

EDITORIAL DIGEST & MANUSCRIPT FILE

PROJECT Negroes of N.Y.  
 EDITOR: \_\_\_\_\_ FILE TITLE & NO.: Biographies  
 REPORTER: copy ART. NO.: 9  
 DATE: 5/31/66 COPY TITLE: Eugene Kinckle Jones  
 WORDAGE 1100  
 REWRITE: \_\_\_\_\_ INDEXED BY: Cannon DATE: 7-1-4?

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PROJECT **Negroes of N.Y.**

EDITOR:

**Gary**

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REPORTER: ~~Eugene Kinckle Jones~~

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PROJECT: NEGROES OF NEW YORK. By Arthur Gary. (1.)

SUBJECT: Sketch of Eugene Kinckle Jones. (Brief)  
Wordage: ~~640~~.  
May 31, 1939.

When liberal-minded New Yorkers, realized the evils of the social and economic position of the New York Negro, a program for a helping organization was drawn up. In 1910, the new body organized as the National Urban League.<sup>1.</sup> The movement progressed slowly, until George E. Haynes, Professor of Social Science at Fisk University, asked Eugene Kinckle Jones to come to New York and help build the organization into one that would be of greatest benefit to the Negro.<sup>2.</sup>

Eugene Kinckle Jones, the son of Joseph Endor Jones, a teacher of theology at Virginia Union University, and Rose Kinckle Jones, a music teacher,<sup>3.</sup> was born in Richmond, Virginia on July 20, 1885.<sup>4.</sup> His parents gave him every opportunity and he was well prepared and educated for an active life.<sup>5.</sup> For three years, 1893-1902, he attended the Wayland Academy and the next four years were devoted to studies at Virginia Union University, where he received his Bachelor of Arts degree.<sup>6.</sup> Not resting on his laurels, young Jones entered Cornell University, in 1906, and two years later graduated with the degree of Master of Arts.<sup>7.</sup> Immediately following his graduation, he accepted the position of instructor at the State University of Louisville, Kentucky; remaining there for one year.<sup>8.</sup> He then married Blanche Ruby Watson, who bore him two children, Eugene Kinckle, Jr., and Adele Rosa.<sup>9.</sup> For the first two years of his married life, he served as instructor of mechanical drawing at the Louisville, Kentucky High School.<sup>10.</sup> It was here in 1911, that he met George E. Haynes<sup>11.</sup> and acceded to his request that he meet the board of directors of the new "League on Urban Conditions among Negroes."<sup>12.</sup> After

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the meeting with the Board, he accepted the position as field secretary to the organization.<sup>14.</sup>

At that time, "the League's entire movement required a budget of \$2,500,"<sup>15.</sup> and with this amount conducted careful investigations which disclosed the abnormally high death rate, the excessive criminal record, and the poor living conditions in over crowded tenements, as the general condition among Negroes in New York City.<sup>16.</sup> Mistaking the true motives behind these exposures, the colored masses resented the League's activities and the "League had not only to battle for better conditions, but had also to convert the colored people themselves to the work."<sup>17.</sup> Throughout this period, Eugene K. Jones proved himself an indefatigable worker and within three years he was at the head of the National Urban League,<sup>18.</sup> covering two large fields, -<sup>19.</sup> "social welfare and economic advancement" for Negroes.

In 1914, when Mr. Jones accepted his new position as executive secretary, Negroes were facing a serious unemployment situation. He immediately organized a Negro station in Harlem<sup>20.</sup> for the unemployed; supplied workers to industry; attended "labor union councils"<sup>21.</sup> to assure the Negro of equal privileges;<sup>22.</sup> trained workers to take their place in industrial centers;<sup>23.</sup> and he contacted "employers of labor and presented the black man's case."<sup>24.</sup> By 1926, through his efforts and the inspiration that he furnished his co-workers, the organization had been firmly established in forty-three cities;<sup>25.</sup> the budget had been increased to nearly half a million dollars;<sup>26.</sup> "200,000 Negro workers had been placed in positions;<sup>27.</sup> forty-five Negro personnel workers had been placed in industrial plants;<sup>28.</sup> and thirty-seven Negro students had been trained and placed in social service positions."<sup>29.</sup> It was proven on investigation that "the Negro station in Harlem" had greatly benefited the city's colored unemployed workers and had

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secured "better results for less money than any of the agencies run by whites."<sup>30.</sup> Mr. Jones also recommended that a provision be made for fellowships for graduate students in social work and the recipients of this fellowship have been some of the most outstanding young Negroes.<sup>31.</sup> In 1924, the degree of Doctor of Laws was conferred upon Mr. Jones by his alma mater, Virginia Union University,<sup>32.</sup> in recognition of his invaluable services to his race.<sup>33.</sup>

In 1933, while his son was attending Cornell University and his daughter was a student at the University of Michigan,<sup>34.</sup> Eugene K. Jones was "sworn in as Economic Advisor on Negro Affairs of the United States Department of Commerce, under Secretary Daniel C. Roper."<sup>35.</sup> This position paid a salary of \$5,600 a year.<sup>36.</sup> The previous year, he had been elected president of the National Conference of Social Work;<sup>37.</sup> the largest social work organization in the world.

Despite the heavy toll on his time and energy, Mr. Jones, has become a member of the American Association of Social Workers, a member of the board of directors of the New York Education Council, chairman of the Harlem Boy Scouts Advisory Committee, the Harlem Adult Education Committee and the Flushing Educational Committee.<sup>38.</sup> He has served as president of the Alumni Association of Virginia Union University and as a member of the trustee board of that institution and is also one of the brothers of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity.<sup>39.</sup>

At present there are forty-eight branches of the National Urban League,<sup>40.</sup> located in various cities, with local executive boards made up of both white and colored citizens.<sup>41.</sup>

In 1927, a brilliant author and eminent social worker, Mary White Ovington, writing of Eugene Kinckle Jones, said: "To be able to place not a few, but tens of thousand of black people in positions, to be consulted by owners of steel mills and munition plants, and

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coal mines, to see a budget grow in fifteen years from three thousand to four hundred thousand dollars, to know that the work of the Negro economic advancement is only beginning ... is a fine outlook for any man still in his youth."<sup>40.</sup>

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