

To Secure These Rights



HARRY S. TRUMAN

To Secure These Rights

THE REPORT
OF THE PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE
ON CIVIL RIGHTS

*“ . . . to secure these rights governments
are instituted among men . . . ”*

—THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

Washington : 1947

Mr. President:

Your Committee has reviewed the American heritage and we have found in it again the great goals of human freedom and equality under just laws. We have surveyed the flaws in the nation's record and have found them to be serious. We have considered what government's appropriate role should be in the securing of our rights, and have concluded that it must assume greater leadership.

We believe that the time for action is now. Our recommendations for bringing the United States closer to its historic goal follow.

A REPORT THAT TAKES ITS PLACE IN HISTORY

Twice before in American history, the nation has reviewed the status of its civil rights. The first scrutiny, when the new Constitution was ratified in 1791, resulted in the first ten amendments—the Bill of Rights. Again, during the Civil War, when it became clear that we could not survive “half-slave, half-free,” civil rights moved forward with the Emancipation Proclamation and three new amendments to the Constitution.

Today there are compelling reasons for a third re-examination of our civil rights—to eliminate abuses arising from discrimination on the grounds of race, creed, national origin or social and economic status:

1) A moral reason—the United States can no longer countenance these burdens on our common conscience, these inroads on its moral fibre.

2) An economic reason—the United States can no longer afford this heavy drain upon its human wealth, its national competence.

3) An international reason—the United States is not so strong, the final triumph of the democratic idea is not so inevitable that we can ignore what the world thinks of us or our record.

FOUR ESSENTIAL RIGHTS

The President's Committee sets forth four basic rights essential to the well-being of the individual:

- 1) The Right to Safety and Security of Person
- 2) The Right to Citizenship and its Privileges
- 3) The Right to Freedom of Conscience and Expression
- 4) The Right to Equality of Opportunity

1. The right to safety and security of person

Freedom exists only where everyone is secure against bondage, lawless violence, and arbitrary arrest and punishment. Where individuals or mobs take the law in their own hands, where justice is unequal, no man is safe.

The Committee found that many Americans still live in fear of mob violence and brutal treatment by police officers.

FOUR ESSENTIAL RIGHTS



THE RIGHT TO SAFETY AND SECURITY
OF THE PERSON



THE RIGHT TO CITIZENSHIP
AND ITS PRIVILEGES

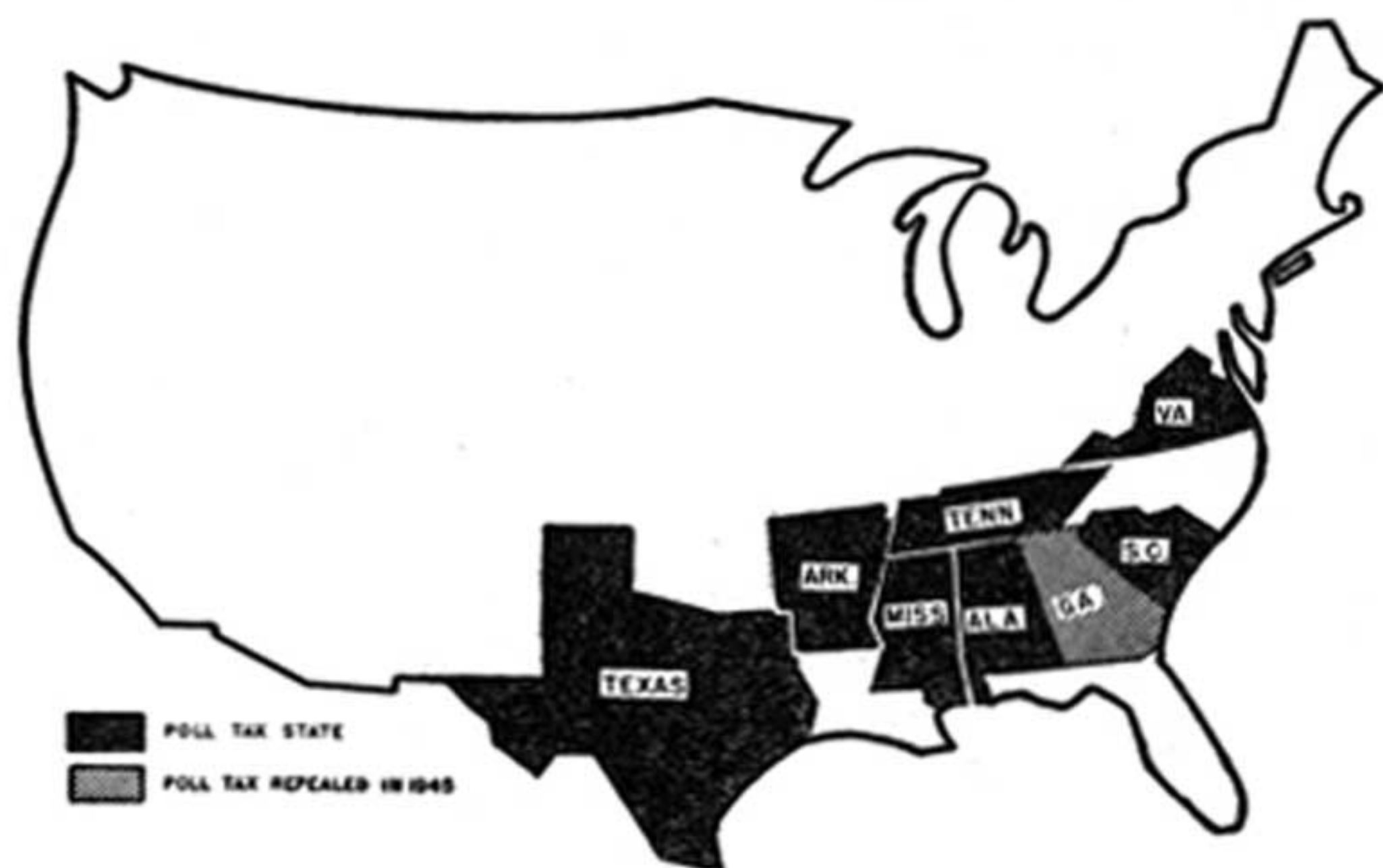


THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM
OF CONSCIENCE AND EXPRESSION



