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A SURVEY OF THE TRANSIENT
NEGRO IN NEW JERSEY

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STATE OF NEW JERSEY

EMERGENCY RELIEF ADMINISTRATION

NEGROES ON THE ROAD

A Survey of the Negro Transient in New Jersey

JANUARY—JUNE, 1934

Melvin C. Jackson

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STATE OF NEW JERSEY
MANUAL TRAINING SCHOOL
BORDENTOWN

W. B. VALENTINE
PRINCIPAL

June 5, 1935.

Mr. Chester Barnard, State Director,
Emergency Relief Administration,
Newark, N. J.

Dear Mr. Barnard:

The committee on Survey of Transient Negroes submits the following statement in connection with the survey made by Nelson C. Jackson, Special Projects Supervisor of the New Jersey Relief Administration Bureau of Transients.

From the information secured in this survey, the astonishing facts were disclosed, that 48.3% were from northern states and 44.2% from southern states. The residence of 3% of these men was unknown and the remaining 4.5% were distributed among 25 unlisted states. This is contrary to the popular view that the Negro transient is almost exclusively from the South. The Negro transient has had considerable schooling, more than 29% of all applicants having finished the 8th grade or better, and 72% having had more than three years of schooling. There is a reasonably large proportion of skilled and semi-skilled workers, inasmuch as 62% of the applicants were reported as unskilled. The cause of transiency was reported as "seeking employment" in more than 93% of the total Negro cases studied, this percentage being considerably higher than has been found in state and national studies of the total transient groups. These latter findings are supported by the fact that the response of the Negro transients to camp work programs is excellent, according to local and state officials.

The foregoing information and other data secured, have suggested the necessity of revamping the past procedure and attitudes of dealing with the Negro transient in the State of New Jersey. This suggestion arises in the discovery of subtle influences not specifically located, which have been operating against the Negro, particularly in opportunities afforded for camp treatment. Therefore, the committee makes the following recommendations:

It is obvious that the interviewers of the Central Registration Bureaus should familiarize themselves more thoroughly with the background of the Negro transient through contacts with Negro agencies and leaders, and through reading and study. It is advised that at the same time they make an effort to utilize the resources at the command of these agencies and leaders.

It is advised that in the various courses in social case work conducted by various departments of the Emergency Relief Administration particularly, some attention and thought be given to the Negro and his problems. It is advised that a special course in reading on the background of the Negro be recommended to all case workers and interviewers.

In connection with programs developed in camps and city shelters, it is suggested that as many social and town contacts be effected for the transients as possible, with due regard to the townspeople themselves, of course. It is felt that the need for these contacts is particularly applicable to the Negro who is used to a family life.

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
MANUAL TRAINING SCHOOL
RODENTOWN

W. R. VALENTINE
PRINCIPAL

Mr. Barnard - 2

The committee was surprised to note the small number and slender proportion of Negroes being sent to Transient Camps, in spite of the fact that comments of the men at camp to the investigator indicated that the Negro is easily adjusted to the camp program and is accepted by the white group without any conflict whatever. Accordingly, we recommend that more careful attention be given to the selection of Negroes to the end that a larger proportion of them may be referred to camp.

The committee feels that the foregoing recommendations could be instituted more effectively if the personnel in the administrative structure were to have available, persons in position to interpret the Negro transient. We suggest that more serious attention be given to the integration of qualified Negro workers into the Transient Bureau structure.

We further suggest, to this same end, that a qualified person of the Negro group be added to the State Advisory Board, as a more effective means of meeting these problems than the present arrangement involving a special advisory committee of Negro citizens.

In view of the many misconceptions which prevail concerning the Negro transient, we believe that the findings in this survey could be made more effective if comparisons are made with similar data concerning the white transient group. Such questions as these could then be answered:

- a. In what respect do the white and colored transients differ, if at all?
- b. Are special provisions necessary because of these differences or these similarities?

The committee realizes that there are many more questions to be answered in relation to the Negro transient, but feels that until further factual material of a comparative nature is secured, it can make only general recommendations conditioning intake, but not treatment.

Respectfully submitted,

W. R. Valentine, Chairman.

W. R. Valentine
C. M. Cairns
Arthur S. Schreiber
John H. Hardy

INTRODUCTION

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE TRANSIENT BUREAU

The Federal Transient Bureau was established under the Federal Emergency Relief Administration in June, 1933; the organization in New Jersey was started on the 15th of August, 1933, and the establishment of the five Central Registration Bureaus located in Newark, Elizabeth, Trenton, Camden and Paterson was completed by December 1, 1933. At the same time two camps were established in the Palisades Interstate Park for the care of transient men and boys.

Each bureau is in charge of a trained social case worker. The bureaus are operated in connection with the New Jersey Emergency Relief Administration and are now under their jurisdiction.

All funds are earmarked for relief to transients.

The bureaus mentioned are staffed with case workers and clerical help sufficient to take care of the load in the particular districts which they cover. These districts are composed of from two to eight counties each, and all matters relevant to transients are handled through these offices.

THE PROGRAM OF THE CENTRAL REGISTRATION BUREAUS

The program followed in each of the bureaus consists of arrangements for food and shelter, medical attention and clothing, when needed. Work programs are developed where possible, though they are the exception rather than the rule.

The workers in the various bureaus had had some specialized study on case work procedure and are under the supervision of trained people. In the light, however, of their previous educational background and work experience, we must consider the newness of the Transient Bureau Program and the lack of experience in assisting this particular type of individual.

The answers received on the applications for Transient Bureau care are in most instances very incomplete because of the reluctance of the applicants to tell their whole story. Therefore, the real situation frequently is not determined until after the men go to camp and have learned to trust the people handling the program.

A constantly shifting population is interviewed at all hours of the day and night under various conditions, such as inclement weather or crowded quarters, and the applicant is frequently tempered by the morale and spirit of any group he may have contacted last. It is safe to say, however, that most of the data collected for this study may be depended upon. The worker doing the sampling spent a month going over all the case histories, picking out the items

particularly wanted, reading all correspondence in connection with all the cases, and in addition, interviewing applicants from time to time. In all his interviews he attempted to get at the full story of the transient rather than the physical facts represented by tables that are included in the study.

THE PROGRAM OF THE TRANSIENT TRAINING CAMPS

The programs at camp are more extensive in that, in addition to food, shelter, clothing and medical attention, they provide for a complete work program, a complete recreational program and partial educational activities.

The community contacts are established which provide outlets for the interest of the man.

