A study of services rendered by Travelers Aid United Service Organization to negroes in Montgomery, Alabama 1942-1946

Eunice Cleovis Simpson

Atlanta University

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A STUDY OF SERVICES RENDERED BY TRAVELERS AID
UNITED SERVICE ORGANIZATION TO NEGROES IN
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA
1942-1946

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

BY
EUNICE CLEOVIS SIMPSON

ATLANTA, GEORGIA
JUNE 1947
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer acknowledges the interest of Miss Bertha McCall, General Director of the National Travelers' Aid Association who made available the material in the Montgomery USO Travelers' Aid Office for purposes of this study. Deep appreciation is expressed by the writer to Miss Alfreda Stanley, Director of USO Travelers' Aid in Montgomery, to Miss Ovada Sexton, Office Secretary of USO Travelers' Aid in Montgomery, to Miss Anne V. McKee, Executive Director of the Y. W. C. A. in Montgomery, and to Mrs. Willease Simpson Clayton, Secretary of USO Lounge Committee in Montgomery for their assistance.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

During World War II, large numbers of people were moving from one community to another throughout the United States. Many relatives followed service men to the various camps. In addition, civilians shifted around because of more lucrative paying positions. These masses of transient people presented numerous problems which social agencies could not handle adequately. By 1941 the need for a special organization to deal with this situation came into existence, namely, the United Service Organization which provided services to people in communities near camps.

As World War II progressed and the need grew to sustain the morale of service men and women, leading citizens throughout the country undertook to provide recreational services on their own initiative and at their own expense. By 1942 local councils and committees began looking to the National United Service Organization\(^1\) for assistance in developing community programs.

\(^1\)National United Service Organization was created by its six member agencies, commissioned by the Federal Government and supported by the American people to contribute to the maintenance of morale in American communities and elsewhere.
Conscious of the increasing need to render more services to the public, USO made plans to formalize the relationship between all operations conducted in its name and to provide community conducted operations with a maximum degree of service so that the USO policies and standards might attain a uniform level. This program was initiated by such agencies as the Young Men and Young Women Christian Association, National Catholic Community Service, the Salvation Army, the National Jewish Welfare Board and the Travelers' Aid Association. Through concerted efforts means were provided for social services to civilians and persons in military service. In view of the fact that Travelers' Aid Associations had always rendered services to the transient person, during the war, it was called upon to enlarge its scope and to assume more responsibility to meet the needs of the migrant person.

The writer had noted with much interest the development and growth of the USO under the auspices of Travelers' Aid Society in Montgomery, Alabama. It was felt that a study of this service for Negroes would prove most helpful in understanding the establishment of social services for transient Negroes in Alabama.

The Purpose of the Study

This study purposes to give a brief historical picture of USO Travelers' Aid service in Montgomery, Alabama;
to point out the need for a program for the transient person and how this need grew as World War II progressed; to present the services rendered to Negro clientele in Montgomery; and to indicate the need for a continuation of this type of social service to Negroes.

Scope

This study is based upon a consideration of 1,256 case records of Negroes known to USO Travelers' Aid service, Montgomery, Alabama during the period 1942 to 1946.

Method and Procedure

For purposes of this study, information was obtained by schedule and a review of the case records of the agency; by holding interviews and conferences with staff members of the agency; by reading minutes of meetings and official reports of the agency; and by supplementing the data with reference readings related to the subject.
CHAPTER II

BRIEF SKETCH OF TRAVELERS' AID MOVEMENT

In the early days of this country and during the periods of migration when people began moving,\(^1\) cities became aware of the distinct problem presented by strangers in their midst.\(^2\) Perhaps it was the need to safeguard young girls coming to the city in search of work or to help immigrants from Europe unfamiliar with custom and language which pointed up a need for service.

Early Interest in the Transient

In the beginning, religious groups sponsored and carried out a Travelers' Aid program. Ladies' auxiliaries would go down to the railroad terminals seeking young girls, runaway children and persons arriving who looked as though they might be in need of help.\(^3\) The first non-sectarian committee to promote Travelers' Aid work grew out of plans for the St. Louis Exposition. Miss Grace Hoadley Dodge of

\(^1\)Thoughts from The Field of Travelers' Aid, \#2220 Revised National Travelers' Aid Association (New York; June 8, 1944), pp. 3-4.