THE RIGHT TO EQUALITY
OF OPPORTUNITY

SUFFRAGE IN POLL TAX STATES



POTENTIAL VOTERS WHO VOTED IN THE 1944 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

8 POLL TAX STATES* --- 18.31%



40 NON-POLL TAX STATES-- 68.74%

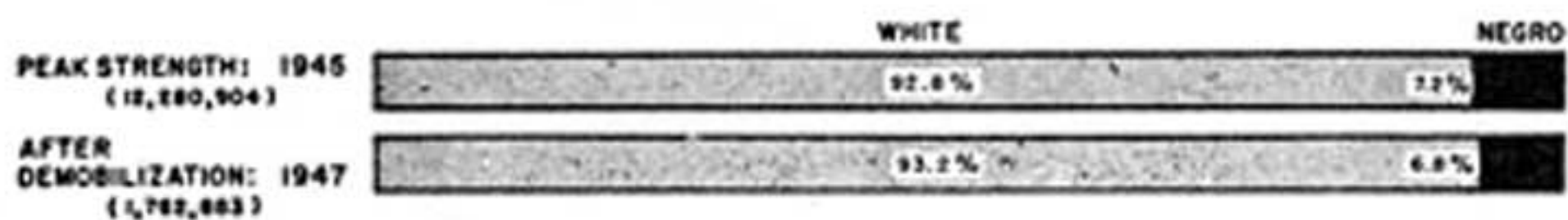


* INCLUDING GEORGIA.

SOURCE • U.S. Bureau of Census.

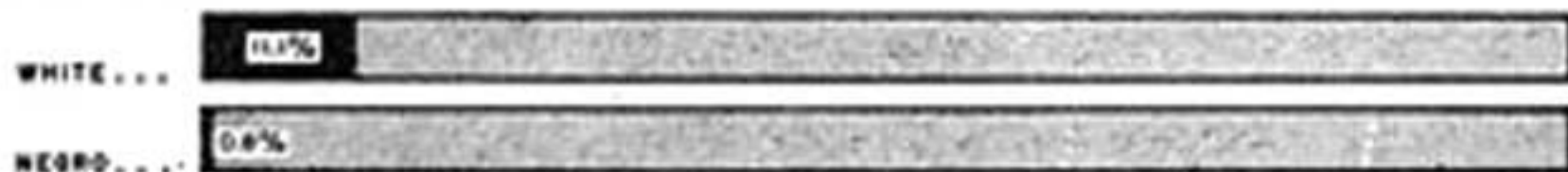
NEGRO MILITARY MANPOWER

ALL SERVICES COMBINED

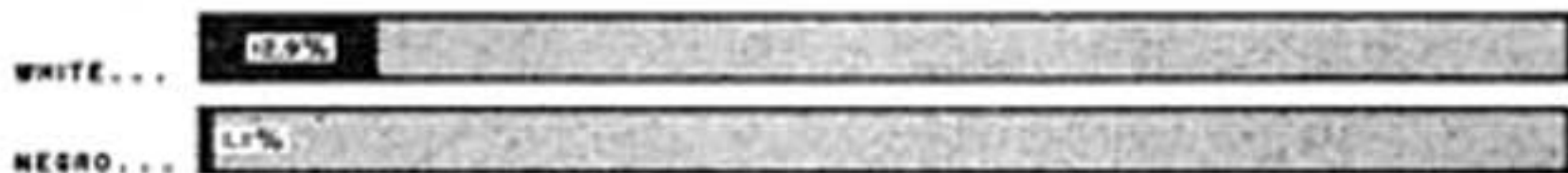


OFFICERS (PERCENT OF TOTAL WHITE OR NEGRO PERSONNEL)

PEAK STRENGTH: 1945

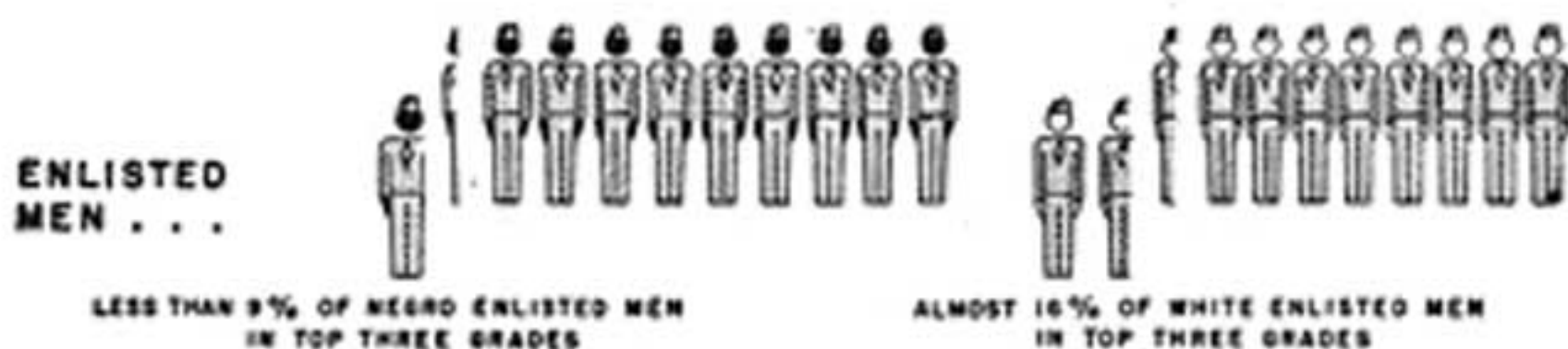
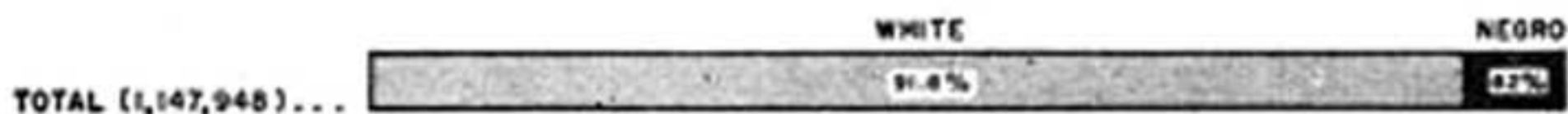


