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DETROIT IN THE 1970'S: A PREVIEW OF THE  
COMING AMERICAN RACIAL CRISIS

by

Timothy J. Kenny

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School  
of Loyola University of Chicago in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
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## VITA

The author, Timothy Joseph Kenny, is the son of John Francis Kenny and Isabel (Carey) Kenny. He was born October 7, 1949 in Niles, Michigan.

His elementary education was obtained at St. Mary's School, Niles, Michigan and secondary education at Niles Senior High School, Niles, Michigan, where he graduated in 1967.

In February, 1968 he entered Indiana University. In March, 1971 he entered the University of California at Berkeley, and in June, 1972, received the degree of Bachelor of Arts in sociology.

In August, 1972 he entered the graduate program in sociology at Eastern Michigan University. In September, 1973 he entered the graduate program in sociology at Loyola University of Chicago.

In June, 1974 he was granted an assistantship in sociology at Loyola University. He is co-author, with Dr. Jai P. Ryu, of "Population Growth and Racial Distribution in Six Community Areas on the North Side of Chicago," a paper presented at the meeting of the Midwest Sociological Society, Chicago, April, 1975. He is also co-author, with Dr. Ryu, of "Housing Patterns of Blacks in Metropolitan America: A Comparative Case Study of Milwaukee and San Francisco," a paper presented at the meeting of the Population Association of America, Seattle, April, 1975.



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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Almost nothing is being done today to meet what is likely to be the nation's most pressing social problem tomorrow. The problem can be simply stated in all its bleakness: many central cities of the great metropolitan areas of the United States are fast becoming lower class, largely Negro slums. (Grodzins, 1958:1)

The words above are not from the report of one of the riot commissions of the 1960's; they form the preamble of a brief, but remarkable monograph written a full decade before President Johnson gave Otto Kerner the charge to find the reasons behind the 1967 racial upheavals. The late Morton Grodzins (1958:2) was the first person to see and report on the impending urban racial crisis and its ramifications for the nation. He noted that the problems were likely to become most critical in the fourteen largest metropolitan areas. Grodzins (1958:6) also first conceived of the idea of the "tipping point," the proportion of blacks in a community above which whites begin to leave the area in large numbers. He emphasized the central city-suburban racial division (1958:12) and warned of the divisive political consequences that could result (1958:14). Finally, he warned that any lasting solution to the racial problems in the central cities would probably have to involve the whole metropolitan area (1958:16-17).

Only two decades after he wrote this prophetic work, Grodzins' predictions are rapidly coming true in one of America's largest cities.

Detroit is undergoing racial change at a more rapid rate than any other major American city. It differs radically from other large cities not only in the acceleration of racial change since 1970, but also in the manner in which the change is taking place. The predominant American process of block-by-block racial transition has been superseded in large areas of Detroit by simultaneous, rapid turnover in areas measured in square miles rather than blocks. At any given point in time, large areas of the West Side appear to be models of residential racial integration. However, this apparently random distribution of black and white families is transitory. In this paper, an attempt will be made to discover the reasons for this unprecedented flight.

Racial change in Detroit has been highly uneven from neighborhood to neighborhood. Some neighborhoods fairly near the center of the city have remained almost totally white, while racial transition is under way in the farthest reaches of Northwest Detroit. These neighborhood differences will also be examined to see whether or not they are merely random or haphazard.

Finally, the social ramifications of the Detroit situation will be considered in relation to the city itself,

in the metropolitan context and with regard to the matter of national urban policy.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>For an explanation of the compilation of racial block maps, see Appendix A. The racial concentration index is discussed in Appendix B.

## CHAPTER II

### HISTORY OF GROWTH AND RESIDENTIAL DISTRIBUTION OF DETROIT'S BLACK POPULATION

Before going into detail about the rapid transformation of the 1970's, it is useful to examine the growth and change in distribution of Detroit's black population since the nineteenth century. Census racial data for the city since 1850 is contained in Table 1.

Table 1 shows that throughout the period prior to World War I, Detroit was typical of the larger cities outside of the South. The black population was small, generally between one and three per cent of the city total at each census. The growth of the black community during this time period was actually slower than that of the immigrant-swollen white population. The 1910 census showed that the black proportion had declined to an all-time low, barely one per cent.

The residential distribution of Detroit's black population before World War I was like that of other Northern cities. Like New York (Osofsky, 1963:12), and Chicago (Spear, 1967:20-21), Detroit was not an open city, but in the limited areas where they lived, blacks were not always the majority of the population, and all-black blocks were rare.



TABLE 1

## RACIAL DISTRIBUTION OF DETROIT POPULATION, 1850-1973

Year	Total	White	Black	Other Races	Per Cent Black
1850	21,019	20,432	587	0	2.8
1860	45,619	44,216	1,403	0	3.1
1870	79,577	77,338	2,235	4	2.8
1880	116,340	113,475	2,821	44	2.4
1890	205,876	202,422	3,431	23	1.7
1900	285,704	281,575	4,111	18	1.4
1910	465,766	459,926	5,741	99	1.2
1920	993,678	952,065	40,838	775	4.1
1930	1,568,662	1,446,656	120,066	1,940	7.7
1940	1,623,452	1,472,662	149,119	1,671	9.2
1950	1,849,568	1,545,847	300,506	3,215	16.2
1960	1,670,144	1,182,970	482,223	4,951	28.9
1970	1,511,482	838,877	660,428	12,177	43.7
July 1, 1973	1,386,817 (U.S. Census Bureau Estimate)		715,000 (Author's Estimate)		51.6

During the Civil War, most black Detroiters lived just east of the central business district and south of Gratiot Avenue. The neighborhood covered the approximate area of Census Tracts 505 through 509 on the Boundary Map. In subsequent years, blacks settled along Hastings Street, between Gratiot and East Grand Blvd. (Katzman, 1973:59). Katzman (1973:67) states that this Near East Side zone consistently contained about five-sixths of the city's blacks during the period from 1860 to 1910. As might be suspected from the size of the Detroit black community during the period in question, even in this limited area they were about five per cent of the population during the five decades between 1860 and 1910. Working class blacks were almost totally confined to the East Side area just described, although some blacks moved into the Delray district on the Southwest Side during the 1880's. This district was later the focus of Hungarian settlement in Detroit.<sup>1</sup> A few upper and middle class blacks lived in white areas, some of them in surroundings far superior to the crowded and decrepit Near East Side (Katzman, 1973:78).

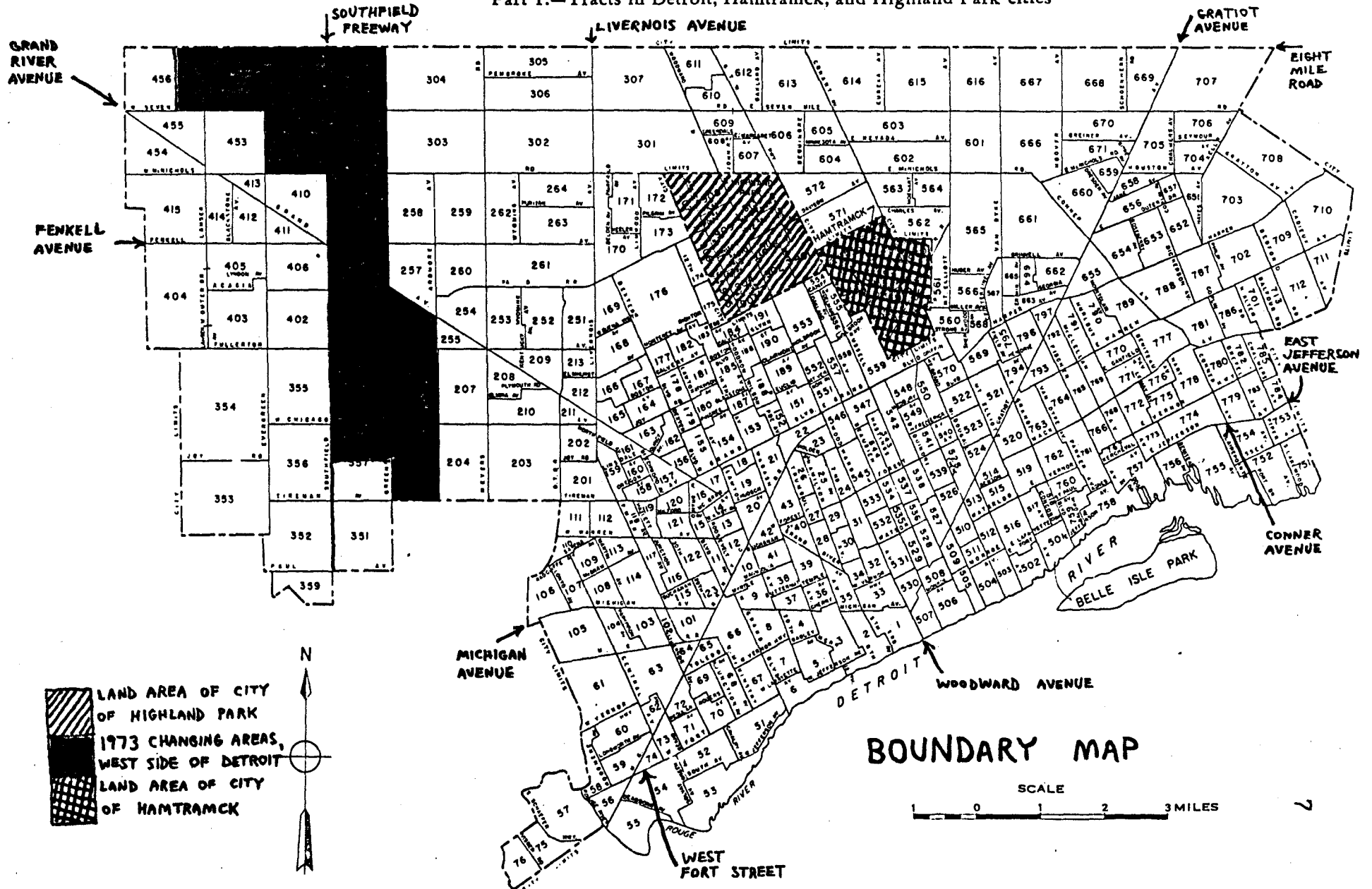
Both the city of Detroit and its black community were to be forever changed by events during the first two decades of the twentieth century. After the Civil War, the city had grown gradually, but steadily, as a center for the manufacture of railroad cars, stoves, furniture, shoes, bicycles and

