Race Riot Danger Ever Present in Cities of North

By Carl W. Ackerman

East St. Louis, Ill., August 29.—(Special)—It does not matter how anxious one may be to report only the facts regarding the negro problem in the industrial centers of the north, one cannot avoid the conclusion of scores of men, white and black, with whom I have spoken, that as long as conditions remain as they are race riots may be expected at almost any time. That there is no disturbance today does not mean that there will be no bloodshed tomorrow. “What are the conditions which may bring about a repetition of the disgraceful racial war started in East St. Louis last year and repeated in Washington and Chicago recently?”

This question was put to business men, social workers, police officials and negroes in Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, Indianapolis and here, and the answer may be summarized as follows:

First. The influx of negro laborers from the south during the war which resulted in the overcrowding of “colored districts.”

Second. Lack of proper housing facilities and the antagonism of white citizens to an extension of the “negro neighborhood.”

Third. The general policy of negro errantry followed by the Chicago riots “patrol load.” In other cities where the police have not taken this drastic step I was informed that the police had warned all second-hand stores and hardware shops not to sell weapons of any kind to negroes. This rule, I believe, is now in force in Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, Indianapolis and here. This fact the police departments have had to face although the general public has had no intimation of this policy of the negroes.

125,000 in Chicago.

One must exclude, of course, that large body of sensible negroes who have lived in the north long enough to rely upon police protection, but this body of men and women present no problem and they must not be included in any discussion except as far as their attitude and influence must be relied upon for aid in solving the disagreeable question. It is the uneducated and disturbing elements of both races which constitute the “problem.”

The extent to which the negroes have “invaded” the white districts may be gleaned from some data I obtained in Chicago. That city today has a negro population estimated at 125,000, making the lake city rank either third or fourth in point of negro population in the United States. Of this number about one-tenth lives in the black belt. The