\(^2\)Travelers' Aid Panorama, \#1618 National Travelers Aid Association (New York; May, 1943), p. 1.

\(^3\)Ibid., p. 2.
the Young Women's Christian Association was leader of this movement. She saw a growing need for placing the uncoordinated work of aiding the traveler in New York City on a cooperative and non-sectarian basis. In 1905 she formed a committee of Protestant, Catholic and Jewish women which was to make a survey of the work in New York City. The resulting non-sectarian, non-commercial Travelers' Aid Society of the city of New York thus became the first independently organized agency for the protection and assistance of travelers. By 1910 The New York Society was organized with representative men invited to sit on the Board as members. Work in railroad stations in large cities as a means of safeguarding youth from an unfortunate introduction to a strange place had gained impetus.

Growth of the Movement

Between 1900 and 1917, the Young Women Christian Association was undoubtedly the largest single factor in organizing Travelers Aid service in the United States. Throughout these years, numerous local Y.W.C.A.'s established and carried out Travelers Aid services in many

1 Through The Years With Travelers Aid, #1530 National Travelers Aid Association (New York; March 29, 1943), p. 1.


3 Travelers Aid Panorama, op. cit., p. 2.
places because of the urgent need. ¹

The next important step in the development of Travelers Aid was to promote inter-agency cooperation not only of two or three agencies in one city but of one city with another. A department of cooperation was established in the New York City society to develop this idea, and in 1914 the afore mentioned Miss Dodge was instrumental in calling the "Conference of Travelers Aid workers of Eastern Cities" in New York. At this conference, resolutions were passed endorsing the New York Society plans and appointing a Provisional Committee to further the work of cooperation.

Accredited representatives performing Travelers Aid work were called together in New York for the purpose or organizing a national society and an unincorporated membership association or "The National Travelers Aid Society" was formed.² By 1920 this society had become a National Association of Travelers Aid Societies,³ and these associations continued to focus on the needs of people in transit.

Meanwhile, interest in the transient person had developed in the south. The Travelers Aid work at the

¹ Ten Milestones Before 1917, op. cit.
² Ibid.
³ Travelers Aid Panorama, op. cit.
Union Station in Montgomery, Alabama had been established as early as 1910 largely as a result of Mrs. Myrtle Booth Campbell, the secretary of the local Young Women Christian Association. The work was fundamentally to protect the young, inexperienced girl. The Travelers Aid organization conducted this valuable branch of its service in Montgomery throughout the years of greatly increased travel of World War I and the more complicated problem of migrant population.¹

During the depression era, the budget of Travelers Aid Society was not sufficient to meet all emergencies and its work was greatly handicapped by lack of funds. The Montgomery agency received a small amount of money from the city and from private sources.² But the local Travelers Aid Services in Montgomery were rendered by one non-professional staff member. Moreover, this agency had practically no Negro clientele and no set up to serve them. Consequently, it was felt that there was no need to provide for Negroes because they did not seek the services of the agency.³

Development of USO Travelers Aid Services

To this picture, however, must be added the


²Ibid., p. 3.

³Statement by Willease Simpson Clayton, Committee Secretary USO Lounge, Montgomery, Alabama, personal interview, September 8, 1946.
development of the USO Travelers Aid Service. When Paul McNutt was first made Federal Security Administrator for the federal government, he was faced with the problem of transients shifting around seeking work. What to do and how to meet the problem was one of the major difficulties which he encountered. In attempting to accumulate all possible information, he learned that the National Travelers Aid Association had had vast experience in dealing with the transient person. The result was that representatives from the National Travelers Aid Association were summoned to Washington to make available their information on this problem. Mr. McNutt was impressed with the work of the agency and requested that the National Travelers Aid Association be included in USO.

When the five other agencies namely, the Young Men Christian Association, the Young Women Christian Association, National Catholic Community Service, the Salvation Army and the National Jewish Welfare Board approached Mr. McNutt to ask his approval of a plan to coordinate a unified recreation and morale sustaining program, he agreed and made the suggestion of a sixth agency, the Travelers Aid Association.