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<sup>1</sup>See Map 9, p. 99.

# DETROIT, MICH., AND ADJACENT AREAS BY CENSUS TRACTS

## Part 1.—Tracts in Detroit, Hamtramck, and Highland Park cities



other goods (Shogan and Craig, 1964:17). The first two decades of the new century were a time of extremely rapid growth, largely because of the new automotive industry, and later, spurred by the needs of the nation during the First World War (Shogan and Craig, 1964:18). Table 1 reveals the extent of the city's rapid increase in population between 1900 and 1920. The racial data in Table 1 show a smaller scale, but proportionately much more spectacular, rise in the black population between 1910 and 1920. Spear (1967:140) noted the rapid increase in the black populations of most major industrial cities, but Detroit's 611 per cent rise was the highest during the decade.

A combination of the sudden demand for war workers, the cutting off of European immigration, the rising racial oppression in the South, and the decline of Southern cotton production because of the boll weevil created the large scale black movement to the Northern industrial cities (Spear, 1967:131-132). The high pay available in Detroit's factories drew Southerners of both races to the city in great numbers during the war (Shogan and Craig, 1964:19).

The black population nearly trebled during the prosperous 1920's and stood at 120,000 in 1930. Detroit was now one of the principal centers of black population, but most of those who had entered the city in the dynamic period since 1910 were crowded in the limited area east of Woodward, which had contained the working class black population prior to the great migration. During the Depression 1930's, black pop-

ulation growth slowed considerably in even the largest cities. Detroit was no exception. The black community had only increased to 149,000 by 1940, in contrast to the phenomenal increase from 1910 to 1930.

1940 is the first census year for which both census tract and city block data are available for large American cities. Maps 1 through 4 contain racial block data for the 1940 through 1970 censuses, respectively.<sup>2</sup> The presentation of the data on these maps and the following detailed discussion of the patterns they contain are necessary to put the post-1970 transformation into perspective.

In 1940 the racial pattern in Detroit was comparable to that of other major industrial cities outside the South which had experienced major increases in black population since 1900. Most of the black population was contained in a single, small, crowded area, and most of the remaining neighborhoods in the city were exclusively, or at least overwhelmingly, white.

The principal black neighborhood in Detroit in 1940 was contained within the area bounded by Woodward, East Grand Boulevard, Mt. Elliot and the Detroit River. Within these limits the black area was even smaller. Between Grand Boulevard and Gratiot Avenue most of the blacks were crowded between Beaubien and Russell. South of Gratiot, the black community extended several blocks east. Nevertheless, it was still a very small area to contain about

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<sup>2</sup>Pp. 91-94.

90,000 black Detroiters, as well as the few whites who remained behind in Paradise Valley. While the crowded area just mentioned contained a solid majority of black Detroiters in 1940, there were a number of other neighborhoods that should be mentioned. There was another black community north of Paradise Valley, in the area bounded by East Grand Boulevard, and the boundary with Highland Park and Hamtramck. The center of this area, along Oakland Avenue, was predominantly black, while some of the blocks along the edge were totally white.

There was a small, predominantly black neighborhood south of Seven Mile Road east of Conant, as well as a small black population just north of Hamtramck. The remaining black population east of Woodward was scattered in the neighborhoods nearer the central business district. There was a small integrated area along Tennessee south of Jefferson.

In 1940 there were two important predominantly black areas west of Woodward Avenue. The larger of these was along West Grand Boulevard, between Tireman Road and Michigan Avenue. The other was located in the area bounded by Pembroke, Meyers, Eight Mile Road and Greenlawn. There was a smaller black community between Tireman and Warren next to Dearborn. There were two small integrated communities adjacent to Highland Park as well as the racially mixed area between West Fort and West Jefferson. The small remainder of the West Side black population was scattered around the older neighborhoods near the city center. There were a few black

residents in the Twelfth Street area north of Grand Boulevard.

Despite the fact that Detroit's black population doubled to 300,000 between 1940 and 1950, the racial block map for 1950 looks quite similar to that of 1940. This is due to the crowding that occurred in the established black neighborhoods in Detroit, a pattern similar to what was occurring in industrial cities during and after the Second World War. The greatest increase in land area of any predominantly black district of the city was in the zone bounded by East Grand Boulevard, Woodward and the city limits of Hamtramck and Highland Park. With the exception of a very few blocks, that area became predominantly black. The black populations near Dearborn, Highland Park, and Hamtramck increased. The two main West Side black districts also expanded slightly. The portion of Detroit south of the River Rouge began to change from white to black. The expanding black areas of both Ecorse and River Rouge had begun to spread into the adjacent, formerly all-white, portion of Detroit.

The most significant changes in the city were the increase in black population, highlighted by the emergence of several predominantly black blocks in the Twelfth Street area as well as three predominantly black blocks east of Cadillac Boulevard. Within ten years the core of the West Side and the central area of the East Side would be predominantly black.

The black community was less than one-sixth of the city's population in 1950, but this changed dramatically during the

next decade. In 1960 Detroit was nearly 30 per cent black.<sup>12</sup> This rapid change was partly due to a large drop in the city's total population, but the major reason was a net increase of 182,000 in the black population.

The black community of 1960 covered an area more in keeping with its numerical strength than it had in 1940 and, especially, 1950. Indeed, the narrow old ghetto corridor just east of Woodward could not possibly have held nearly a half-million people. Instead, the black population entered, and soon became the majority group in many nearby central city neighborhoods east and west of Woodward. The new black areas were generally characterized by lower density and better quality housing.

A look at the 1960 racial block map reveals a dramatic increase in the size of the predominantly black and integrated portion of Detroit. This very closely paralleled the situation in New York, Chicago, Milwaukee and other cities during the same period. Old ghettos in these cities had been crowded to the bursting point by the black migration of the 1940's, and the further increase of the 1950's guaranteed that major transition would occur in nearby neighborhoods.

The result of this process in Detroit was that the central area of the city had become predominantly black by 1960. That part of the East Side east of the established black area, south of the Ford Freeway and west of Conner Avenue consisted mostly of predominantly black or integrated blocks by 1960. As previously noted, incipient change was evident in the



northeastern part of this zone in 1950. As large as this<sup>13</sup> change was, it was dwarfed by the transformation that had taken place west of Woodward. The small changing area along Twelfth Street expanded and merged with the older established black areas to the southwest. This enlarged black zone continued to expand, merging with several separate, older, small black settlements. By 1960 this new, huge ghetto contained nearly 240,000 black residents or about 50 per cent of the city total. This rapid growth contrasted sharply with that east of Woodward, where several decades had been required for the same amount of growth. In 1960 the main West Side black community was roughly bounded by Michigan Avenue, Livernois, McNichols and Woodward. Thousands of whites still lived in this zone, of course, and racial transition was in progress up to one-half mile west of Livernois on both sides of Grand River.

Beyond the major black concentrations, the smaller black districts shared in the general increase. The small, southernmost part of the city, next to River Rouge and Ecorse, became overwhelmingly black during the 1950's as a result of the expansion of the black area from those two suburbs across the city limits into Detroit. This was an interesting early reversal of a developing trend of the 1960's and 1970's--some center city black populations became so large that they reached the city limits and expanded into "inner suburbs" such as Compton, California, East Cleveland, Ohio and University City, Missouri.

