

BUSINESS CONFERENCE CLOSES FIRST MEET: U.S. DEPT. OF COMMERCE IN ...

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BUSINESS CONFERENCE CLOSES FIRST MEET

**U. S. DEPT. OF
COMMERCE IN
SPONSOR ROLE**

**Educators And Industrial
Chiefs At Inaugural
Washington Session**

WASHINGTON, D. C.—The first annual Conference on the Negro in Business held under the auspices of the Department of Commerce concluded its sessions Saturday, April 19 with a spirited discussion of business education and the Negro and national defense and the Negro in business.

Miss H. Elsie Austin, national president of the Delta Sigma Theta sorority, outlined a program for combining business and training with practical experience, which, she said, has been put into active operation in some colleges and is receiving serious study by other educational institutions. Miss Austin likened this type of business education to an internship, similar to that which has long prevailed in medicine.

Dr. V. V. Oak, professor of sociology and economics, Wilberforce university, discussed frankly the defects existing in the curricula of Negro colleges and made suggestions for radical improvement.

Instead of entering the higher realms like cost accounting, income tax accounting and even more complex subjects, Dr. Oak declared that more attention should be devoted to practical instruction concerning real estate, merchandising, business correspondence, secretarial service and similar practical subjects of direct help to the student who desires to enter upon a business career.

He also urged the wisdom of preparing Negro students for positions of manager, salesmen and clerks in stores owned by white persons, but patronized largely by Negroes and sounded a warning that such stores may be expected to make determined efforts to attract further Negro trade.

Dr. Oak paid his respects to those Negro business men who criticize the efforts of educational institutions to promote business education, but fail to make any helpful suggestions towards improving college curricula.

Instead of looking down upon business teachers as mere theorists, business leaders are urged to give these teachers genuine cooperation and to develop an atmosphere of mutual respect in the interest of all concerned, more especially the student.

Miss Irene C. Hypps, head of the department of business education in the Negro divisions of the Washington, D. C., public schools, stressed the need for wise and proper training in high school, since large numbers of students do not have an opportunity to enter college.

She reminded the audience that the failure of many Negroes who seek to enter the business field is due to inexperience and lack of knowledge, and pointed out that, while a doctor or a lawyer must demonstrate his qualifications to practice his profession any man or woman who has the money can buy a license to enter business, regardless of qualifications.

Dr. William H. Bell, president of Alcorn A. and M. college, Alcorn, Miss., advanced helpful suggestions for improving business education among Negroes and for a greater

degree of cooperation between educational institutions and Negro business men.

The general discussion which followed tended to clear the atmosphere, especially in view of the frank declaration of some of the educators that there is room for very real improvement in the curricula of Negro colleges.

Leon M. Wallace Sr., president of the Colored Civic Association, Inc., Baton Rouge, La., opened the discussion of national defense and the Negro in business, and was followed by Robert L. Mehornay, chief of the defense contract service, Office of Production Management, the latter contributing much information of interest to the conference concerning the handling of contracts.

A special committee of delegates submitted a number of recommendations covering specific lines along which assistance could be extended to the Negro in business.

Speaker after speaker commended the objectives of the conference and expressed the hope that it might become a permanent institution.