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A SURVEY by
The URBAN COLORED POPULATION COMMISSION
STATE OF NEW JERSEY

prepared for the Commission by
JOSEPH A. CLARKE
Public Relations Analyst

under assignment from
JOSEPH P. BOWSER
Executive Director

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MIGRATION AND HOUSING
among the Negro population of
Asbury Park, New Jersey

-. -

for

The URBAN COLORED POPULATION COMMISSION
State of New Jersey

-. -

by
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This REPORT is published by The Urban Colored Population Commission, State of New Jersey, established by Act of the New Jersey Legislature on June 10, 1941 (Chapter 192, Laws of 1941):

... "There is hereby created a commission to examine, report upon and formulate measures to improve the economic, cultural, health and living conditions of the urban colored population of this State in order to secure the urban colored population an equal opportunity with the general population thereof for self-support and the economic and cultural development to the extent, if any, that such opportunity does not now exist." ...

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The URBAN COLORED POPULATION COMMISSION
of the
STATE OF NEW JERSEY

Members of The Commission

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Richard L. Martin, Vice Chairman
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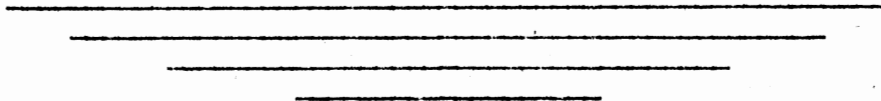
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PURPOSE OF THIS SURVEY

To determine to what extent the housing situation among the Negro population had been aggravated by the influx of migrant war-workers who established residences in Asbury Park and found employment in the industries, military and naval bases, and other Federal agencies of the Asbury Park Area

..... To determine the extent of such increases in the year-round Negro population of Asbury Park

..... To ascertain, if possible, what proportion of these new-comers to this section would probably settle as permanent citizens of this area

..... To determine the anticipated need of additional housing to accomodate returning veterans of World War II, who had been inducted into the Armed Services from this area

..... And, as part of a state-wide inquiry to ascertain to what extent over-crowding and acute housing shortages among the colored population had been relieved by new constructions, financed under the FHA Program

This SURVEY was undertaken by The URBAN COLORED POPULATION COMMISSION of The State of New Jersey ... seeking answers to these basic questions in order to intelligently recommend feasible steps towards a program to improve the living conditions of the urban colored population of this State.

The data obtained through our observations and inquiries is tabulated in the following pages of this Report.

The findings of this Survey with our conclusions are presented for its possible value to the proper authorities having the responsibility to plan and provide better housing for its citizenry; and to the general public as interesting and significant information.

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THE METHOD USED FOR THIS SURVEY

The starting point for this Survey was taken from the 16th Census of the United States which listed Asbury Park with a Negro population of 3,513 in 1940.

These 3,513 Negro residents were listed as occupying 994 dwelling units. The 994 dwelling units were located, 983 in the First Ward and 11 in the Second Ward.

Of these 994 dwelling units, 30.2% were classified as needing major repairs, or having no private baths.

An estimated 27.2% of the reported dwelling units were listed as owner-occupied.

The only known, major public housing project undertaken for the benefit of the Negro population was the Asbury Park Village.

This FPFA Project, developed under the program of the Asbury Park Housing Authority, was completed and occupied on January 20, 1941.

With the above, known facts, The URBAN COLORED POPULATION COMMISSION began this Survey, seeking a true picture of conditions and the position of the housing needs among the Negro population in the Asbury Park housing scale, as of July 31, 1945.

Enumerators, employed on this Survey, obtained true samples from typical blocks of the First Ward wherein Negro residents were found to predominate.

All families occupying 368 dwelling units were interviewed. A questionnaire was filled whenever the enumerators found a resident who had come into the area since 1941.

Public officials, heads of various social service agencies, employment and personnel managers, and directors of other fact-finding organizations were interviewed and solicited for information and assistance.

An occupational survey to ascertain in what capacities and where the Negro population found year-round employment was completed with satisfactory results that were considered sufficiently dependable and accurate to be included in this Report.

PRE-WAR CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POPULATION:

Asbury Park, 50 miles from the highly industrialized and metropolitan areas of Newark and New York, in 1940, was the center of a highly developed resort area on the North Jersey shores of the Atlantic Ocean - a city with a mile-long beach front; a mile-long boardwalk; some 200 hotels, both large and small; hundreds of restaurants and eating houses; and summer cottages that welcomed paying guests.

Eleven smaller municipalities with Asbury Park comprised an area for which Asbury Park was the shopping, business, recreational, religious and civic center.

These adjacent and surrounding communities: Allenhurst, Avon, Belmar, Bradley Beach, Deal, Interlaken, Loch Arbour, Neptune City, Neptune Township, Ocean Grove, Wanamassa and West Allenhurst were largely, restricted residential zones for the larger estates and private all-year and summer homes.

Commercial activity in these smaller communities was limited to industry associated with the operation of clubs; maintenance of the homes; fishing, boating and other recreational facilities.