The Conant Gardens black area expanded eastward to <sup>14</sup> Mound and west to DeQuindre, but was still confined south of Seven Mile Road. The neighborhood south of the City Airport, which had a few blacks for years, now had blacks living on many of its blocks. The small black settlement south of East Jefferson at Conner expanded considerably during the 1950's. The western part of that district was predominantly black by 1960. Some of the integrated blocks of this community were less than a mile from the city's border with suburban Grosse Pointe Park.

North of Jefferson, while the area east of Conner was nearly totally white, there were several slightly integrated blocks. Farther north, a black minority lived in the integrated Parkside housing project. Besides the exceptions already mentioned, the outer portion of the East Side was uniformly white in racial composition.

The same could be said for the huge zone on the West Side, north of suburban Dearborn and west of the developing West Side ghetto. Some blacks lived in the Smith and Herman Gardens public housing projects, and the black district along Wyoming south of Eight Mile Road expanded somewhat, but the remainder consisted of mile after mile of totally-white single-family home neighborhoods. This large zone was still connected to its East Side counterpart by the white neighborhoods north of Highland Park, but the rapid growth of the West Side ghetto separated it from the southwestern white neighborhoods lying east of Dearborn. Actually, with the ex-

ception of the nearly complete turnover next to River Rouge, very little racial change had occurred in the southwestern part of Detroit. The principal directions of black movement, as reckoned from the central business district, were to the northwest, north and east during the 1950's.

It is worth noting here that during the entire period under discussion, that is, from 1940 to the mid 1970's, the expansion of Detroit's black areas conformed largely to the pattern of sector growth as stated by Homer Hoyt (1939:62). Before there were many large-scale examples of this process in existence, he wrote: "A more significant problem facing American cities, however, is the segregation of sectors populated by different races" (Hoyt, 1939:62).

The patterns of black settlement in nearly all large cities with expanding black populations between 1940 and 1970 reveal the same type of growth. Most of the rapidly growing racial ghettos grew outward, that is, in the direction opposite the city center. This growth is largely restricted within a sector, sometimes narrow, sometimes wide. Some outer neighborhoods in "black" sectors have changed racially, while inner city neighborhoods in "white" sectors may still be all-white, although in close proximity to both the central business district and the oldest, central black areas.

In 1970, Detroit was nearly 44 per cent black. The net population loss and the numerical increase in the black population were about the same during the 1960's as during the 1950's. Thus the city had shrunk to a population of about

one and one-half million, and the black community now num<sup>16</sup>bered 660,000 members. These figures initially give the impression that the changes during the 1960's were merely a continuation of a trend of several decades' standing.

It requires a careful examination of the 1970 racial block map and the benefit of a number of post-census indicators of change to realize that the city of Detroit in the 1960's saw the beginning of a basic change in the process of racial residential succession that can only be described as revolutionary in its implications: the replacement of the usual, block-by-block white to black racial change by widespread transition over many or all of the remaining white neighborhoods in cities with large and rapidly-growing black populations. Thus whites begin to leave and are replaced by blacks, even in areas many blocks, or even several miles, from the actual leading edge of the expanding predominantly black zone.

Before expanding on this theme and reciting the evidence from Detroit which supports the assertion, it would be useful to elaborate on the "normal" transition that was the rule until after 1960. The general sequence in the racial transitions from 1940 to 1960 which have already been described was that the blocks immediately adjacent to black areas became integrated and then subsequently became predominantly or totally black. Thus, an expanding black district would have its predominantly black core and a zone of transition in the direction or directions of movement. The

changing area might be a half-mile or only several blocks <sup>17</sup> in depth, but rarely as much as a mile deep. A good example of this process is frozen in the picture made by the 1960 census racial block map of Detroit. The northern and northwestern periphery of the West Side ghetto illustrates the gradations of the pattern found on the edge of a large black district expanding through previously all-white neighborhoods. A smaller scale example of the same process can be found on the Northeast Side in the same map. The eastward expansion of the Conant Gardens black community toward Mound, between Nevada and Seven Mile, also fits the regular pattern found in racial change in American cities.

A variation found in Detroit and other cities is the development of new, large black neighborhoods in places separated from the established ghettos by major physical barriers or great distances, often exceeding a mile. The racial changes in Detroit on Twelfth north of Grand Boulevard and on the East Side between Cadillac and Conner during the 1940's and 1950's are examples of that. The transition began in limited areas, as shown by the 1950 map, and then expanded in the traditional block-by-block manner.

The 1970 Detroit block map reveals one step in the process of shifting from block-by-block to general racial transition. While much of the change on the East Side still fit the basic model just described, the zone of transition west of the greatly expanded West Side ghetto was considerably elongated in comparison to the situation just ten years before.

While formerly the zone of transition between the edge of the ghetto and the nearest all-white area was seldom over one-half mile, the West Side zone of change was one to one and one-half miles deep along the whole advancing "front" between Tireman and Eight Mile Road, in 1970. A smaller scale case of this phenomenon was evident on the East Side east of Connor and south of Warren.

Using only the 1970 census data, it might be possible to argue that the larger transitional zone between the ghetto and white neighborhoods represents an actual loosening of segregation and the beginning of widespread, genuine, enduring integration, rather than the beginning of a general white panic. Unfortunately, post-1970 indicators refute this optimistic hypothesis very convincingly. In fact, both the Fall, 1972 public school racial enrollment figures (U.S. Dept. of H.E.W., 1972:627-630) and the author's personal observations from September, 1972 to May, 1973 indicate an even more radical transformation than that shown in the 1970 census map. First, the 1970 "integrated" areas that covered so much of the West Side had largely resegregated as black neighborhoods. This was particularly true in the area bounded by Grand River, Greenfield, Seven Mile and Schaefer. It was also largely true in the smaller area on the East Side south of Warren and east of Conner. The per cent black enrollment at each public school in these two locations rose by twenty, thirty or more points in only two years (U.S. Dept. of H.E.W., 1970:655-657).

While the 1970 "integrated" West Side areas were being incorporated into the ghetto, 1970 white areas were being "integrated." Almost all of the remaining white areas north of suburban Dearborn and east of the Southfield Freeway were changing. The same was true of the area west of the Southfield Freeway, between Grand River and Eight Mile Road, as far west as Berg Road. South of Grand River there were more limited increases in black population, especially north of Fullerton and east of Evergreen. In 1970 there were only about two dozen integrated blocks west of the Southfield Freeway, but in under three years, the school enrollment figures and observations of neighborhood population composition confirmed that a major population shift had begun. Amazingly plentiful--in comparison to the stable, all-white far Northeast Side--"for sale" signs further underlined this conclusion.

This was the situation in 1973: the traditional process of block-by-block racial transition had given way to general black succession in an extremely large portion of the West Side. By the author's estimate the city was over 50 per cent black by 1973.<sup>3</sup> It is now time to look for the reasons behind this new development in urban racial change.

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<sup>3</sup>See Table 1. See p.69 for an explanation of how this figure was arrived at.

### CHAPTER III

#### WHITE FLIGHT: A CITYWIDE TIPPING POINT?

The process by which whites of the central cities leave areas of Negro in-migration can be understood as one in the social-psychology of "tipping a neighborhood." . . . Once the proportion of non-whites exceeds the limits of the neighborhood's tolerance for inter-racial living (this is the "tip point"), the whites move out. (Grodzins, 1958:6)

Having viewed the fundamental changes that have taken place in the process of racial transition in Detroit during the period since 1960, one is forced to conclude that the "tipping mechanism" identified by Grodzins now transcends individual neighborhoods. It is presently at work in a very large zone on the West Side and may conceivably affect all remaining white areas in Detroit in the not-too-distant future. It is important to know why so many white Detroiters now consider most or all of the city to be a "changing neighborhood." There are a number of factors which have become important in Detroit during the 1960's and 1970's--roughly the time span of the white "collapse" on the West Side--that should be examined.

The most obvious factor to be considered is the size of the black community and its proportion of the total population. Examination of Table 1 shows that the 1970 black population was more than one hundred times larger than that of 1910 and more than four times larger than the substantial



black community that existed in the city in 1940. The city was less than one-tenth black in 1940, but was nearly 44 per cent black in 1970. Only three years later the city apparently had a black majority. On the other hand, the white population, which was at its peak in 1950, declined by an astounding 707,000 persons during the next twenty years.<sup>1</sup>

Since other major American cities exceed Detroit in the size of their black populations or proportion black, there must be other reasons for the whites' unusual, simultaneous abandonment of so many neighborhoods. The unhappy condition of the public school system stands out in this regard. The school district has been the center of a five year legal storm over racial integration. The result has been a limited mandatory busing order, restricted to the schools of the Detroit system. Because the student enrollment is over 75 per cent black, the Supreme Court's refusal to require the suburbs to participate limits the possibilities of large-scale, genuine school integration. One hundred forty-nine, or roughly one-half of all Detroit schools were over 90 per cent black in the Fall of 1975. To leave the formerly predominantly-white schools no more than 55 per cent black, it was necessary to exclude all but fifteen of the schools that were over 90 per cent black (Sheils and

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<sup>1</sup>Table 2 contains a measure of the instability of the racially mixed city blocks found in the 1940, 1950 and 1960 census city block reports.