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1 Travelers Aid Panorama, op. cit.
2 Ibid., p. 3.
3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.
He pointed out the need for an agency to handle the mammoth problem during the defense and war era when thousands of people, military and industrial, were leaving their homes and moving to new communities. Consequently, a case work agency joined the USO because social services as well as recreation and religious programs were considered vital to morale.

The program of the USO Travelers Aid Society was very similar to that of the regular Travelers Aid Society and performed the same services to people. The clientele, however, was predominately from military groups or from those closely allied to military or war industries. "Under the USO program, the Travelers Aid Units for the most part were established at spots where there were no regular Travelers Aid Services; where the demand for service was too great for the local society; or where camps and industries were attracting endless streams of travelers."

USO Travelers Aid Society from its inception provided information on recreation, housing, churches, location of persons, transportation, community resources, employment opportunities and assistance to travelers at change points en route or at destination. It gave individualized service to people in temporary financial difficulty; to those who were confused or ill; to young people with personal problems; to newcomers needing guidance in adjusting to a strange community; and to women who flocked to the camp sites.
From 1941 to 1946 the National Travelers Aid Association became the associated member USO agency responsible for the organization of the USO Lounges located in terminal stations for the use of servicemen. The USO Troops-in-transit lounges grew to be an integral part of the services of the local Travelers Aid Society\(^1\) and were supervised by Travelers Aid workers.

\(^{1}\text{Ibid.}, p. 5\)
CHAPTER III

USO TRAVELERS AID SOCIETY FOR NEGROES IN MONTGOMERY

The securing of a lounge for Negroes in the Union Station of the city and staffing it with Negro professional workers and volunteers was not an easy task. Services for the Negroes were not provided until a year and a half after services for the white clientele had been instituted.

Establishment of the Organization

During the early part of March, 1942, a group of leading colored citizens organized an Overall Committee to carry out the suggestions made by Mr. George Syme, Jr. of the field service staff of the National Travelers Aid Association. The function of this group as outlined by Mr. Syme was to study the needs of the local community and to recommend plans to utilize resources available to meet these needs. The committee was conscious of the fact that there were approximately 380,000 colored soldiers in every branch of the United States Army. According to the figures on December 27, 1942, 10.1 per cent of the entire Army were Negroes. The increase in servicemen along with the

---

1"Minutes," USO Lounge Committee (Montgomery, Alabama; March, 1942), p. 4.

2Ibid., (March 6, 1942), p. 6.
civilian group had drawn heavily upon the resources of the Negro of Montgomery.

Realizing the limited resources here, the Overall Committee made definite efforts to work out, as well as to develop a service men's lounge that was most essential at the Union Railroad Station in the city. The Negro group were certain that no one could successfully represent any other group without first obtaining first hand information from the person directly affected. It was the consensus of opinion that if any group were in need of trained workers who could discern their problem, it was the Negro people. The Overall Committee of Negroes took a firm stand and fought the proposed plan to consolidate services for Negroes and whites under one budget plan. Furthermore, they vehemently opposed the proposal that the chairman of the services for white persons, namely, the Troops-in-Transient Committee, be made responsible for supervising the use of funds for the Negro project. It was affirmed by the Negro citizens that its representing committee was capable of assuming responsibility for the planning of a Negro USO Service. It was pointed out that the Overall Committee, representing 43,000 Negroes in the community in addition to Negro servicemen and transients,

2Ibid.
was unwilling to turn the project for Negroes over to the committee handling the program for white clientele.

Prior to setting up a USO Travelers Aid Unit, a member of the field service staff of the National Travelers Aid Association surveyed local needs for Travelers Aid Service in Montgomery in conjunction with the Federal Security Agency and USO regional executive before recommending plans to the Regional Staff Conference. The National Travelers Aid Office, upon receipt of sufficient data, approved a Travelers Aid Unit for Montgomery, and the USO Travelers Aid Office in Montgomery was opened in February, 1942.

Meanwhile, from the Overall Committee, a group composed of nine members was formed which requested a lounge for Negroes. It was pointed out that Montgomery was a point of heavy traffic as well as having stationed nearby two army camps, namely, Gunter Field and Maxwell Field where there were Negro and white troops. Similarly, an advisory committee on Troops-in-Transient was formed and the chairman acted as a liaison person to the white travelers Aid Board.