PURPOSE AND SET-UP OF THE STUDY OF NEGRO TRANSIENTS

Early in the work of the bureaus it became evident that the number of Negro transients applying to the various bureaus averaged between ten to twenty per cent of the total load. On the other hand, the number of Negro transients that we were able to send to camps amounted to less than one per cent of the load and about ten per cent of the population of the camp at that time. This percentage was set on the advice of the State Advisory Committee.

As the number of applicants of Negro transients increased, we felt the need of more complete information than was available to us on the statistical reports sent in. We were desirous of knowing the average age groups into which the Negro transient fell, where he came from, was he skilled, semi-skilled or just an unskilled laborer, what educational background he had, why he left home, and where he was going.

The female Negro transient is not included in the figures given.

Doctor W. R. Valentine of the Manual Training and Industrial School for Colored Youth was asked to head a committee composed of Dr. Ellen C. Potter, Director of Medicine, Department of Institutions and Agencies; Dr. Emma S. Schreiber; Mr. Harold Lett, Executive Secretary of the New Jersey Urban League; Mr. Arthur Hardy, Executive Secretary, Court Street Branch, Y. M. C. A., Newark and Mr. C. M. Cain, Executive Secretary of the Arctic Avenue Branch of the Y. M. C. A., Atlantic City.

The committee was to consider the findings and to recommend some action to the State Director. On the basis of the facts determined in this study, the committee recommends that the Transient Bureau increase the percentage of Negroes in the camps and do more complete case work on them while they are being assimilated by the group. The study covered a period of six months and represented 51% of the total number of applicants.

CORNELL B. BRAISTED,
State Manager, Bureau of Transients.

HOW MANY ARE THERE?

During the period covered by the survey 10,028 persons applied for care to the various Transient Bureaus: 8,660 were White and 1,368 were Negro applicants. For this period the Negro represents 13.6% of the total number. The statistics of the Federal Transient Bureau show a rapid increase in the number and proportion of colored clients, between March and June, 1934, i. e., 10,289 or approximately 8% in March and 21,658 or 10.6% in June. In the light of the above information, New Jersey had a higher percentage of Negro transients than the country at large.

Tables I and II show the relative increases and decreases, by months, of applicants to the bureaus.

The proportion of Negro transients in April, the peak month for the period under observation, approached 20%. The cause for this increase may be explained in several ways.

Interviews with officials and transients at the Elizabeth Bureau which cared for the greatest percentage of Negro applicants during the month revealed that an influx was caused by "word of mouth publicity" regarding the free issue of clothing. Every vehicle of transportation brought men who had heard that clothing could be secured very easily at this center.

New Jersey normally offered a large number of jobs in seasonal employment. For a number of years Negro workers have found a haven in the seashore resort area, principally Atlantic City, the farming sections and oyster districts. The resort area attracted those at this particular time because definite contacts may be made for jobs for the season.

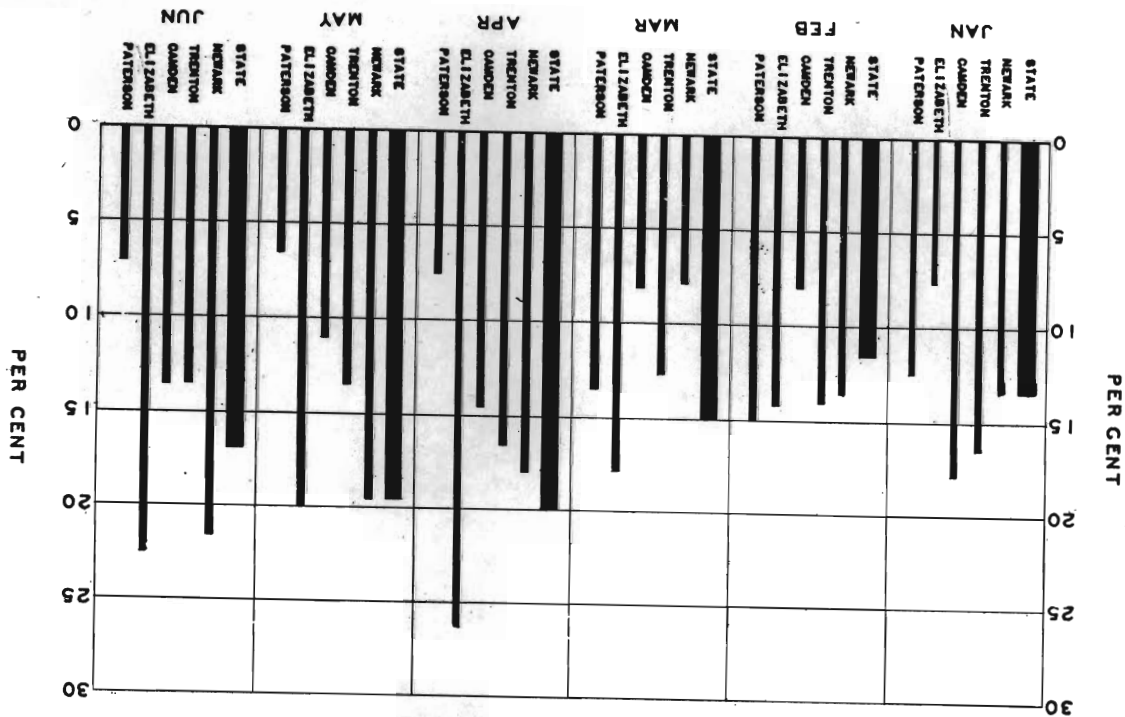
Unfortunately, a great number of Negroes continue the annual trek to this particular section, not realizing that the scenes are shifting in this job mart. In recent years Negroes have lost considerable ground in the resort areas because of the general depression and because of the general displacement of Negro workers by others.

Because the transient is an extremely mobile individual and there was a general increase in transiency in New Jersey during the month of April, it is safe to say that better weather conditions also played a definite part on this trend of increased registrations.