TABLE 2

RACIAL COMPOSITION OF RESIDENTIAL CITY BLOCKS IN DETROIT, 1940-1970  
AND INDEX OF STABILITY OF RACIALLY INTEGRATED BLOCKS

Year	Residential Blocks with No Black Residents	Blocks with Black-Occu- pied Hous- ing Units Not Exceed- ing 50%	Blocks with More Than 50% of Units Oc- cupied by Blacks	Total Residential Blocks	Trans- ition Blocks	Trans- ition Index
1940	10,850(89.6)	707(5.8)	553(4.6)	12,110(100.0)	309	43.7
1950	9,853(81.4)	1,128(9.3)	1,129(9.3)	12,110(100.0)	671	59.5
1960	8,340(69.4)	1,310(10.9)	2,361(19.7)	12,011(100.0)	773	59.0
1970	5,479(45.9)	2,256(18.9)	4,209(35.2)	11,944(100.0)	---	---

The Transition Index measures the proportion of blocks with black residents not exceeding 50% at a given census that have become predominantly black as of the subsequent census. This is a rough measure of the stability of integrated neighborhoods. Thus, the 1950 census revealed that 309 or 43.7 per cent of the 707 integrated blocks counted in the 1940 census subsequently became predominantly black. Given the apparent rate of racial change during the 1970's, it is quite possible that the transition index score for the integrated blocks of 1970 will be as high as 90.

Jones, 1976:45). This meant that the busing was largely <sup>23</sup> restricted to the white schools, the racially-changing schools and a few black schools away from the downtown area. The lack of whites in the system meant that the inner city black schools had to be written off in terms of trying to integrate them.

Finding enough whites to go around is not the only headache for Detroit school administrators. The city tax base, source of much school money, is declining. A recent news article estimated that in the 1960's and early 1970's \$150,000,000 in property was leveled to build twenty-three miles of freeway. In 1973 the schools were described as declining in quality and largely custodial rather than truly educational, as in the suburbs (Time, 1973:72-73).

In the past, the decline of the public schools has caused dismay and promoted departure from some white neighborhoods in the path of the expanding ghetto; now residents throughout the city are suffering from the budget cuts. Those whites who would normally utilize the public schools have a number of good reasons to send their children to private schools or to leave Detroit. Besides the quality of the schools, the racial aspect of the busing program will probably discourage whites from staying in the system. It is questionable how long the 55-45 ratio of blacks to whites can be maintained in the schools involved in the integration plan, especially in view of the long-term shift in the city's racial composition.

One highly visible symbol to Detroit's whites that "they" are "taking over" the city is the black mayor. Such a development in a city with such a bad record of race relations indicates that white political power has probably been lost forever. In 1949 Albert Cobo beat George Edwards in the mayoral race on the basis of opposition to public housing in single-family home areas. He had the strong support of the white homeowner groups in many neighborhoods, and the racial issue was very close to the surface during the election (Abrams, 1955:97-98). Twenty-five years later, racial transition caught up with the electoral process, and Coleman Young beat the white ex-police commissioner at the polls by 14,000 votes (Newsweek, 1973:48).

While the loss of political power may make many of the city's whites unhappy, a decade of rapidly rising crime has them frightened. The increase in violent crime, particularly murder, has been astounding in recent years. Between 1964 and 1974 the number of murders and non-negligent manslaughters increased from 125 to 714 per year. During the same time period robberies more than quadrupled, to 20,000 per year. With the notable exception of murder, most crimes on the F.B.I. index increased at about the same rate in Detroit as in the rest of Michigan. Unfortunately, the city, with less than one-sixth of the state's population, had far more than its share of serious crime in all major categories except larceny, during that entire period. In 1975 Detroit had about 60 per cent of the murders, two-thirds of the robberies and

nearly half of the auto thefts in Michigan. The 46,233 25  
burglaries in 1975 meant that there was nearly a one-in-ten  
chance that a building in Detroit would be broken into dur-  
ing that year (U.S. Dept. of Justice, 1964-1975).

The upsurge in crime in Detroit during the last decade  
has also included group as well as individual crime. The  
most recent example is the rise in youth gang violence in  
1976. During the first half of the year five persons were  
killed and fifty injured in gang attacks. The climax came  
during the summer when 150 black gang members interrupted  
a rock concert in the city's downtown auditorium (Salman  
and Manning, 1976:47). The series of robberies, assaults  
and rapes on this occasion and during a public fireworks  
display several days before the Fourth of July shocked the  
city government into action. Four hundred fifty previously  
laid-off policemen were reinstated, and a strict 10 P.M. cur-  
few on persons under eighteen years of age was enacted (Salman  
and Manning, 1976:49).

Besides gang activities, the city has suffered from  
extremely large scale violence on several occasions within  
the past decade. The worst outbreak was the huge riot of  
1967, with forty-three deaths and widespread property dam-  
age. This eruption in particular probably made a profound  
impression on white Detroiters who were worried about the  
changes that were taking place in their city. Again in  
April, 1968 and July, 1975 the ghetto threatened to explode,  
but the police were able to restore order before the toll in

life and property began to approach that of 1967.

The total picture of life in Detroit in the 1970's is quite bleak from the white point of view. The emergence of a black majority, with the loss of white influence that it implies in politics, seems likely to engender a sense of helplessness in those who live in the remaining white areas of the city. They could not have expected the black mayor to help prevent the school integration plan from being implemented. At the same time the quality of life in Detroit is being visibly eroded, and the likelihood of becoming a victim of crime is increasing. All of these problems have occurred concurrently with the racial transition in the city. The deterioration of the schools has coincided with the increase in black enrollment. Eighty per cent of the murders involve blacks, and the proportion of solved killings remains abnormally low (U.S. News and World Report, 1974:38). The youth gang violence is almost totally black, and a major racial riot remains a very real possibility every summer.

Other American cities have black mayors, and the problems in Detroit exist to some degree in many other localities. However, the combination of the loss of political power and the numerous, often uniquely severe, urban problems with racial overtones has created a new type of situation in white Detroit. Throughout wide areas of the West Side, white residents have reassessed the desirability of living in Detroit. Their decisions mean that the West Side has reached, and white Detroit as a whole is approaching, the "tipping point."

## CHAPTER IV

### NEIGHBORHOOD RESISTANCE TO CHANGE:

#### A MATTER OF ETHNICITY?

While the black population of Detroit has been growing steadily for the last several decades, the distribution of the increase through the central neighborhoods of the city has been remarkably uneven. Complete racial change in some neighborhoods has come about in the space of a decade. In others, the process has taken several decades. Still other white areas have remained completely stable for many years, despite close proximity to large black communities. Some racial boundaries visible in the 1940 and 1950 census block maps still existed at the time of the 1970 enumeration. White neighborhoods only a few miles from the central business district have remained stable, while by 1972, the far reaches of the Northwest side--ten miles from the city's heart--were undergoing rapid transition. While the general trend toward an overwhelmingly-black Detroit is obvious, the different rates of change east and west of Woodward Avenue<sup>1</sup> and the neighborhood variations within both halves of the city deserve further examination.<sup>2</sup> The scope

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<sup>1</sup>See Table 3.

<sup>2</sup>See Maps 1-4.

TABLE 3

DETROIT, 1940-1970: RACIAL DISTRIBUTION AND DECENNIAL CHANGE  
EAST AND WEST OF WOODWARD AVENUE

Year	Total Population	White and Other Races	Black	Per Cent Black	Per Cent of City Black Population	Decennial Per Cent Change of Total	Decennial Per Cent Change of White and Other Races Population	Decennial Per Cent Change of Black Population
Detroit								
1940	1,623,452	1,474,333	149,119	9.2	100.0	---	---	---
1950	1,849,568	1,549,062	300,506	16.2	100.0	13.9	5.1	101.5
1960	1,670,144	1,187,921	482,223	28.9	100.0	-9.7	-23.3	60.5
1970	1,511,482	851,054	660,428	43.7	100.0	-9.5	-28.4	37.0
Population East of Woodward Ave.								
1940	759,868	642,953	116,915	15.4	78.4	---	---	---
1950	857,797	642,990	214,807	25.0	71.5	12.9	0	83.7
1960	709,432	482,286	227,146	32.0	47.1	-17.3	-25.0	5.7
1970	623,678	358,110	265,568	42.6	40.2	-12.1	-25.7	16.9
Population West of Woodward Ave.								
1940	863,584	831,380	32,204	3.7	21.6	---	---	---
1950	991,771	906,072	85,699	8.6	28.5	14.8	9.0	166.1
1960	960,712	705,635	255,077	26.6	52.9	-3.1	-22.1	197.6
1970	887,804	492,944	394,860	44.5	59.8	-7.6	-30.1	54.8



of this paper limits the study of neighborhood characteristics to ethnicity, but evidence from Detroit and elsewhere indicate that it is of no little importance in this and other large American cities.

