Project Committees shall be created by the Board for a definite and specific purpose, not within the preview of any Standing Committee, and for a stated period of time. Standing Committees shall consist of all other committees that may be required for the administration or functional work of the Urban League.

Section 2 - (a) Except as may otherwise be provided in this Constitution, all Standing Committees shall be created and their duties defined by the membership of the Urban League

at a regular or special meeting in the form of a By-Law, but the President may, with the advice and consent of the Board, add any pertinent and relevant duties to any committee, in addition to those defined in the Committee By-Law, that may be needed to carry on the work of the Urban League.

(b) All reports of committees shall be made to the President and Board.

(c) The President and Board shall refer all Urban League affairs and business requiring committee action to the proper Standing Committee, or if it is a matter outside the duty and scope of any Standing Committee, the matter shall be referred to a Project Committee, created for that purpose.

Section 3 - The President shall appoint the Chairman and Committee members of all Project and Standing Committees as specified in Article V, Section 3.

Section 4 - The Standing Committee chairman shall be appointed each year immediately after the first regular Board meeting following the annual meeting to serve for one year or until after their successors are appointed and have qualified.

ARTICLE VII

Section 1 - (a) An annual meeting of the Urban League membership shall be held in November of each year at such time and place as the Board of Directors may determine.

(b) Special meetings of the Urban League membership

may be called for a specific purpose by the Board, and shall be called by the Secretary upon a written request, specifying the purpose of the meeting, signed by ten persons or more of the membership.

Section 2 - (a) The Board of Directors shall meet monthly, except July and August, at such time and place as the Board may direct.

(b) Special meetings of the Board may be called for a specific purpose by the President, and shall be called by the Secretary upon a written request, specifying the purpose of the meeting, signed by fifty per-cent or more of the Board membership.

Section 3 - (a) Notices of all regular meetings of the Urban League membership or Board shall be given to the members thereof at least ten days beforehand.

(b) Notice of all special meetings of the Urban League membership or Board shall be given to members thereof at least two days beforehand.

Section 4 - At any special meeting of the membership or Board of the Urban League, no business shall be transacted except that specified in the notice of the meeting.

SEAL

The Board of Directors may authorize a seal for the Urban League and direct its use.

ARTICLE IX

CUTLER AWARD

Section 1 - (a) The Vilona P. Cutler Award, or The Cutler Award, is hereby established in honor of Miss Vilona P. Cutler for her active, effective, and unceasing efforts to further the concepts expressed by the purpose of the Urban League.

(b) The membership may grant, under the conditions (strictly interpreted) established in this Article, the Award to any individual who has effectively demonstrated for a period of twelve years or more a valid, comprehensive creative and steady concept of the objects of the Urban League and has ably expressed that concept in actual and constant practice. The recipient may or may not be a member of the Urban League and be engaged in any occupation or profession.

(c) A period of five years shall elapse from any date on which the Award is given before the membership may again grant the Award; provided that this is not construed as a requirement to make the Award every five years.

(d) The membership shall enact a By-Law creating a Standing Committee, in accordance with the provisions of Article VI of this Constitution, for the purpose of recommending nominees for this Award to the Board of Directors. The Board shall establish uncompromising rules and superior standards for the operation of the committee and the granting of the Award, and such rules and standards in no manner

diminish or weaken the provisions of this Article. It is the intent of the Urban League that The Cutler Award shall have actual and honest distinction and significance.

Section 2 - (a) A record of the Award recipients shall be kept permanently in the offices of the Urban League and it shall be in such form as the Board of Directors may approve.

(b) A certificate of Award and a gift shall be presented to each recipient of the Cutler Award. The Certificate and the gift shall both be in such form as the Board of Directors may approve.

ARTICLE X

BY-LAWS

The membership of the Urban League may adopt or may amend By-Laws, not inconsistent with this Constitution, or may repeal existing By-Laws at any regular meeting of the League by a majority vote of the active members present; provided that any proposed addition or change has been filed in writing with the Secretary at least ten days prior to the beginning date of said regular meeting. The secretary shall immediately transmit copies of all proposed alterations or additions to the By-Laws to the President.

ARTICLE XI

AMENDMENTS

The membership of the Urban League may adopt amendments to, or repeal any and all portions of this Constitution at any

regular meeting of the League if three-fourths of the active members present vote in favor of such changes; provided that any proposed constitutional amendment, or repeal, has been filed in writing with the Secretary at least sixty days prior to the date of said regular meeting. The Secretary shall immediately send copies of all proposed constitutional amendments or repeals to each of the other members of the Board of Directors. The Secretary shall notify each active member of the League of any such proposed amendments or repeals at least thirty days to the beginning date of any regular meeting in which they will be acted upon or considered.

BY-LAWS

No. 1 - Classes of Membership and Dues

(a) Charter Members are those persons who contributed $25. or more to the Urban League in the initial year of its existence.

(b) Associate Members are those persons who contributed $25. or more annually to the Urban League.

(c) Sustaining Members are those persons who contribute from $5. to $25. annually to the Urban League.

(d) Contributing Members are those persons who contribute from $1. to $5. annually to the Urban League.

No. 2 - Fiscal Period

The fiscal period of the Urban League shall be November 1 to October 31 of each year.

No. 3 - Contracts and Obligations

The Board of Directors may empower any officer or employee of the Urban League to enter into leases, contracts or agreements, make purchases or contracts, incur indebtedness, sell Urban League property and execute and deliver negotiable instruments on behalf of the Urban League. No contract, or agreement undertaking or negotiable instrument of any kind shall be valid and binding on the Urban League unless approved and signed by such officer or employee so designated.

No. 4 - Financial Management

All funds of the Urban League shall be deposited in such banks as may be directed by the Board of Directors. All disbursements and audits of League funds shall be as directed in Article V, Section 6b of this Constitution.

No. 5 - Committees

The committees listed hereafter shall compose the Standing Committees of the Urban League:

(a) Awards Committee. This Committee shall recommend the names of individuals to the Board of Directors to receive the Cutler Award, after an objective, thorough, strict and detailed examination of their qualifications.

(b) Budget Committee. This Committee shall assist the Executive Director in the preparation of the annual budget of the Urban League and in securing funds for the operation of the League. The Treasurer shall be an ex-officio member of the Committee. All budgets or other

requests for funds shall be approved by the Board of Directors before being presented to the appropriating body.

(c) Education and Interpretation Committee. This Committee shall interpret the objectives and program of the Urban League to the Public, to social welfare agencies and to any other organizations. It shall also aid in the planning and preparation of Urban League publications.

(d) Membership Committee. This Committee shall establish qualifications for membership in the Urban League with the advice and consent of the Board of Directors. It shall also review membership applications and recommend applicants for membership to the Board.

(e) Nominating Committee. This Committee shall nominate all officers and members of the Board of Directors. The Committees shall select individuals who are best able to effectively and progressively discharge the duties of the offices to which they may be nominated. The Committee shall be fully prepared at all times to make nominations for Urban League offices.

(f) Personnel Committee. This Committee shall establish Urban League personnel policies and practices with the advice and consent of the Board of Directors.

No. 6 - Consultants

The President, upon the request of the Executive Director and with the advice and consent of the Board of Directors, may

appoint consultants for a term not to exceed one year to advise those in charge of Urban League services or committees.

President

Secretary

Date of Adoption