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Detroit. **MAYOR'S INTERRACIAL COMMITTEE**

1949

CITY OF

DETROIT

J. MASCHHOFF



1949
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1949
Sixth Annual Report
CITY OF DETROIT
MAYOR'S INTERRACIAL COMMITTEE

"THE CHALLENGE:

Our Changing City — Our Changing Human Relations"

FOREWORD

Once every year, with the publication of the Annual Report, the Mayor's Interracial Committee of the City of Detroit has the opportunity to present its operations for review by the people of Detroit. In this, the Committee's 6th Annual Report, we present a record of *how* the Committee has worked, *what* was done during the year 1949, and a summary statement of the reasons *why* an official agency of government acts as it does in dealing with race relations. Ultimately, the real test of a "philosophy" in race relations or the effectiveness of the Committee's work in eliminating prejudice and discrimination in Detroit is to be found in the day-to-day work of the Committee and the relationships the Committee has with the Community and people it was set up to serve.

This foreword is devoted to a review of the Committee's role in the solution of problems in race relations. The body of the Report records what the Committee did during 1949 and what was accomplished.

Changes

The changes which have been taking place in race relations throughout the nation, during the past few years, have had tremendous influence upon the changing pattern of human relations in Detroit. The changes in thinking and acting which are of paramount importance to race and cultural relations cut across the total fabric of American life. For the most part the more dramatic of these changes have come about as a result of the actions of people *within groups*. In every case, whether the group has gone on record against restrictive policies or discriminatory practices, or whether there is only challenge or criticism of these policies, the direction or objective of the change is to reaffirm and establish the right of all people, regardless of color, ancestry or religious faith, to receive fair, just and equal treatment and opportunity.

One has only to read the daily newspaper to see accounts of the actions of unions and businessmen alike in support of equal economic opportunities; stories of the deliberations and decisions of church denominations and religious organizations to combat intolerance; articles referring to the actions taken by such a range of organizations as professional societies, business groups, fraternities and sororities to eliminate "exclusive" membership codes; accounts of business groups including some mortgage bankers and insurance companies which have established a single, non-racial standard for doing business; stories of the changes in ama-

teur and professional sports; and daily testimony to the fact of change in practically all social, educational and youth service agencies.

Sometimes these changes which create new patterns of human relations come about through the framework of government and political parties. For instance, there has been widespread sentiment and demand that fair employment practices, anti-poll tax, and anti-lynching bills be enacted into law. In other instances, the decisions of the United States Supreme Court have helped to interpret the present day meaning of the guarantees of American citizenship. Administrative actions to conform with judicial decisions and laws passed by the elected representatives of the people have added to the changing pattern of human relations.

The counterpart of these happenings of a nation-wide character is to be found in Detroit. Other changes of perhaps even more significance to the total pattern of race relations in Detroit, but of a less dramatic nature, have also taken place.

The changes in the Detroit population are important because they indicate the extent to which community patterns have altered. Since 1940 the population in the Detroit Metropolitan District has increased by about 400,000—from 2,300,000 to 2,700,000. The Negro population for the same area and over the same period of time has more than doubled—from 174,000 to 350,000. (It is well to note that this represents a population twice that of Flint, Michigan's second largest city.) The proportion of the total population which is Negro has risen from 9% to 13%. For the City of Detroit itself, the Negro population has risen from 150,000 to an estimated 300,000.

Another factor making for change has been the high rate of employment in Detroit during and after the war period. This was shared, although not equally, by white and Negro citizens. A combination of the two factors of population increase and money available has resulted in marked changes in the pattern of home ownership and widespread shifts in population in Detroit. The 6 areas, in 1940, of mixed Negro and white occupancy and concentration of Negro families have expanded. Today new areas of Negro home ownership and occupancy have become available.

The Challenge

Shifts in population have always taken place as Detroit grew and as new and "better" housing was placed on the market. Changes in the occupancy pattern of religious groups, of foreign-born nationality groups and racial groups

are continuing to take place in Detroit today. The shifts in racial occupancy patterns in Detroit constitute the single greatest challenge to Detroit citizens, community organizations and city governmental agencies.