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1USO Regional Staff was composed of representatives of all USO agencies in Montgomery, Alabama.

2Statement by Ovada Sexton, Secretary USO Travelers Aid Office, Montgomery, Alabama, personal interview, July 11, 1946.

3Statement by Willease Simpson Clayton, Secretary of USO Lounge Committee, Montgomery, Alabama, personal interview, September 8, 1946.
As a result of concerted efforts, in July, 1943 a Negro professional worker was employed by USO Travelers Aid; was placed at Montgomery to establish a USO Travelers Aid program at the Union Station; and was authorized to handle case work services as well as to supervise the lounge. But the USO lounge for Negroes was not opened until August 1, 1943.\(^1\)

The lounge for Negroes was located in the waiting room for Negroes at the Union Station. It offered services to men and women and soon became a quiet, attractive spot for relaxation purposes, for reading and writing letters, or for "napping" after a long and tiresome trip. The lounge served cookies and fruit generously provided by churches, civic groups and individuals. Cards for games, magazines, books and cigarettes were at the disposal of the service people in the lounge. A radio brought the news of the day as well as soothing music, stories and plays, and the lounge gave free checking service to service men. Originally, the USO lounge was opened from 7 A.M. to midnight daily. Gradually, there was a need for the lounge to remain open longer because of the heavy traffic. By November 9, 1945, the lounge was operating on a schedule of twenty-four hours daily.\(^2\)

\(^1\)Miss Ovada Sexton, op. cit.

\(^2\)Ibid.
Function of the Organization

The purpose of USO Travelers Aid Service in Montgomery as elsewhere was designed to meet the needs of persons who were in difficulty and were away from home. Groups on the move during the years 1942-1946 have been defined as immigrants, pioneers, homeless travelers, transients, migrants, refugees and evacues. These persons had shared the experience of being new-comers and strangers in a community. They were hampered in their adjustments whether temporarily or permanently due to lack of contact with or because of lack of knowledge of local resources, very often because of restrictions on the part of local social agencies in acknowledging or accepting responsibility for their need,¹ some people suffered.

For the most part, services to travelers provided by USO Travelers Aid Society grew and developed through study of the migrants and a belief that the services rendered must be based on the specific needs of the migrant or traveler. There was an attempt to carry out a social case work program which covered the following categories of assistance: travel service, financial problems, information about and direction to destinations, housing, location of persons and referral

to and cooperative service with other agencies.  

Staff and Personnel

Staff is imperative in operating any program. The members of the USO Travelers Aid staff are employed by the National Travelers Aid Association, and their work is supervised by the National Travelers Aid Regional Supervisors. Other members of the national staff are available for consultation to supervisors and to the local USO Travelers Aid staff. Likewise, in Montgomery the USO Travelers Aid staff was employed by the National Travelers Aid Association. The personnel consisted of a director, three white and two Negro professional workers. There was an office secretary and a Negro stenographer provided.

With the USO lounge remaining open from 7 A.M. until midnight daily, volunteers were used in the lounge on a three-hour shift daily with the exception of those persons who started at 7 A.M. and worked until 9 A.M. There were seventy-five volunteers for USO Travelers Aid, and awards were given to them in recognition of meritorious service. Likewise,

1Committee of the National Staff Statement On The Function Of Travelers Aid #3150 (National Travelers Aid Association New York; November, 1945), pp. 14-20.

2Organizational Structure #1620 Revised, (National Travelers Aid Association New York; February 17, 1944), p. 2.

certificates were issued in recognition of a minimum of 100 hours of service. According to the hours of service, plain, small and large monogrammed pins with stars were given.

Many volunteers were faithful and served regularly. One of the volunteers taught in a nearby county school and served in the lounge every week-end. He had devoted 500 hours of volunteer service to the Negro unit and was given a meritorious pin. Another volunteer had two sons in service. She received a two star pin because she had given approximately 1000 hours of service.\(^1\)

As the volume of work grew, 87 per cent of the persons served at the lounge were soldiers which indicated a need for an additional professional staff member.\(^2\) As the program developed, the staff needs grew, and when the lounge went on a twenty-four hour schedule, a non-professional person was employed on a schedule from midnight until 7 A.M.\(^3\)

An Advisory Committee composed of two ministers, a college secretary-treasurer, two college professors, a pull-man porter, an insurance agent, two housewives and the lounge supervisor were able to interpret USO Travelers Aid program to the community. But in order to carry out this program

\(^{1}\)"Minutes," op. cit. (September 30, 1945), p. 2.

