8-1-1948

A study of seventy-five veterans living in two housing projects in Atlanta and the extent to which their army-learned skills have been useful in civilian occupations

James King Satterwhite Jr.
Atlanta University

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.auctr.edu/dissertations

Part of the Social Work Commons

Recommended Citation
Satterwhite, James King Jr., "A study of seventy-five veterans living in two housing projects in Atlanta and the extent to which their army-learned skills have been useful in civilian occupations" (1948). ETD Collection for AUC Robert W. Woodruff Library. 3137.
http://digitalcommons.auctr.edu/dissertations/3137

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@Robert W. Woodruff Library, Atlanta University Center. It has been accepted for inclusion in ETD Collection for AUC Robert W. Woodruff Library by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@Robert W. Woodruff Library, Atlanta University Center. For more information, please contact cwiseman@auctr.edu.
A STUDY OF SEVENTY-FIVE VETERANS LIVING IN TWO HOUSING PROJECTS IN ATLANTA AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH THEIR ARMY-LEARNED SKILLS HAVE BEEN USEFUL IN CIVILIAN OCCUPATIONS

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

JAMES KING SATTERWHITE, JR.

ATLANTA, GEORGIA
AUGUST 1948
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of Study</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of Study</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Limitations</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method of Procedure</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THE BENEFITS OFFERED VETERANS</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training Eligibility Requirements</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems Facing Negro Veterans</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training and Educational Opportunities Offered Negro Veterans in Atlanta, Georgia</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE VETERANS</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Status</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Status Before Armed Service</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Status During Service</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Component and Length of Service</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. FACTORS IN THE VETERANS POST-WAR ADJUSTMENT</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Status Since Discharge</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Stability</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. IMPLICATIONS OF POSSIBLE AREAS OF PLANNING</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**LIST OF TABLES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Age Range</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Educational Status</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Occupational Status Before Armed Service</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Occupation While in Service</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Length of Service</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Occupational Status Since Discharge</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Occupational Preferences</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Reasons for Job Changes</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Significance of Study

World War II emphasized to the nation the need for making some amends to servicemen for their sacrifices of time and energies in fighting for the nation. Consequently, the federal government has enacted legislation designed to help financially those ex-servicemen who desired post-war training in the field of their choice.

State and local governments, likewise, have set up actual training facilities to meet the veteran's desires or have made use of existing training facilities within the state and local community.

Many states, too, have considered the influence of the war on the veterans desire for specialized training and an opportunity to pursue new occupations.

World War II has shown among other things, the need of specialized training. Much of the training given the men and women in the armed services will carry over into their lives as veterans. Some veterans will return to their pre-war jobs; others will want to pursue different occupations. Thousands and thousands will feel the need of training, either for their old work or for new jobs to which they aspire.¹

In cooperation with the federal, state and local governments, many private agencies have inaugurated programs designed

¹"Georgia Educational Opportunities for Veterans Negroes" (Athens, 1945), p. 6.
to aid the veteran in his attempts to readjust to civilian life.

Within the local community, among the enumerable services to aid veterans were referral services, counseling services, employment services, educational and training services. To a greater or lesser degree, those services were offered to all who requested them.

During the past war there were many complaints from Negroes, both their organizations and newspapers, concerning the fact that by far the vast majority of Negro servicemen were relegated to menial tasks behind the lines in such service branches as the Quartermaster Corps, the Ordnance Department, the Corps of Engineers', and the like, which demanded little skill.

There is a strong probability that because of this lack of opportunity to learn the more technical skills offered in the branches of military service, few Negro veterans received any training which would be advancing to them in terms of civilian employment. However, many of those in service did have an opportunity to attend some of the many technical training schools to learn skills which would definitely help them in civilian jobs. For example, there were a number of Negro servicemen given the opportunity to attend clerical schools where they learned to type, to file, and to perform other general office duties. This kind of knowledge can easily be used in civilian occupations of that same nature. There were others who attended mechanical schools in which they learned certain
fundamentals of mechanics which had a definite relationship to civilian jobs of a mechanical nature.

Purpose of Study

This study will be concerned with the use Negro veterans have been able to make of their army learned skills in civilian jobs.

This study will attempt to find how extensively the veterans questioned have used, and were using the services of the many local agencies attempting to aid the veteran in his readjustment problems.