The impact of racial change in any particular neighborhood is felt first in the neighborhood and in the community-located agencies: in the shopping centers, in transportation facilities, in the schools and churches, in the recreational facilities, playgrounds and community centers, in the youth groups and social service agencies. The business man, whether storekeeper or restaurateur, becomes a participant because the way he conducts his business is a part of the pattern of human relations. The actions of a church leader, the school teacher, the policeman, the youth leader, in the same fashion, take on considerably more importance than ever before. A great many little decisions have to be made by a great many people. Do we invite the Negro mother into the P.T.A.? What if a Negro wants to have lunch in my restaurant? Shall we have a Scout troop for white children only? One for white children and one for Negro children? Or as many Scout troops as we can organize with children in them regardless of their race or religion? These little but tremendously important decisions have their larger counterparts. Shall the Scout administrator work piecemeal, permitting one thing in this area and not in others? Shall there be a school "human relations" program in this school and not in all others? Obviously, these are only a few of the really complex problems that people, whether they are governmental officials or private citizens, are facing. The answers each person finds to these questions will determine the future pattern of human relations in Detroit. *That is the Challenge.*

In the light of these facts, what is the role of an official agency of city government, the Mayor's Interracial Committee?

The operations of an official governmental agency in race relations are not comparable to those of a water department. For all practical purposes there is only one agency in the community that supplies water. This monopoly on service does not exist when dealing with problems in race or human relations; nor would it be desirable for it to be so. Sometimes people faced with the urgency of problems in race relations think there must be an agency with almost dictatorial powers to act in correcting some of the obvious social injustices. There are many ways in which people's rights get violated, and many ways, therefore, in which those rights may be protected. It must be understood, then, that a single agency cannot encompass all the work there is to do.

A brief listing would include more than 50 groups working on some aspects of race relations or civil rights in Detroit. Each of these, whether governmental agency or community organization, has a particular structure and purpose. Each has a different function to perform in terms of the total job to be done. Each organization has come into existence to serve different community needs. The Mayor's Interracial Committee is only one agency in this functioning whole. At times the Committee enters into co-operative relationships with other groups when there is a "community of interests" or when certain kinds of problems must be faced, but the function that the Committee is equipped to perform is retained throughout. The Committee should not be viewed as having the role of a super-authority, but rather as being equipped to act most effectively in particular areas.

What is this distinctive role or function of the Mayor's Interracial Committee?

A distinctive role of the Committee is that of **TROUBLE SHOOTING**. Essentially, this means that the Committee must be able to work on problems which have taken place or anticipate problems which are going to occur in government and in the community. Sometimes these problems are such that they threaten community peace and safety. At other times they involve the deprivation of people's rights because of race or religion. In either case, "trouble shooting" is essential to maintain people's faith in the democratic method of correcting injustices and confidence in the agencies of government.

A second function of the Committee is that of interpreting the gap between principles, of fair and equal treatment and opportunity, and practice. We are the inheritors of older community patterns, and some of these things seem like the easy, the legitimate, the right ways of doing things without being so at all. The **INTERPRETATION OF DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES** is a vital part of the Committee's total job.

A third function of the Committee is that of **PROVIDING THE CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION** through which conflicting interests can be brought together to work out their differences within a framework of law.

Lastly, the Committee functions as a **TECHNICIAN** to discover where things are wrong, how they can be approached or changed, and otherwise acts as consultant to such planning for better human relations as agencies or groups may want to follow. As the technician, the Committee has the responsibility of helping groups with problems to move from a defensive position to a defensible one.

Underlying the work of the Mayor's Interracial Committee there are two basic assumptions which are of importance to its daily operations.

(1) That the affairs and services of government shall be conducted at all times to serve all of the public fairly and to treat individual citizens justly without regard to color, ancestry or religious faith.