AFTER DEMOBILIZATION: 1947



BEFORE UNIFICATION OF THE ARMED SERVICES: 1947

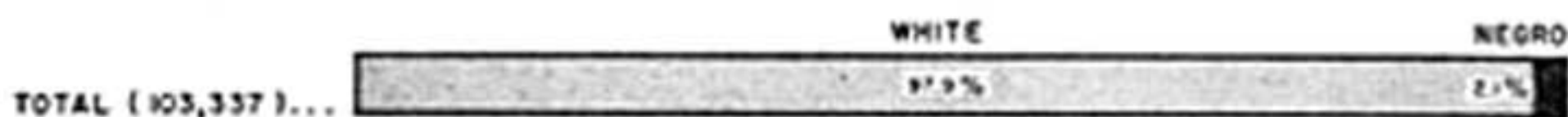
THE ARMY



THE NAVY



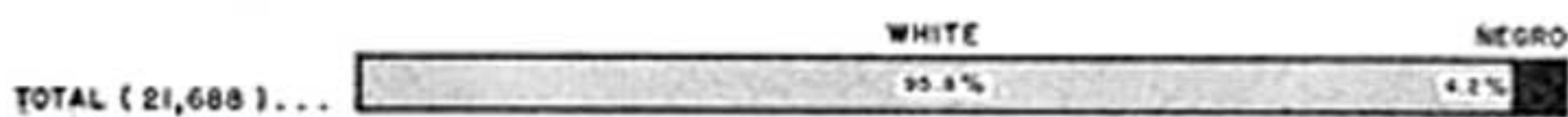
THE MARINES



... THE MARINE CORPS HAS 7,798 OFFICERS... ALL WHITE



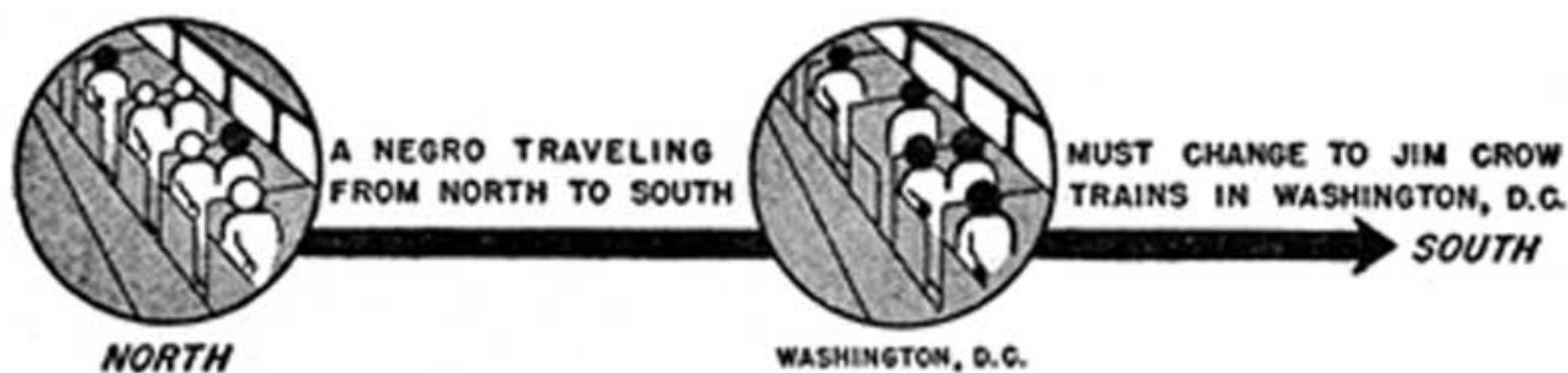
THE COAST GUARD



SOURCE: From data supplied by War, Navy, and Treasury Departments.

THE NATION'S CAPITAL

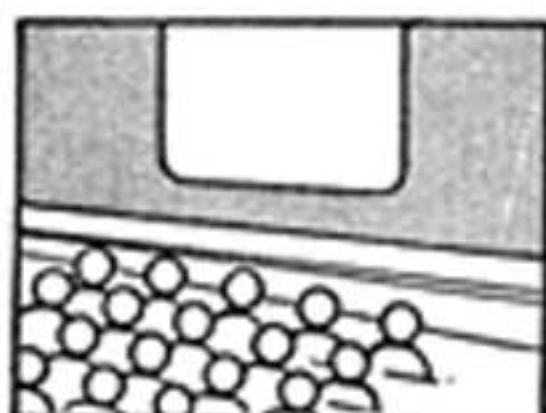
A SYMBOL OF FREEDOM AND EQUALITY?



IF HE DECIDES TO REMAIN IN D. C. OVERNIGHT HE WILL FIND THAT:



HE CANNOT EAT IN A DOWNTOWN RESTAURANT



HE CANNOT ATTEND A DOWNTOWN MOVIE OR PLAY.



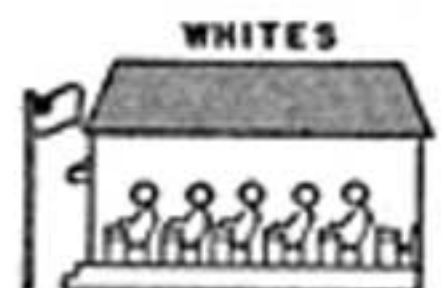
HE CANNOT SLEEP IN A DOWNTOWN HOTEL.