Negro Populations

The year-round, Negro populations of the area, in 1940, according to the 16th U. S. Census, follows:

| | Total Population | Negro Population |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Allenhurst | 520 | 11 |
| Asbury Park | 14,617 | 3,513 |
| Avon-by-the-Sea | 1,211 | 5 |
| Belmar | 3,435 | 199 |
| Bradley Beach | 3,468 | 8 |
| Deal | 917 | 16 |
| Interlaken | 787 | 26 |
| Neptune City | 2,392 | 1 |
| Neptune Township | 10,207 | 1,605 |
| Ocean Township | 4,200 | 30 |

Negro Employment Status

Those of the Negro population who were not self-employed or engaged in their own homes; in business or professional pursuits; found employment largely in the hotels, rooming houses, restaurants and in private residences in various domestic capacities.

The next largest numbers were engaged upon Federal, State Highway, County and municipal public works.

An appreciable number found employment with the 800 retail stores, 50 wholesale firms and the utility and service industries.

Only an inconsequential number were employed by the 29 manufacturing establishments of the area whose chief products were wearing apparel and foodstuffs.

Employment statistics published in the 16th U. S. Census, gave the following information pertaining to the Negro population of Asbury Park:

| | Male | Female |
|--------------------------------------|-------|--------|
| PERSONS 14 YEARS OLD AND OVER | 1,354 | 1,559 |
| In Labor Force | 1,102 | 827 |
| Employed (Not on Public Works)..... | 639 | 503 |
| Wage And Salary Workers | 543 | 446 |
| Unpaid Family Workers | - | 4 |
| Unclassified | 5 | 8 |
| Employers And Self-Employed | 91 | 45 |
| On Public Emerg. Work (WPA,NYA,etc.) | 77 | 70 |
| Seeking Work | 386 | 254 |
| Experienced Workers | 380 | 247 |
| New Workers | 6 | 7 |
| Engaged in Own Homework | 7 | 428 |
| Others Not Reported or Unclassified | 146 | 206 |
| In School | 99 | 98 |

ASBURY PARK , NEW JERSEY

Negro Housing

A distressing need for improved housing conditions among the Negro population existed and had been recognized prior to 1941. The Negro population of Asbury Park was largely concentrated in an area located in the southwest section of the city.

The Asbury Park Housing Authority, during a survey conducted in 1938, described the section as "definitely blighted and a slum area is concentrated therein."

The supply of family dwelling units existing and available in Asbury Park on April 1, 1940 was tabulated as follows:

| | Total | White | Non-White |
|-----------------|-------|-------|-----------|
| Tenant-occupied | 2,804 | 2,001 | 803 |
| Owner-occupied | 1,180 | 989 | 191 |
| Vacant | 737 | 600 | 153 |
| Total | 4,737 | 3,590 | 1,147 |

Of these existing and available dwelling units in Asbury Park on April 1, 1940, the following were classified as sub-standard:

| | Total | White | Non-White |
|-----------------|-------|-------|-----------|
| Tenant-occupied | 503 | 206 | 297 |
| Owner-occupied | 149 | 108 | 41 |
| Vacant | 151 | 80 | 71 |
| Total | 803 | 394 | 409 |

In 1940, it may therefore be observed that the 882 families composing Asbury Park's Negro population of 3,513 occupied 994 dwelling units, including the 338 that had been classified as sub-standard.

Negro Housing

The Asbury Park Housing Authority, in its application to the Federal Public Housing Administration of the National Housing Agency for approval and assistance to construct a low-rent project for Negro occupancy, stated:

"Housing available to the Negro residents of Asbury Park is barely sufficient to accommodate the city's Negro population though the unfit dwelling units are occupied."

The Asbury Park Village, designated as "Project, N. J.-7-1", was consequently approved. Construction was completed and the units, costing \$760,000, were occupied on January 20, 1941.

Developed under the program of the Asbury Park Housing Authority, the Asbury Park Village provided 126 dwelling units and accommodated 500 of the city's Negro population. The project achieved 100 per cent Equivalent Elimination of slum dwelling by demolition of 108 sub-standard units.

Admittedly, a great improvement, the 126 new dwelling units were sufficient to supply only a comparatively small portion of the 500 applications for apartments that the local Housing Authority had on file since 1939.

Aside from the program of the Asbury Park Housing Authority, no building program for the benefit of the colored population was undertaken or planned in any of the other municipalities of the area.

With two exceptions, the Negro populations of the surrounding municipalities, shown on Page 6, represented employees who lived in the residences or on the premises of their employers.

The exceptions were Belmar, with a Negro population of 199 housed in 60 dwelling units; and Neptune Township, with a Negro population of 1605 housed in 441 dwelling units.

PRESENT TOTAL SUPPLY OF FAMILY DWELLINGS:

(Temporary Public War Housing Excluded)

Supply on April 1, 1940

| | Total | White | Non-White |
|-----------------|-------|-------|-----------|
| Tenant-occupied | 2,804 | 2,001 | 803 |
| Owner-occupied | 1,180 | 989 | 191 |
| Vacant | 753 | 600 | 153 |
| <u>Total</u> | 4,737 | 3,590 | 1,147 |

Completed Since April 1, 1940

| | Total | White | Non-White |
|-------------------------|-------|-------|-----------|
| Private Housing | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Low-rent Public Housing | 185 | 59 | 126 |
| Public War Housing | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| <u>Total</u> | 185 | 59 | 126 |

Housing Existing on April 1, 1940
Which Has Since Been Demolished Or
Taken Out of Use

| | Total | White | Non-White |
|--------------------|-------|-------|-----------|
| Standard Units | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Sub-standard Units | 156 | 45 | 111 |
| <u>Total</u> | 156 | 45 | 111 |