(2) That some people are more strategically placed than others for dealing with problems in race relations or for acting in ways which ultimately affect race relations. Since there are such positions and such key locations, these people—the owners of business or industry, religious, labor, civic and political leaders—have more responsibility to act in ways which are not prejudiced.

In summary, we have outlined the changes taking place in Detroit and nation-wide which challenge us to make the kinds of contributions to human relations which will insure community peace and at the same time diligently protect the rights of all our citizens. Secondly, we have presented the distinctive role of the Mayor's Interracial Committee in achieving community peace and understanding in Detroit. Thirdly, we have set forth the assumptions that underlie the daily work of the Committee. And finally, the Committee wishes to report on its six distinct contributions to better human relations in Detroit. They are: (1) Tension control, (2) Activities to secure desirable legislation, (3) Technical and consultative services, (4) New techniques in education for better understanding, (5) Coordination of community activities, and (6) Leadership in reviewing public policies.



1. TENSION CONTROL

For the six years of its existence as an official City agency, the Mayor's Interracial Committee has had as its prime responsibility the promotion of (1) peaceful solutions of racial problems, and (2) community understanding. The first responsibility calls for certain kinds of action; the latter relates to educational activities.

During the past year, as in previous years, the Committee has watched all situations in Detroit which were actual or potential breeding grounds for the development of community tension or open conflict and, thus, threats to community peace. Tension situations result from a number of causes: (1) deliberate attempts to arouse racial prejudice; (2) interference with citizens, because of their race, religion or ancestry, as they pursue legitimate and lawful activities; and, (3) the reactions or retaliation of people because of the disregard or denial of their rights as citizens. While the Committee has carried on this "trouble shooting," investigation, and reporting in all situations where tension or conflict is involved, it does not officially enter into all such situations as long as it appears that the normal forces of decency and good sense will provide for a proper adjustment without interference.

One of the most important things that the Committee has learned is that the dangerous community tensions, the real threats to community peace and welfare, are based on concrete problems where there is a conflict of interests. The role of the "spreaders of race hate" or the actions of "radical left-wing organizations" are important and dangerous, but these groups are not the sole "cause" of racial tension and conflict. There is always a concrete and specific problem as the basis upon which groups can come into conflict with each other and gain supporters. The "line up" of groups and the numbers of people involved on either side are what make the situation dangerous; tension is a product of the "lining up" of numbers of people on the various sides of the controversy. Knowing all the facts in these situations is a function of the "field investigators" on the Committee staff. Only in this way can there be intelligent solution to the basic causes involved in tension situations. The Committee has found that tension or conflict can be dealt with effectively by governmental agencies by specific and positive action within the framework of our laws.

During 1949 the Mayor's Interracial Committee acted in numerous instances to prevent the development of tension or the spread of conflict, and to see that the rights and guarantees of American citizenship were protected. Situations requiring Committee action can be grouped into four classes: (1) Violations of the Michigan Civil Rights Laws; (2) Conference on the Control of Violence; (3) Housing Incidents; and (4) The Communist Threat in Race Relations. Action was of three types: (1) to encourage the responsible agencies of government to act decisively; (2) to keep people informed about the situations they are involved in; and (3) to initiate study and discussions in those situations where the problems require co-ordinated community action.

I. Enforcement of the Michigan Civil Rights Law

In the beginning of 1949, the Mayor's Interracial Committee held a series of discussions with the newly-elected

County Prosecutor and the lawyers on his staff to whom were assigned those cases brought under the Civil Rights Law of Michigan.

These discussions were held for a number of reasons: (1) To determine what policies the new administration would follow in handling charges of discrimination in places of public accommodation (e. g., whether emphasis would be on out-of-court settlement or on issuance of warrants charging discrimination). (2) To determine the exact procedure by which all such cases would be handled. Knowing the exact procedure is essential, since the role of the Mayor's Interracial Committee is that of a service and educational agency. The Committee must be in the position to tell citizens what legal recourse is available to them should they be denied equal service in a place of public accommodation, as required under the law. (3) To discuss the necessity of establishing clear-cut, simple procedures—because people feel that involved procedures are only "red-tape" or "tactics" to prevent the enforcement of the law. (4) To discuss past experience in civil rights cases, the effects of long delays in the trial, experience in jury trials, and the effect of convictions upon discriminatory practices.