IF HE DECIDES TO STAY IN D. C.

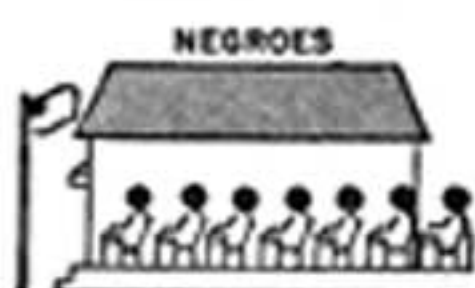
HE USUALLY MUST FIND A HOME IN AN OVERCROWDED, SUB-STANDARD, SEGREGATED AREA:



HE MUST SEND HIS CHILDREN TO INFERIOR JIM CROW SCHOOLS:



CAPACITY EXCEEDS ENROLLMENT BY 27%



ENROLLMENT EXCEEDS CAPACITY BY 8%

HE MUST ENTRUST HIS FAMILY'S HEALTH TO MEDICAL AGENCIES WHICH GIVE THEM INFERIOR SERVICES:

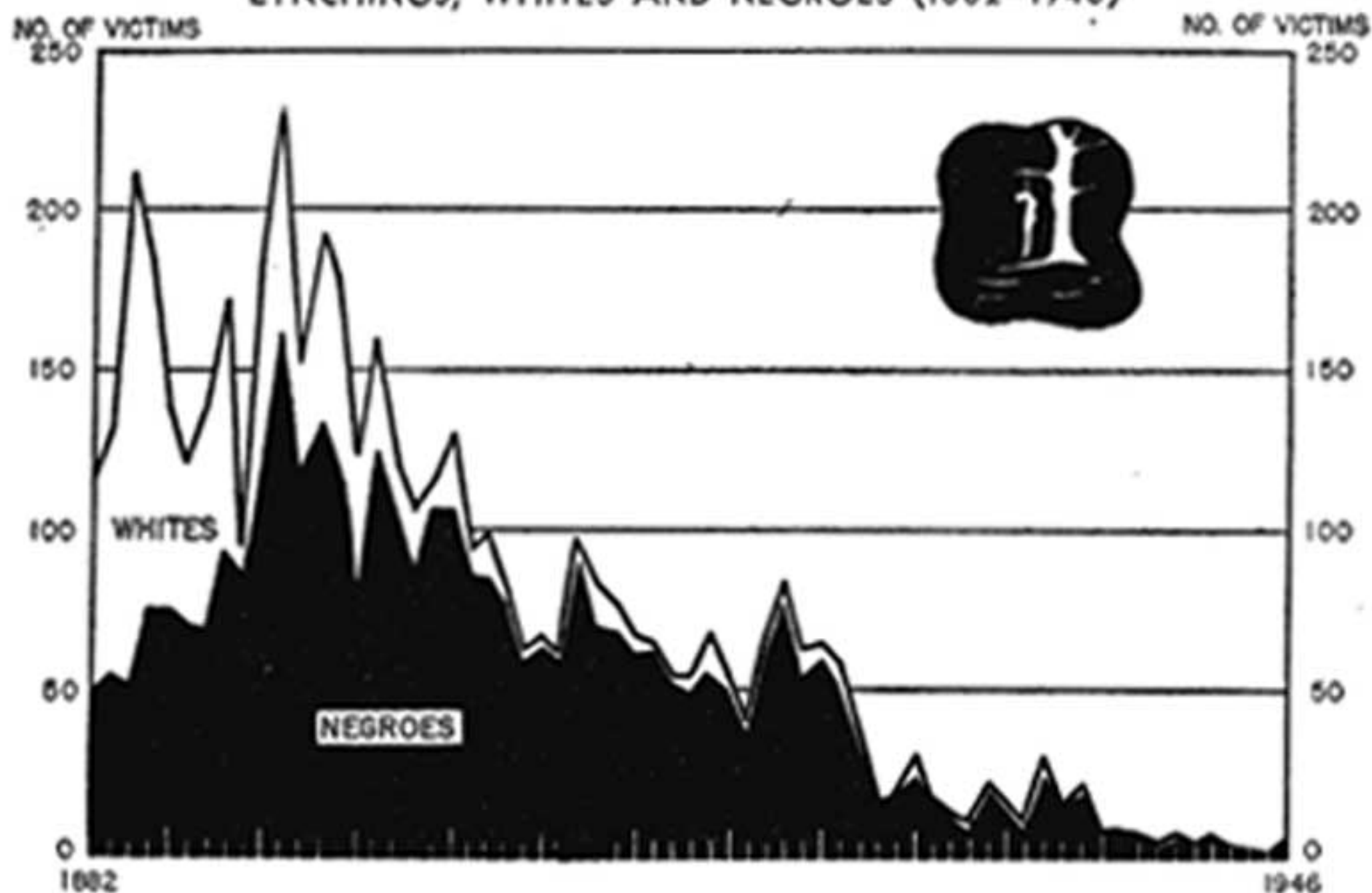


HOSPITALS IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA EITHER DO NOT ADMIT NEGROES OR ADMIT THEM ON A SEGREGATED BASIS

To Secure These Rights

ALTHOUGH LYNCHING HAS DECLINED SHARPLY...
NO YEAR SINCE 1882 HAS BEEN FREE OF IT!