PRESENT TOTAL SUPPLY

| | Total | White | Non-White |
|--|-------|-------|-----------|
| | 4,766 | 3,604 | 1,162 |

ASBURY PARK , NEW JERSEYPRESENT TOTAL SUB-STANDARD FAMILY DWELLINGS:Sub-standard Housing on April 1, 1940

| | Total | White | Non-White |
|-----------------|-------|-------|-----------|
| Tenant-occupied | 503 | 206 | 297 |
| Owner-occupied | 149 | 108 | 41 |
| Vacant | 151 | 80 | 71 |
| <u>Total</u> | 803 | 394 | 409 |

Standard Housing Existing on April 1, 1940 Which
Has Since Become Sub-standard

| Total | White | Non-White |
|-------|-------|-----------|
| 355 | 180 | 175 |

(Estimated 1% per year of standard supply for White and 3%
 per year of standard supply for Non-White)

Sub-standard Housing Existing on April 1, 1940 Which Has
Since Been Demolished, Taken Out of Use or Rehabilitated

| | Total | White | Non-White |
|--|-------|-------|-----------|
| In Connection With Public Housing Projects (equiva- lent elimination of slums since April, 1940 | 126 | 15 | 111 |
| Other | 30 | 30 | 0 |
| <u>Total</u> | 156 | 45 | 111 |

PRESENT TOTAL SUB-STANDARD HOUSING:

| Total | White | Non-White |
|-------|-------|-----------|
| 1,002 | 529 | 473 |

ASBURY PARK , NEW JERSEYSub-standard Housing As Per Cent of Total Supply

| Total | White | Non-White |
|-------|-------|-----------|
| 21% | 15% | 41% |

Total Present Vacancies in Sub-standard Housing

| Total | White | Non-White |
|-------|-------|-----------|
| 0 | 0 | 0 |

Number of Families Now Living in Sub-standard Housing

| Total | White | Non-White |
|-------|-------|-----------|
| 1,002 | 529 | 473 |

Per Cent of Families Now Living in Sub-standard Housing
with Gross Monthly Rents or Rental Equivalents above the
Upper Limit of the Low-Rent Public Housing Scale

| | White | Non-White |
|-------------------------|-------|-----------|
| | 42% | 32% |
| Number of Such Families | 222 | 150 |

Per Cent of Families Now Living in Sub-standard Housing
with Gross Rents or Rental Equivalents below the Scale of
the Low-Rent Public Housing

| | White | Non-White |
|-------------------------|-------|-----------|
| | 0% | 0% |
| Number of Such Families | 0 | 0 |

Number of Vacant Dwelling Units of Standard Housing Now
Available to Families Living in Sub-standard Housing

| White | Non-White |
|-------|-----------|
| 0 | 0 |

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ASBURY PARK , NEW JERSEYACTUAL AND PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION:

To the best of our information and knowledge, no new building of any kind has been built by private enterprise in Asbury Park since 1940. (Temporary Public War Housing and private reconversions are excluded.)

Aside from the program of the Asbury Park Housing Authority, we are unable to learn of any proposed construction planned for the immediate future which may provide dwelling units of standard quality for Non-White occupancy.

FPHA Application Filed for 150-unit Project:

The Asbury Park Housing Authority has filed an advance program with the Federal Public Housing Administration of the National Housing Agency for financial assistance to construct a proposed low-rent housing project.

This proposed new project, designated "Proposed N.J., 7-3" will be an extension of the present Asbury Park Village, or will be constructed on a site not far from the location of the Asbury Park Village.

The proposed, additional project will provide 150 dwelling units, and is intended for 100% Non-White occupancy.

The site chosen for the location of the proposed, additional, low-rent project is within the boundaries of a housing tract wherein 95% of the Negro population resides. The total area of the proposed site is approximately 8 acres and contains approximately 100 dwelling units, situated on about 110 parcels, involving about 75 owners. Other improvements located within the proposed site number about 100, and are mostly barns, out-houses and garages.

RECORD OF HOUSING CONSTRUCTION SINCE 1940:

Public War Housing

| | Total | White | Non-White |
|-----------------------|-------|-------|-----------|
| Permanent | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Demountable | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Conversion (net gain) | 9 | 9 | 0 |
| <u>Total</u> | 9 | 9 | 0 |

Public Low-Income Housing

| | Total | White | Non-White |
|-------------------------|-------|-------|-----------|
| Asbury Park Village (*) | 126 | 0 | 126 |
| Washington Village | 59 | 59 | 0 |
| <u>Total</u> | 185 | 59 | 126 |

Privately Owned Housing

| | Total | White | Non-White |
|----------------------------|-------|-------|-----------|
| New Conversions (Net Gain) | 16 | 16 | 0 |
| New Constructions | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| <u>Total</u> | 16 | 16 | 0 |

| <u>Units Demolished</u> | Total | White | Non-White |
|---------------------------|-------|-------|-----------|
| | 400 | 315 | 85 |
| <u>Net Gain or (Loss)</u> | (190) | (231) | 41 |
| Temporary War Housing ** | 0 | 0 | 0 |

(*) The Asbury Park Village was occupied Jan. 20, 1941

** "0" indicates that no figures were available.

WAR-TIME CHARACTERISTICS:

During the period of World War II, Asbury Park lost none of the attractions, facilities or characteristics that had won its nation-wide fame as a Sea-Shore resort. Rather, under the emphasized importance of brief vacations from the vigorous duties of war in order to maintain highest, productive efficiencies; the week-end and other, periodic exodus of war-workers from the nearby industrial centers, upon occasions, severely taxed Asbury Park's capacities and recreational facilities.