TABLE I
NEGRO AND WHITE APPLICANTS
AT TRANSIENT BUREAUS IN NEW JERSEY
JANUARY—JUNE, 1934

Distribution by Month of Application

1934	State			Newark			Trenton			Camden			Elizabeth			Paterson		
Month	Total	White	Negro	Total	White	Negro	Total	White	Negro	Total	White	Negro	Total	White	Negro	Total	White	Negro
TOTAL	10,028	8,660	1,368	3,527	2,990	537	1,785	1,572	213	1,545	1,360	185	1,731	1,382	349	1,440	1,356	84
January	1,525	1,381	144	544	503	41	315	288	27	187	168	19	261	217	44	218	205	13
February	1,023	952	71	336	313	23	189	175	14	152	137	15	161	147	14	185	180	5
March	1,375	1,229	146	437	392	45	249	225	24	165	146	19	241	196	45	283	270	13
April	2,000	1,667	333	700	581	119	483	407	76	207	179	28	345	254	91	265	246	19
May	1,901	1,593	308	781	628	153	285	249	36	240	216	24	400	324	76	195	176	19
June	2,204	1,838	366	729	573	156	264	228	36	594	514	80	323	244	79	294	279	15



WHERE DID HE COME FROM?

The surprising fact in the survey is that the Negro transient is largely a Northern product and came principally from within a 500-mile radius of New Jersey.

In a study of States from which Negro transients came into the State of New Jersey, Pennsylvania was claimed as residence by 113 or 16.1% of the total applications; New York, also a border State, presented the next largest number with 9%. Border States are the first to be visited by persons in an effort to secure employment and the like. It is oftentimes felt that the neighboring State has more opportunities to offer. When these opportunities are not secured the journey continues until many State lines have been crossed. Virginia and Maryland, in a direct line on the Atlantic Seaboard, had the next greatest numbers. Following them in number of applicants was Ohio, bordering Pennsylvania. Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia were claimed as residence by the next greatest number, and the proportions by States was small.

The District of Columbia presented the next largest number with 27 which is 3.6% of the total. Alabama and Louisiana showed 16 applications or 2.2%.

Other Southern States, Mississippi, Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky and Texas were represented only by occasional applicants. As a partial explanation of this condition, the following quotation from the Evaluative Survey of the Federal Transient Program made by Dr. Ellery Reed is illuminating.

There were many towns in the South where the feeling against Negro transients was so strong that Negroes were afraid to stop. In one Transient Bureau which attempted to care for Negroes, a mob formed and the colored transients had to be hurried out of town. Freight trains in the South, prior to the Federal Program especially, were "stripped" of transients, who were arrested and farmed out to work for private contractors on the roads or in the mines and cotton fields. "It is little wonder, therefore, that the Transient Bureaus in many places in the South had no colored applicants, and that the viewpoint was frequently expressed that there was very little, if any, colored transient problem. Some held that the Southern Negro was not usually enterprising enough to go to strange communities in search of work; and that when he did, he more readily found care among his people, sleeping in pool rooms, bootleg joints, and in hallways when some relative did not take him into his home. In Memphis, Tennessee, and at Fort Worth, Texas, there were well operated Negro shelters, but as a rule the Negro shelters in the South, which were studied or visited, were not quite equal to those provided for the Whites."

While the New England States were not represented to a great extent by transient Negroes in New Jersey, this may be explained by the fact that this section of the country does not have as large a percentage of Negro population as some of the other sections.

The East North Central States were claimed as residence by 35 applicants or 5% of the total number. In this section applicants from Illinois predominated. There is a large Negro population which can account for these States being represented in New Jersey.

A small number were from other States. It is interesting to note that nine were from California. While the number is not large, it is an indication that there was either an adventurous spirit among these men or they were going long distances in the search of adjustment.

Twenty-one applicants gave information that was of such nature to discount any State being named as residence. In these instances transients had been away from the State for longer than a year or the relative period subject to residence laws of these States.

Men frequently lose residence because they are itinerant workmen, not chronic hoboos. They work at one job for a time and leave to go on to another. The subsequent lay-off caused them to appear on relief rolls as transients because they had no residence in the State of New Jersey. An example follows of a mythical transient.

"Art Hardtack left Kansas, his State of legal residence, to work in the wheat fields, after the season he traveled east to Ohio and secured a job for three months. When this job terminated he moved into New Jersey and secured a job on a potato farm. When a strike was called he was forced to apply for relief in New Jersey. He was classified as a transient without residence because he had lost residence in Kansas and had not gained residence in New Jersey."

The New Jersey Transient Bureau does not give care to the State homeless or intra-State cases. However, twenty such individuals made application for assistance at the bureaus in the State during the period discussed.

This represents 2.8% of the total load. The fact that New Jersey Transient Bureau does not care for these types of cases does not imply that time is not taken with the client because in each instance advice and direction was given as to the place that was responsible for this service. The fact that local and State homeless men applied to bureaus in New Jersey showed a mobility in the State because of undesirable conditions and inadequate facilities in many instances for their inclusion in the relief set-up.