LYNCHINGS, WHITES AND NEGROES (1882-1946)



LYNCHINGS BY STATES (1882-1945)



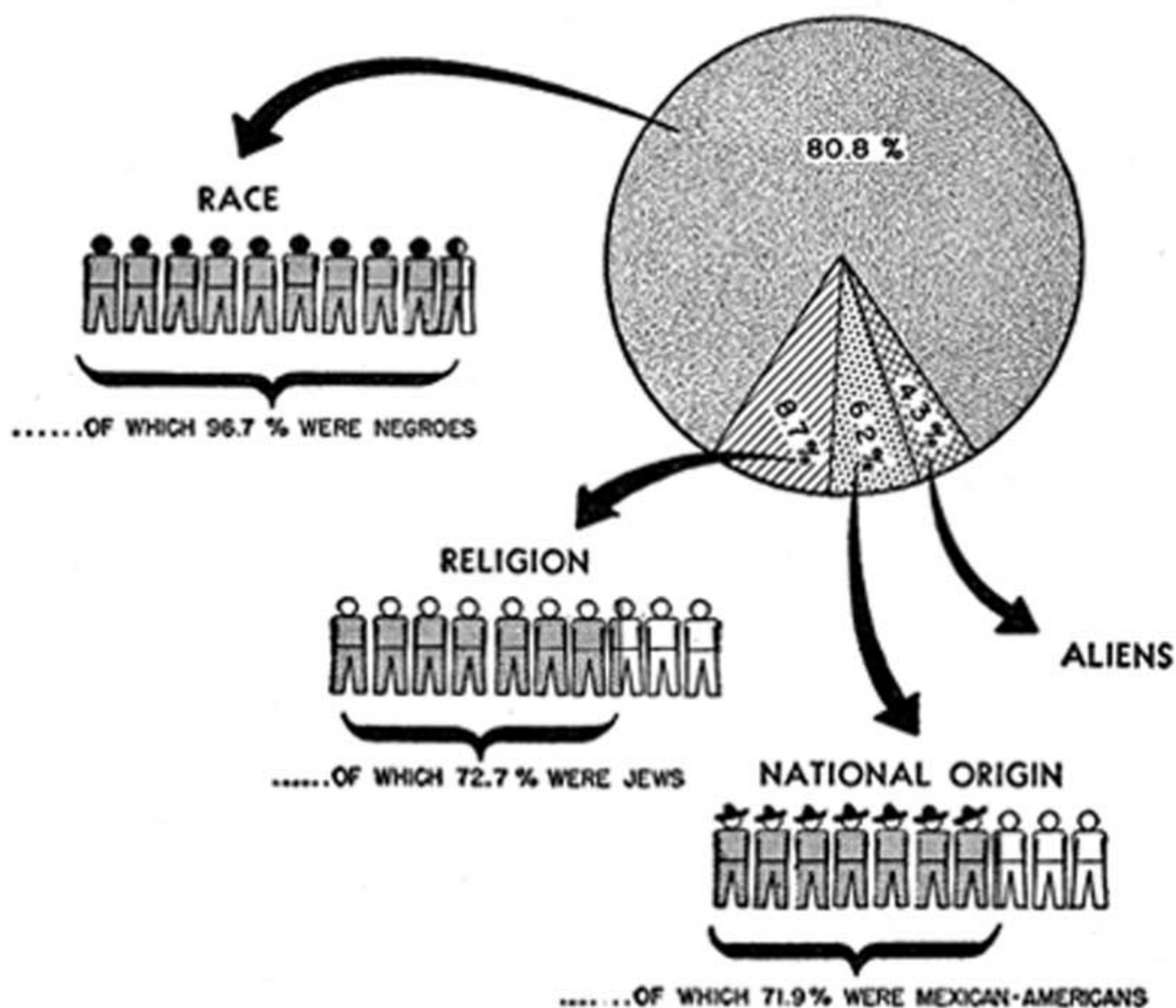
SOURCE: Tuskegee Institute, Alabama

Truman Presidential
Museum & Library

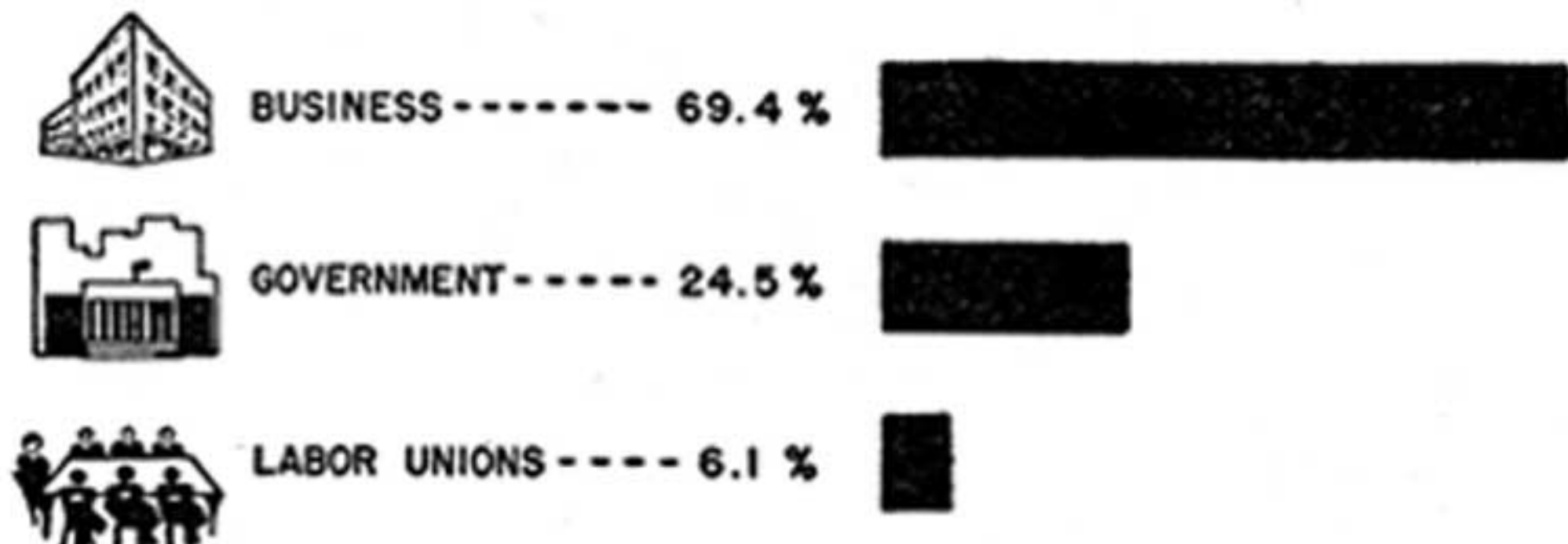
The

BASES OF JOB DISCRIMINATION

(COMPLAINTS TO FEPC, FISCAL YEAR 1943-44)