Simultaneously, a metamorphosis that effected conversions of many commercial and amusement pursuits, and added grim military and naval over-tones to the complexion of the entire area, was achieved. In an amazingly short time, the area was filled with the colorful uniforms of nearly all branches of the Armed Services; and the population was made aware of the serious preparations for war in activities throughout the area.

At nearby Fort Monmouth, a multiplicity of urgent, military needs accelerated the programs of the Eastern Signal Corps School, the Eastern Signal Corps Training Center, the Eastern Signal Corps Unit Training Center, the Eastern Signal Unit Survey Groups and the Signal Laboratory.

This essential phase of military activity expanded rapidly to establish the Coles Signal Laboratory at Red Bank, the Long Branch Signal Laboratory, the Evans Signal Laboratory at Belmar, the Signal Corps Stock Numbering Agency at Asbury Park, the Monmouth Signal Corps Procurement District at Bradley Beach, the Signal Corps Ground Signal Agency Warehouses at Asbury Park and Avon.

The Government acquired several of the city's largest hotels, the Y.M.C.A., the Convention Hall and other beach-front buildings as auxiliaries to house and train candidates of the Officers Training Schools and for other essential purposes in the preparations for defense and offensive war.

Many of the candidates for commissions and others of the civilian personnel were Negroes who settle their families in nearby, Asbury Park. Some of the military personnel left families in the area after leaving for other assignments or over-sea duties.

ASBURY PARK , NEW JERSEY

Large groups of students from the advanced classes of Negro schools and colleges of the Southern states were brought to this area for employment and training courses in the Signal Corps laboratories. Negro graduates of high schools and colleges with a background of Chemistry and Physics were attracted into the area and found employment in the laboratories.

Coast Guard Auxiliary Headquarters were established at nearby Monmouth Beach, Spring Lake and Point Pleasant. Asbury Park became a recreational center for the Negro non-commissioned officers and men in these Coast Guard companies. Those who had families, established living quarters in Asbury Park.

An immense Naval Ammunition Depot, costing \$60 millions and occupying hundreds of acres was established a short distance from Asbury Park at Earle. Negro personnel of the Navy, stationed at Earle, numbered at times from several hundreds to near four thousands, including non-commissioned officers of all grades. Many of these settled families in Asbury Park and vicinity for the duration; and in the case of quite a number who acquired families since coming into this area, perhaps, permanently.

It was therefore, easily, observed that the vast amount of construction work involved in these expanding programs, plus the need of civilian labor in maintenance and supply services at these military and naval bases created employment opportunities in unrepresented quantities far beyond the available supply of the local, labor pools of Asbury Park and vicinity.

It was also observed that employment opportunities which had existed for the Negro population in maximum proportions only on a seasonal scale; or from which they had been entirely excluded; during the period of the war, became full-time, all-year-round occupations.

Conversion of plants in the area to war production, under the compelling influence of the President's Fair Employment Practices Committee and the New Jersey Stevedore Law, both, prohibiting racial discrimination in employment by plants engaged on war contracts; many new employment opportunities were opened to the Negro population of Asbury Park and new-comers to the area.

At the Sigmund Eisner Company of Red Bank, an estimated 35% to 40% of the total number of employees were reputedly Negro workers.

Negro workers had not been employed at this plant before. No conversion was needed at the Sigmund Eisner Company. For three generations, this plant has made uniforms for the U.S. Army. Creditable records have earned a secure post-war status for the Negro employees of this company. So pleased was the management that representatives of this Commission who had aided in the intergration of the original Negro workers, were invited as guest of the Company upon the occasion of a War Bond Rally and ceremonies to present the Treasury Flag to the company.

The Atlantic Sports Wear Mfg. Co., of Asbury Park, reported 33 1/3 per cent of its total personnel were Negroes.

The Thos. A. Edison, Inc. reported that 18% of the personnel employed at its Asbury Park plant were Negroes.

The Unexcelled Manufacturing Co., Inc., at its Cranbury plant, reported 47% of the total number of workers employed were Negroes. This company operated two, sometimes, three buses between Asbury Park and Cranbury to provide free transportation for its employees.

No available record could be obtained from the Red Bank Division of the Bendix Aviation Corporation but Negro workers are estimated to compose about 10% of its total number of employees.

An undetermined but appreciable number of the Asbury Park Negro population were known to have been employed at the Raritan Arsenal at Metuchen. Transportation, during peak periods, was provided by buses and many grouped-private cars.

Others were employed in war industries at Perth Amboy and Rahway, commuting by automobiles and trains.

Besides those employed in professional, special and maintenance services at the Signal Corps laboratories, quite a number of others were employed as civilian guards at those establishments and at other military installations.

In July, the Asbury Park U.S.E.S. offices of the War Manpower Commission reported job-placements in the industries of the area averaging about 550 per month. Of this number, an estimated 150 to 175 were Negro workers.

ASBURY PARK , NEW JERSEYESTIMATES OF POPULATION INCREASES SINCE 1941:

With no reliable and accurate tabulation of population statistics available until the next U.S. Census, representatives of this Commission, engaged upon this Survey, discovered a wide disagreement and extreme variations in the local estimates of the present Negro population of Asbury Park.