Finally, this study will attempt to find in what ways the programs for veterans, in the training and employment area, have needed improvement in order to better serve these veterans.

The veteran has had a wonderful opportunity to improve his economic standing by preparing himself, through training and education, for his desired trade or profession. Many veterans have known little or nothing of the many facilities placed at their service, others knew of these services but made no attempt to use them, contenting themselves with the same type of jobs traditionally held by Negroes. It was hoped that in pursuing this study, areas of possible attack in not only making those unaware, aware, but also in stimulating those knowing of the many services offered to take advantage of these opportunities. It must be remembered that any planning in this area must happen in the near future because the length of time in which a veteran can begin such training is limited.
Scope and Limitations

This study was confined to seventy-five veterans living in University Homes and John Hope Homes, two adjoining low rent housing projects, in the city of Atlanta, Georgia. The only phases of the veterans post-war lives this study was concerned with were those relative to training, education and employment.

Method of Procedure

Permission was obtained from the manager of University Homes and John Hope Homes to use the office records in compiling a list of all veterans living in the two housing projects. The selection of the veterans to be questioned was made by taking one record out of five as the random sample. Much of the information used in this study was obtained from personal interviews with the veterans concerned and a questionnaire which each veteran was asked to complete. This information was supplemented by reading material relative to the subject secured from the Veterans Administration and local libraries.
CHAPTER II

THE BENEFITS OFFERED VETERANS

At the end of World War I the serviceman was, upon discharge, given a small bonus and a ticket home. This supposedly ended the government's obligation to the men who had served it in its hour of need. This was so totally inadequate that years later the government was forced to grant a large cash bonus to the war veterans. Today, it is agreed that the government has a greater obligation than this. In Washington, D. C., and in state and community organizations has been developed the most complex and certainly the best program yet devised for the American veteran. The community services carry most of the load of making the program function and of meeting the full impact of the demands on it. Actually all that the federal government can do is to devise an over-all program, supervise it, and appropriate the money to finance its administration.

The veteran program suffers unfortunately from one perhaps unavoidable misconception that has to be overcome before it can work smoothly. That misconception is that the government can provide jobs and schooling as laid down in the general program.¹

As for jobs everything the federal government or community agencies can do will amount to very little unless there is a post-war economy in which jobs are available. The education program makes many requirements, the most important of which

is that any able bodied veteran taking advantage of it must have the qualifications to undertake the studies he wishes to follow.

Training Eligibility Requirements

With certain limitations any veteran who has served, within the prescribed dates, at least ninety days on active duty and was discharged under conditions other than dishonorable, is eligible for training under the Servicemen's Readjustment Act, commonly called the "GI Bill of Rights".

The passage of the "GI Bill of Rights" was offered as proof that the federal government recognized its responsibility to those who served could not be taken care of by cash payments alone. The passage of the "GI Bill of Rights" was an attempt by the government to help the veteran to gain skills needed to fit him for a better post-war job in order to give him a fair competitive status with the non-veteran.

Problems Facing Negro Veterans

For the returning veteran there were many problems and difficulties which he had to face. These problems were very acute for the white veteran but for the Negro veteran the problem was much greater. The Negro veteran had not only the

---

2 Ibid.
problems of all other veterans to face and fight but also he
he had the additional problem of being a Negro. The problem of
the Negro veteran followed several lines. He needed better
housing, better training and schooling facilities, a chance to
gain a full sense of dignity in society, but probably most im-
portant of all he had the additional needs of better paying
jobs than those held before entering the armed forces. Eco-
nomic security will do much to alleviate the seriousness of many
of the other social problems confronting him.

During the war years there was a decided change in the
economic status of the American Negro. The country's war in-
dustries, with some prodding from the Fair Employment Practices
Committee, made an effort toward the full utilization of all
the country's manpower. Thus, Negroes received better jobs at
higher pay than they had held during the pre-war period. The
Negro soldier heard much about how well those he had left home
were getting along and quite naturally wanted to find this boom
going on when he returned.