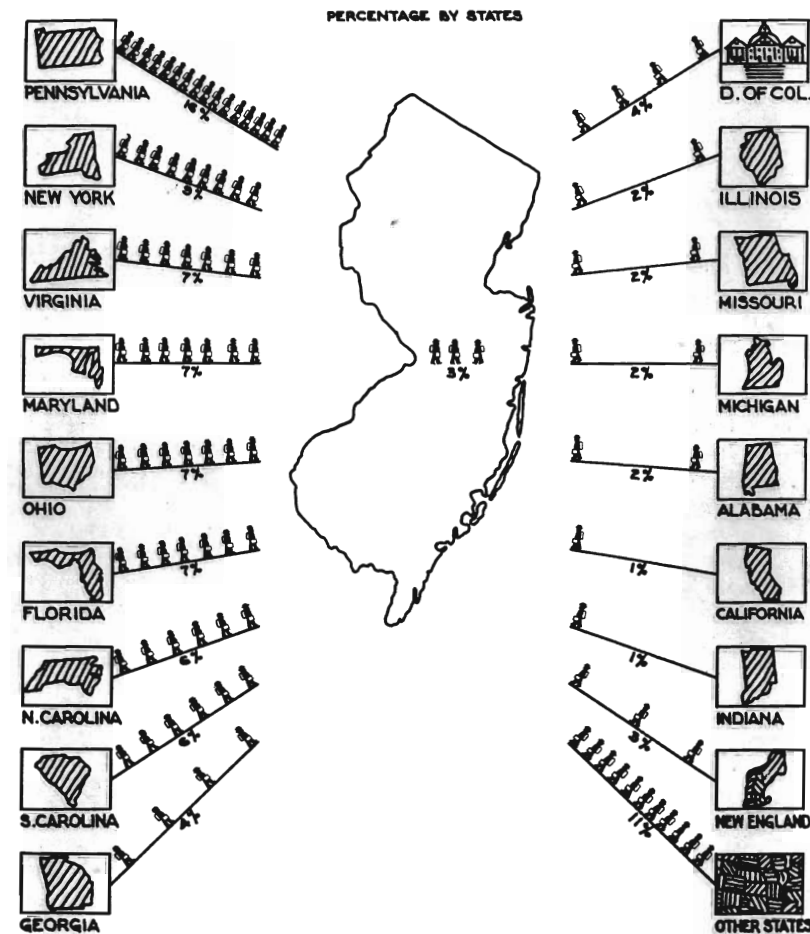
TABLE 3
NEGRO APPLICANTS
AT TRANSIENT BUREAUS IN NEW JERSEY
JANUARY—JUNE, 1934

Distribution by State of Legal Residence												
State of Legal Residence	State		Newark		Trenton		Camden		Elizabeth		Paterson	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
TOTAL	700	100	316	100	99	100	75	100	158	100	52	100
Pennsylvania	113	16.1	51	16.1	20	20.3	8	10.7	25	15.8	9	17.4
New York	64	9.1	40	12.7	6	6.1	3	4.0	6	3.8	9	17.4
Virginia	51	7.3	19	6.0	10	10.1	7	9.3	12	7.6	3	5.8
Maryland	50	7.1	18	5.7	6	6.1	11	14.7	13	8.2	2	3.8
Ohio	49	7.0	19	6.0	10	10.1	3	4.0	10	6.3	7	13.5
Florida	47	6.7	20	6.3	10	10.1	2	2.7	14	8.9	1	1.9
N. Carolina	42	6.0	28	8.9	5	5.1	1	1.3	8	5.1	—	—
S. Carolina	40	5.7	16	5.1	4	4.0	7	9.3	11	7.0	2	3.8
Georgia	30	4.3	14	4.4	4	4.0	2	2.7	9	5.7	1	1.9
D. Columbia	27	3.9	15	4.7	3	3.0	3	4.0	4	2.5	2	3.8
None	21	3.0	2	.6	—	—	2	2.7	16	10.1	1	1.9
New Jersey	20	2.9	3	1.0	2	2.0	6	8.1	—	—	9	17.4
Massachusetts	16	2.3	8	2.5	1	1.0	1	1.3	5	3.2	1	1.9
Illinois	16	2.3	10	3.2	—	—	2	2.7	4	2.5	—	—
Missouri	11	1.6	5	1.6	2	2.0	1	1.3	2	1.3	1	1.9
Michigan	10	1.4	5	1.6	2	2.0	1	1.3	2	1.3	—	—
Alabama	10	1.4	5	1.6	—	—	4	5.3	—	—	1	1.9
California	9	1.3	2	.6	2	2.0	2	2.7	3	1.9	—	—
Indiana	9	1.3	8	2.5	—	—	—	—	1	.6	—	—
Delaware	8	1.1	5	1.6	—	—	1	1.3	2	1.3	—	—
Connecticut	7	1.0	3	1.0	2	2.0	1	1.3	1	.6	—	—
Kentucky	6	.9	2	.6	2	2.0	2	2.7	—	—	—	—
Louisiana	6	.9	3	1.0	1	1.0	1	1.3	1	.6	—	—
W. Virginia	6	.9	1	.3	2	2.0	1	1.3	1	.6	1	1.9
All Others	32	4.5	14	4.4	5	5.1	3	4.0	8	5.1	2	3.8

NEGROES ON THE ROAD

A SURVEY OF THE NEGRO TRANSIENT IN NEW JERSEY

LEGAL RESIDENCE OF NEGRO TRANSIENTS REGISTERED
AT CENTRAL REGISTRATION BUREAUS IN NEW JERSEY



WHY DID HE LEAVE?

Unemployment was the greatest motivating force of the transient Negro applying for care in New Jersey, 93.2%. This percentage is higher than existing averages among other nationalities of transients cared for in the United States by Federal Transient Bureaus. The Negro's plight has been acute in the existing economic order, never too secure; however, there have been certain types of jobs to which he has been accustomed. With the pressure of continued unemployment there has been a gradual replacement of Negroes by Whites in many lines of endeavor.

Many of the transients in question left home because there was not enough income in the family to support them or the family was on relief and no need was felt in the individual to stay at home to receive relief. He felt that a job awaited him somewhere so went in search of it.

Adventure as a cause of transiency did not represent a very large proportion. This is an indication that the Negro transient is concerned more with the desire to earn a living and does not have the desire for adventure to an appreciable extent.

Ill health represented a relatively small ratio as a cause of transiency among Negroes. This small proportion showed that the general health condition of the group was good. Nevertheless, as physical examinations were not given, except in specific instances, there is a possibility for doubt as to the authenticity of this data.

Broken homes and discord at home caused eleven individuals, approximately 1.5% to become transients. It was impossible to ascertain the underlying causes in either instance yet one could be reasonably certain that there was a definite link with "unemployment" as a cause of transiency. The number who were runaways were youths below the age of sixteen, who took to the road because there was something lacking at home.

Five of the number, less than 1%, were chronic hoboos, men who wouldn't work. These men travel continuously and would be traveling if there were no Transient Bureaus to assist them. As a general rule this class of transient does not make application at the Transient Bureau because they are able to get by "by their wits." No doubt this small number is the forerunner of a larger group that will be on the road in the future unless some definite plan can be made to curtail this.

The other causes of transiency representing .5% of the total were not of sufficient number to warrant a detailed discussion. These causes were the unusual rather than the rule; however, they are important enough to necessitate having a program so flexible that all causes can be treated.

TABLE 5
NEGRO APPLICANTS
AT TRANSIENT BUREAUS IN NEW JERSEY
JANUARY—JUNE, 1934

Cause of Transiency	State No. %	Newark No. %	Trenton No. %	Camden No. %	Elizabeth No. %	Paterson No. %
TOTAL	700 100	316 100	99 100	75 100	158 100	52 100
Unemployment	653 93.3	296 93.7	95 96.0	72 96.0	141 89.2	49 94.2
Adventure	9 1.3	8 2.6	— —	— —	1 .7	— —
Illness-Physical	8 1.2	1 .3	— —	2 2.7	4 2.5	1 1.9
Broken Home	7 1.0	3 1.0	3 3.0	— —	1 .7	— —
Runaway	7 1.0	2 .6	— —	— —	3 1.9	2 3.9
Chronic Hobo	5 .7	— —	— —	— —	5 3.1	— —
Seasonal Work	4 .6	— —	1 1.0	— —	3 1.9	— —
Discordant Home	3 .4	2 .6	— —	1 1.3	— —	— —
Institutional Re.	2 .3	2 .6	— —	— —	— —	— —
Workman's Compensation Adj.	1 .1	1 .3	— —	— —	— —	— —
Illness-Mental	1 .1	1 .3	— —	— —	— —	— —

HOW OLD WAS HE?