Neither the City Clerk's office of Asbury Park nor the Asbury Park Chamber of Commerce would attempt an estimate. However, various other, unofficial sources offered estimates which ranged from claims of increases over the 1940 population to a present total of 6240 to claims of decreases from the 1940 population to a present total of 3499.

Figures compiled by an undetermined source but given wide publicity through the Asbury Park Daily Press of Sept. 10, 1944, claimed the following populations and percentages of increase for the following communities of the area:

| | 1942 | 1944 | % Increase |
|---------------|--------|--------|------------|
| Asbury Park | 18,000 | 26,000 | 44.4 |
| Neptune | 8,000 | 8,000 | None |
| Allenhurst | 1,500 | 3,000 | 100 |
| Deal | 2,445 | 1,423 | -41.8 |
| Bradley Beach | 3,500 | 4,500 | 28.5 |
| Avon | 3,500 | 4,000 | 14.2 |

Some took the 24.0 percent of the total population which composed the Negro population in 1940 and projected this percentage against the estimated 26,000 in the above table to obtain a figure of 6240 which they offered as an estimate of the present Negro population.

Others were inclined to apply the above percentage of increase against the 1940 Negro population to accept an estimate of 5073 as the present total Negro population.

Many others accepted the Asbury Park's Chamber of Commerce estimate of 20,000 for the total population of Asbury Park; and projected the 24% to obtain an estimate of 4800 which was offered as the present total Negro population of Asbury Park.

Enumerators engaged upon this Survey, working independently upon two different methods, obtained estimates that varied only slightly. One method produced an estimate of 4377 as the present Negro population of Asbury Park; and the second method obtained an estimate of 4323.

The methods employed by the enumerators of this Survey were (a) obtaining true samples from typical blocks of the residential sections where the Negro population predominated and (b) an occupational census to determine where, how many and in what capacities the Negro population was employed.

In the first method, our enumerators visited 368 dwelling units housing a reported, estimated 1376 of the Negro population. The dwelling units visited and their distribution according to location were:

- 53 on Atkins Avenue from the Neptune line, North to Mattison Avenue.
- 39 on Sylvan Avenue from the Neptune line, North to Mattison Avenue.
- 69 on Borden Avenue from the Neptune line, North to Mattison Avenue.
- 22 on Union Avenue from Springwood Avenue to the Atkins Avenue intersection.
- 75 on Mattison Avenue, West from Prospect Avenue to Dead End, West of DeWitt Avenue.
- 110 on Springwood Avenue from Lincoln Place, West to Ridge Avenue.

Of the 1376 persons reported residing in the 368 dwelling units, about 31.6% of the total dwelling units available and occupied by the Negro population, 275 or about 20% were reported to have moved into Asbury Park since 1941.

Accepting and projecting the percentages obtained from an analysis of findings from these samples against the known totals, our enumerators obtained a total of 864 as the estimate of the number of new-comers to Asbury since 1941.

Adding this estimate of 864 to the 3513 known Negro

ASBURY PARK , NEW JERSEY

population of 1940 resulted in a total of 4377 which we accept and offer as our estimate of the present Negro population of Asbury Park.

This estimate of 4377 varies only slightly from the figure of 4323 which was obtained through our Method "b", the occupational census.

Additional support of the accuracy of our estimates was obtained by a verification of one of the results of the family analysis of the new-comers as recorded in questionnaires our enumerators filled whenever a migrant was reported. Our questionnaires revealed that 9.4% of the families were composed of 4 persons and 10.1% consisted of 5 persons. The Principal of the Bangs Avenue South public school confirmed our estimate of the number of children of elementary school age by reporting from his records that 125 transfers, representing about 75 families had been admitted to the Asbury Park school system.

The occupational census produced the following statistical data:

PERSONS 14 YEARS OLD AND OVER

| | |
|---|------|
| In the Armed Services | 311 |
| Employed in all-year-round hotels, domestic service and other semi-skilled and unskilled commercial services | 2127 |
| Employers and Self-Employed (including insurance agents, commission salesmen, musicians, entertainers and taxi-operators) | 239 |
| Professional Groups and Skilled Tradesmen (including ministers, teachers, physicians, dentists, druggists, lawyers, morticians, social workers, beauticians, barbers, tailors and commercial artists | 142 |
| Employed by City, County and State | 105 |
| In Essential Industry and Federal Agencies | 563 |
| Not Employed or Engaged in Own Homework | 694 |
| Persons 14 yrs old and over in Schools | 242 |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | 4323 |

ASBURY PARK , NEW JERSEY

ASBURY PARK FAMILIES ACCORDING TO SIZE

| <u>No. in Family</u> | <u>Per Cent of Total</u> |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 2 | 41.1% |
| 3 | 21.3 |
| 4 | 9.2 |
| 5 | 10.1 |
| 6 | 4.8 |
| 7 | 5.3 |
| 8 | 2.9 |
| 10 | 1.4 |

AVERAGE FAMILY INCOMES

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| Lowest Level Average | \$600 |
| Average | \$1660 |
| Highest Level Average | \$2160 |

(Professional Groups And Self-Employed Excluded)

POST-WAR RESIDENTIAL ANTICIPATIONS OF 275 NEW-COMERS

| | |
|--|-------|
| Decided to remain in Asbury Park | 58.8% |
| Undecided | 26.4% |
| Will return to original homes | 11.2 |
| Awaiting return of husband in Service, undecided about future | 4.6% |

PROSPECTIVE HOME-OWNERS

| | |
|--|-------|
| Number expressing desire and financial ability to purchase a home | 38.6% |
|--|-------|

WHERE 4377 NEGRO RESIDENTS LIVE:

Accepting our estimate of 4377 as the present Negro population of Asbury Park, our enumerators observed that the entire Negro population lived in an area bounded by the Neptune Township line on the South; Springdale Avenue in the West; Bangs Avenue, Summerfield Avenue and Washington Avenue on the North; Prospect Avenue, Langford Street and the Railroad in the East.

