

tributing his experience, to make racial issues come alive to them.

The Negro conversation leader can serve again and again in his role, as each Visit is for a new group of white learners. In fact, he will become more expert in drawing out the white participants and in expressing clearly his own ideas as he has added experience with the Visits. He is also the best recruiter of additional conversation leaders from his own friends, relatives, associates.

Pastors of Negro churches can also be helpful in recruiting leaders. Then there are work groups—teachers, social workers, lawyers, factory and office workers, and the like, as well as groups like the Negro membership of the Urban League, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and interracial organizations. The key qualities of effective conversation leaders are not those of formal education or economic standing but a hospitable willingness to share with white strangers one's personal ideas, feelings, insights on race and the ability to do this in a small, informal group.

(Throughout this booklet, "leader" is used in the singular. In most cases, of course, the leader is a couple. Occasionally, too, the leader may invite another Negro friend or two to sit in on the Visit. This is useful as a "selling" device for new conversation leaders, but there should not be too many added, or the conversation may tend to go off in too many different directions.)

The Visitor-Learners

RECRUITING new groups of white visitors proves to be the challenge—and the measure of effectiveness—of the Interracial Home Visit program.

The Home Visit is a tried-and-true way of bringing truth to those who seek it. White visitors are enlisted by interesting them in this opportunity to get the facts on racial problems from those best qualified to give the facts—informed and articulate Negroes. And most whites, if they know a conversation of this kind is available to them, will respond. Some may

think they have little to learn, but unfailingly they do learn.

Visitors have been of all walks of life, adults and young people (college or senior high school age), religious and lay. The best "salesmen" of the program are those who have already participated so a special effort to enlist help of visitors in recruiting new groups is often fruitful. Friendship House experience has been that the recruiting is most easily done in groups—a class, a club, a church society. Members may also, of course, extend invitations to relatives, friends, neighbors, co-workers, fellow students.

Another method of recruitment would be to seek out leaders: clergymen, school administrators and faculty members, political figures.

One sales technique which has been used successfully is to provide for a white audience a short "demonstration Home Visit" followed by explanation and discussion of the program. The demonstration is simple: at the beginning of the program five or six members of the audience are drafted to act as "visitors" and are sent outside the auditorium to begin a "visit" with a Negro conversation leader. While they are warming into their conversation, the audience is briefed on the general idea of the program. Then the group is brought on, to continue their conversation at whatever point it has reached. Fifteen or twenty minutes of listening to the conversation gives the audience an idea of, at least, the free-wheeling nature of the Home Visit conversation (though they should be cautioned that listening to a conversation is a different experience from participating), and then they can ask questions about aspects of the program which are not clear.

As an aid to answering the questions most frequently asked about the Visits, these are discussed fully in "A Few Further Points" at the end of this booklet.

The Escort

THE escort is the link, representing the organizers of the Home Visits, between the white visitors and the Negro conversation leader. He meets the visitors at an agreed-upon place and