These discussions were helpful in establishing explicit policy and procedure and in cultivating public understanding of and confidence in the law enforcement procedure.

II. Conference on the Control of Violence

Over the past several years a series of incidents has threatened the peace and welfare of the Detroit community. These incidents have centered around the protest to non-white occupancy of homes. One such incident which occurred toward the end of 1948 was a source of grave concern to the Mayor's Interracial Committee because there was evidence of deliberate and organized action to deny persons their rights to property.

Accordingly, in January of 1949, the Committee called a special meeting of representatives of law enforcement agencies and other organizations interested in the application of laws to control community violence and conflict. It was the desire of the Committee (1) to completely clarify the question of the adequacy of existing laws to control not only the overt activities of mobs in such situations, but also the organizers or inciters of violence, (2) to explore the need for additional legislation, and (3) to arrive at a workable plan whereby situations of impending or actual community violence could be most effectively handled.

The Committee presented an analysis of past incidents and copies of legal opinions and decisions relating to this question as a framework for the discussion. The ensuing discussions clarified the role of the police and prosecutor in such conflict situations, emphasized the need for prompt action on the part of law enforcement agencies when violations of law have been established, and directed attention to the organizers of violence who are rarely involved directly in such obvious violations of the law in these tension situations.

III. Housing Incidents

During 1949 the Mayor's Interracial Committee investigated and acted on a number of incidents involving actions of opposition to the occupancy by Negroes of homes which they owned. Although it would not be possible to list each case individually, a brief summary of the techniques used by the Committee in these cases is desirable:

The control of violence, actual or potential, is regarded as a function of the Police Department. The Police Department, shortly after the Supreme Court decision on restrictive covenants, announced that it would continue to protect the life and property of all persons in Detroit, regardless of race, creed or ancestry. Threats to life or property in such housing incidents have, in all instances, been treated as normal police problems.

The major role of the Committee is that of observation and analysis of incidents to determine the cause of tension or violence and the activities of persons involved. Since this sometimes takes place before any formal police action is called for, its importance to prompt action in the event that the situation becomes dangerous to community peace is obvious. Following this observation and analysis, the nature of the problem is interpreted to (1) the law enforcement officers who are working on the matter, to point out social implications and consequences of the situation; (2) the individuals and interest groups affected, in order to prevent rumor, misinformation and distortion which can only lead to further tension, acts of retaliation or breakdown or confidence in police or governmental action; and (3) the key elements in the community-at-large so that they can have the necessary information to act should further action or coordinated follow-through be necessary.

2. ACTION TO SECURE LEGISLATION FOR FAIR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

The concept involved in fair employment practices legislation, that of legislating against discrimination in employment opportunity, is relatively new in American politics. The knowledge that discrimination exists in employment or the fact that people have been opposed to it is not so new, however. The situation we are confronted with is that of seeking the application of a new law to an old problem.

Since its formation, and most explicitly formulated in the policy statements of 1946, the Mayor's Interracial Committee has been committed to the desirability and necessity for legislation which will guarantee equality of economic opportunity to all Americans regardless of race, color, religion or ancestry. Prior to 1949 the work of the Committee was limited, by and large, to educational activities in behalf of the passage of a law. From 1943 through 1948 various groups and organizations had initiated F.E.P.C. bills in the state legislature but had failed to get the necessary support to bring the issue to a vote.