The mean average for this transient group was 31 years, an age when an individual normally is in his prime industrially.

There were seventeen individuals under 18 years of age; 201 between 18 and 25; 235 between 25 and 35; 202 between 35 and 50; and 45 over 50.

The ages of transients studied are grouped according to the Federal Transient Classification.

Since this group does not vary so much in that there are few very young and very old, a program for men between 18 and 50 may be planned.

TABLE 6
NEGRO APPLICANTS
AT TRANSIENT BUREAUS IN NEW JERSEY

JANUARY—JUNE, 1934

Age Distribution

Years of Age of Applicant	State No. %	Newark No. %	Trenton No. %	Camden No. %	Elizabeth No. %	Paterson No. %
TOTAL	700 100	316 100	99 100	75 100	158 100	52 100
Under 18	17 2.4	7 2.2	1 1.0	— —	9 5.7	— —
18 and Under 25	201 28.7	100 31.7	31 31.3	14 18.7	47 29.8	9 17.3
25 and Under 35	235 33.6	108 34.2	30 30.3	25 33.3	50 31.6	22 42.3
35 and Under 50	202 28.9	87 27.5	27 27.3	26 34.7	44 27.8	18 34.6
50 and Over	45 6.4	14 4.4	10 10.1	10 13.3	8 5.1	3 5.8

WHEN DID HE LEAVE SCHOOL AND WHY?

Seventy-three per cent of the total number of Negro transients applying for relief in New Jersey had attended elementary school. One hundred and fourteen or 16.2% had secured some high school education. Approximately 52% had an educational background of the seventh grade and above.

The average educational background was the sixth grade.

There were 63 who reported no schooling whatever. For this group and the group who were otherwise limited in education there are several explanations.

Many formerly came from border States and the deep South where separate facilities and standards of education are established. Particularly in the rural areas are there places where no education whatever was given. There are today places in the South where the Negro child has been allowed to attend school during the time his services are not needed on the plantation.

Parents in some instances did not have the opportunity to attend school and did not produce an incentive in their children to gain an education.

Within a group that has little economic stability at best wage earners are the most important asset. It is little wonder on the basis of the above assertion that children are forced to discontinue their educational pursuits in order to add to the family income.

TABLE 7

NEGRO APPLICANTS
AT TRANSIENT BUREAUS IN NEW JERSEY

JANUARY—JUNE, 1934

Distribution by
Education

Years of Schooling	State		Newark		Trenton		Camden		Elizabeth		Paterson	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
TOTAL	700	100	316	100	99	100	75	100	158	100	52	100
No Schooling	63	9.0	23	7.5	16	16.2	5	6.7	19	12.0	—	—
Grade School:												
1 year	16	2.3	8	2.5	3	3.0	3	4.0	2	1.3	—	—
2 years	41	5.9	16	5.0	8	8.0	2	2.6	13	8.2	2	3.8
3 years	65	9.3	26	8.2	10	10.2	3	4.0	18	11.4	8	15.4
4 years	72	10.3	33	10.4	8	8.0	10	13.4	16	10.1	5	9.6
5 years	82	11.7	33	10.4	12	12.2	8	10.7	21	13.3	8	15.4
6 years	77	11.0	39	12.3	12	12.2	13	17.4	10	6.3	3	5.8
7 years	70	10.0	34	10.7	6	6.0	7	9.3	19	12.0	4	7.7
8 years	93	13.3	51	16.1	11	11.2	11	14.7	13	8.2	7	13.5
9 years	51	7.3	23	7.5	5	5.0	9	12.0	9	5.7	5	9.6
10 years	25	3.6	8	2.5	4	4.0	1	1.3	8	5.1	4	7.7
11 years	14	2.0	6	1.9	1	1.0	—	—	4	2.5	3	5.8
12 years	24	3.5	13	4.1	3	3.0	2	2.6	4	2.5	2	3.8
College:												
1 year	1	.1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1.9
2 years	3	.4	1	.3	—	—	1	1.3	1	.7	—	—
3 years	1	.1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	.7	—	—
4 years	1	.1	1	.3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Graduate Study:												
Medical Degree	1	.1	1	.3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

WHAT KIND OF WORK CAN HE DO FOR A
LIVING?

Approximately three-fifths of the Negro transients in New Jersey, were classed as unskilled laborers. The next largest group was composed of domestic and personal service workers, 16.2%. There were 116 who were professionals, proprietors, office workers, salesmen, skilled and semi-skilled workers representing 16.5% of the total usual occupations.

In the brief years since Slavery the Negro has changed his occupational status considerably. Prior to and for a number of years following emancipation he was chiefly a farm laborer. This change is chiefly noticed in the northern States that precipitated the greatest number of Negro transients into the various New Jersey Transient Bureaus.

The Negro's status was changed greatly during the World War when there was a natural shortage of labor in the North and immigration was stopped almost entirely. During this period the Negro was able to step into various industrial plants and generally made good. His break with the South was final, for better or for worse. There was, of course, bitter feeling in various communities because employers often used Negroes as strike breakers. This condition cannot be attributed to the Negro entirely because many trade unions refused membership to Negroes who were forced to take the only other method open to them in order to survive, that of taking a job where they could work regardless of labor difficulties.

In the State of New Jersey there has been and continues to be exploitation of Negro labor in various sections. There has been importation of laborers principally in the farming areas and fishing districts of South Jersey far in excess of the amount of work available. This invariably depressed the labor market and forced workers to work for subsistence wages or apply for relief. All phases of these activities made an indelible impression upon general community feeling against the Negro because he was invariably on relief rolls in greater proportion than other races. The reason for these conditions were not thought through, neither were there plans worked out to restrict these practices by dealing with the persons responsible.

Where the Negro worker has been forced to work for low wages, live in insanitary conditions with inadequate facilities for a normal expression of wholesome living he has done as any other person in like condition would do. He is frequently a delinquent and generally an unwanted citizen. He cannot be held responsible for his environment when it has been thrust upon him and boundaries established more stringent than prison bars. He has made advancement under terrific odds.