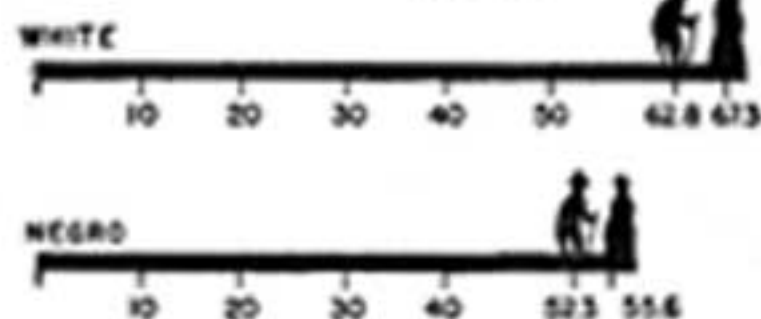
THOSE CHARGED WITH DISCRIMINATION



SOURCE: First Report, FEPC, based on 4,081 complaints for fiscal year 1943-44

DISCRIMINATION CONTRIBUTES TO POOR HEALTH

LIFE EXPECTANCY OF NEGROES
10 YEARS LESS THAN WHITES...
(1940)



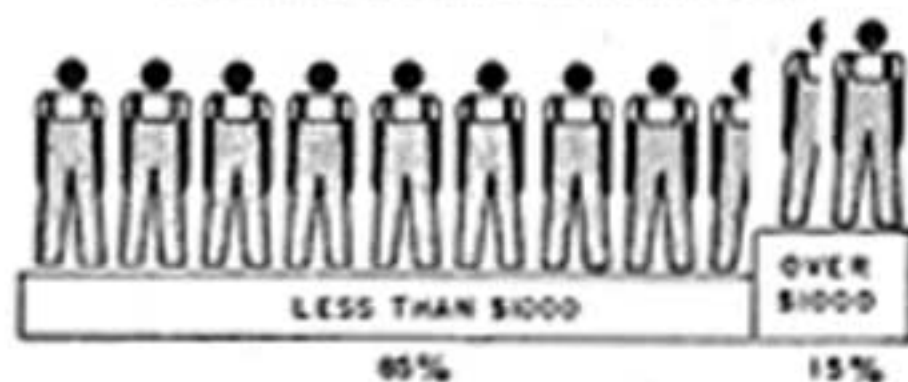
...MATERNAL DEATH RATE OF NEGROES
IS MORE THAN DOUBLE THAT OF WHITES
(1940)



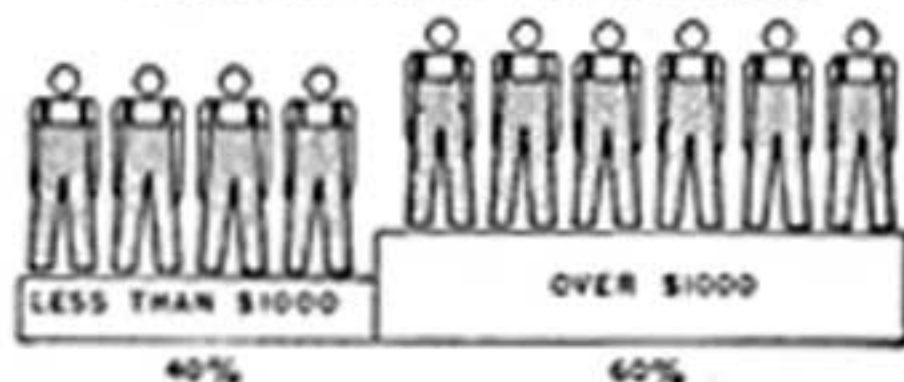
SOME UNDERLYING CAUSES

1 POOR ECONOMIC STATUS OF NEGROES...

INCOME OF NEGRO WORKERS (1939)



INCOME OF WHITE WORKERS (1939)



2 DISCRIMINATION IN MEDICAL FACILITIES...

IN 1946 ONLY 1% OF ALL HOSPITAL BEDS
WERE AVAILABLE TO NEGROES (10% OF
POPULATION)



...99% OF ALL HOSPITAL BEDS AVAILABLE TO OTHERS



3 SHORTAGE OF TRAINED NEGRO PERSONNEL...

(1942)



IN 1940 THERE WERE ONLY 7,192 TRAINED
AND STUDENT NEGRO NURSES...