A liberal interspersion of White residents throughout nearly all the blocks of this section saves the area from being strictly labeled a "circumscribed, segregated Negro section".

However, the prevailing pattern of the "circumscribed, segregated Negro section" exists to the extent that this area is the only one in the entire city of Asbury Park in which Negroes have been able to rent or purchase homes.

White residents move from the area as their economic status and standard of living improve. On the contrary, every known attempt of Negro residents to rent or purchase homes elsewhere than within this area has met frustration and failure.

The entire area, locally known as "The West Side", has very obvious, physical characteristics of a neglected area of deteriorating properties. Uncomfortable congestion in addition to an, apparently, appalling laxity in enforcement of building and sanitation codes are easily discernible.

Asbury Park's "West Side", wherein the Negro population predominates, may be considered a melting pot containing widespread variations of conflicting cultures, economic levels and degrees of respectability ... a semi-slum Ghetto from which the most discriminating Negro citizen, irrespective of means, education or character, has found no escape.

Modern homes of the better class groups of the higher economic levels, representing investments of several thousands dollars must be built in the area where neighbors on either or both sides may be irresponsible citizens without civic pride, living in disgraceful shacks of the worst slum type.

HEALTH THREATS TEEM AMID UNSANITATION:

A serious health menace results from this incongruous housing pattern. One of the city's most respected and civic-minded Negro residents, taking a merited pride in his well-kept lawn and garden surrounding his beautiful and modern home; has at his immediate rear an irresponsible, derelict neighbor living in a dilapidated house with back-porch, sanitation facilities. Usually, the plumbing is faulty or inferior, resulting in leaking which freezes and bursts in cold weather.

While one citizen keeps his garbage in covered depository, the other just throws his garbage out of the back door against his neighbor's well-kept hedge until an accumulation of refuse in the tall, uncut, rat-infested woods has created a dangerous threat to the health of the entire neighborhood.

Another of the city's reputed wealthiest Negro citizens must live in close proximity to a ground-floor, fish dealer whose accumulated piles of smelling garbage has been known to nauseate the entire block.

Multiply such situations a few times and the infant mortality rate of 59.5 per 1000 among the Negro population against 31.4 per 1000 for the White population is easier understood.

Such conditions also partially explains the tuberculosis rate of 185.5 per 100,000 among the Negro population against 35.6 per 100,000 for the White population.

Corresponding maternal mortality rates are 4.1 for the Negro population against 1.9 for the White population.

According to a previous, official conclusion of the Asbury Park Housing Authority, "housing available to Negro residents of Asbury Park is barely sufficient to accommodate the city's Negro population even though the unfit dwelling units are occupied."

This same area, with no net gains in dwelling units since 1941, has been compelled to absorb an additional 864 new-comers who have moved into the city since 1941.

75 ACRES OF LIVING SPACE VS 120 ACRES OF PARKS:

Doubling-up of two or more families in a single dwelling unit has long since passed the danger point in Asbury Park's "West Side". Measured by the American standard of .67 persons per room as essential for decent living, 85% of the Negro dwellings of Asbury Park's "West Side" have an index between .75 and 2.5 or more persons per room.

While no statistics on light and air in dwellings were available, the most casual inspection will verify the conclusion that a serious deficiency is common-place in too many of the dwelling units occupied by the Negro population of Asbury Park's "West Side."

A concentration of adjacent, multi-family dwellings and the prevalent construction of several, smaller houses on lots that were normally intended for one house, have, without question, resulted in many dark and badly ventilated rooms.

These small houses that are observed in the rear of many "West Side" homes were originally constructed as summer cottages to house paying guest during the vacation season. Many, constructed without adequate provisions for heating, were never intended for all-year-round occupancy. However, with the especially, acute shortage of available dwelling units of standard quality, these summer cottages have become homes for many of the new-comers.

Population density of the area was charted according to enumerator districts in 1940. Part of the "West Side" area was in one district that recorded a population density of "41 - 50" per acre. The remaining section of the "West Side" was in a district where the population density registered "over 50" per acre.

Nothing has been done since to alleviate this population density. Rather, conditions in the same area have been greatly aggravated by the absorption of 864 additional new-comers to Asbury Park's "West Side" since 1941.

While no accurate figures were available, our enumerators ventured an estimate that 4377 Negro population of Asbury Park reside in an area that would not exceed 75 acres.

75 acres in which 4377 persons must live - but the city provides 5 parks with a total of 120 acres in which the population may play and seek recreation.

TWO ASPECTS TO BE RECOGNIZED IN FUTURE PLANNING:

An analysis of the statistical data compiled in the preceding pages and a common knowledge shared by all the residents of Asbury Park's "West Side", leave room for little disagreement with the conclusion that improved housing accommodations are urgently needed for the expanding Negro population of Asbury Park.

