

STATEMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

TO THE MAYOR'S COMMITTEE

Submitted June 29, 1943



FROM THE N. A. A. C. P.

446 E. WARREN AVE.

TEMPLE 1-3609

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STATEMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE MAYOR'S COMMITTEE

We commend the Mayor for his appointment of a Commission to study racial problems, and urge that the Commission begin work immediately. That there immediately be provided:

1. Such assistance as the commission might need by way of research.
2. Funds for its work be provided through the Mayor's office or through the Common Council.
3. Agencies of propaganda, education, and other media be immediately placed at the disposal of the Commission.
4. Executive assistance and proper personnel.
5. Power of subpoena and access to all necessary records.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

We recommend an immediate grand jury investigation of the Police Department to determine its failure during the past crisis; that all persons within the department found to have affiliations or sympathy with the Ku Klux Klan, National Workers League, or any other such organization; especially those that are guilty of non-feasance, mis-feasance, or mal-feasance while on duty, be dismissed.

For a long time we have recognized, and on numerous occasions pointed out, the inadequate number of colored policeman; that Negroes have confidence and faith in their officers and respect them.

We recommend that the number of Negro officers be increased from 43 to 350; that there be immediate promotions of Negro officers in uniform to positions of responsibility; that there be at least one Negro Inspector, that a race relations divisions of the Police Department be created composed of officers with experience and education to form a smoother working body within the department. We further recommend a commission of Negro and White laymen to serve jointly with a group of Negro and White Policemen and officers to work toward immediate restoration of confidence in the department.

RECREATION

For years it has been apparent that Detroit's recreation facilities were inadequate to meet the need.

We recommend the following:

1. That all school grounds in congested areas be immediately made available for leisure-time activity.
2. That recreation leaders be employed to take over these newly opened fields.
3. That community agencies implement the Recreation Department to provide clean wholesome fun this summer, especially should the churches turn to opening centers in their basements or on other property that is available and properly supervised.
4. That in congested areas where problems of delinquency have reached saturation point and inter-racial feeling is high, special workers be employed immediately to co-ordinate and correlate civic, social, church and community programs.
5. That emergency funds be released by the Common Council for this purpose if such funds are not available in the Recreation Commission's budget.
6. That special funds be released or made available by churches and other agencies to meet their portion of this emergency program.
7. That special attention be given in a recreational program to the problems of so-called "jitterbugs and hoodlums" who are in great need of constructive activity under competent leadership.
8. To create a better understanding between young people who at tender ages are unaware of the significance of this problem of racial antagonism, we recommend that all organizations, such as the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, the Y.M.C.A., Board of Education, Urban League, church, etc., maintaining summer camps, immediately plan to include children of All races in their summer program, so that in addition to a summer of fun, special attention may be given to the problem of living together.

EDUCATION

The repercussions of the present racial conflict will not have effect in the schools until fall. During the summer vacation period there is time for constructive planning and preparation for a program to be launched in the fall.

We recommend and urge that the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools evaluate the school system to determine whether it is prepared to meet the need for racial adjustments. We further recommend:

1. That more Negro teachers be employed and placed throughout the school system on an integrated basis.
2. That Negro teachers be advanced according to experience and training; that qualified Negro teachers be advanced to principalships.
3. That Negro teachers be placed on faculties of High Schools, and Negro Counselors be utilized in all mixed schools to counsel both Negro and white students.
4. That Negro professors be considered immediately for appointment on the faculty of Wayne University—a municipal University.
5. That the Board of Education and the schools through their Social Science Departments include study units on the subject of racial amity.
6. That in future elections of members of the Board of Education the citizenry of Detroit consider the election of a qualified Negro for the board to assure representation on the policy-making body.

HOUSING

Now is the time to reconsider living together. The riot has proven that segregation whether voluntary or involuntary, produces separateness and friction. On the other hand where people were living together in the City of Detroit, there was no friction.

We reiterate our position that public housing should be for all people regardless of race, creed or color. We urge that the Detroit Housing Commission rescind its policy of not disturbing "neighborhood patterns", and open war housing pro-

jects to workers who qualify. We urge that additional housing be considered and built immediately; that a request be made to the President of the United States and such other Federal officials to grant priorities on building materials as a war measure to provide adequate housing. We contend that housing for war workers is as necessary to the war effort as camps for the armed forces.

LABOR

Because a large number of workers will be affected by events of the past few days, the rank and file of labor must make some plans for adjustment. We recommend:

1. That inter-racial commissions be set up in all locals in which a mixed labor force is employed.
2. That inter-racial committees of international unions be activated where they are already in existence by launching a program of education and adjustment to problems of racial-differences.
3. That there be a coordinated inter-racial labor commission composed of representatives of labor organizations, the AFL, CIO, and independent unions. Such commission representatives are to be appointed by heads of respective organizations, and these in turn correlated by program and activity with plant committees.
4. That trade unions in cooperation with management immediately develop a sound, intelligent, and over-all program, for the complete integration of workers of minority groups into industry.

REPARATIONS

We urge that the City Government immediately take steps to make reparations for the loss of life, limb and property in Detroit.

We also urge that a inter-racial committee be set up by the Mayor to receive and adjust claims.

TO MEMBERS OF THE MAYOR'S COMMITTEE

Attention:

On Tuesday, June 29, we submitted a number of recommendations to your honorable body covering specific areas of conflict and suggesting both immediate and long-term remedies. We would like to add to our first recommendation which urged that your body be given "power of subpoena and access to all necessary records."

We feel that because of the public interest, an open hearing ought to be held immediately and those whom the committee might find advisable to interview, should be called before your honorable body, rather than sought out in the intimacy of private chambers.

An open hearing would have a salutary effect and would bring out into the open questions of a program to be formulated. As such a hearing proceeds the entire public, interested as we all are in this question, would be given an opportunity to review the proceedings.

The committee ought to be given the power of calling persons in administrative positions whose functions were closely connected with events of the past few days and those who will be charged with executing future programs.

We respectfully submit this recommendation for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

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President, NAACP

Gloster B. Current, Executive Sec'y