...AND ONLY 1,471 NEGRO DENTISTS

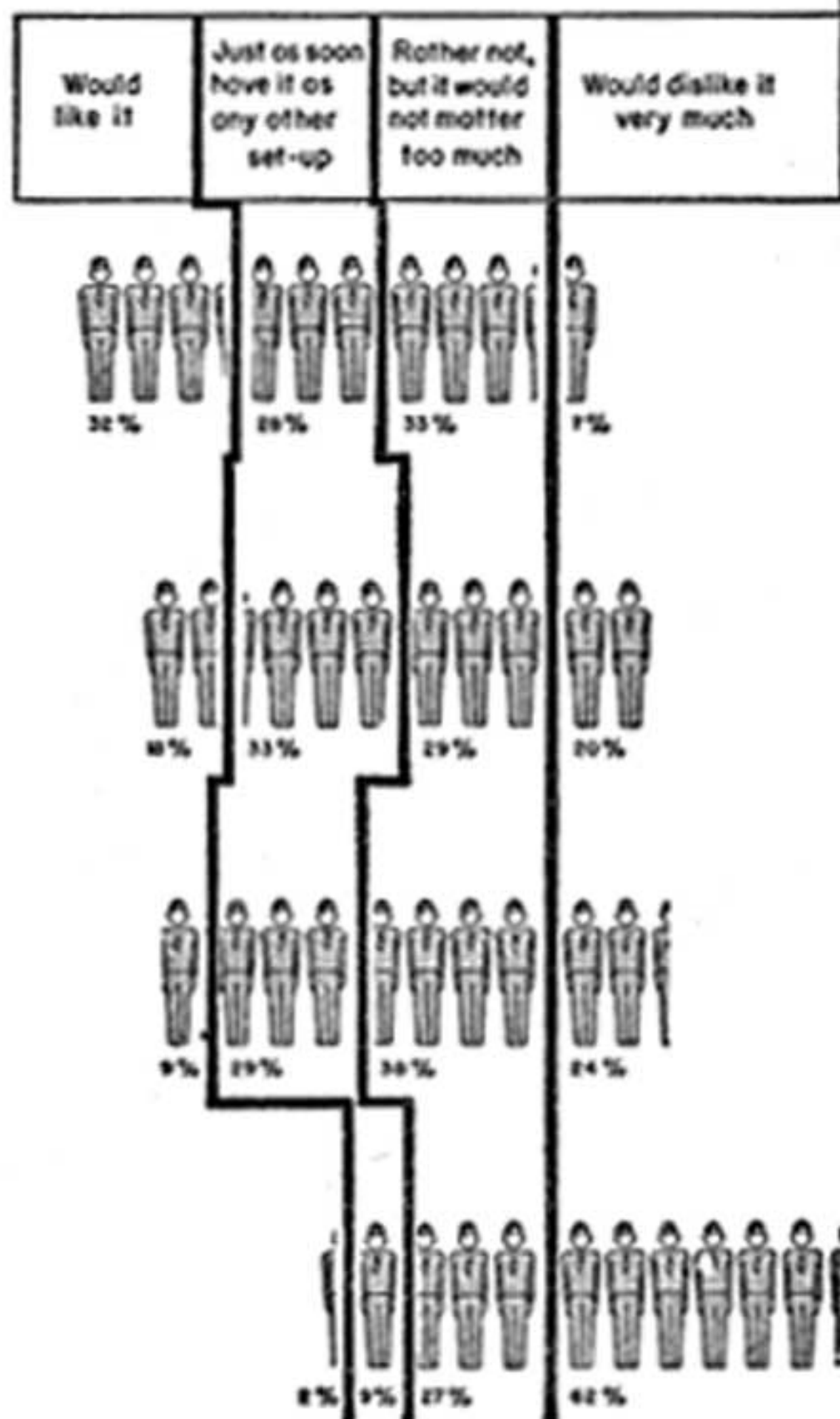
...TO SERVE A NEGRO POPULATION OF 13,000,000

SEGREGATION AND PREJUDICE

THE FOLLOWING QUESTION WAS ASKED OF 1,710 WHITE ENLISTED MEN*

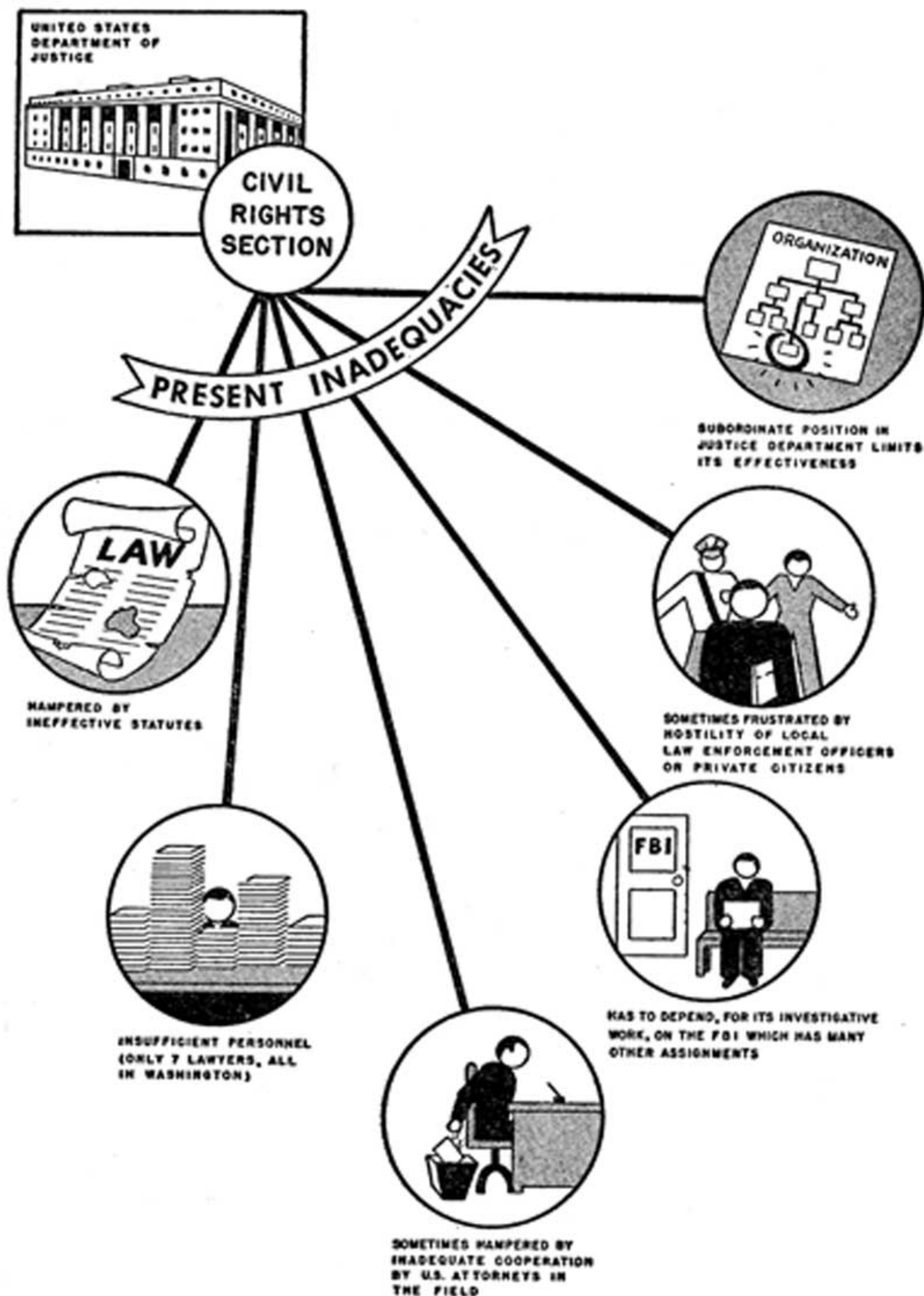
"Some Army divisions have companies which include Negro platoons and white platoons. How would you feel about it if your outfit was set up something like that?"

