

# 1,750 Guards Keep the Peace as Negroes Enter Truth Project

4-30-42

Without a hitch, 14 Negro families were moved into the Sojourner Truth Defense Housing Project at Fenelon and Nevada Wednesday under the protection of State troops and battalions of City and State police.

Sentries with loaded rifles and fixed bayonets patrolled the project to prevent demonstrations as Detroit and Michigan officials decided to settle the tenancy problem.

Spectators and officials both agreed that it was the strangest moving day Detroit had ever seen. Moving vans were whisked into the guarded project in a convoy of police motorcycles and squad cars. The caravans moved past red lights and stop signs to pull up in front of dwellings that have been ready for tenants since Feb. 1.

To settle the problem that caused a riot on Feb. 28, when white residents of the district objected to Negro neighbors, the State sent in 1,000 troops and about 200 State police. The City

sent about 450 officers as outpost guards.

The troops started moving in at midnight and took up sentry duty in a tight circle around the new houses. The State Police moved in at dawn in 60 automobiles to cruise in and around the project.

Before the first morning traffic began to move, the Detroit police were stationed at main roads around the project.

Residents of the adjoining section and reporters and photographers had to have cards countersigned by military authorities or the State Police to get in and out of the patrolled section.

Persons on the fringe of the project were kept moving to prevent the gathering of crowds. The curious were kept away entirely.

At about 9:30 a. m. Walter Jackson and his wife Queenetta, with their five children and Jackson's mother, moved into a house on Nevada. Joe Battle, his wife and four children moved in

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a little later and by 3:30 p. m. 14 families had arrived. There are 200 houses in the project.

Little knots of people gathered on the project's south side along Nevada as the Jackson truck whizzed by. They agreed that "violence would only make things worse." They were mostly women and children whose menfolk were at work.

Some of the women shouted insults at the State Troops. Others tried to hush the critics, saying that the troops were only doing their duty.

### Police Seize a Dozen

On a north end of the project the crowd was bigger and for a time threatened to get ugly. Police settled that by taking a dozen ringleaders, including Joseph Buffa, unyielding foe of Negro tenancy of the project, to the Davison Station. All except Taylor Smith, of 953 Erskine, were released, police said. Smith was held on a charge of carrying concealed weapons.

Col. William D. Howe was in charge of the State Troops and Capt. Donald Leonard directed the State Police. Alfred Siska, deputy police superintendent, was in charge of the City reinforcements, with Police Commissioner Frank D. Eaman supervising the plans and Inspector Walter Clago handling the convoy plans.

### FHA Makes Announcement

Raymond Foley, State director of the Federal Housing Administration, added another contribution to the neighborhood peace Wednesday by announcing that FHA loans would be made on the property around the project.

Home owners who have objected to letting Negroes move into the project had claimed that they could not get FHA loans after the Government decided that Negroes would be given the new defense homes.