T A B L E 8
NEGRO APPLICANTS AT TRANSIENT
BUREAUS IN NEW JERSEY—JANUARY-JUNE, 1934

Distribution by Usual Occupation

Occupation	State No.	State %	Newark No.	Newark %	Trenton No.	Trenton %	Camden No.	Camden %	Elizabeth No.	Elizabeth %	Paterson No.	Paterson %
TOTAL	700	100	316	100	99	100	75	100	158	100	52	100
Professional and Technical.....	8	1.2	5	1.6	—	—	2	2.6	1	.6	—	—
Proprietors, Managers and Officials.....	4	.5	1	.3	—	—	1	1.4	1	.6	1	1.9
Office Workers.....	3	.4	2	.6	—	—	—	—	1	.6	—	—
Salesmen and Kindred Workers.....	2	.2	2	.6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Skilled and Foremen in Bldg. and Con.....	21	3.1	6	1.9	3	3.0	1	1.4	8	5.0	3	5.7
Skilled and Foremen in Bldg. and Other.....	40	5.8	19	6.0	4	4.0	2	2.6	9	5.6	6	11.6
Semi-skilled in Bldg. and Const.....	14	2.0	10	3.2	1	1.0	2	2.6	1	.6	—	—
Semi-skilled in Mfg. and Other.....	24	3.4	15	4.8	4	4.0	3	4.0	2	1.2	—	—
Unskilled Laborers.....	434	62.0	186	58.9	72	72.8	37	49.4	104	65.8	35	67.4
Domestic and Personal Service.....	114	16.2	58	18.4	10	10.2	17	22.7	22	13.9	7	13.4
Farm Operators and Laborers.....	21	3.1	6	1.9	3	3.0	10	13.3	2	1.2	—	—
Inexperienced Juniors.....	10	1.4	4	1.2	1	1.0	—	—	5	3.7	—	—
Not Ascertained.....	5	.7	2	.6	1	1.0	—	—	2	1.2	—	—

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE ABOUT HIM?

Five hundred and ninety-four or 84.8% of these transients left the care of the bureaus of their own accord before any rehabilitation plan was offered. 3,214 days' care was given, an average of 4.5 days' care per person.

Here are several reasons for this high turnover.

1. Many transients wish to continue their travels.
2. Frequently workers are hurried. Their desire is to complete one interview in order to call the next one in.
3. They do not understand the Negro and invariably treatment is governed by misconceptions.

In studying records certain statements were noted in description of transients such as "He was an ordinary Negro"; "He was a typical Southern Negro that has been good work material"; "This boy came from Philadelphia," etc. (The term boy was used irrespective of age.) All the above descriptions support the fact that little is known of the Negro or an attempt at burlesque is being made. No race as heterogenous in its make-up as the Negro can lend itself to the term typical. There are as many types in the South as elsewhere.

Working with Negroes requires a special technique understood only by Negroes. The term "boy" is a carry-over from slave days when in the eyes of overseers and plantation owners a Negro never grew up. Disconcerting phrases, such as "his child-like simplicity" and other statements are used frequently in certain literature today and do not present a true picture.

Twenty were referred to the Emergency Relief Administration because they were either State or local homeless individuals.

Seventeen were returned to their places of legal settlement by various bureaus. This proportion was small; however, the underlying factors revert to methods and procedures in interviewing.

In order to return an individual to his place of legal residence, correspondence must be carried on between the Federal Transient Bureau and the Relief Administration at the place of legal residence claimed by the individual for permission to return him. The investigations attendant to this procedure require time to verify facts. Relatives, employers and references must be visited at the point of legal settlement. At the discretion of the worker who made the inquiry the individual is returned unless there is a social reason for not doing so. Frequently this procedure consumes about two or three weeks especially when men do not trust workers at the various bureaus and withhold facts. When this is true men leave rather than wait longer.

Seventeen refused a plan of treatment which either was a refusal to return to residence after it had been verified, the refusal to receive medical care, or the refusal to wait for correspondence from out of the city.

Only sixteen or 2.3% were referred to camp where there were greater facilities for rehabilitation. The Newark bureau that cared for more Negroes than any other bureau in the State during this period did not send any. The Camden bureau that cared for less than any bureau with the exception of Paterson during this period sent the largest proportion. Both bureaus receive transients from metropolitan areas.

Interviews with Negro transients revealed a desire on their part to go to camp and the few who were permitted to go entered into the camp life without difficulties and were excellent workers according to reports from camp.

Fourteen of the total number secured work in the vicinity of the Transient Bureaus, thereby showing more initiative than some local residents. Two men went to the Civilian Conservation Camp.

Four of the number returned to their homes of their own accord, tiring of the road and are making an adjustment in this manner. (This was ascertained by correspondence.)

Three were discharged to institutions. Two different types of institutions were used: the Bureau of Colored Children and an Industrial Institution from which a client had escaped.

Those discharged for drinking or dismissed and committed to jail for assault and battery showed a rather small number. But even such a small proportion shows the need for planned activities to assist men in making an adjustment without causing anti-social actions.

TABLE 9
NEGRO APPLICANTS AT TRANSIENT BUREAUS IN NEW JERSEY JANUARY—JUNE, 1935
Disposition of Cases

Disposition of Client	State No.	State %	Newark No.	Newark %	Trenton No.	Trenton %	Camden No.	Camden %	Elizabeth No.	Elizabeth %	Paterson No.	Paterson %
TOTAL	700	100	316	100	99	100	75	100	158	100	52	100
LEFT	594	84.9	300	94.9	92	93.0	53	70.7	118	74.7	31	59.6
Referred to E. R. A.	20	2.9	3	1.0	2	2.0	6	8.0	—	—	9	17.3
Returned to Residence	17	2.4	10	3.2	—	—	1	1.3	3	1.9	3	5.8
Refused Plan	17	2.4	—	—	—	—	1	1.3	15	9.5	1	1.9
Transient Camp	16	2.3	—	—	3	3.0	7	9.4	4	2.6	2	3.9
Secured Work	14	2.0	—	—	—	—	5	6.7	4	2.6	5	9.6
Returned Home Self	4	.6	1	.3	2	2.0	—	—	1	.6	—	—
Discharged to Institutions	3	.5	1	.3	—	—	—	—	2	1.3	—	—
C. C. C.	2	.3	—	—	—	—	1	1.3	1	.6	—	—
Hospital Care	2	.3	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	.6	1	1.9
Still Under Care	2	.3	1	.3	—	—	—	—	1	.6	—	—
Discharged for Drinking	2	.3	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	1.3	—	—
Dismissed	2	.3	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	1.3	—	—
Returned to Friends	1	.1	—	—	—	—	1	1.3	—	—	—	—
Jail for V. D. Treatment	1	.1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	.6	—	—
Jail—Assault and Battery	1	.1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	.6	—	—
Left Hospital—Refused Operation	1	.1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Refused to Return AFTER ticket was Secured...	1	.1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	.6	—	—

WHAT'S HIS STORY?