In December, 1948, Governor-elect G. Mennen Williams appointed an Advisory Committee on Civil Rights and directed the group to make a study of civil rights. In early January the Governor's Committee submitted a report which documented the record of civil rights in Michigan. While recognizing many limitations insofar as civil rights were

IV. The Communist Threat in Race Relations

During the summer of 1949 in Peekskill, New York, citizen and veteran groups met in open conflict and uncontrolled rioting with the followers and supporters of Paul Robeson. This clash made Robeson a symbol of persecution and a target for hate, useful for both Communist and hate-group purposes. In view of the program that was subsequently developed to arrange for Robeson to appear in the major cities in the northern and western part of the country, it became obvious that what had happened in Peekskill could easily happen in Detroit.

It was the opinion of the Mayor's Interracial Committee and staff that a repetition of the Peekskill incident would be a great detriment to our city and could benefit only the extremist forces on either side who would gain notoriety and prestige by fighting each other. It was recognized that this was in part a question of race relations, in part a police problem, in part a question of political ideology, and in part a matter of public policy. Nevertheless, the Committee took the initiative to see that organized community thinking was brought to bear on this problem and that a plan should be developed to meet this threat to peace in Detroit.

The actions which followed were based on the firm conviction of the Committee and staff that the basic responsibility of keeping our city on an even keel rested with top-level authority in the city government, particularly with the Police Department, and with the local press, radio, business, civic, church, labor, and veteran group leadership. The uneventful nature of Robeson's visit to Detroit was in part attributable to the quick thinking and responsible action on the part of all these groups in Detroit.

3. TECHNICAL SERVICES AT THE STAFF LEVEL

During the past year the staff of the Mayor's Interracial Committee has been called upon with increasing frequency to perform technical advisory service in race and intergroup relations. This service is best described as consultation on community problems. The requests made of the Committee have been of four general types: (1) Information on the work of the Mayor's Interracial Committee, and what it can do to help other agencies in their programs; (2) Analyses of current problems in race relations; (3) Information on techniques and skills in human relations; and (4) Recommendations as to the development of sound organizational race relations policy.

These consultation services are of the following types: (1) Action. Representatives of the Committee staff have been invited to other communities as technical consultants. In St. Louis a riot which developed over the use of a swimming pool was a subject of study; in Youngstown, staff members served as consultants with the police department

4. NEW TECHNIQUES IN EDUCATION

In 1944, when the Mayor's Interracial Committee was established, it was directed to "work for the improvement in the attitudes of white and Negro citizens toward one another." This emphasis on education for better race relations was a new responsibility for government to assume. It was based upon the recognition that "just letting things work themselves out" was not enough. The silence, the myths, the rumors, the misinformation and half-truths about race relations in Detroit were shown, in the race riot of 1943, to be too dangerous to simply leave alone. When people, regardless of their race, religion or nationality, have a set reaction to other individuals in terms of the myths or misinformation about "group characteristics," only isolation, fear, hostility or hatred, and conflict can result. An educational program which helps to establish a basis for communication between individuals of differing races, religions and nationalities is essential to the safety and security of the community.

In 1949, six different kinds of educational services were offered by the committee and were used extensively by the community. In order of importance and amount of staff time spent these were: (1) Speakers; (2) Group discussion leaders; (3) Radio programs and recordings; (4) Pamphlets, posters, publications and newsletters; (5) Movies and film strips; (6) Friendship Tours.

The greatest number of requests for speakers and discussion leaders have come from church, women's, social service, business and fraternal groups wishing to get more information on topics that range from "The Facts of Race" to "Civil Rights" to "The Responsibility of Government in Race Relations" to "Current Problems in Race Relations in Detroit." Work through the medium of radio in 1949 was primarily with Station WDET-FM (UAW-CIO), where 30 minutes of free radio time was given the Committee each week throughout the year to conduct its discussion program called "Your Community Clinic." Pro-