\(^{2}\)Miss Ovada Sexton, op. cit.

effectively, additional volunteers were needed and recruited. As a result of an appeal to the community, the staff was able to get churches, civic groups and individuals to provide food, candy, fruit, flowers, cigarettes and magazines generously for the lounge. Other agencies in the community cooperated with USO Travelers Aid as well as the two camps, Gunter Field and Maxwell Field. Gradually, a friendly, cordial relationship was established and maintained between the USO Travelers Aid and the community.

Thus, for the first time in the history of Montgomery, Negroes were provided with a service for the transient person with some definite attempt to render a case work service to the Negro traveler.
CHAPTER IV

PROGRAM CONDUCTED FOR NEGROES

The program conducted for Negroes was in keeping with the aim of Travelers Aid which is to assist with the problems of travelers, strangers and newcomers, irrespective of age, sex, race or creed, who were in transit within the United States. Broadly speaking, such an aim requires a program with a two-fold objective, first, to meet promptly and effectively the needs presented by the individual who finds himself in difficulty when away from home and second, to work toward the improvement of those social conditions which produce many of these difficulties. Of necessity this calls for first, a specialized non-commercial information and direction service based on a case work approach and, secondly, facilities for research, interpretation, social welfare planning and community organization.¹

Clients Served

The clientele of the USO Travelers Aid Service varied from members of the armed forces to war production workers, relatives of soldiers, children and other civilians. Some of

the clients were physically handicapped and mentally de-
fected, there were children traveling alone, women traveling
with children, runaways, the aged, girls in need of social
protection, and others with a language handicap.

Table I shows the number of persons handled by the
Montgomery USO Travelers Aid from 1942 to 1945. Out of a
total of 1,256 cases, 321 cases were travel services and
935 cases were case work services. The year of 1944 appeared
to be the heaviest period of service to all persons seeking
help. There was a slight decrease by 1945, but for the most
part the organization concentrated on aid to persons in mili-
tary services.

Services Rendered

Statistically speaking, the Montgomery office rendered
1,978 services to Negroes during the period from 1942 to 1945.
A breakdown of services rendered show various categories as
shown in Table II.

Travel service was provided on a twenty-four hour a
day link of inter-city service for inexperienced travelers and
for those who because of extreme youth or age or physical or
mental infirmity were in need of protection. In addition,
travel services were made available to persons who found them-
selves unable to meet or to plan for friends and relatives
arriving in a strange city because of unavoidable circum-
stances.
TABLE I
NEGRO CASES HANDLED BY USO TRAVELERS AID,
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 1942-1945

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Armed Forces</th>
<th>Civilians Adults</th>
<th>Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>727</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data gathered from 1,256 Negro case records of USO Travelers Aid in Montgomery, Alabama.
TABLE II
SERVICES TO NEGRO CLIENTELE
1942-1945

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Services</th>
<th>1942</th>
<th>1943</th>
<th>1944</th>
<th>1945</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>882</td>
<td>703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional treatment</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>152</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial planning</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing secured</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigation for other agencies</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location of persons</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Met by appointment</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical treatment</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other travel services</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placed en route</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pullman reservations secured</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referrals</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returned to legal residence</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment interview</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>140</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Inter-city service has been highly developed in Travelers Aid because migratory people frequently required the help of more than one agency in the "chain of service." The agency attempted to bring the client who was in trouble and away from his own community in touch with personal, social and financial resources.

Moreover, case work service to non-residents unable to solve their difficulties through their own resources was a primary function of USO Travelers Aid. This required an understanding of the traveler's problems and the resources available for meeting them. Satisfactory cooperative relationships with other public and private social agencies were of paramount importance in assisting the traveler with his problem. Frequently, case work procedure required cooperative relationship with other agencies not only at the point of contact but also in the client's own community from whence he came or at his ultimate destination. USO Travelers Aid assisted with the problem of finances for people when it was evident that such help would be constructive in enabling them to work toward a solution of their difficulty.