THE ANSWERS...



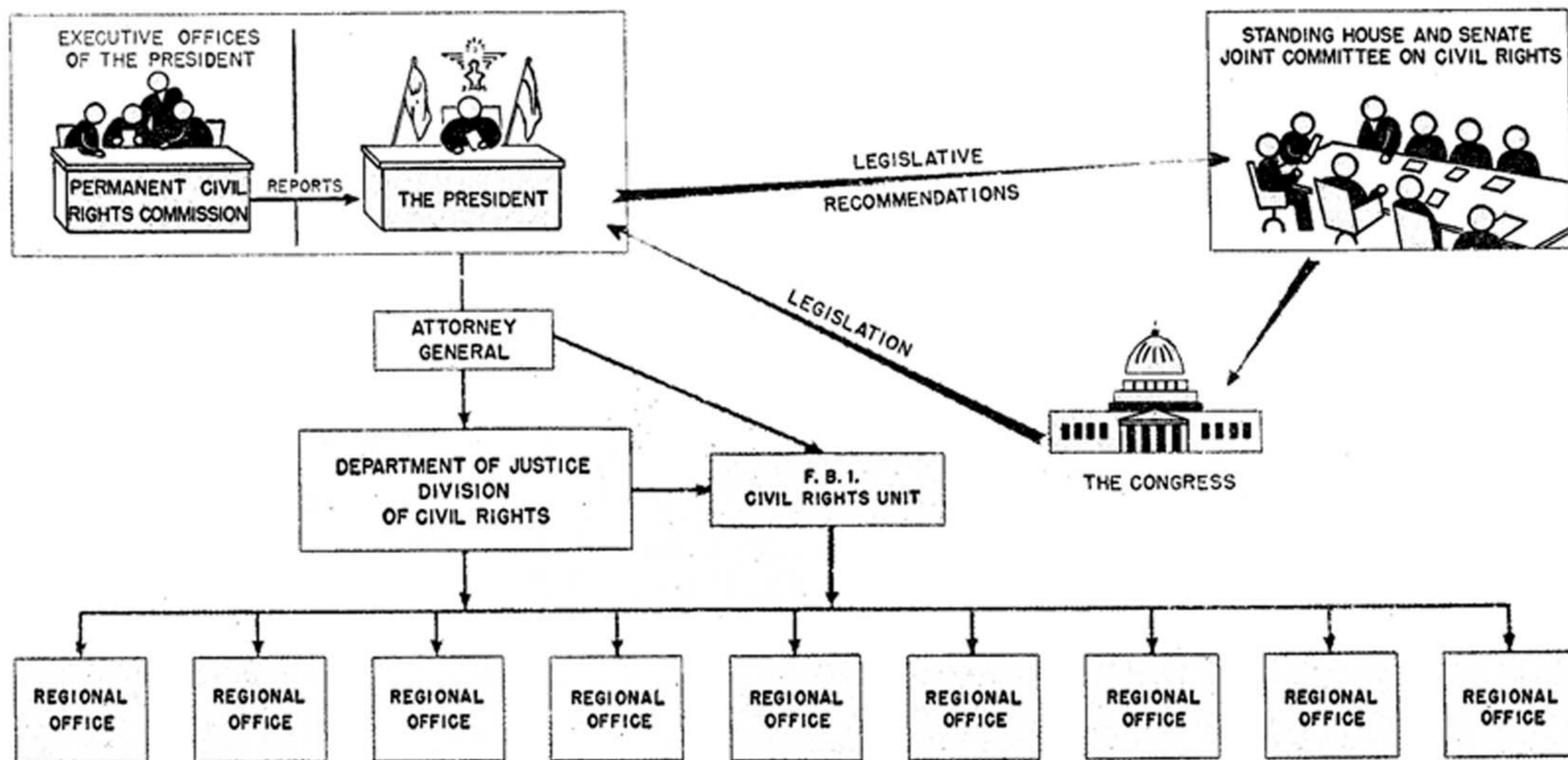
* Based on a survey in France, Research Branch, Information and Education Division, Hdqtrs., ETO, Report ETO-82, June 1945.

OUR FEDERAL CIVIL RIGHTS MACHINERY NEEDS STRENGTHENING



To Secure These Rights

FOR STRONGER CIVIL RIGHTS ENFORCEMENT MACHINERY
THE PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS



A PLAN ALONG SIMILAR LINES IS RECOMMENDED FOR STATES GOVERNMENTS WITH INCREASED PROFESSIONALIZATION OF STATE AND LOCAL POLICE FORCES.