grams have included radio dramatizations and recordings, as well as round-table discussion series on "Problems in Race Relations," "Civil Rights, a Report on the National and Local Scene," "What Governmental Agencies and Community Organizations are Doing to Improve Race Relations in Detroit," and "Case Histories in Human Relations." The current series of broadcasts consists of interviews with visiting authorities or persons with established reputations in some phase of race or cultural relations. Quantities of pamphlets and publications have been distributed on request to community groups which are anxious to use the educational services of the Interracial Committee in order to stimulate thinking within their own group. Pamphlets dealing with the facts on race and on the Committee and its work have been most popular. In addition to the Annual Report, 2,000 copies of which were sent out to newspapers and opinion leaders in educational, parent-teacher, race relations, church, labor, and social service groups, the Mayor's Interracial Committee publishes a newsletter called "Detroit FOCUS on Human Relations," which is sent out monthly to a mailing list of 2,000 persons in Detroit who have indicated an interest in receiving news about events and trends in race relations.

Beginning in January of 1949 the Committee began sending out materials to specific groups of people in Detroit as well as making these materials available to the general public. A summary of the findings of a research study on "Customer Reactions to the Integration of Negro Sales Personnel in Department Stores" was sent to the owners, personnel directors and managers of all large or chain department stores. The pamphlet dealing with restaurant discrimination and the law, "Outside the Home," was sent to the owners and managers of all Detroit restaurants. The pamphlet, "If Your Next Neighbors are Negroes," which provided information on the Negro home owner and techniques for dealing with community tension was sent to all real estate agencies in Detroit.

* Such service to other cities is, of course, financed by those cities without cost to Detroit.



5. COMMUNITY COORDINATION

One of the most significant steps taken during 1947 toward improving interracial relations was the formation of the Coordinating Council on Human Relations. This organization was set up under the sponsorship of the Mayor's Interracial Committee at the request of a number of community groups. It exists for the purpose of relating the activities of many organizations into an overall program of community education for better human relations.

During 1949 this organization undertook a program which was of tremendous importance in achieving its own potentialities as a coordinating agency. The Coordinating Council on Human Relations, with Interracial Committee staff help, set out to develop (1) a method which would emphasize the internal educational problems which individuals and member organizations could deal with as a part of their own decision and policy-making role, and (2) a method which would uncover the kinds of problems member organizations were facing because of changing community conditions and changing attitudes in race relations. Thus, the "Our Changing City" discussion series was developed. Each month representatives of agencies in the Coordinating Council made presentations based on the changes in Detroit, the changes in thinking and goals of their organizations, and the kinds of organizational problems which have resulted. The first meeting dealt with the

6. PUBLIC POLICY

The most difficult and the most easily misunderstood phase of the work of the Mayor's Interracial Committee is that which involves the establishment of non-discriminatory standards of public policy. The first charge of the Mayor, in setting up the Committee in 1944, was that the Committee "make recommendations designed to improve those services which affect racial relationships that flow from the several departments of government to the community." It is logical, therefore, that questions about the policies or practices of agencies of government would be discussed and acted upon within the Interracial Committee framework.

The raising of such questions, however, implies no blame. Because of changes in elected and administrative officials which have taken place over the years, the present heads of departments of the city government have been the inheritors of policies and procedures which they did not establish. From time to time, community criticism or challenge is directed at an agency of government in which it is charged that discrimination is implicit or obvious in the agency's policy, procedures or practices. Since people want the facts, it is not enough to say "that is the way we've always done it," or that no discrimination exists, in answer to charges of discrimination. The Mayor's Interracial Committee and staff have filled the role of consultant to the departments of city government to investigate criticism, to solve problems, and to create confidence in the actions of government.

In practice, the role of the consultant is that of helping the agency to establish working tools for dealing constructively with the problem while continuing its normal operations. Briefly, the consultant has a number of functions:

problems in race relations which have resulted from community changes and the particular responsibility of government for maintaining community peace. The second program centered attention on the physical and population changes, and the changes in attitudes in Detroit. The third meeting centered discussion on the achievements and problems of the group-work agencies in Detroit. The last meeting of the year was a presentation of the ways community education groups meet their responsibilities to a changing city. In 1950, presentations will be made by church groups, school organizations, study groups, and service agencies.

