



*8 years
of
interracial
progress*

**1953
Annual Report
of
Urban League
of Portland**

Affiliate National Urban League
Member United Fund

HERE'S THE PICTURE

JOBS

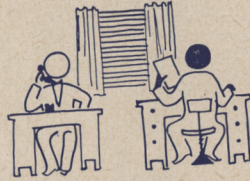


1945

97% of Portland's nonwhite workers excluded from industrial and commercial employment. Negroes employed mainly in railroad and domestic service jobs.

Sample old jobs:

Cook	Handyman
Maid	Waiter
Chauffeur	Porter
	Laborer



1953

Nearly 1,000 jobs in commerce and industry, federal, state & city depts. now filled by nonwhite workers.

Sample new jobs:

Secretary	Teacher
Sales Clerk	Nurse
Technician	Engineer
Policeman	Shipping Clerk
Social Worker	Assembly Worker

HOTELS & RESTAURANTS



1945

All but one major downtown establishment for public accommodation practicing discrimination on the basis of race.



1953

Nearly all principal downtown establishments open to all without discrimination.

PUBLIC EDUCATION



1945

Most Portlanders acting upon false assumptions about Negroes and other nonwhites. Misinformation and apathy widespread. Race tensions evident.



1953

Better understanding of the common needs and problems of all bringing harmony, teamwork and progress. High community interest in the removal of injustices.

Art Work contributed by Radcl Cahen.

Cover Photos: (top to bottom): William McCoy, Boys Clothing Dept., Lipman Wolfe & Co.; Sage Nishioka, accountant, State Tax Dept., consults with an official; Mrs. Oteria Nicholson, supervisor, in Children's Dept., Public Welfare Commission, confers with a caseworker; David Robinson, chairman, Oregon FEP Advisory Commission, and Edwin C. Berry, Urban League executive, meet with former Governor Douglas McKay, now Secretary of the Interior; Robert Ford, teacher, Roosevelt High School; Machine workers, Joseph Manufacturing Co.

HOUSING



1945

Negroes becoming increasingly concentrated in rundown, overcrowded Williams Avenue district. Racial segregation in public housing (Vamport and Guilds Lake units.)



1953

Some hopeful signs appearing in housing for minorities, though concentration largely remains in Williams Avenue area. Segregation abolished in public housing units.

POLICE METHODS



1945

Attacks on helpless citizens by regular or "special" police a frequent occurrence.



1953

Civil approach in police methods. Brutal handling of persons in custody almost unheard of.

What It Means

The pictograms show only highlights of the URBAN LEAGUE STORY in Portland over the past eight years. THEY DO NOT TELL THE WHOLE STORY. In human relations, the kinds of results which lend themselves to illustration represent only a fraction of the total accomplishment. Not shown, for example, are the hours of inspired individual and cooperative group effort required to bring about these results, nor the communicational and educational resources employed.

They do represent significant achievement.

OTHER AREAS OF ACTIVITY ARE:

The Schools

During the past four years the Urban League has increased its activity in the public school field, working with parents, teachers and school officials to remove the barriers to understanding growing out of racial and cultural background, and to encourage student achievement.

Community Services

Your Urban League has worked ceaselessly to insure that public services in health, welfare and recreation are equally available to all and that people of all races recognize their right to enjoy such services.

BUT—OUR TASK IS FAR FROM COMPLETE.

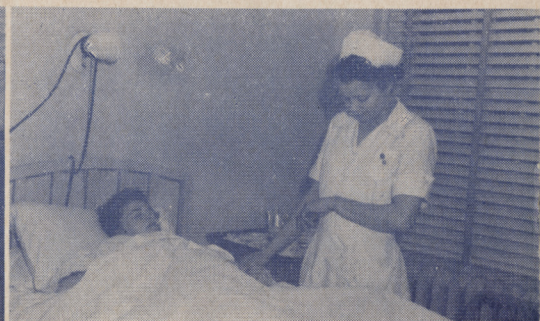
We still have a long way to go before the goal of interracial understanding and equality of opportunity is fully realized.

IN FACT, WE ARE ONLY

. . . . HALF WAY TO DEMOCRACY!



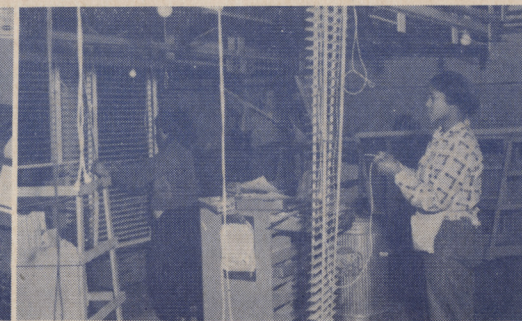
Wiley Gibson, washerman, is one of first Negroes to be admitted to Laundry Workers Union.



Mrs. Audrey Ellis, registered nurse on the staff of Wilcox Memorial Hospital, Portland.



Miss Mary Minamoto, supervisor of teletype division, Multnomah County chapter of Red Cross.



Mrs. Wallicia Harrison, assembly worker, American Window Products Company, Portland.

In the city of Portland, we are one-half the way toward our goal of EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY for all citizens.

This is not a pessimistic statement. One-half the way is good when compared with most other American cities. It is excellent when compared to patterns of race relations as they were eight years ago in Portland.