Many Negro soldiers and sailors visited war-boom cities
while in the armed forces. They talked with many of the
Negro workers who had been up-graded and had learned
skills in war production. Negro war workers jumped from
a total of six tenths per cent to six per cent in skilled
categories in the two years from 1942 to 1944. Negro vet-
erans knew that precedents had been broken, that some of
the race barriers to employment had been broken down.
They were determined to obtain good jobs or the training
that would eventually provide them with better employ-
ment.1

---
1 Charles G. Bolte and Louis Harris, Our Negro Veterans
(New York, 1947), Public Affairs Pamphlet No. 128, p. 10.
Unfortunately, when the war was ended, the high pay and comparatively good living which large numbers of Negroes had enjoyed also ended. The nation very quickly returned to the old way of living. The Negro who was "the last to be hired was the first to be fired" when the "cut backs" in industries began.

The Negro veteran found on his return that instead of coming home to a better place in which to live, he was returning to the same sort of life he led before his entrance into the armed forces. The Selective Service Act granted him the privilege of returning to his old job but this was not satisfactory for many for that involved the same old menial tasks at the same old low wages.

A Georgia survey on Negro employment concluded that jobs were plentiful, however, the pay and grade of work made these jobs unattractive. Many instances were found in which Negro veterans were offered jobs from twelve dollars to fifteen dollars per week, despite the fact that many of these men had had either industrial or army experience which had advanced them beyond common labor.

An example of an industry which badly needs skilled workers but bars Negro veterans is the building trades. With a construction boom of unprecedented proportions, the industry needs some 1,500,000 workers. There are thousands of trained Negro construction workers who were electricians, plumbers, sheet metal workers, carpenters and other mechanics in the army and navy. Yet, except for work as common laborers and hod carriers, Negro veterans are virtually banned from the industry.¹

¹ Ibid., p. 12.
An additional instance is also cited concerning carpenters:

Take for example, Negro carpenters. Although more than 24,000 of them were trained in the army, not more than five per cent of these have been employed as carpenters since returning to civilian life. The discriminatory practices of the AFL craft unions is chiefly responsible for the inability of Negro veterans to find skilled jobs in the building trades. Chief offenders are the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and the United Association of Journeymen, Plumbers, and Steamfitters which virtually shut out all Negroes from membership. These unions serve as hiring agents in their trades. Continuation of their policy of discrimination automatically cuts off all Negro veterans from these jobs. If the construction industry were to expand its labor force to its full needs, it alone could furnish employment for almost all Negro veterans. The outlook, however, is a dismal one. The building industry will continue to hang out a shingle which says, no Negroes wanted here.1

These few illustrations clearly show the work problems which Negro veterans faced on their return to civilian life. Because the attention is centered in problems of adjustment in Georgia, the author of this thesis did not deem it necessary to furnish examples from other sections of the nation. Nevertheless, according to many newspapers and other published material Negro veterans faced like situations on a wide scale.

Training and Educational Opportunities Offered Negro Veterans in Atlanta, Georgia

Despite certain obvious limitations of a segregated pattern of education, the same general benefits were available to Negro veterans in Georgia and in Atlanta, as were to white veterans, in so far as education and training were concerned.

The state of Georgia had three state colleges located at

---

1 Ibid., p. 13.
Albany, Fort Valley, and Savannah. There were eight private denominational schools in the state, seven of them in Atlanta, and one in Augusta. Three of these Atlanta institutions were on the graduate level. There were also two business colleges, one located in Atlanta, and one in Fort Valley. Vocational trade schools were in Atlanta, Columbus, Macon, and Savannah. The city of Atlanta also offered several schools of Beauty Culture and of Barbering, and one school of Mortuary Science. All of these were on the approved lists of the Veterans Educational Council.

Under the on-the-job training program the veteran was given the opportunity on the job to advance from one series of operation to another under the direction of skilled workers in accordance with a planned sequence of work processes until he mastered the skill. As he advanced in the program, so too, did his earnings increase.

Apprenticeship and on-the-job training was offered in Atlanta in the following categories:

- Painting and Decorating
- Plasterers and Cement Finishers
- Bricklayers
- Carpenters
- Plumbing (limited)
- Gasket and Cabinet Makers
- Radio Service and Repair
- Tire Vulcanizing
- Auto-Mechanics
- Bakers
- Shoe Repairmen
- Barbers
- Printers (limited)

In addition to the above, veterans are also eligible to take part in the State Department of Education Training
Program for those persons who are interested in any phase of the following categories:
Drugstores
Fountains
Restaurants
Laundries
Grocery Stores
Insurance Agencies
Filling Stations
Auto Supply Stores
Dry Cleaning Shops

In addition to the list above, all elementary schools standardized by the Georgia Accrediting Commission and all high schools accredited by this same Commission were eligible to provide instruction to veterans in the field of general education. Schools providing other types of instruction, such as vocational training and the like, must have the approval of the Veterans Educational Council.