There are included in the following pages a few case histories of unattached transients. It was impossible to include more due to the fact that complete case histories were scarce in the bureaus in the State. Those included were secured by chance in investigating in the Seabrook Farm strike area and at the Camden district when men came in during the time I was present.

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Mr. G. was born in Winston-Salem, a son in a family of six, all of whom are dead but two. His mother died when he was eight, and the father when he was ten. He was given to a white family who reared him. They did not allow him the opportunity of attending school. When he was old enough, he worked on the farm that this family owned. He ran away when fifteen. He went to Calax, Virginia, worked in a livery stable for six years then went to Roanoke, Virginia, where he secured a job on a railroad. He kept this job for a year and joined the Hagenback-Wallace Circus. He stayed with the Circus from 1910 to 1913. The latter part of the year of 1913 he returned to Winston-Salem where he secured a job at a transfer company, which he kept until 1922.

In 1920 he married. One child was born. After living together two years, the wife and child died. He stayed for awhile, then went to Richmond where work was secured. For a few years he stayed there, but finally left to go some other place. At intermittent periods he would return to Winston-Salem. The last time being for a period of one and a half years until a month ago. The last employment was secured in Indianapolis with the Big Four Carnival where he was in a side-show attraction.

Mr. G. applied to the Transient Bureau for food and lodging for a few days because he wished to look around the town for work. He had been on the road for approximately three months, starting from Winston-Salem, North Carolina. His travels had taken him to Roanoke, Virginia, Wheeling, West Virginia, Cleveland, Boston, New York State and Baltimore. At these various places he stayed at the Transient Bureaus and in the meantime looked for work in the towns.

Mr. G. left the bureau to journey on.

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Mr. H. was born in Washington, D. C., the son of a rather small family. His father died when Mr. H. was quite young, but the mother was able to maintain the family and educate them with her earnings as a dressmaker. Mr. H. finished high school in Washington; from there he went to Oberlin for two years, and the University of Toronto for one year, as a lecture student. One brother was the assistant principal of a high school in Washington until his death. After Mr. H. finished school, he went to London where he worked as a book reviewer for a publishing house.

On his return to the States, he settled in Boston, where he maintained headquarters for lecture tours that took him to various parts of the country. He traveled under his own auspices, lecturing to various audiences and clubs throughout the Eastern section.

In April of 1933, he left Boston on one of his trips that took him to Montreal, Canada, Portland, Maine, through the White Mountain region, New York State to Washington, D. C. While in Washington, he was the victim of a hit-and-run driver. The accident caused him to be in a hospital for seven months, during which time he was treated for multiple fractures. He left the hospital of his own accord because he could not stand the intolerable conditions where there was no segregation of venereal diseases and criminal classes. His stay at the hospital depleted his funds and left him a transient. He had enough money to pay transportation to Baltimore. From Baltimore he traveled, hitchhiking to Wilmington and then to New Jersey.

Mr. H. came to town from Wilmington where he gave a concert that netted enough to pay transportation. He was brought to the bureau by a Y. M. C. A. executive to whom he had been referred by a local minister. He claimed Boston as his place of residence.

Mr. H. stated that no assistance had been secured by him at the various Transient Bureaus along the way; however, correspondence with Boston showed that inquiries had been received from Washington, Baltimore and Wilmington for the return of Mr. H. to Boston. The correspondence was able to verify facts regarding employment with certain newspapers, but was unable to verify residence.

Mr. H. was in a nervous state when interviewed, bordering it seemed, on a breakdown. After Boston would not authorize return, camp was suggested to him. He did not make an adjustment at camp and was returned to the bureau. On the way back he attempted to jump out of the car. After the return he was committed to a hospital for temporary treatment.

He is on his way to Boston where he expects to secure medical care and be with friends that he has known for a number of years.

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Mr. W. was born in Philadelphia, the youngest of a family of four. He lived in Philadelphia until he was six or seven years of age. Both of his parents died and a grandfather took him to Maryland where he went to school, completing the second year of high school. Inasmuch as the grandfather did not earn very much at his trade as a carpenter, and because he felt the responsibility of caring for himself, he did not complete high school. His first employment was secured as delivery boy. Later he went to Philadelphia where he secured other work.

He claimed that he had lived in Philadelphia at various times but always returned home during the year.

Mr. W. left to go further in quest of employment.

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Mr. J. was born at Jonesville, Louisiana, in 1912, a member of a family of brothers and sisters. His parents farmed.

He lived in Jonesville until 1928, when the family moved to Monroe. His education was limited to the fifth grade because the family was unable to send him after that grade was reached.

At an early age he was employed as delivery boy at drug stores and later as a porter at various barber shops in the town. He found it increasingly hard to secure enough work to maintain himself.

He left his home in Monroe Louisiana, six months before coming to New Jersey. When he left home, he went to Jonesville, Louisiana, where he worked on the C. W. A. Projects during November, December and part of January. After leaving there he went to New Orleans where he stayed at the Transient Bureau for three weeks. While at this bureau, he worked on a Work Project. One of the men there had been to the farms before and decided to come with him this year. From New Orleans he went to Montgomery, Alabama, Birmingham, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Buffalo, New York City, Philadelphia, Camden and then to the farm. While he was on the road, the Transient Bureau accommodated him.

↓ Mr. J. worked for two months at Seabrook Farms. He had been out of work before applying for relief because of a strike. After the strike is entirely settled he expects to earn enough to purchase a ticket back home. Temporary care was given to cover a week, with the understanding that he does not return after this period for further care.

Correspondence was sent to Monroe, but nothing was heard from there. Mr. J. finally secured work at another place when the farm did not re-employ him.

Mr. B. was born at Ensley, Alabama, the oldest of four children, all of whom are living. He lived in Ensley until five years of age when the family moved to a farm out from Bessemer where they worked on shares. His education terminated at the fifth grade when he was fifteen.

After leaving school because economic conditions at home could not allow further education, he went to work as a drayman.

In 1927, he moved back to Ensley and married. He secured a job in the steel mill and worked until 1929, leaving because the forces were cut.

Mr. and Mrs. B. did not get along well and separated. Since he found it a hard matter to secure work at Ensley, he began to travel in search of work.