We are proud of our community's accomplishments in jobs, education, housing, use of public accommodations, interpretation through radio and press, and the solid gains which have reached the stage of crystalization by enactment into law.

Changes Are Marked

We can observe the fruits of our efforts in incalculable ways. For instance: the more than 100 responsible organizations which have federated to work for specific interracial projects such as Fair Employment Practices, Civil Rights, and the Mt. Sinai Church situation. Another dramatic result: not a single Portland social agency practices **racial exclusion** or **separation** in extending services or assigning staff.

Progress is also revealed in terms of our membership. In 1945, our membership was nil; today we have more than 1,800 citizens who are active, working Urban League members. These members are responsible for the improvements cited here.

In evaluating race relations, we must always maintain a balance. It is important that we do not become dizzy with exhilaration when we have made small gains. It is equally important that we do not despair because our task is not finished.

Our Work is Urgent

Our progress has been substantial and respectable. But we

are sobered by the fact that we are only HALF WAY TO DEMOCRACY. We hope this thought creates in all of us a sense of urgency to get on with the job.

Our work is urgent. For every day we delay, other persons are injured—some of them beyond recall as useful citizens.

There are those in our community who say: wait—take it easy—time will take care—this way is better in the long haul. None of these statements is valid. **Time alone will achieve nothing but decay;** and people do not live in the long haul. They live NOW. Our kids are growing NOW. They must be properly nourished, clothed, housed, educated, and given medical attention NOW—if they are to reach adulthood with strong bodies.

By the same token, they must receive the emotional nourishment of self respect, freedom to participate, and an equal chance, if they are to reach adulthood with the strength, understanding, and integrity required to achieve and preserve the democratic goals of our great nation.

The Tasks Before Us

We say one-half the way—For no major area of human endeavor in Our Town is completely democratic, interracially speaking—either in work, play, or worship.

We have gone far in opening new avenues of employment, but no major industry is free of racial discrimination.

Our schools are among the best in the nation, but to claim the total absence of bigotry would be naive and misleading.

Before the law, we are moving closer to justice. However, when a deputy district attorney reveals stereotyped thinking



and uses a term of racial opprobrium in open court, when law enforcement officers remain untrained in human decency, equal treatment continues to be impossible.

Further, when one assesses the amount of controversy and acrimony engendered in the current assembly of our State Legislature about a simple Civil Rights Bill, it is apparent that democracy is not yet a reality.

And Again—Housing

The final item to be mentioned here is housing. This is the area of greatest concern. Public housing has become entirely integrated. Still discrimination is practiced in the sale of houses by practically every realtor serving the Portland area, and by most real estate dealers who are not members of the Realty Board. None of the new sub-divisions, even those built with government loans—**everyone's money**— are available to non-white buyers. Exclusion of Negroes from decent apartments is almost universal in Portland. These practices continue in spite of local experience and scientific evidence which completely explode the myth that non-white residents depreciate property values.

* * *

This has been an over-view of our present interracial condition. The situation is hopeful. Our job is worth doing because it is "do-able."

We have demonstrated that the altering of racial patterns need not require as long as has been popularly held. This, we believe, is a significant contribution to the total field of human relations.

We have no hesitation to state unequivocally that we, in Portland, have exhibited more vitality, and have moved more rapidly than any other city in the entire nation. **We are still but half the way.**

It is the purpose of the Urban League to work itself out of a job.

Let's pull together and speed the day when equality has been so firmly established that it is no longer debatable, and the Urban League program will have taken its place in the museum as an illogical relic of the past.



Summer scene at city-owned Peninsula Park swimming pool.

STATISTICAL REPORT

May, 1952—April, 1953

INDUSTRIAL		REFERRALS FROM OTHER	
New Applicants	315	AGENCIES	1,237
Job Orders	360		
Referrals	463	REFERRALS TO OTHER AGENCIES	911
Job Placements	271		
Counselling Interviews	688	CONFERENCES	821
Re-Interviews	221	Conferences were participated in by professional staff with employers, community, church, social, labor, education, housing, political and governmental agencies and officials.	
Job Information (number of times information was given, not number of individuals)	1,837		
		MEETINGS	
FIELD CONTACTS		Meetings were attended by staff, officially representing the Urban League ..	293
Field Contacts were made to:			
Employers	169	SPEECHES	
Labor Organizations	78	Speeches were made before all types of groups	181
Social Agencies	75		
Public Bureaus & Departments	52	REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION	6,121
Schools	88	These requests for information were filled in addition to instances related to job information. Most requests for information were filled by telephone, although some were filled by letter, literature or conference.	
Church & Civic Groups	124		
Housing	57	LITERATURE (Individual pieces)	90,573
Other	71		
	<hr/>		
	714		
COUNSELLING (other than Industrial)			
Individuals received counselling as follows:			
Education	137		
Race Relations	215		
Housing	98		
General	71		
	<hr/>		
	521		



Left: Julius A. Thomas, Director of Industrial Relations, National Urban League, addresses Labor-Management luncheon sponsored by Urban League of Portland, March, 1953. President R. P. Gantenbein at left of speaker. Right: Counseling a job-seeker, one of the many activities of the Urban League.

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Urban League of Portland

202 McKay Building

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