These were some of the training and schooling opportunities available to the Negro veteran in the city of Atlanta, and in the State of Georgia.

1 "Georgia Educational Opportunities for Veterans Negroes", op. cit., p. 9.
2 Ibid., p. 10.
CHAPTER III

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE VETERANS

The data for the study of the characteristics of the veterans were taken from a questionnaire presented to seventy-five veterans all of whom were male. These veterans lived in two housing projects in the city of Atlanta. One was University Homes in which the income range permitted was from $660.00 per year to $2592 per year, depending upon the number of rooms used and the size of the family. The other project was John Hope Homes with a like income range as that for University Homes. The rent rates for the occupants were adjusted to their income ranges.

While it was not the purpose of this study to ascertain the economic status of the veterans, these income ranges are indicative of the general economic status of the people living in the two housing projects.

In consideration of the seventy-five veterans this study indicated certain general characteristics. Of the veterans interviewed seventy were married and five were single, none of those questioned was separated or divorced. The high number of married veterans may seem rather unusual, however, if it is remembered that the low rent housing projects were designed primarily for low income families, which means that the majority of tenants selected for occupancy were married, and with children.
From Table 1 can be seen the range in age of the seventy-five veterans contacted for this study. The majority of these veterans were between twenty-five and thirty-four years of age.

TABLE 1
AGE RANGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 - 24</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 - 29</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 - 34</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 - 39</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 - 44</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Educational Status

Since one of the major requirements for occupancy in the housing projects was low income, most of those studied followed this low income pattern. Many of the veterans contacted personally indicated that poor financial standing was their reason for not going any further in school than they had.

In the elementary school group, fifteen of the veterans were listed as having completed that unit of their education. This means that out of a total of seventy-five veterans studied, sixty-three would be expected to have an average reading ability, and forty-eight of that sixty-three should have been above
average as they had attended high school and college.

TABLE 2
EDUCATIONAL STATUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Attended</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The interviewer felt, in his contact with the individuals, some doubt as to the actual amount of schooling many of these veterans had completed but the nature and scope of this study would not allow further investigation. For example, one veteran stated that he had completed high school, yet, he was unable to understand the questions listed and called upon the interviewer to read the questions to him and then to write his answers for him. Several other incidents could be related to further substantiate this doubt.

Occupational Status Before Armed Service

As is characteristic of the employment status of the Negro worker in general, the majority of the veterans studied had jobs of a more or less menial nature before entering the armed forces. For purposes of this study the occupational classifi-
ocation of the men has been categorized into three general occupational areas, namely, skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled. Under the skilled status has been included clerical and professional workers, and those engaged in the building trades, such as painters and carpenters. Under semi-skilled has been included all those performing some type of mechanical work, such as an auto-mechanic. Under the unskilled status was included, cooks, chauffeurs, truck drivers, porters, maids, butlers, laborers, barbers, and warehouse workers.

TABLE 3

OCCUPATIONAL STATUS BEFORE ARMED SERVICE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-skilled</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Occupational Status During Service

In the army over seventy per cent of all overseas Negro troops were assigned to unskilled duties behind the lines; in the navy ninety per cent were assigned to such tasks as stewards, mess boys and seamen.

1 Charles G. Bolte and Louis Harris, op. cit., p. 7.
Table 4 indicates the occupational status of the seventy-five veterans while in service. The occupational classifications have been categorized according to Table 3, skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled. Under the unskilled category was included cooks, truck drivers, and domestic workers such as officers' orderlies, and waiters. Under semi-skilled was included mechanics and military police. Under skilled was included those with a clerical status.

**TABLE 4**

**OCCUPATION WHILE IN SERVICE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-skilled</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The information indicated in this table follows rather closely the findings of Bolte and Harris with regards to the occupational status of Negro soldiers while serving in the armed forces. By comparing Tables 3 and 4 it can also be noted that generally speaking there was little difference or change in the occupational status of the veterans before entering service and while actively serving within the armed forces.