There has been some notice given to the amount of resistance to black entry into various types of white neighborhoods during the past fifty years, both in the sociological literature and in popular writings. In 1928 Burgess (Lieberson, 1963:121) noted that some types of white ethnic areas in Chicago were more prone to black invasion than others. In the 1960's it was popular knowledge that some types of white ethnic neighborhoods changed quietly, while others confronted expanding black areas with stiff resistance that often included violence (White, 1963:110). Before examining the neighborhoods of Detroit with respect to ethnic differences and the rate of neighborhood change, it is instructive to look at a clear-cut case of two white communities that constitute polar extremes in resistance to black entry--one that will soon be overwhelmingly black and another which has retained its racial and ethnic character despite the nearness of large ghetto areas.

The examples that illustrate the two extremes are two suburbs. These two suburbs, Hamtramck and Highland Park, differ from the stereotype of suburbia in several ways. The first is that they are entirely surrounded by Detroit. This is not too unusual in itself. Chicago, Indianapolis, Houston and Oakland, among other cities, all have at least one suburb

that is completely surrounded by the central city. The second difference, attributable to the two Detroit suburbs but to few other "surrounded" suburbs, is that they are near the geographic center of Detroit and thus have been in close proximity to large black and racially changing neighborhoods for years.

Highland Park and Hamtramck exemplify the different results that commonly occur when two different types of neighborhoods are confronted with impending racial change. Highland Park will be taken as an example of a heterogeneous, "All-American" neighborhood whose white population is not concentrated in any one ethnic group and in which northern European groups seem to predominate. Hamtramck, on the other hand, has a white population that belongs overwhelmingly to one continental European ethnic group, the Poles.<sup>3</sup>

Before dealing further with the composition of these two sample white populations, it is important to know the extent to which racial transition has occurred in the two suburbs. Table 5 presents the census data from 1910, before the rapid population growth of the two suburbs began, to 1970.<sup>4</sup>

Highland Park shows a very rapid increase in black population during every decade except the Depression-era 1930's. Racial block data is available for the city of Highland Park

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<sup>3</sup>See Table 4.

<sup>4</sup>See p. 33.

TABLE 4

FOREIGN-BORN WHITES, 1940 AND 1950, AND FOREIGN STOCK, 1960 AND 1970

	1940	Per Cent	1950	Per Cent	1960	Per Cent	1970	Per Cent
Detroit								
Great Britain	41,012	12.8	31,519	11.4	46,493	8.6	25,474	7.5
Canada	74,137	23.1	63,820	23.1	98,803	18.4	58,644	17.2
Poland	52,235	16.3	44,611	16.1	106,739	19.9	61,136	17.9
Russia	20,252	6.3	19,159	6.9	33,142	6.2	15,724	4.6
Italy	26,277	8.2	24,496	8.9	47,689	8.9	30,376	8.9
Hungary	11,382	3.5	9,303	3.4	14,202	2.6	7,023	2.1
All Others	95,369	29.7	83,562	30.2	190,378	35.4	142,756	41.8
TOTAL	320,664	100.0	276,470	100.0	537,446	100.0	341,133	100.0
Hamtramck								
Great Britain	44	.3	71	.6	190	1.1	120	.9
Canada	448	3.0	360	3.2	478	2.7	623	4.6
Poland	12,260	81.4	8,309	74.8	13,105	72.8	9,208	67.6
Russia	670	4.4	1,060	9.5	1,494	8.3	1,056	7.8
Italy	147	1.0	125	1.1	286	1.6	120	.9
Hungary	55	.4	33	.3	71	.4	33	.2
All Others	1,446	9.6	1,445	10.3	2,377	13.2	2,457	18.0
TOTAL	15,070	100.0	11,103	100.0	18,001	100.0	13,617	100.0

Continued next page.

TABLE 4 Continued.

	1940	Per Cent	1950	Per Cent	1960	Per Cent	1970	Per Cent
Highland Park								
Great Britain	2,782	25.8	1,803	22.8	2,093	16.6	786	12.4
Canada	3,201	29.7	2,364	29.9	3,217	25.5	1,232	19.4
Poland	143	1.3	136	1.7	503	4.0	295	4.6
Russia	173	1.6	131	1.7	438	3.5	252	4.0
Italy	822	7.6	442	5.6	691	5.5	262	4.1
Hungary	171	1.6	113	1.4	136	1.1	49	.8
All Others	3,477	32.3	2,929	37.0	5,526	43.8	3,471	54.7
TOTAL	10,769	100.0	7,918	100.0	12,604	100.0	6,347	100.0

TABLE 5

TOTAL POPULATION, 1910-1973 AND BLACK POPULATION 1910-1970  
HAMTRAMCK AND HIGHLAND PARK

Year	Hamtramck			Highland Park		
	Total	Black	Per Cent Black	Total	Black	Per Cent Black
1910	3,559	85	2.4	4,120	15	.4
1920	48,615	2,022	4.2	46,499	358	.8
1930	56,268	4,068	7.2	52,959	1,171	2.2
1940	49,839	3,363	6.7	50,810	1,292	2.5
1950	43,355	4,733	10.9	46,393	3,877	8.4
1960	34,137	4,908	14.4	38,063	7,947	20.9
1970	27,245	3,270	12.0	35,444	19,609	55.3
July 1, 1973	24,370 (U.S. Census Bureau estimates)			34,471 (U.S. Census Bureau estimates)		

for the most recent censuses.<sup>5</sup> Between 1940 and 1960, when the black community increased six-fold, most of the black population was confined within limited areas west of Hamilton Avenue and in the southeasternmost part of the city. As late as 1960, more than half of the residential blocks in the city had no black residents. By 1960, however, the neighborhoods in Detroit to the south and west had become heavily black. During the 1960's Highland Park went from one-fifth to over one-half black. Only about a dozen blocks were still all-white. Most of the blocks with black residents in 1960 were now predominantly black, and some black families were living on most of the remaining blocks in the city. While the central and northern portions of Highland Park present the appearance of integration on the 1970 block map, it is as illusory as the "integration" found at the same time between Greenfield and Schaefer roads in Detroit. 1972 racial enrollment figures for the Highland Park public schools point to continuing rapid transition (U.S. Dept. of H.E.W., 1972:644). It is probable that within the next few years most of the remaining white population will leave, and Highland Park will be distinguishable from the adjacent black areas of Detroit only by the fact that it is a separate municipality.

In terms of total population, Hamtramck has consistently been comparable to Highland Park both in growth

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<sup>5</sup>See Maps 5-8, pp. 95-98.

trends and total population size. Both communities grew more than tenfold during the decade of the First World War, and both reached peak census year populations in excess of 50,000 in 1930. Hamtramck and Highland Park have both recorded population losses at every subsequent census. Hamtramck's decline has been slightly more rapid than its neighbor's; in 1970 Hamtramck had fewer than half as many inhabitants as it had in 1930.

Both cities are quite compact in shape and small in land area. They are both quite close to the central business areas of Detroit as well as its more crowded inner residential neighborhoods. Both Hamtramck and Highland Park are partially isolated from some adjoining Detroit neighborhoods by railroad tracks, factories, arterial streets and other non-residential strips of land.

All of these similarities of total population size, growth rate and geography leave the superficial impression that Highland Park and Hamtramck are virtual twin cities. Nothing could be further from the truth. Racial transition is one matter in which the two suburbs have strikingly different histories. It has already been shown that by 1970 Highland Park was over one-half black and that its population composition would probably soon be like that of the adjacent Detroit ghetto neighborhoods. With the similarities just mentioned, Hamtramck would seem to be a prime candidate for a similar transformation. Despite the rapid change in many surrounding Detroit neighborhoods, this has not been the re-

sult in Hamtramck.

Until 1950, Hamtramck's black population was considerably larger than that in Highland Park, as Table 5 shows. The census block statistics cover Hamtramck only in 1940, when it was still large enough under contemporary criteria to be included, and 1970, when the Census Bureau began to publish data for entire urbanized areas.<sup>6</sup> In 1940 three areas of the city accounted for the majority of the black residents. The northwesternmost area, the northeastern neighborhood east of Conant and south of Caniff, and the southernmost residential area were the centers of the black population. There were at least a few blacks in each of the remaining neighborhoods in Hamtramck; only about half of these blocks were all-white. During the 1940's and 1950's Hamtramck's total population continued to decline, and the black community grew somewhat larger. By 1960 Hamtramck was 14.4 per cent black. During the 1950's Highland Park's black population surpassed Hamtramck's both in size and in its proportion of the total population. Although there is no racial city block data for Hamtramck for 1950 or 1960, census tract information indicates that no major change took place in the pattern of black residential distribution.

