

Statistical Data of Negroes in Detroit

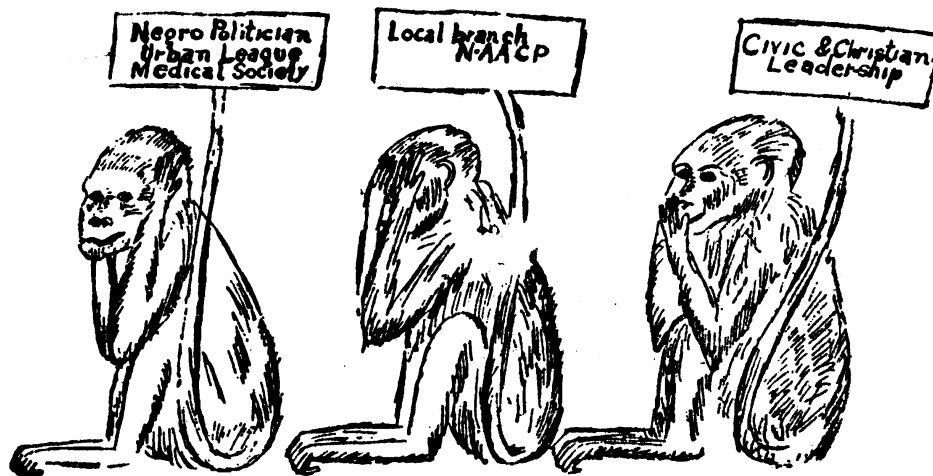
An X-Ray Picture of Detroit

December, 1933

Bulletin No. 1

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"IS THIS SILENCE PERPETUAL?"

By

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Detroit, Mich.

Bentley Historical
Library
University of Michigan

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**Dedicated to my wife,
ELIZA ANNA GRIGSBY,
and daughter,
GLORIA VERONICA GRIGSBY**

PREFACE

This Bulletin is not issued with the intention of antagonizing anyone, but with the intention of making you think seriously of the conditions that exist in Detroit — that our race may see the imperative need of uniting individuals, churches and organizations into one great unit, forgetting self, and working for the advancement of the entire group.

As we read, may we think in the three following terms:

1. That we are American citizens;
2. That we are entitled to the same consideration of all American citizens, regardless of race or color;
3. That we are taxpayers, directly or indirectly, as other American citizens.

Negroes constitute 7.6 per cent of the population of Detroit.

The above figures, along with other figures on unequal distribution of city jobs were read in the presence of an outstanding white attorney of Detroit, preceding his speech. In his address he tried hard to sway a large audience of very high calibre, representing every walk of life in Detroit, to believe that "if Negroes paid 7% of the taxes in Detroit, we would get 7% of the jobs."

Some white men have tried to make Negroes believe that they are not taxpayers unless they pay directly on real estate, which is absurd. If you rent a room in a house in the most dilapidated section of Detroit, or elsewhere, you are a taxpayer, and have a right to all jobs supported by public funds.

Negroes in Detroit have paid, and are still paying higher rent for inferior places. In a sense, the Negro has been the largest taxpayer after all.

A little over 80% of the entire population of Detroit are renters. The taxes paid on 478,447 parcels of real estate listed on Detroit tax books are paid by little over 19 per cent of the entire population.

UNEQUAL DISTRIBUTION OF JOBS IN DEPARTMENTS MAINTAINED BY PUBLIC FUNDS

Police Department:

There are 3,734 policemen on the force, of which 35 are colored—less than 1% representation, to be exact 93/100 of 1%. If Negroes had 7% representation, they would have 261 Negro policemen. The salary for the police force for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1933, was \$8,612,860.60. Of this amount approximately \$82,799.50 was paid to Negro officers. If they had their correct quota of 261 on the force, Negroes would have drawn \$617,247.70 for the last fiscal year.

There are 278 civilian employees in the department with salary for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1933, of \$506,046.70. Of this number we should have 19 Negroes employed, but do not have any. Negroes should have drawn \$34,449.28 of the total amount paid civilian employees the last fiscal year.

Altogether, we are due 280 jobs in the department, and have only 35. There is a vacancy for a police surgeon in this department.

Board of Education:

The Board of Education has 10,183 employees. Of this number 7,323 are regular teachers. Only 50 are colored. There are approximately 900 substitute teachers, of which 15 are colored. The combined salary for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1933, for teachers alone was \$14,105,352. Negro teachers only drew about \$92,000 in the last fiscal year of the total amount of salaries paid teachers.

There are 558 census enumerators, who worked three weeks last year, at a cost of \$25,581, of which number we had no colored.

There are 109 regular employees in the attendance department, in which department there are no colored.

There are 493 clerical workers, but no colored.

There are 2,369 non-educational employees, such as engineers, janitors, mechanics, lunchroom help, bathroom attendants, etc. Of this number we have 3 colored bathroom attendants; 2 janitors, 1 lunchroom helper, and 1 lavatory assistant.