When the veterans were asked whether their civilian occupational experience proved useful in the performance of
their military assignment, approximately one half of those questioned answered "yes", while the other half answered "no". These answers were not totally accurate. For example, one ex-serviceman stated that his job before entering the army was that of a laborer. While in service this same veteran was in the Corps of Engineers', building bridges, and laying roads. Most of this veterans' work building bridges and roads was of a laboring nature. Yet, this veteran answered "no" to the question of whether his civilian job had proved useful in his military job.

Another veteran answered "no" to the same question was an express handler before his military service. While in service he worked in the navy in the transportation branch, small craft division. His work was that of loading these boats with supplies, ammunition and other necessary equipment. It can easily be concluded that there was a definite correlation between his civilian and his military jobs.

These were only two cases which would tend to refute the accuracy of the veterans' answers to the question of the civilian job's aiding the veteran in his military job. There were many other such doubtful cases.

Service Component and Length of Service

As could be expected the majority of the servicemen studied were in the army. Fifty-six of the seventy-five men were in the army and nineteen were in the navy. No other branch of service was represented in this group. Significantly,
all but ten of the seventy-five veterans held ranks within the lowest pay grades while in service. This means that they were within the pay range of from fifty dollars per month to seventy-five dollars per month; while the ten mentioned were in the highest pay grades ranging from ninety-six dollars per month to $136.00 per month.

The length of service for most of the veterans was between two and a half to four years. A complete indication of the length of time in service is given in Table 5.

TABLE 5
Length of Service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Time</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1 year</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 less than 2</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 less than 3</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 less than 4</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 less than 5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

None of these veterans served less than ninety days which indicated that the entire seventy-five veterans were eligible for benefits under the GI Bill, on the basis of length of service. Nature of discharge was not known for the veterans.
CHAPTER IV

FACTORS IN THE VETERANS POST-WAR ADJUSTMENT

Occupational Status Since Discharge

Since returning from the armed forces there had been very little change in the occupational status of the seventy-five veterans studied. The majority of these veterans have returned to unskilled occupations. Table 6 indicates their occupational status.

TABLE 6
OCUPATIONAL STATUS SINCE DISCHARGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-skilled</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When asked whether their service learned skill had been useful in their civilian occupation, twenty-nine of them answered "yes", while forty-six answered "no". However, it must be remembered that many of those who answered in the affirmative had the same type of job before entering service, while in service, and since being discharged. For example, there were several men who held jobs as cooks before, during, and after their period of service. These men did not actually
learn a new skill but rather continued to use an old one. The authenticity of these answers was further biased by the veterans' interpretation of what was useful and what was not useful. An illustration of this was a mechanic while in service, since his discharge from service he had been a truck driver. This veteran's answer to the question concerning army learned skills usefulness in civilian job was "no". However, actually his mechanical ability which was learned in service made him an even better truck driver because in addition to driving his truck he could also make repairs on it.

Despite the answers given, there seemed to be a strong probability that most of the veterans did receive some small degree of carry-over value from their army learned work, yet, with the exception of the cooks and a few truck drivers, few learned a skill while in service which was applied directly to their civilian job.

There was one veteran who had learned to operate a crane during his service career. A crane operator's job is a good paying one and such operators were scarce. When this veteran was asked if his army learned skill had proved useful in a civilian occupation his answer was; "Sure my skill would prove useful in a civilian job if I could find some one who would hire me." This was the experience of one veteran who was fortunate enough to have learned a usable skill while in service. There were other Negro veterans who had a similar opportunity, some even finding jobs using their service learned
skills, but these few were in a very definite minority.

Few of these men were satisfied with their present job, for, of the entire seventy-five veterans, only nine stated that their present job was the type of work they preferred doing. Most of the veterans answering the question on job preference listed skilled or semi-skilled occupations. Table 7 indicates the complete occupational preferences stated by the veterans.

TABLE 7

OCCUPATIONAL PREFERENCES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-skilled</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Preference</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present Job</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following categories were included under skilled, radio, trades, advertising, teaching, real estate, electrician, accounting, medicine, and clerical. Under semi-skilled, mechanic, shoe repair, aircraft, crane operator, trucking, and tailoring. Under unskilled, cook, porter, waiter, chauffeur, and truck driver.

Significantly, while many of the veterans expressed
dissatisfaction with their present occupations, of the seventy-five studied, only twenty-four had taken vocational or on-the-job training or academic training. Nine of these men had taken academic training and all had either finished their unit of training or were in the process of doing so. Of the fourteen men taking vocational or on-the-job training only six had completed or were in the process of completing their unit of training. One other had taken a correspondence course which he had completed.

