FEPC

Few alphabetical symbols in government have stirred such controversy as FEPC. It stands for Fair Employment Practices Commission which was created by an order of the President to eliminate racial discrimination in industry and particularly the discrimination against negroes. In the present Congress, a half dozen or more members of both parties introduced bills to create such a commission by law and give it adequate power to deal with this problem. The bill was reported by the Labor Committee of the House by a vote of 12 to 2 and will soon come before the Congress for action. It will of course stir much controversy and sectional hostilities will be awakened. There are certain stubborn facts which dictate the need for meeting this problem intelligently and at once without emotion or prejudice.

FACT NUMBER ONE.
It is a human and incontrovertible fact. There are 12,800,000 negroes in the United States which is about one tenth of our population. Eleven large cities, six of which are in the north and five in the south have colored populations over 100,000. New York leads with 438,000 and Chicago is second with 272,000. Thus there is the stubborn unyielding fact that one out of every ten persons in the U. S. is colored and they are people. Today they fight and die for freedom and opportunity.

FACT NUMBER TWO.
They have been the victims of discrimination. Perhaps it is not readily appreciated. It springs from our thought habits which carry over from one generation to another. We have been accustomed to seeing colored persons shine shoes, clean public lavatories, wait on tables, carry baggage, serve as domestics and perform service tasks. With high good nature, they perform rough and heavy labor. It seems always to have been so. It seems so easy to believe that perhaps it should always remain so. We have rated them as a matter of habit for subnormal tasks and so we become the victims of thinking habits.

FACT NUMBER THREE.
There is widespread belief that the colored man lacks capacity and ambition. It springs from the fact that we do not ordinarily encounter that vast group who are a living rebuttal of this belief. The 4000 negro physicians, 6000 negro nurses, 2000 negro dentists, 11,000 negro musicians, 1500 negro contractors, 4000 negro real estate men, thousands of negro lawyers and other professional men bear witness to their capacity and ambition. The 187,000 negroes in the Union Army of which 80,000 died, and the hundreds of thousands in the military and naval service today bear witness to their patriotism.

FACT NUMBER FOUR.
The fourth fact - and it is not too pleasant - is that discrimination is kind of confession that we cannot live together in the true spirit of liberty, opportunity and unity. There is something hollow about any program for the liberation of peoples in other lands until there has first been true liberation and fair opportunity at home. The pattern of democracy can scarcely be imposed upon other lands until it is cleansed and made whole at home. Nobody expects that overnight or by a single act of Congress, there will be a complete achievement of democracy but every person has a right to expect that we at home shall not relent in our efforts to make progress in that direction. This is an hour for understanding.