If we had our share on the regular teaching staff, we would have 512; 63 substitute teachers, 34 clerical force, 39 census enumerators, 7 attendance department, 165 non-educational department—making a total of 820.

Hospitals:

Herman Kiefer Hospital has 1,400 beds; 727 employees, a total salary for all employees for the last fiscal year ending June 30, 1933, \$609,831.06. We are due 50 employees, but have one on part time.

Receiving Hospital has 700 beds and approximately 700 employees, and in other words, an employee to each bed. The total salary for the last fiscal year was \$679,890.24. We are due 49 employees, but have four, three of whom are on part time. There has been only one Negro interne at Receiving Hospital since it was established in 1915. Thirty-nine internes entered Receiving Hospital on July 1, 1933, for the term of one year. No Negroes included. This is a large number to turn out annually.

Fire Department:

Fire Department has 1,784 employees. The payroll last fiscal year was \$3,513,473.97. No colored in the department.

Library Department:

There are 551 employees in this department, with a total salary of \$657,823.00 paid for the last fiscal year. We are entitled to 38 employees.

SUMMARY NO. 1

Department	No. of Employees	No. Colored	No. Entitled to
Police Department	3,734	35	280
Board of Education.....	10,183	72	820
Herman Kiefer Hospital ...	727	1	50
Receiving Hospital	700	4	49
Library Department	551	3*	38
Fire Department.....	1,784	0	124
Total.....	17,679	115	1,361

* 2 doubtful; 1 part time.

Had Negroes received a seven per cent share of employment in various city departments, supported by taxpayers' money, they would have received:

SUMMARY NO. 2

	For Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1933	For the Past 10 Years
Police Department	\$651,696.98	\$6,516,969.80
Board of Education	986,204.16	9,862,041.60
Receiving Hospital.....	47,535.88	475,358.90
Herman Kiefer	42,560.50	425,605.00
Library Department	43,988.66	439,886.60
Fire Department	245,593.16	2,455,931.60
Total.....	\$2,017,579.34	\$20,265,792.50

The above records were taken at a time when employment was at its lowest ebb in the various departments, and salaries cut to a minimum. Negroes have lost enough in the past ten years by not having equal representation in employment in departments mentioned to have bought the Ambassador Bridge, which cost only twenty million dollars.

LOCAL BRANCH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE

Preceding the 1933 membership campaign in April, an analysis was made of the various professions who carried memberships with the Association:

	Total Number in Detroit	Number Members of the Association
Attorneys	61	5
Physicians	82	9
Dentists	33	3
Ministers	75	—

(And this did not include
all store-front churches.)

Less than 7 were members

Teachers, social workers, druggists and nurses did not excel the other professions in holding memberships.

There were memberships turned in at local branch office in September, 1933, and had not been received at the National Office on November 11, 1933, according to communications with the National Office.

The Constitution on page 8, Article 5, Section 4, provides:
"Of the total amount paid in as membership fees, the Branch shall remit to the Treasurer of the National Association, one-half of all one dollar membership fees within fifteen days of their receipt; and may retain in its treasury for local expense, the balance. Other than one dollar memberships shall be divided as hereafter stated."
(See page 17.)

For your comparison, Atlanta, Georgia, Branch has 1,000 members; Richmond, Virginia, Branch has 900 members; Detroit Branch, as of November 15, 1933, 353 paid up memberships on National Office records.

The Detroit membership list will increase at National Office since 34 memberships were taken out on the eve of election, of which a certain portion were employees of officials of the Local Branch, and it put a question in the minds of thinking citizens. People are wondering why the N. A. A. C. P. has not been sold to the public, so the symptoms in this X-Ray picture of Detroit may be treated and Negroes' rights may be as healthy as any other American citizen. Newspapers show activities of branches all over the country, except Detroit.

NEGRO VOTERS

Space will not permit giving a complete chart, but I am pointing out a specific election date that is still fresh in the minds of Detroiters who are interested in the advancement of the Negro race. It was established by the United States Census Department in 1930, that there are 81,968 Negroes in Detroit eligible to register and vote. Deducting 3% incarcerated, there left 79,509 eligible.

On March 4, 1929:

Primary:		Election:
Number Negroes Registered.....	26,544	26,864
Number Negroes Voting	4,687	8,201

Our own Cecil L. Rowlette, attorney, was nominated for Judge of Recorder's Court in the Primary, and at the election received 14,441 votes.