The URBAN COLORED POPULATION COMMISSION of The State of New Jersey, in publishing the findings of this Survey, hopes to focus the wide variety of opinion as to the extent of the need upon a conclusion that the housing conditions of the Negro population of Asbury Park occupy the extreme, low position in the local housing scale; and should consequently be the first beneficiaries of any possible program during the war period; or certainly, of the earliest expanded or new construction program permitted in the post-war era.

Fortunately, the housing problem is an adjustable situation - one that not only permits but demands decisive action. In considering possible programs to improve housing for the Negro population of Asbury Park, The URBAN COLORED POPULATION COMMISSION hopes that the City Planners will recognize the existence of two aspects of primary importance:

(a) Need of publicly-subsidized housing developed under the program of the local Housing Authority with FPHA assistance for the low-income groups, and

(b) Construction of homes by private developers, financial institutions and construction firms under the H-2 program of the FHA to permit prospective home-owners of the upper and highest income-bracket groups of the Negro population to purchase standard, modern and desirable property.

The URBAN COLORED POPULATION COMMISSION also expresses the hope that Director Charles G. Lumley and the members of the Asbury Park Housing Authority will continue to vigorously press its application, already filed on June 9, 1944, to the FPHA for financial assistance to construct the proposed low-rent housing project (N.J.7-3) which is designed to provide an additional 150 dwelling units for Negro occupancy on Asbury Park's "West Side".

HOUSING PROBLEM THE KEY TO MANY URBAN PROBLEMS:

The housing problem has been known to be the Key to many other urban problems. Unquestionably, distressing housing conditions have been established as a contributing, environmental factor upon many habits of citizens who live in slum areas, resulting in serious and, often, irreparable, social maladjustments.

Statistics from typical slum areas of municipal communities have revealed that every 2.5% of the population that resides in slums are responsible for:

- 6.5% of the City's Police Department Expense
- 7.3% of the City's Social Service Appropriation
- 14.4% of the Operational Cost of the Fire Department
- 21.3% of the City's Crime and Delinquency

In Asbury Park, where the Negro population is slightly less than 25% of the total population, and with 95% of the Negro population residing within a blighted, deteriorating area - the cost of slums, by the above, accepted statistics, should certainly be considered a ruinous liability, and a most prohibitive threat to the City's solvency.

Again - as in the case of the Asbury Park Village, financial returns to the City's Treasury which The Federal Government pays in lieu of taxes, exceeds the amount of revenue which the city received from taxation upon properties located in slum areas.

- - And, more important, slum's greatest evil, stunting the development of young citizens, will be repressed.

Data assembled by socio-economists support the conclusion that juveniles are affected more directly by the influence of blighted areas than adults. Often, the motivating factors of adult behavior are too complex to trace or measure its direct relations to environment.

Fortunately, however - and of greater significance, is the consensus of expert opinion that when 100 per cent of those who live in uncomfortable slum areas are rehoused in modern and standard housing; only about 10 per cent or less retain their old social habits, and appear incapable of social rehabilitation, while above 90 per cent respond, in varying but encouraging degrees, to the new environment.

MARKET FOR OWNER-OCCUPIED HOMES AT HIGHEST LEVEL:

Very few, if any, indexes of the social responsibility and economic status of a community's population reflect the traditional character of the United States as a prosperous, democratic nation more vividly than the standard of its housing and the number of home-owners.

In 1940, of the 994 dwelling units occupied by the Negro population of Asbury Park's "West Side", 27.2% were owner-occupied, according to the U.S. Census.

In this Survey, our enumerators reported that 38.6% of the 275 new-comers since 1941 who were interviewed, expressed a financial ability and desire to purchase homes.

Estimating an increase of 864 in the Negro population since 1941, this Survey indicates that there may be 334 new prospective Negro home-owners in Asbury Park today who wish to purchase desirable property of standard values, and who possess the financial ability to do so, if such property were available.

Due to the unprecedented opportunity during the war for increased family savings from high wages at continuous employment in 48 to 54 hours, weekly industrial occupations; plus an accumulation of Service allotments and War Bond purchases - - the potential market among the Negro population for desirable, modern housing is probably at its highest level.

This latent, golden opportunity appears to have been either negligently unrecognized or apathetically ignored.

567 of Negro Population of This Area in Service

Housing should possess a high priority on the program of those concerned with the problem of the returning veterans. A total of 567 Servicemen were inducted from this area. Upon return to civilian life, these veterans will be eligible under the "G.I. Bill of Rights" for loans for the purpose of purchasing homes. Inductions from this area were:

| Selective Service Board | Inducted | Volunteers | Total |
|------------------------------|----------|------------|-------|
| No. 5 (Asbury Park) | 299 | 12 | 311 |
| No. 6 (Neptune Twp., Belmar) | 240 | 16 | 256 |

H-2 PROGRAM OF FHA APPEARS AS LOGICAL AND BEST PLAN:

A recent statement, released by Dr. Booker T. McGraw, principal housing analyst in the office of John B. Blandford, Jr., Administrator of the National Housing Agency, gives the following information:

"Negro families, along with other families living under over-congested housing conditions, may gain some measure of relief by taking advantage of H-2 housing priorities recently programmed in various localities throughout the nation for housing development through private finance.

"In some localities where it appeared that the units would be quickly constructed, a portion of the priorities programmed has been specifically reserved to accomodate Negroes. In all other localities, the entire H-2 quota of private priorities programmed are open to any eligible applicant without regard to race, immigrancy status, or war employment.