All the meetings in 1949 were characterized by the frank discussion of organizational problems and the sharing of information and techniques for solving problems. It was recognized at the outset that there existed a wide variety of race relations policies and problems in the member agencies of the Coordinating Council. The emphasis in the meetings, however, was not on destructive criticism, but rather upon the posing of such questions as "What about our changing city?" "How does it affect us, our organization, our memberships, the approaches we make?" "What must we do to meet the challenge to our changing city?" The effect of this activity has been to help establish community standards for good race relations policies and practices.

(1) To give aid in the formulation and establishment of non-discriminatory departmental policies; (2) To establish an adequate and factual framework for investigating a problem or studying charges and criticism; (3) To conduct a study of the problem; (4) To outline the requirements of good policies and procedures to cover the activity in question, based on the facts uncovered in the study; (5) To interpret organizational and community consequences of alternative solutions to the problem; (6) To help lay out long-range plans and the groundwork for changes; (7) To give advice on the ways of creating community confidence while in the process of making the changes or to create support for the necessary changes; and (8) To leave all responsibility for decision-making and administration of changes up to the agency's policy-making body.

During 1949 two questions of public policy were worked on by the Mayor's Interracial Committee. The first of these related to the Board of Education; the second related to the Housing Commission.

With reference to the Public Schools, the program of education for democratic human relations and administrative policies pertaining to hiring and assignment of teaching personnel were under consideration. Representatives of the Board of Education met with the Interracial Committee to describe and discuss the human relations program in the schools. The questions concerning hiring and assignment practices were referred to a Sub-Committee of the Interracial Committee which made an intensive study, prepared a written report, and, at the end of the year, was in the process of discussing its findings with officials of the Board of Education.

With reference to the Housing Commission, the policy and practice of racial segregation in housing projects was reviewed in the light of the Housing Policy Statement issued by the Mayor's Interracial Committee in 1946. This Statement had declared opposition to governmental sanction to racial segregation in housing. In order to review this question which was assuming considerable community importance in view of the impending relocation problems involved in Detroit's slum clearance program, the Committee undertook several concrete actions: (1) As a means of establish-

7. LOOKING FORWARD

Thus far this report has treated with the viewpoint, the techniques and the activities of the Committee in the past. Looking back over six years of its operation the Committee believes it can say with a sense of satisfaction that it has helped to guide Detroit through the difficult period of postwar adjustment. Significant strides in community understanding have been made during that period. The high rate of migration which flowed into Detroit during the war years has slowed down to a fraction of what it was at that time. Detroit has gone through the first steps of assimilating the vast numbers which came here to live in the past decade. The evidences of tension which were so apparent on the streets, in busses and street cars and in the public parks a few years ago are far less evident at the present time.

There is better community understanding. There is less mystery, less ignorance, less fear. Church, labor, civic and business organizations make it their business to openly and frankly discuss problems of group relations. These many

ing a basic framework for discussing relocation problems and racial segregation policy, the Committee held two informal meetings with the Housing Commission and staff. (2) Growing out of these discussions, the decision was made to establish a joint study committee with the participation of the Interracial Committee, the City Plan Commission, and the Housing Commission. (3) Preliminary discussions as to the scope of the study were held and work begun.

organizations whether formally tied together through the Coordinating Council or less formally by a mutual sense of responsibility constitute a highly significant and useful community machine through which problems of prejudice, discrimination and tension can be handled.

In spite of these evidences of progress the Committee feels it must take a serious view of the future. As indicated in the introduction to this report, our nation has been launched into a definite program of ameliorating inequities and injustices accorded racial and religious minorities. Our own community is experiencing a process of change in racial patterns, a process which is gaining momentum. Detroit has before it an unusual opportunity to make constructive headway in human relations. There are inherent in the present situation all of the possibilities of tension and conflict. It becomes more imperative than ever that institutions of government, of church, business, labor and civic groups become thoroughly informed and prepared to act with care and good judgment.