The reasons given by the veterans for not completing their course of training were many, the most prominent being their inability to support their families on the small amount of money they received while in training. One of the veterans had been a cook while in the army, and on being discharged from the army secured employment as a cook. He worked on this job for a short while then decided to leave it because what he was really interested in was baking. He then applied for and was admitted as an on-the-job trainee at one of the local baking companies. He worked on this job for three months and then decided to leave because, as he said it, "I wanted to learn to bake but all I did was grease pans." It will be recalled that all on-the-job training programs were broken down into a series of processes from lowest to highest.

Surprisingly, of the veterans expressing the desire toward a different type of work, so few had made any earnest attempt towards training in their preferred occupation. As was pointed
out in the preceding chapter, fifty-two of the seventy-five veterans contacted for this study, were within the age range of twenty-five to thirty-four, which are definitely reasonable ages for returning to school.

Job Stability

Of the seventy-five veterans questioned for this study, all but seven were gainfully employed. The seven not gainfully employed were students. Forty-six of these veterans had held only one job since their discharge, the remaining twenty-two had held two or more jobs since discharge.

Significantly, the veterans making the most changes in employment were largely those who had spent the longest time in the armed forces. This would tend to indicate that the longer the period of time spent in the armed forces the more difficult the period of readjustment. Table 8 lists the reasons given by the men for changing jobs.

The one veteran giving "lack of housing" as his reason for changing jobs presented a rather interesting case, for his readjustment period had been rather difficult. First, he had a job with a local egg company which he gave up because, "the work was too heavy for me." He then went to Detroit and obtained a job there, first in one of the automobile factories, then, later he changed to another automobile factory. He gave no reason for that change. However, he did say that the pay was very good on both the Detroit jobs, but that he was forced to move back to Atlanta because he could not find adequate
housing facilities for his wife and children. Since returning to Atlanta this veteran had driven a taxi, and at the time of the interview was enrolled in a local barbering college for on-the-job training.

TABLE 8
REASONS FOR JOB CHANGES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More Money</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Discontinued</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better Working Conditions</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work too Difficult</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illness</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Housing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laid Off</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction in Force</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER V

IMPLICATIONS OF POSSIBLE AREAS OF PLANNING

The information gained from the questionnaires indicated that the veterans of the two housing projects studied had taken little advantage of the "GI Bill" in respect to factors of education, training, and jobs. This was the finding despite the fact that Atlanta had numerous resources providing both referral and actual services. Another study, recently made, indicated the nature of services veterans had requested from the Urban League and verified the need of referral services.

Among the community resources available to Atlanta veterans were the American Red Cross, the Young Men's Christian Association, the Urban League, and of course, the Veterans Administration. Also within the city of Atlanta were the various institutions of the Atlanta University system, offering to those who so desire, academic training. While it may be true that in many of the training areas in which some veterans have shown preference, this city offered no facilities for training. However, looking at the occupational preferences listed by the veterans, it can be seen that training was offered in most of the skills listed.

Of the seventy-five veterans studied, thirty-eight had used the facilities of the Veterans Administration for

__________________________

1 Statement by Clarence Coleman, Community Organization Secretary, Atlanta Urban League, June 29, 1948.
counseling, vocational and on-the-job training, educational benefits, disability compensation, medical aid, and loans. Most of these men were seeking informational services, and as was pointed out previously very few received any actual services.

Much thought should be given toward the development of some program which would attract the veterans and help to stimulate them into taking advantage of some phase of the training programs offered. This was definitely one area in which there were strong possibilities for intelligent planning.

One attempt was made among the veterans of University and John Hope Homes to organize a veterans group among the residents. The management in sponsoring the forming of this group wanted to accomplish two things. First, it was the hope that these veterans could be interested in a program of civic betterment, such activities as encouraging the residents to register and to vote, and to solicit funds for the annual membership drive of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, were encouraged as civic duties.

The second reason for the management's sponsorship of this veterans organization was to try to acquaint these men with the many opportunities this community was offering the veteran in the area of training and preparation. This organizational effort with the veterans was not successful, largely, because the program was not interesting enough or its significance pointed out to the veteran in a manner which would attract
their attention and support. This does not mean that the program which the management of University and John Hope Homes had suggested was not a totally worthy one, but rather suggests that these veterans were not ready to accept such a program. All of which indicated a strong need for the development of a program which would both attract and stimulate the veterans.