The 1970 census revealed a loss of about 7,000 residents in Hamtramck in ten years. This was to be expected, a continuation of a long-term, steady population loss. The

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<sup>6</sup>See Maps 5 and 8.



loss of one-third of the black population was something different. There had been a 17 per cent decline during the Depression decade, but the black population had increased substantially in the 1940's and continued to grow during the 1950's. The 1970 black population was 3,270, down from 4,908 ten years before. The 1970 black percentage of Hamtramck's population was 12.0, down from 14.4 in 1960. The racial block map for 1970 bears an amazing likeness to the 1940 racial pattern. The most notable change is the corridor cut across the northwestern part of the city for the construction of a freeway. At the extreme south end of the city, other residential blocks near the Chrysler plant had been cleared. These developments make it advisable to compare the city in 1970 on a tract-by-tract basis with the 1960 data to see where the net loss of 1,638 black residents during the 1960's occurred.

The two northwestern tracts affected by the freeway project had a combined loss of 730. The southernmost tract had a loss of 784 black residents. These two tracts account for more than 92 per cent of the decrease in black population. Of the remaining eight tracts, four gained in black population and four lost. The net loss in black population for these eight tracts as a whole was only 124. The conclusion to be drawn from this is that Hamtramck's black population would probably have remained stable and might even have increased if the various residential demolition projects had not been carried out. Just by remaining at its

1960 size, the black community would have increased its proportion in the total population because of the steady decline in the size of the white population. The demolition of heavily black areas brought the black proportion of the total population in 1970 to a level below that of 1960. In raw numbers, the blacks were actually less numerous in 1970 than they were in 1930. This stands in sharp contrast to Highland Park, which was in fact, if not in law, being annexed to the immense Detroit black community. Some possible reasons for this strange contrast between neighboring communities will be examined in some detail.

The ethnic data for Hamtramck and Highland Park suggest one major reason for the preservation of the former from major racial transition: even in 1970 over two-thirds of the foreign stock in Hamtramck was Polish. Arthur Evans Wood made major use of this fact in differentiating Hamtramck from Highland Park and other localities lacking distinct ethnic identity:

Always Hamtramck has been a highly self-conscious community, proud of its Polish traditions, resentful of criticism, and confident in its economic advantages. Such qualities form an admirable basis for future progressive developments. Though the proportion of the Polish-born in the population will decline further in the coming years, at present there seems to be no diminution in the essential Polishness of the community, which remains a fascinating cultural island within the confines of the City of Detroit. (Wood, 1955:10)

Two decades later William K. Stevens (1974:61) in the New York Times could still report that strong community feeling existed in Hamtramck, focused on the Catholic churches,

Polish ethnic clubs and sports teams.

One result of the strong sense of community in Hamtramck is that when actual or possible increases in the city's black population threatened to change its basic character, action to oppose such developments was proposed at the official municipal level. Two plans, one which was not acted upon and the other which was carried out, matched in brazenness many schemes of subterfuge attempted by Southern jurisdictions faced with the requirement to integrate.

The first instance was a proposal in 1954, never actually adopted, to sell the city's public housing project to private interests to avoid compliance with a court order to admit black families. It was alleged that some local Catholic leaders were also opposed to letting blacks live in the project (Wood, 1955:238). While it would have been serious if Hamtramck had maintained exclusionary practices in public housing in the 1950's, the city's conduct in the 1960's, according to a 1971 U.S. District Court ruling, was extremely shocking. Judge Damon Keith ruled that the city of Hamtramck had used two urban renewal projects and the construction of a freeway to remove black families from the city. One urban renewal project leveled a heavily-black area in the southern part of the city to construct a new parking lot for an auto plant. In the other urban renewal project, the homes of eighteen black families were selectively torn down before any of their white neighbors were affected. City officials allegedly arranged to have the

route of the new I-75 freeway, which would have bypassed Hamtramck, cut through a northwestern black area, displacing many of its residents and isolating the rest from the remainder of Hamtramck (Salpukas, 1971:19).

Judge Keith's ruling sheds much light on the curious, sharp decline in the black population of Hamtramck noted between the 1960 and 1970 censuses (Salpukas, 1971:19). Hamtramck is a rather extreme case of the community or neighborhood that uses every available means to prevent large-scale black settlement from altering its special ethnic character. As a city, Hamtramck had the ability, if not the right, to hinder black population growth within its boundaries. As a tightly-knit ethnic community, it also had a consensus that major black inroads would seriously damage the desirable existing conditions and that whatever necessary preventive measures were possible should be carried out. The conditions in adjacent Highland Park probably only stiffen the resolve of the Hamtramck residents who want to maintain its ethnic character. While Hamtramck's violent crime rate has remained low during the 1960's and 1970's, Highland Park has suffered the same large increase in crime that was registered in Detroit. In 1973 and 1974 the racially changing inner suburb had a per capita homicide rate that was half again that of Detroit, the alleged national murder capital (U.S. Dept. of Justice, 1964-1975).

After this rather instructive comparison-contrast of Hamtramck and Highland Park, it is evident that it may

be very useful to examine the neighborhoods of the city of Detroit to see if distinct ethnic character or lack of same has had any bearing on the uneven course of expansion of the city's black areas.<sup>7</sup>

If the Hamtramck-Highland Park experience is applicable in Detroit, ethnic communities should be less vulnerable to racial transition than heterogeneous areas or neighborhoods without a distinctive ethnic stamp. Ethnic areas would be expected to remain overwhelmingly white, or, at least, succumb to racial transformation much more slowly than other types of residential neighborhoods.

To most accurately determine the ethnic character of Detroit's white neighborhoods, this study used the data on the place of birth of foreign-born whites that is contained in the census tract data for the 1950 enumeration.<sup>8</sup> It used the 1950 census because it was the most recent count in which

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<sup>7</sup>An extremely important issue in regard to flight or resistance on the part of whites is financial resources. Although examination of economic variables is beyond the scope of this paper, available census tract data indicate that both in the Highland Park-Hamtramck situation and in the case of Detroit as a whole, those financially most able tend to depart most rapidly. In 1960, the median family income in white tracts in Highland Park was up to \$2,000 higher than that in Hamtramck. The same contrast held true in Detroit where the soon-to-disappear Jewish areas had median family incomes \$2,000, \$3,000 or more higher than the stable Polish neighborhoods. Rosenthal (1975:287) presents 1970 census data that suggests that Jewish median family income is about \$2,000 higher than that of Poles.

<sup>8</sup>1940 and 1950 census tract data list only foreign-born whites; 1960 and 1970 data cover foreign-born persons of all races and their children.

the black population was still confined mainly within the narrow corridor east of Woodward. This meant that the neighborhoods added to the black community during the 1950's, 1960's and 1970's were still mostly or all-white. Thus their ethnic composition could be viewed in the light of the subsequent massive black expansion which enveloped many areas, but skirted others.

The preliminary survey of the 1950 tract data found that Detroit conformed to the ethnic pattern found generally in the United States during this period. The so-called "new" immigrants, those from Southern and Eastern Europe, were definitely more segregated within their own zones of concentration than those from Northern and Western Europe (Lieberson, 1963:76). However, both groups were highly segregated from the black population, which was another widespread finding in the cities Lieberson studied (1963:132). The large elements of the foreign-born population from Great Britain, Canada (overwhelmingly English-speaking) and Germany were found wherever whites lived in Detroit in 1950, and no meaningful pattern approaching any sort of neighborhood concentration could be found. The national categories of the "new" immigration produced different results, though. Members of the four largest of these groups in Detroit were concentrated in certain neighborhoods, in some cases to a remarkable degree, though never to the extreme degree that blacks were. These four national categories were in descending order of size: (1) Poles, 16.1 per cent; (2) Italians, 8.9 per cent;

(3) Russians, 6.9 per cent; and (4) Hungarians, 3.4 per cent.<sup>43</sup>

To determine any relationship between the ethnic concentrations of these four groups and the course of the growth of black Detroit, the ethnic patterns of each group in 1950 were compared with the racial patterns in the city. Concentrations of each of the four ethnic groups in 1950 are presented on census tract maps as per cent of all foreign-born whites. Although the Census Bureau makes no attempt to discover the national origins of native-born persons of native parentage, the concentrations noted on Maps 9 through 15 are probably reasonable accurate indicators of the composition of the white population in the tracts indicated.<sup>8</sup>

In the following analysis, the Hungarian, Italian, Polish and Russian ethnic areas of 1950 will all be identified, and their fates during the subsequent massive black expansion will be noted.