Information and directional service was an integral part of USO Travelers Aid program in an attempt to avoid difficulties for the newcomer in a community. To make possible helpful answers to the requests regarding the facilities of the community and to direct the person
efficiently, it was essential to maintain an accurate and current resource file in the agency.

The need for housing was of immediate concern in the initial adjustment of a person strange to a community. USO Travelers Aid offered a reliable housing service on a non-commercial basis by means of which appropriate living arrangements could be made available to the newcomer. Such service often relieved his tension; offered him some protection; and helped him to avoid further complications as to his adjustment in a new setting.

USO Travelers Aid assisted the traveler or stranger in locating a friend or relative, and every effort was made to aid him in getting in touch with his own associates. His need for this help was usually related to inexperience, confusion or inadequate information. In an emergency, a traveler could save time by using USO Travelers Aid as a contact for exchanging messages and meeting relatives or friends.

When it was apparent that the services of USO Travelers Aid were not appropriate to meet the needs of the applicant, the worker had the responsibility for evaluating the problem and for making referrals to the most suitable resources available. The referral plan was discussed with the client as a means of possible assistance. If he wished to apply, USO Travelers Aid cleared with an agency and gave the individual sufficient information about reaching it.
USO Travelers Aid served some individuals in cooperation with one or more social agencies. The client may have been referred from one agency to another or he may have come voluntarily to the attention of the agencies. Whenever there was cooperative service, there was some shared thinking and planned division of responsibility in accordance with the functions of the agencies concerned.¹

Unmet Problems

Housing became a special problem when women traveling with children had to be cared for overnight. Private families were reluctant about taking people with children and claimed that children did not obey their parents or they marred and destroyed the furniture in the homes. The one Negro hotel in Montgomery did not maintain satisfactory standards and as a result could not be recommended to persons seeking accommodations.

Another problem was related to the very limited recreational resources. No play grounds or swimming pool exist for Negroes, and up to the present time there has been no attempt to provide such facilities. Similarly, no public library existed for the traveler with several hours to wait who wanted to spend the time in reading. Furthermore, there

¹Committee of the National Staff, op. cit., pp. 20-22.
is no city hospital to care for the ill persons who are unable to pay. For the most part, social workers in USO Travelers Aid were most cognizant of the dearth of resources available in planning adequately for those seeking service at its desk.

Community referrals were limited to the two social agencies, namely, the American Red Cross and the Department of Public Welfare. Unfortunately, the mentally ill person is confined in jail until other plans can be evolved for him. Then, too, the workers were handicapped in ascertaining information about clients because Montgomery does not have a social service index at the disposal of social agencies.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Transients have always presented problems which different organizations in their own way have tried to meet. Religious groups in particular have manifested an interest in the plight of the wanderer. But the Young Women's Christian Association was instrumental in organizing a Travelers Aid Service. By 1917 the uncoordinated work of the different organizations in New York City was placed on a cooperative basis through the efforts of Miss Grace Hoadley Dodge of the Y.W.C.A. Finally, a National Travelers Aid was formed, and by 1920, this group became a National Association of Travelers' Aid Societies which continued to focus on the needs of people in transient.

Because of the many years of experience in helping people who were in trouble away from home, in 1941 Travelers Aid was called upon by United Service Organizations to be responsible for an individualized approach to persons whom the national emergency had called from their homes in World War II. The National Travelers Aid Association also became the USO agency responsible for the organization in 1941-1945 of the USO Lounges located in terminal stations for the use of servicemen.
The general services of the USO Travelers Aid Society covered a wide field including information and recreation, housing, churches, location of persons, transportation, community resources, employment opportunities and assistance to travelers at change points en route or at their final place of destination. Individualized services were given to people in temporary financial difficulty; to those who were confused or ill; to young people with personal problems; to newcomers needing guidance in adjusting to a strange community; and to women who flocked to the camp sites.

