

North of Birmingham—V

Negroes Find Law To Be Different From Facts in Los Angeles Vicinity

Editor's note: Racial problems in the South have their counterparts in the North. The following final dispatch in the United Press International series reports on the racial situation in Los Angeles.

By JOSEPH A. ST. AMANT

Los Angeles — (UPI) — In law, a Negro in Los Angeles is the equal of a white man. In fact, he is not, according to civil rights authorities.

This sprawling metropolis has a Negro population of about 350,000 — or 14 per cent of its over-all 2.5 million. Ninety per cent of the Negroes are concentrated in a south-central section of the city where a white face is a rarity.

This is what civil rights leaders call de facto segregation or geographical segregation established by "gentlemen's agreements" to keep the Negro in a ghetto even though the laws are on his side.

Today the county Negro population is estimated at 515,000. Most of these people live within the city of Los Angeles but there are a few Negro islands in suburban Pasadena and Monrovia.

Most Negroes are compressed into their ghettos by poverty and consequent inability

to purchase homes of their own and by the connivance of white tract builders, according to leaders of such groups as the Congress of Racial Equality and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

While it is conceded that the Los Angeles Negro may be better off from the standpoint of schooling, housing and job opportunities than his counterpart in Alabama, there still is a smoldering discontent.

This was obvious at a civil rights meeting recently which was attended by some 30,000 persons, mostly Negroes, at Wrigley Field. Numerous speakers urged moral and financial support for Birmingham, Ala. Negroes in their desegregation struggle but a common comment from the audience was: "What about Los Angeles?"

Draws Applause

Dr. Christopher Taylor, chairman of the local chapter of the NAACP, drew one of the biggest bursts of applause at the three-hour meeting when he said:

"We are here to help the people of Birmingham but I would be remiss in my duty if I did not mention certain problems we have in Los Angeles — police brutality, lack

of housing, discrimination in employment... we must not let down in our fight in all walks of life for equal opportunity in Los Angeles."

Allied Invasion Victims Honored

Omaha Beach, France — (UPI) — American, Canadian, British and French officials Thursday honored the soldiers who died in the Allied invasion of Europe which started 19 years ago.

More than 9,000 Americans lie buried on the cliffs above Omaha Beach, only part of the thousands of Allied troops who gave their lives in the campaign to liberate Europe from domination by Nazi Germany.

There was little left but the historic names of the Normandy beaches and towns to remind participants in today's ceremonies of the bitter fighting on D-Day-June 6, 1944. The battered hull of a sunken American landing craft which can be seen offshore at low tide as the old relic left behind at Omaha Beach.

The other traces of war were swept away long ago, and beach huts and cafes now dot the shore.

Police Chief William H. Parker denies any policy of brutality toward Negroes or any other persons but the charges are levied repeatedly not only by extremist groups such as the Black Muslims but also by leaders of the NAACP and CORE.

Residential and classroom problems seem to be uppermost in the minds of Negro leaders.

F. Daniel Gray, first vice chairman of the local CORE chapter, says these two problems are "unalterably tied up."

"You've got school segregation as the result of a neighborhood segregation," he says.

Denies Intent to Segregate — Education officials such as Jack P. Crowther, superintendent of the Los Angeles school district, deny any intent to segregate schools on the basis of race.

"The doors of our schools are open to all students, based on an orderly procedure calling for the attendance of each student to a prescribed school."

Because of geographical segregation, there are some 50 schools which are virtually all Negro in enrollment.

Gray and other CORE leaders feel that desegregation in

fact cannot be accomplished under present state laws because penalties are not stringent enough and litigation to force compliance is time-consuming and expensive.

Problems of the Negro in Southern California have not been helped by a large influx of new residents from the South who come here in the hope of escaping segregation and its attendant miseries. Many of these migrant Negroes lack funds and are not eligible for relief.

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RECEIVE PLAQUES — Membership plaques in United Airlines "100,000 Mile Club" were presented recently to Frank Bash, left, vice president and district manager of Pacific Power and Light company, and to William Prentice, right, senior accountant for PP&L. The presentation was made by Ken Cook, center, customer service manager for United Airlines. The star on Prentice's plaque indicates that he has passed the 200,000 mile mark of commercial airline travel. Membership in the club entitles the holder to "special privileges." Cook said, and also puts him on the private mailing list of W. A. Patterson, president of United Airlines. Cook said there are about 15 other club members in the area.

ACCIDENTS RISE — Chicago — (UPI) — The death toll from on-the-job accidents in 1962 was 13,700, compared with 13,500 in 1961, the National Safety Council reports. Disabling injuries rose to 2 million from 1,940,000.

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