While much of the work of rehabilitating veterans should and had been accomplished by federal and state agencies, its most important phases can be carried on only by local communities. These local communities must assist the veteran in preparing for, and in finding jobs.

Probably, the area of training which has appealed to the largest number of Negro veterans had been on-the-job training. This on-the-job training must be supplied by local businesses, and trades, and the Veterans Administration has been very liberal in certifying a concern for the training of veterans. Yet, enumerable times veterans stated that they were unable to secure the type of training they desired in this community. This indicated a need for concentrated action toward finding out what the Negro veteran wants in order that he might have an opportunity to pursue the course of his choice. Where his desires for training can not be met courses should be organized.

While the eventual securing of better jobs and the accompanying economic security may not be a panacea for the ills of the Negro, it at least will make progress towards providing a more secure position in American life.
CHAPTER VI
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The passage of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act, marked a recognition by the government, that all of the ex-service-man's ills could not be cured by any one single payment of money to the veterans as was attempted after World War I.

World War II prompted the government to offer a program designed to meet practically any need of the veteran, from the critically ill to job preference for veterans in civil service. These benefits were available to all veterans who met certain minimum requirements and were discharged under conditions other than dishonorable.

This study was undertaken in an effort to determine how extensively the veterans have benefited by army service and the subsequent job and training benefits offered veterans because of their military service. The following conclusions based upon an analysis of the data collected were:

1. Most of the veterans studied were of a low income status, married, and had at least finished elementary school. Moreover, most of these veterans held jobs of an unskilled classification, before, during, and after their discharge from armed service.

2. The majority of the veterans expressed dissatisfaction with their post-war jobs and listed job preferences of skilled or semi-skilled nature.

28
3. Despite the fact that the largest number of the veterans was in an age range of twenty-five to thirty-four years at the time the study was made, very few had taken advantage of any of the training and educational benefits offered them by the federal government, and the state and the local community.

4. There were several reasons given by the veterans for their not making use of some phase of education or training as offered under the "GI Bill". One, offered by some, was that the community did not provide the type of training desired. This reason applied to only a few of the men. Training opportunities, in Atlanta, were found to cover a fairly wide range of activities. Furthermore, the jobs listed as being preferred by the veterans were, for the most part, available. Another reason was a general lack of knowledge concerning the benefits offered under the Servicemen's Readjustment Act. Still, another was that many of the veterans with families found that they could not successfully support their families with the amount of money received while in training. Finally, there was a general lack of interest on the part of the veterans studied, most contenting themselves with the same type of unskilled job held before service, despite the opportunity to pursue the training of their choice.

5. A majority of the veterans did receive some small degree of carry-over value from their service learned skills in their civilian jobs. However, with the exception of a few
cooks and truck drivers, among the seventy-five veterans studied, none learned a skill while in service which he had been able to convert into a civilian occupation successfully.

6. There was a fertile field for intelligent planning toward a program which would help veterans to understand just what the government had made available in their behalf, and also to offer some stimulus which would encourage veterans to take advantage of the opportunity given them. There was also further need for inclusion, in any program of this nature, of a concentrated effort toward encouraging more local business establishments and trades to open their doors for the training of the veterans.
QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name______________________________

2. Address____________________________

3. Date of Birth________________________

4. Education: Elementary High College Graduate

   12345678 1234 1234 1234

5. Marital status: Married___ Single___ Div___ Other___

6. Date of entrance into service________________________

7. Date of discharge from service________________________

8. Rank held at discharge____ 9. Branch of service____

10. Nature of work before entrance into service________________

11. Nature of work while in service________________________

12. Was work experience before entrance into service useful
    in service assignment________________________

13. Nature of work since discharge________________________

14. Has service learned skill proved useful in civilian
    occupation______________________________

15. Number and kinds of jobs held since discharge___________

16. If more than one job has been held since discharge state
    reasons for changes________________________

17. Is present wage satisfactory___________________________

18. What is your job preference___________________________

19. What use have you made of the services offered veterans
    by such agencies as the Veterans Administration, Urban
    League, etc. State agency and service rendered__________

20. Have you taken on-the-job training or any educational or
vocational training. If so, state what training and length of time taken
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books


Miscellaneous Material


Publication of the Office of War Information, [n.d.].