In 1950 there were 9,303 Hungarian-born white residents in Detroit. They constituted 3.4 per cent of the foreign-born white population in that year. More than one-third of them lived in the southwestern part of the city, along Fort Street on both sides of the River Rouge. In Census Tract 54, over two-thirds of the foreign-born were Hungarians. Map 9 shows that eight other nearby tracts had foreign populations

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<sup>8</sup>Pp. 99-105.

that were at least one-quarter Hungarian. The foreign-born white populations in six other adjacent tracts were over 10 per cent Hungarian. There were no other major concentrations of Hungarians in Detroit. There were Hungarian-born persons in nearly every remaining census tract in the city, but in very small numbers. The chief exceptions were East Side tracts that were almost totally black.

During the twenty years between the 1950 and 1970 censuses, the amount of racial change in Detroit's southwestern census tracts that comprised the Hungarian immigrant area ranged from no black increase whatever to virtually complete transition. North of Fort Street such tracts as 59 and 74 were virtually all-white at both censuses. On the other hand, the neighborhood bordering River Rouge and Ecorse, which was in the early stages of change in 1950, was over 95 per cent black in 1970.

The core of the 1950 Hungarian community was Tract 54, whose immigrant population was over half Hungarian. It lost about two-fifths of its total population in the following twenty years. The other tracts south of Fort Street suffered similar or even larger declines. All of these tracts had some black residents, and this segment of the population registered a slight numerical increase. The only tract in this group to become predominantly black was Tract 53. It went from under one-fourth to over two-thirds black. Tract 54, the center of the Hungarian settlement, was more typical of these tracts in that it exhibited much more racial stability. The



black proportion rose from under 16 per cent to slightly <sup>45</sup> over 21 per cent.

On balance, the Hungarian area, as defined by the 1950 census, maintained quite remarkable racial stability. During the same time period the city population changed from 16 to almost 44 per cent black, and many square miles underwent complete racial transition.

Italian-born persons made up 8.9 per cent of the foreign-born white population. A majority of the 24,496 Italians in Detroit were located east of Woodward Avenue. The one notable concentration of Italian-born Detroiters on the West Side was in Tract 57, southwest of the River Rouge. Here the Italians comprised just over one-half of the immigrant population. Three other southwestern and four northwestern tracts had foreign populations that were at least 10 per cent Italian.

Returning to the other side of Woodward, Italians made up nearly one-half of the white immigrant population of the southeasternmost census tract in suburban Highland Park. This tract was also about two-fifths black. North of Hamtramck and Highland Park was a cluster of eight Detroit tracts with foreign-born populations that were over 10 per cent Italian. This was not, however, the center of the Detroit Italian community. Map 10 reveals that many tracts on both sides of Gratiot Avenue from near the central business district all the way to Eight Mile Road had significant Italian representation among their foreign-born popula-

tions. However, there was no extreme concentration of these immigrants comparable to that of racial minorities. The four East Side tracts with Italian majorities in their immigrant populations accounted for under 10 per cent of the city's Italian population. Two of these, Tracts 514 and 526, were predominantly black. There were small numbers of blacks in many of the East Side Italian areas west of Conner, but the neighborhoods farther to the northeast were virtually all-white. About two dozen of the tracts west of Conner had Italian immigrant percentages between one-quarter and one-half of the foreign total. Farther to the northeast most of the census tracts had between 10 and 25 per cent Italian foreign populations.

The twenty years between 1950 and 1970 have seen massive racial transition in most of those tracts containing significant Italian immigrant population at the start of the period. On the West Side, the southern half of Tract 57 changed from white to black along with the rest of the southwestern tip of Detroit. The rest of Tract 57, along Oakwood Boulevard, remained a white area.

On the East Side, nearly all of the tracts identified as centers of Italian settlement on Map 10 that lay west of Conner Avenue had become predominantly black. The proportion black in most cases ranged from the upper eighties to well over 95 per cent black. What foreign stock still remained consisted largely of Italian immigrants and their children. Except in the areas immediately adjacent to the expanding

black community, the Italian areas east of Conner received no black influx during the 1950's and 1960's. The nationality tables for the 1970 census tracts indicate an increase in the importance of the Italian population in these far northeastern white tracts--a population shift out of the older Italian neighborhoods that were now part of the black area.

Table 3's data on the racial composition of the part of Detroit lying east of Woodward Avenue reveal that there was no massive increase in the black population between 1950 and 1970. Much of the racial change in the 1950 Italian zone can be attributed to a shift in the black population from the crowded slums just east of Woodward. Portions of the old Paradise Valley ghetto had been given over to various redevelopment projects and a major freeway by 1970.

In general, the Italian neighborhoods of Detroit as defined in the 1950 census underwent immense changes in twenty years. The principal East Side Italian area west of Conner had virtually disappeared in twenty years because of the eastward expansion of the black zone.

In 1950 there were 44,611 Polish immigrants in Detroit. They were exceeded in number only by the 63,820 natives of the country across the Detroit River--Canada--among the foreign born. Poles comprised about one-sixth of all immigrant Detroiters. The Poles were very heavily concentrated in two distinct locations, one east and one west of Woodward Avenue. Map 11 shows one heavily Polish area that comprised both

sides of Michigan Avenue between West Grand Boulevard and the city's border with suburban Dearborn. Its core was a cluster of twenty-one census tracts with predominantly Polish foreign populations. In many of them Poles were 70 to 80 per cent of the foreign-born white population. The Michigan Avenue Polish area contained about ten thousand persons who had immigrated from Poland.

The East Side Polish community extended from near the central business district to Eight Mile Road. It was shaped roughly like an equilateral triangle with the northern city limits as one boundary. Gratiot Avenue bounded the area on the southeast, while the major Detroit black areas and the city of Highland Park formed part of its western border. The East Side Polish area contained nearly 25,000 immigrants. Eight thousand lived in the city of Hamtramck, and the rest were in Detroit.

Map 11 shows that the portion of the district closest to downtown Detroit contained nine tracts with predominantly Polish immigrant populations. As on the West Side, Poles were often two-thirds or even three-fourths of all immigrants. Tract 538 was predominantly black, and Tracts 539, 541, 548 and 549 had some black residents, but the remaining Polish tracts to the east were nearly all-white.

To the north, Hamtramck's immigrant population was three-quarters Polish. The map shows that the adjacent Detroit tracts to the north and east were heavily Polish as well. The western halves of Tracts 571 and 572 were predom-

inantly black. Black neighborhoods also made up portions of Tracts 603, 604 and 605. Tract 603 also contained the black Sojourner Truth public housing project. The black population in this part of Detroit was approximately twenty thousand in 1950.

Like the other major immigrant groups, Poles were found all over Detroit, but these two great areas just described were the center of the Polish community. The map shows a few smaller concentrations west of Woodward Avenue, but they were quite small in comparison with the Michigan Avenue and East Side Polish districts. There are seventeen tracts on the map located on the West Side above Grand River Avenue that are marked as containing immigrant populations from 10 to 25 per cent Polish. They consist of the cluster surrounding Tract 177 and, farther north, Tract 302. As will be elaborated later, it is probable that the majority of these individuals were Jews, rather than ethnic Poles. Thus the concentration of ethnic Poles is even more striking than Map 11 appears to indicate.

A comparison of 1950 census tracts with predominantly Polish foreign populations to the racial block maps of Detroit for 1960 and 1970 reveals a very striking resistance to racial change. In fact, no other major nationality category in the Detroit census data had a residential pattern consisting almost entirely of neighborhoods that had remained completely white in close proximity to expanding black districts or underwent racial change only at an extremely

slow rate during those twenty years.

Of the census tracts west of Woodward with Poles comprising a majority of immigrants, only four had become predominantly black. They were Tracts 111, 116, 122 and 123. Map 11 shows that they were the closest to the rapidly-expanding West Side black ghetto. The extremely slow pace of black expansion in this direction is further emphasized by the fact that two of the Polish tracts that had become predominantly black by 1970 were already nearly half-black in 1950.

On the other side of Woodward, the Polish area south of Hamtramck in Detroit was still predominantly white. Since 1950, the Detroit neighborhoods to the south and east had become predominantly black so that the Polish area was surrounded on three sides by black neighborhoods. As the black zone further encroached from the west, south and east during the 1950's and 1960's, the number of all-white blocks in this enclave diminished. There were scarcely a dozen such blocks left in 1970. Still, only Tracts 539, 541 and 549 had become predominantly black since 1950. Although this neighborhood appears to be headed for the same sort of racial change that has occurred in nearby East Side districts, its extremely slow rate of change is amazing, given the surroundings.

