

Federal Security Agency
U. S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

Background Radio Speech Material
National Negro Health Week 1946

The first postwar National Negro Health Week observance finds a nation eager for what President Truman terms "health security for all, regardless of residence, station, or race -- everywhere in the United States."

National Negro Health Week stresses the great need and opportunity for the average Negro family to improve their home and share health benefits in the community.

The late Booker T. Washington, eminent Negro leader, founded National Negro Health Week in 1915. Following the death of Dr. Washington, the observance was sponsored by Tuskegee Institute and by Howard University. The U. S. Public Health Service has carried on National Negro Health Week since 1932 as a phase of the year-round health program.

Although Negroes have shared generally in the Nation's health progress during the past 35 years, they have not shared in proportion to their needs. Negroes constitute 10 percent of our population, but they bear from three to six times their proportional burden of ill health and premature death.

In every thousand Negro births, one and three quarters' times as many babies die before they are a year old as in white births. Negro mothers die in childbirth at twice the rate among white women.

Many of the chronic diseases which disable and kill strike Negroes far more frequently than their white neighbors. These inequalities are unnecessary. Public health and medicine have found the knowledge and skills with which to make the Negro's load of sickness and death as light as the white man's today. More than that, the means are available now to reduce death and illness in all races to still lower levels than are experienced at present by the most favored groups.

It is significant that the theme for this year's observance of National Negro Health Week is "a healthy home in a healthy community." Plans for better homes and community improvement should highlight proper housing for the Negro families.

The constant need for the security and enjoyment of the home is health. The healthy breadwinner is a better provider. Health conserves the family earnings and sickness drains the family budget. And so it is also true of the community in which the healthy homes are located. Community health is economical as it protects and promotes the welfare of the people. Home and community are equal partners in the business of keeping the American people healthy.

The Surgeon General of the United States Public Health Service, Dr. Thomas Parran, has pointed out that among the major health requirements throughout the country are better facilities and more trained personnel. This means, he said, in order to assure equal opportunity for health in all parts of the country, we shall have to: Construct more hospitals and health centers and equip them with modern medical tools; train more physicians, dentists, nurses, engineers, health educators and other professional people; establish more public health departments and gear up all services to make use of the newer knowledge in prevention and cure.

In no part of the United States, the Surgeon General has pointed out, have health and medical services reached the point where all services meet all needs. It is safe to say, however, that in all parts of the country, services for the Negro fall farther short of the mark than do those for white people. State and community plans for the future must take account of this fact wherever Negroes form a significant proportion of the population.

Any movement to stimulate better health among Negroes not only helps the group itself but the entire Nation which is seeking an adequate health and medical care program for all people. High disease rates among Negroes are needless drains upon the Nation's resources and upon individual health and progress. Thus, as President Truman so aptly stated, "Our new economic bill of rights should mean health security for all, regardless of residence, station, or race -- everywhere in the United States."

Although Negroes have shared generally in the Nation's health progress during the past 25 years, they have not shared in proportion to their needs. Negroes constitute 10 percent of our population, but they bear three to six times their proportional burden of ill health and premature death.

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It is significant that the theme for this year's observance of National Negro Health Week is "A healthy home is a healthy community." Plans for better homes and community improvement should be a high priority for the Negro community.

The constant need for the security and enjoyment of the home is health. The healthy breadwinner is a better provider. Health conserves the family earnings and sickness drains the family budget. And so it is also true of the community in which the healthy home are located. Community health is economical as it protects and promotes the welfare of the people. Home and community are equal partners in the business of keeping the American people healthy.

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MEMORANDUM OF TRANSMITTAL
RADIO SPEECH MATERIAL

for the

Year 1946 Observance of the

NATIONAL NEGRO HEALTH WEEK

March 31 to April 7, 1946

Theme: A Healthy Home in a Healthy Community:
Health Education and Health Services.

The National Negro Health Week Committee is pleased to transmit for your information and use suggested speech material for the year 1946 National Negro Health Week Radio programs.

Cooperating Health Week groups and Health Week speakers may use this copy for information and suggestions in preparing talks for local radio programs relating to needs and opportunities in their respective communities.

The local Health Week programs should feature music and talks, interviews, or plays, in well-balanced proportion to secure attention, maintain interest, impart helpful information, and stimulate cooperation.

The radio station program director should be consulted without delay as to dates available, length of broadcast, form and content of program, and other essential details. The participants--master of ceremonies, speaker, members of panel or cast, singers or instrumental performers--should be selected as to quality of talents, radio experience or adaptability to public performance, and dependability of presence for broadcast as scheduled.

The spoken parts should be brief, simple, appropriate, and effective. The music should be sufficiently spirited to conform to the tempo of successful radio programs and the present need of stimulus to constructive peacetime activities and good morale.

The health department and other health agencies; the medical, dental, nursing, and social work professions; the schools, and musical and dramatic groups should be sought for aid in selecting the best talent and in providing, editing, and rehearsing the parts of the participants.

Report of the Health Week radio program, together with copies of the scripts and talks, should be sent to the National Negro Health Week Committee, U. S. Public Health Service, Washington 25, D. C., for its information and record.