The following is a summary of the number of votes received by the various nominees at the election on April 4, 1929:

Recorder's Court Judges (9 elected) :

	Highest Vote	Lowest Vote
Hon. John V. Brennan.....	81,165	
Hon. Arthur Kilpatrick.....		71,527
Circuit Court Judges:		
Hon. Harry J. Dingeman.....	109,850	
Hon. DeWitt H. Merriam.....		98,734
Judges of Common Pleas Court:		
Hon. Arthur E. Gordon.....	50,575	
Hon. Leonard L. Schemanske.....		44,168
School Inspectors (4 elected) :		
Dr. Angus McLean.....	61,628	
Mr. A. Jamieson.....		49,126

I am quite sure when you make a comparison of the potentiality of the Negro voting strength of 81,968, with the number of votes cast for Attorney Cecil L. Rowlette, and the number cast which put others in office, our Negro political leaders, ministers, and particularly our Local Branch of the N. A. A. C. P. should bow their heads in shame for not putting on a constructive program, and uniting our forces, and use them for the advancement of the Negro masses.

It will be done when our Negro leaders quit being so selfish, and stop using organizations for personal and private business advancement, but use them for the welfare of the masses, and particularly the man who is farthest down. Organizations should be used to open up, rather than cover up.

I am not a pessimist. It can be done! It must be done! Does it not stand to reason that with 120,066 Negroes in Detroit, all our churches, and organizations, we could bring about a change to better the Negroes' condition. Do we have the moral courage to take a definite stand, or is it easier to be a jelly-fish?

SEGREGATION

The following is a sample of what you get when institutions are supported by public funds. These figures were computed after communicating with every State Superintendent of Education in the United States, and their annual reports analyzed. Their reports were before the depression curtailed expenditures:

For building and equipment, in Alabama:	
Spent for schools per capita:	
White	\$86.36
Colored	15.40
For Education:	
White	37.50
Colored	7.16
For building and equipment, South Carolina:	
White	\$114.99
Colored	69.25

For Education:

White	52.89
Colored	5.20

This is enough to make anyone be on guard to protest any form of segregation in Detroit.

RESPECT

I have great respect for the program outlined by the National Office of the N. A. A. C. P. I am a member and supporter. There are many citizens in Detroit who admire the N. A. A. C. P. and who will have respect for our Local Branch when it stops being so lax, negligent, and sets up a modern membership and financial record system, kept up to date at all times, so if any member desires to see the records, the books will be open to them, and such system will gain respect and the support of more people for the organization.

Along with this, all worthy cases must be pushed, and not neglected as the Hastings Street case and others I can name. Our local branch must become militant, if we are to get the people's support.

BOOKS AND MAGAZINES

May I urge you to read the following four books, and the Crisis Magazine:

"Along This Way," by James Weldon Johnson.

"The Negro Church," by Mays and Nicholson.

"Trial by Prejudice," by Arthur Garfield Hayes.

Twenty-third Annual Report of the N. A. A. C. P.

If you do not find copies in the library, ask your pastor, and I am quite sure he will let you read his copies.

APPRECIATION

May I express my sincere thanks to Mr. Thomas R. Solomon, A. M., who is working on his Ph. D. at the University of Michigan, for the material he compiled on voting as an Earhart Scholar. Every precinct in Detroit was covered for a four year period, from June, 1928, to August, 1932. Every election has been tabulated in this period. Mr. Solomon's crew of clerks worked from January 19th to May 25th, 1933, at considerable expense. This is the first time such accurate and scientific study has ever been made in a metropolitan city.

I thank our artist, Mr. Emmett Nash, for the cover design.

I also thank the Presbyterian Forum friends who supported the Forum's program. I assure you that the work in gathering this information has been most interesting.

I could not close this page without mentioning the fine, unselfish and constructive work that Rev. and Mrs. William H. Peck are doing with the Booker T. Washington Trade Association, and the Housewives' League, and their supporters.

YOUR STAND

The following three questions are being circulated on individual cards, to be filled out, ~~by~~ the individual desires, of his or her own free will, to sign the same. We will announce to you later how people of every walk of life stand on these questions:

1. Do you approve of segregated Municipal Hospitals as a means of sound advancement for Negro nurses, internes and doctors?.....
2. Do you believe that Negro nurses, internes, physicians and general employees should be employed as other racial groups in all Municipal Institutions and Departments?.....
3. Will you become actively engaged in a movement to gain such jobs for the Negroes of Detroit?.....

BUILDING BRIDGES

An old man traveling a lone highway,
 Came at evening, cold and gray,
 To a chasm deep and wide.
 The old man crossed in the twilight dim,
 The sullen stream had no fears for him,
 But he turned when he reached the other side,
 And builded a bridge to span the tide.
 "Old man," cried a fellow pilgrim near,
 "You are wasting your strength with your building here.
 You never again will pass this way,
 Your journey will end with the ending day,
 You have crossed the chasm deep and wide,
 Why build a bridge at eventide?"
 The builder raised his old gray head,
 "Good friend, in the path I have come," he said,
 "There followeth after me today
 A youth whose feet must pass this way,
 This stream that has meant naught to me
 May to that fair-haired boy a pitfall be,
 He too must cross in the twilight dim,
 Good friend, I am building this bridge for him."

Will you help build the bridge of equal opportunity for Negro Youth, to cross over as other American citizens?