As the applications filed for priorities in each locality are being considered by the FHA in the order of receipt, private builders who are prepared to construct homes, as well as individuals who are financially prepared to build a home should file application at once before all H-2 housing priorities have been taken up in their locality."

Seeking additional information regarding the availability of H-2 priorities under the FHA program, representatives of The URBAN COLORED POPULATION COMMISSION interviewed Mr. Warren Lockwood, State Director of the Federal Housing Administration of New Jersey.

A statement, secured from Mr. Lockwood, follows:

"It is very difficult to give you figures of the total number of mortgages that have been insured during the past ten years in which Negro owners have been the mortgagors. Our records are not kept separately according to race, color or creed. If I were to attempt a reasonable guess as to the number,

it would be lamentably small, probably not more than 200 scattered widely throughout the state and prior to the war practically none representing newly constructed homes.

"During the war, priorities have been available in the Northern New Jersey metropolitan area taking in Newark, Kearny and Elizabeth and all of the area within easy commuting distance of these centers.

"We have had an allotment of 75 units for colored, and after many months, 15 units remain uncalled for."

Mr. Lockwood told representatives of The URBAN COLORED POPULATION COMMISSION that the New Jersey office of the FHA had on July 9, 1945 (the date of our interview) priorities for 170 units available, specifically, for construction of homes intended for Negro occupancy. These priorities, however, were allocated for areas in North New Jersey, in which Asbury Park and vicinity were not included.

The State Administrator, however, made the following additions to his comments:

"I can assure you that all this time we in the Federal Housing Administration have been quite willing to insure mortgages on newly constructed homes to be built for colored people and I, personally, have spent hours in conference with those who have from time to time shown interest in attempting to create new housing units of this type under the requirements and standards of the War Production Board and the National Housing Agency.

"I should like to take a further moment to make clear that Federal Housing Administration has stoutly maintained that nothing worthwhile can be done by those who do not look realistically upon what will meet the needs of the average home owner or renter among the colored people. We have been ready at all times and are ready now to do all that we can to encourage the building of five-room units to sell at \$5000 or to rent at not more than \$40 per month."

From the National Association of Home Builders, representatives of The URBAN COLORED POPULATION COMMISSION were able to obtain the following, additional information regarding the H-2 Program of the FHA:

"Construction of more than 100,000 housing units was approved by the National Housing Agency in the first half of 1945 under the H-2 Program.

"It is expected that from 225,000 and 300,000 housing priorities will be allotted this year.

"NHA began its H-2 housing program with the issuance of a few home priorities last Fall, and has since gradually increased the number of allotments to areas of critical shortage.

"Such dwelling are limited to a selling cost of \$8000, or a \$65 monthly rental, but are not restricted to servicemen, war veterans or war-workers, as in other cases of new home construction."

From the palpable facts disclosed in our Survey of the living conditions among the Negro population of Asbury Park's "West Side"; and from the explanations and information we have obtained from authorities concerning the H-2 Program of the FHA, The URBAN COLORED POPULATION COMMISSION of the STATE OF NEW JERSEY concludes that a move by interested citizens of Asbury Park to obtain a H-2 Program for the Asbury Park area is the most logical and best approach towards the achievement of the second important aspect to be considered in future planning of better housing for the Negro population of the area.

All of the information contained in this report of our observations and inquiries is offered for its obvious value as proof of the existence of an acute and critical need of housing in Asbury Park for the Negro population which may be relieved by a H-2 Program of the FHA.

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CO-OPERATION AND MOTIVES OF THIS COMMISSION:

Local authorities having the responsibility to plan for improved living conditions for the citizenry of their communities; or responsible private enterprise, having a civic interest in improving community housing conditions; may call upon The URBAN COLORED POPULATION COMMISSION and its facilities for any further assistance this AGENCY may officially render under its legislative authority "to . . .
improve the economic, cultural, health and living conditions of the urban, colored population of this State."

This report of our observations and inquiries is published with no intentions to usurp or supersede the functions of any organized agency concerned with local housing conditions.

Rather, we have been enthusiastically encouraged and inspired by our realization of an opportunity at hand to fulfill the longing for modern housing by a segment of our citizenry so long deprived of adequate shelter essential for decent living.

Again - and even more important - we have been actuated and inspired in this Survey by visions of three incalculable and important beneficial advantages we believed inherent in this situation:

- (a) GOOD HOMES WILL INSURE WHOLESOME FAMILY ENVIRONMENT - CHECK FAMILY DIS-ORGANIZATION AND CURB JUVENILE DELIQUENCY.
- (b) GOOD HOMES ARE PRODUCTIVE OF A NEW GENERATION OF GOOD CITIZENS.
- (c) HOME-OWNERSHIP AND THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF HOME-OWNERSHIP ARE STEPS IN THE PROGRESSIVE INTERGRATION OF THE URBAN, COLORED CITIZEN INTO FULL, AMERICAN, DEMOCRATIC LIFE IN THIS STATE AND THIS NATION.

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Asbury Park, N. J.

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Selective Service Board, No. 6
Belmar, N. J.

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These enumerators, trained and instructed
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.... regarding this valuable service as a
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thority and all other records of the Authority
relating to housing affecting the Negro popu-
lation.

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JOSEPH P. BOWSER
Executive Director
The URBAN COLORED POPULATION COMMISSION
The STATE of NEW JERSEY