

Raleigh, N. C.
April 15, 1937.

" In April, 1936, all sewing rooms, both white and colored, in the strawberry section of this county were closed because of the fact that labor was available to these women both in picking and packing of strawberries. Since employment was available in the tobacco fields, these rooms were not re-opened until after the tobacco season, which was sometime during the month of November, 1936. Since the colored case load was so low in the county and business conditions in general were much improved, it was felt both by WPA authorities and also by local sponsors and the Department of Public Welfare that to re-open the colored sewing rooms would tend to increase the shortage of domestic labor in this county.

" As you know, housewives in the South have never employed white domestic labor. Since many of our white women in this county are untrained workers, there is practically no employment for them. However, there seems to be a scarcity, not only of domestic labor but of field labor in the county, and there is no reason why any colored woman cannot secure employment at a reasonable wage in domestic service. The winter has been mild and the opportunities for working on the farms have been available all winter. Most of the names signed to this petition are those of colored women who are known personally by me, and there is not any doubt in my mind that these women could secure work if they so desired. Of course, it is natural that they would prefer working sixteen days a month at a wage of \$22.12 to working full time for that same wage; and I believe that this accounts for the feeling that they have been discriminated against. Some of these women who signed this petition have employable men in the family. There is a large amount of building going on in and about Whiteville at the present time and I see no reason why these men could not secure private employment."

In Virginia women also complained concerning employment as strawberry cappers:

Norfolk, Va.
May 14, 1937.

"This is written by the workers of the W.P.A. staff the Land Scaping project. The head official cut off a 114 women yesterday and they said we had to go to the factory to cap strawberrys and we dont know how we are going to make it."