↓ Mr. B. applied for relief after being in New Jersey for six months. Until the time he made application for relief he had been securing odd jobs on farms in the vicinity of Seabrook.

His plan is to stay until the farming season is over in hope that there will be something for him to do. He does not wish to return to Ensley, first because if he were to return and he had to apply for assistance, he does not feel that it could be secured, and second there are but slight possibilities of his finding a job.

Mr. D. was born at Nassau, B. W. I., the only son of an Oysterman and Fisherman, who moved to the States in 1910, when Mr. D. was quite young. The family lived at Tampa where both of the parents died when he was thirteen. Mr. D. went to Gainesville, Florida, to live with some friends and there met Mr. P., a white man, who offered him a home in return for work.

Mr. D. moved to Dothan with his employer and entered school going as far as the seventh grade. He married and had one child. Mr. D. expects to get work and return in the fall.

↓ Mr. D. went to Seabrook May 10. At the time of application he had been there two months, coming from New Orleans where he had been at the Transient Bureau from November 27th to May 1st. While at the Bureau he was on work relief, making \$1.30 a week. Of this amount he sent \$1.09 to his wife at Dothan, Alabama. He left the Bureau to come to New Jersey because he was looking for a better job and one of the men who had been there before had told him of work opportunities at the farm.

Mr. R. was born at Little Rock, Arkansas, the eighth child in a family of nine, all of whom are dead. He lived in Little Rock until he was twelve years of age and went to live with a white family by the name of Jones, in Georgia.

He went to school there as far as the second grade. The family took him to Youngstown, Ohio, and then returned to the South. He stayed with this white family three years. His father was killed by train in Greenville, South Carolina.

When he was 17 years of age, he left home and went to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, where he stayed approximately a year, working in the steel mills, and later went to Wilmington where he worked for the DuPont Corporation.

↓ Mr. R. came to Seabrook Farms in May from Wilmington, where he had been six months. Prior to that time he was at Pittsville, Maryland, three weeks; Hancock, Virginia, five months; Olney, Virginia, two months; Pumatee, Virginia and other towns in that vicinity for more than a year. He came to work since he had been here in previous years and would be working at the present time had not the strike intervened.

Mr. R. has no residence but is confident that he can secure work.

Mr. A. was born in a small town in Florida, the son of poor people and the fifth child of a family of nine. One of the sisters is in an asylum.

Mr. A. lived in this town until he was nine years of age. He was unable to secure an education because there were no schools near. The family moved to Pennsylvania where he went to school as far as the first reader, and then stopped because the parents did not see the need of an education. The father worked in one of the mills until his services were no longer needed. He then tried to support a family by hauling trash with a team. Mr. A. assisted him.

In 1921, Mr. A. married. Mr. and Mrs. A. have one child. He was then working at the steel company. After being married three years, his wife was discovered in an act of adultery and he left her. Soon afterward he lost his job due to forces at the plant being decreased. He, too, as his father, tried to maintain himself by hauling trash.

A year later he met a woman with whom he began living in common-law. They did not get along well and he was soon brought into court for assault and battery and sentenced to jail. Several other misdemeanors kept him constantly in the toils of the law.

He then joined his mother who had moved to Egg Harbor, New Jersey. Mr. A. applied to the Emergency Relief Administration office at Egg Harbor for assistance with food, when relief was discontinued to the family of his mother because a member of the family had been sent to the C. C. C. camp. Mr. A. stayed at the home of his mother for four months. Financial conditions kept him from returning to Pennsylvania.

However, his residence was verified and return was authorized with the statement that he would be arrested on sight because he had jumped bail to visit his mother. He did not wish to return to Pennsylvania, but with no other outlet, since he was a recipient of relief, he did so.

Mr. L. was born at Monroe, Georgia, the eldest of four boys who lived at home. When Mr. L. was five years of age, the family moved to Atlanta, where they stayed a year and then moved to Chatanooga where they have lived ever since. His father died in 1930. His mother remarried to a man who had been steadily employed until recently at one of the grain companies. The mother does bundle washings. At the present time the family receives relief at Chatanooga.

Mr. L., a small neat brownskin lad of seventeen years, applied for assistance with transportation to his home in Chatanooga. He left New York one day previous to making application and hoboed as far as the bureau; however, he was arrested for illegal riding of the trains and committed to the Detention Home. He was released to the Transient Bureau. There was a friend with him who was supposed to wait for him until a shirt could be gotten from the laundry. The friend left with his transportation.

Mr. L. attends high school and is to finish next spring. He then expects to attend college, working his way through.

Mr. T., the oldest child of a large family, was born at Pensacola, Florida he lived there until he was three years old. The family moved to Dothan Alabama, where he lived until he left home recently. While there he went as far as the eighth grade in school, but did not continue because he felt his mother was unable to send him.

After leaving school, he worked as a delivery boy and as a bellhop in the hotels at Tampa during the hotel season. His longest job was with a wholesale company that went bankrupt in 1929. Since that time he has depended on odd jobs.

✓ Mr. T. had been working for the Seabrook Farms until the strike. He had been in New Jersey two months this year; however, came last year to work at the same place. For approximately four months he was under care at the New Orleans Bureau and left the first of May, via freight and hitch-hiking for this section. Along the way he stayed at Transient Bureaus and went to Camden during the strike in search of other work. While there, he received assistance at the Transient Bureau.

Mr. T. is quite anxious to return home and is willing to wait until this can be arranged since there is slight chance that work will be forthcoming at the farm this summer.

NEGRO POPULATION IN NEW JERSEY
AND CITIES WHERE TRANSIENT BUREAUS ARE LOCATED

	1930	%	1920	%	1910	%	1900	%
STATE	208,828	5.2	117,132	3.7	89,760	3.5	69,844	3.7
NEWARK	38,880	8.8	16,977	4.1	9,475	2.7	6,694	2.7
TRENTON	8,057	6.5	4,315	3.6	2,581	2.7	2,096	2.9
CAMDEN	11,340	9.6	8,500	7.3	6,076	6.4	5,576	7.3
ELIZABETH	4,761	4.2	1,970	2.1	1,381	1.9	1,139	2.2
PATERSON	2,952	2.1	1,551	1.1	1,539	1.2	1,182	1.1
*ATLANTIC CITY	15,611	23.6	10,946	21.6	9,834	21.3	6,513	23.4

Sources U. S. Bureau of Census Population Statistics.

* Sub-Bureau of Camden.