But Travelers Aid services to Negroes were slow in being developed in Alabama. When the foresighted Negro citizens of Montgomery learned of the USO Travelers Aid Program, they organized and requested a similar program. Upon sufficient data presented to the National Travelers Aid Office, together with sanction of the National Travelers Aid Field Representative, who had already surveyed the city, a servicemens' lounge was opened on August 1, 1943, in a part of the Negro waiting room at the Union Station of Montgomery. Services for Negroes, however, were established a year and a half after services for white clientele had been instituted.

The lounge was staffed with Negro professional workers and volunteers who were recruited and given meritorious recognition for their services. Due to the heavy demands for information and assistance, on November 9, 1945,
the lounge began to operate on a twenty-four hours daily schedule.

During the period studied, 1942-1945 services rendered to Negroes amounted to 1,978 which were distributed as follows: 80 in 1942; 313 in 1943; in 1944, 882; and a slight decline in 1945 to 703. Most records showed that two or more services were rendered per individual client.

The 1,256 Negro cases handled by USO Travelers Aid in Montgomery were divided into two main classes, namely, case work services and travel services. The extent of case work assistance on the 935 case work services depended upon the wish and capacity of the client seeking help and upon the knowledge of the worker as to agency and community services. The assistance given was limited by local community resources, the facilities of cooperating agencies and by legal restrictions.

Travelers Aid made efforts to set services specifically related to travel in order to safeguard the young, the aged, the inexperienced or handicapped travelers and to implement a sound travel plan. There were 321 cases of travel services. These services, any or all of which may be needed by a client were as follows: assisting in the formulation of travel plans, placing en route and appointment service. This included arrangement by one Travelers Aid Society with another to meet a client; the actual meeting of the traveler; and reporting back to the agency
requesting this service. Appointment services totalled 67.

A further break down of services showed assistance with emotional problems, which, from 1942 through 1945, totalled 297 services. Case work, in these situations was directed towards the alleviation of environmental pressures and inner tensions which interfered with an individual's ability to cope with his problem. Similarly, financial planning involved exploration with the applicant of his resources and the utilization of financial resources within the community, outside the community, or within the agency itself. When the assistance with a financial problem required relief from Travelers Aid funds, it could be given on a refundable or non-refundable basis. This service totalled 337.

Housing proved to be considerable concern and USO Travelers Aid offered a reliable housing service on a non-commercial basis by means of which appropriate living arrangements could be made available to the newcomer. Frequently, before a person returned to his legal residence, a social agency in his community was requested to evaluate his home and to authorize his return. An investigation was required of the community where the client resided with his relatives in order to obtain an understanding of the client's problem. Housing services were extended to 171 persons.

Location of persons was a service which called for knowledge of the total community, direct contacts with community resources and information about travel and
transportation complexities. Every effort was made to assist
the newcomer or traveler to get in touch with persons whom he
knew.

The 290 other travel services included giving inform-
ation regarding train or bus schedules; wording telegrams
and sending them for illiterate persons who wanted to notify
relatives or friends of the time of their arrival; assisting
in the location of missing luggage; and giving local direction
and information. In addition, medical treatment involving the
securing of physicians for an ill person or giving first aid
treatment totalled 21 services rendered. Approximately 145
referrals to other agencies were made. Assisting clients when
they were blocked or unable to take constructive action cov-
ered 375 services of the treatment interview type. There were,
however, some problems not met for Negroes. These were housing
for women traveling with children; recreational privileges;
public library facilities; limited social service agencies;
and no city hospital to care for the physically ill without
funds or for the mentally sick.

Recommendations

Because of the limited resources for Negroes and the
lack of social services it is imperative that Travelers Aid
Service continues to serve Negro transients on a case work
basis. The need for this service is accentuated because only
one private agency, the American Red Cross and one public
agency, the Department of Public Welfare administers to the Negro client.

In addition, the Negro population of Montgomery needs help in adjusting to post war conditions and in adapting to the changing social and economical situations greatly influenced by the Negroes' experience as a traveler, service man, and war worker during the period 1942-1946.
APPENDIX

The Schedule Used in Making the Study
**SCHEDULE**

*For Procuring Data From Case Records*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address</td>
<td>Case No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>Social Worker</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Problem:**

**Financial Status:**

**Service Rendered:**

**Social Worker's Comments:**
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