The story of the slow increase followed by the unusual decline of Hamtramck's black population has already been told. The adjacent Detroit tracts with immigrant populations that

were predominantly Polish were as resistant to racial change as the Detroit tracts previously discussed. The only northeast census tract to become predominantly black during the twenty year period in question was Tract 603, south of Seven Mile Road. In 1950, its black population was restricted almost entirely to the predominantly black Sojourner Truth public housing project. The construction of this project had inspired much opposition and some violence in the 1940's. In the 1950's, the surrounding private housing became mostly black, and the 1960's saw the expansion of black settlement into the tracts north of Seven Mile Road.

The Polish areas south of Tract 603 remained largely free of racial change. Tract 561 and neighborhoods to the east were in the early stages of racial transition in 1970, but the other tracts farther north were much more stable. Tracts 571 and 572 are striking examples of neighborhood stability. For more than thirty years the pair of tracts has been divided into a black western half and a white eastern half along the approximate line of Joseph Campau Street.

It is evident that much of the 1950 Polish area, especially on the East Side, is undergoing or about to begin racial change. It is also evident that for many years the expansion of a rapidly growing black community has skirted the Polish areas of the city. In 1970, Polish areas along Michigan Avenue within four miles of the central business district were still nearly all-white. Other neighborhoods on the far northwestern edge of the city which had no par-

ticular ethnic character were changing rapidly from white to black.

The resistance of Polish neighborhoods to racial change, even when squarely in the most likely paths of black community expansion, has no parallel in any of the other groups for which published census data is available. During the period from 1950 to 1970, when the Polish areas remained largely intact, Detroit's population changed from 16 to 44 per cent black.

In 1950 there were 19,159 Russian-born persons in Detroit. They made up 6.9 per cent of the immigrant population of the city. A majority of them lived in two nearby clusters of census tracts on the West Side. Map 13 shows that there were no tracts in Detroit in which Russians formed a majority of the foreign-born. However, they comprised more than one-quarter of the immigrant population in a group of a dozen census tracts north of West Grand Boulevard and east of Livernois, as well as nearby Tract 302 farther north. Some adjacent tracts had more than 10 per cent Russians among their immigrants, as did some western and southwestern tracts. The same was true of three tracts in the city of Hamtramck and Detroit Tracts 571 and 572, just to the north.

United States census data on Russian-born persons cannot be taken at face value. While the foreign-born Americans from most European nations are usually members of the principal ethnic group in their countries of origin, this is decidedly not the case with Russia. Rosenthal (1975:275)



found that although American census data do not identify Jews per se, their preponderance within the Russian stock makes data for that category largely equivalent to information on the Jewish population. It also means that census tract data on Russians may be used with considerable reliability to pinpoint Jewish neighborhoods.

Even though Jews account for the vast majority of Russian-born Americans, it should be remembered that Ukrainians, ethnic Russians and others also emigrated to the United States. In attempting an analysis of data on Russians for a specific city, such as Detroit, it is wise to find out how many ethnic groups are heavily represented in that category and if any of them are concentrated in specific neighborhoods. Professor Fauman (1972) stated that since World War II the areas of heavy Jewish concentration in Detroit have all been located within the area bounded by Woodward Avenue on the east, West Grand Blvd. on the south, Grand River Avenue on the southwest and Eight Mile Road on the north. The Russian-born groups in Hamtramck, Northeast and Southwest Detroit were composed mainly of Ukrainians. In the Jewish area just defined, it is probable that there were many foreign-born Jews from countries other than Russia. Map 11 shows a scattering of Poles in the principal Jewish area. Rosenthal (1975:282) found that Jews from other European countries were also found in Russian Jewish tracts in Cincinnati.

The Detroit Jewish community has probably shifted in

terms of residential location more than any other white ethnic group in the city in this century. Fauman (1972) stated that the first major Eastern European Jewish settlement was in the area that later became the focus of large-scale black settlement during World War I and the 1920's--the near East Side. The next center of the Jewish population was the district just west of Hamtramck and east of Woodward. Map 12 indicates the location of the Russian foreign-born white population in 1940. It shows the declining Jewish population in the area just mentioned and its successor as the principal Jewish neighborhood--the 12th Street-Russel Woods area. By 1940, many blacks had moved into the older Jewish zone east of Woodward and north of East Grand Blvd. By 1950, blacks had entered the 12th Street area, and the Jewish population was shifting farther to the northwest. More than one-fourth of the foreign-born whites in Tract 302 were Russians. The old Jewish areas east of Woodward were now almost totally black.

The rapid shift of the Jewish population and the rapid filling up of their former neighborhoods by blacks make it worthwhile to look at the 1960 and 1970 tract maps. Although the census tract data category for national origin was changed in 1960 from foreign-born white to foreign stock, it is doubtful if there was any significant change in the accuracy with which the Russian data identified Jewish areas. By 1960, the Russel Woods-12th Street Jewish population had largely

moved to the northwest, mainly around Seven Mile Road.<sup>9</sup> 55  
1970 revealed a further decline in Jewish population on the  
Northwest Side.<sup>10</sup> Russel Woods was about 90 per cent black,  
and the principal 1960 Jewish areas were now over one-half  
black.

The net effect of all of these transformations has  
been to remove the Jewish population from the city center to  
the northwest suburbs in a few decades. This is graphically  
illustrated by the fact that in the 1960's Russian stock in  
the metropolitan area declined from 55,000 to 47,000, while  
in suburban Oak Park and Southfield--just northwest of the  
city--the Russian stock rose from 6,000 to 11,000. Since  
1970, racial change has continued at a very rapid rate in  
the major remaining 1970 Jewish areas in Detroit, and has  
spread almost to the northwestern corner of the city.

Detroit's Jewish neighborhoods have exhibited less  
stability than any of the other of the major ethnic areas of  
the city. While Detroit's 1950 Polish neighborhoods have  
remained about entirely intact in subsequent decades, two  
major, distinct Jewish areas have become predominantly black  
during the same time period. Two earlier Jewish settlements  
became predominantly black between 1910 and 1950. This  
neighborhood-by-neighborhood outward progression of the  
Jewish community is in its final phase as far as the city of

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<sup>9</sup>See Map 14.

<sup>10</sup>See Map 15.

Detroit is concerned. The impending movement of the remainder of the Northwest Side Jewish population to Oakland County and other suburban areas means that the city of Detroit will probably be the largest municipality in the Western Hemisphere without a significant Jewish population.

From this lengthy survey of the 1950 ethnic areas of the four nationality groups in question, it is evident that in the subsequent decades racial change in these neighborhoods has ranged from absolute racial stability in some, all the way to complete residential succession by blacks in others. Poles, the largest group in this analysis, had the most stable neighborhoods of any of the four white groups. Many of their areas were immune to black expansion during the whole period of more than two decades since 1950. Those Polish districts that have changed or are changing racially have done so at a remarkably slow rate, even when situated along major likely paths of black neighborhood expansion. The Hungarian zone in Southwest Detroit has also been very stable, despite the fact that blacks have lived in portions of the area since the late nineteenth century. The main Italian neighborhoods on the East Side in 1950 have since become heavily black, but as late as 1970 a small, largely-Italian white population remained. The newer Italian areas on the far Northeast Side form a major part of one of the last large, stable white zones in Detroit. No mass panic comparable to the post-1970 West Side white exodus has been evident here.

If the Italians have been less than successful in

maintaining the stability of their portions of Detroit, the Jewish story in this regard can be summarized as an absolute rout. From the immigrant area on the lower East Side to the final Detroit Jewish stronghold just south of west Eight Mile Road, four distinct Jewish neighborhoods have successively developed and subsequently become predominantly black. Most of this transition has occurred since 1950, although the process really began with the World War I black migration. The Jewish experience in this regard is the complete antithesis of the Polish situation. The fate of those 1950 white areas which had no particular ethnic character appears to have depended largely upon whether or not they were located in sectors containing outward-expanding black ghettos.<sup>11</sup> For example, the sector stretching west of downtown Detroit between Michigan Avenue and West Fort Street never experienced a black influx. On the other hand, the non-ethnic neighborhoods in the northwest sector between Grand River Avenue and Woodward underwent the same racial change that the Jewish neighborhoods did since 1950. The rapid outward spread of the black zone that developed near the inner part of that sector overtook all of the white neighborhoods in its path.

In general, the dichotomy of neighborhood types illustrated by the comparison of Highland Park and Hamtramck held up in this analysis of white neighborhoods in Detroit.

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<sup>11</sup>See discussion of Hoyt, pp. 15-16.

The Polish and Hungarian areas showed the same stability over a long period of time as Hamtramck did. It is difficult to make an accurate appraisal of the Italian situation because that group was not as concentrated as the Poles and Hungarians. It is quite probable that if the Detroit Italians had been concentrated in the same way that the other two groups were, their neighborhood would have been just as resistant to black succession. As it was, some Italians still lived in East Side neighborhoods that blacks had begun to move into more than twenty years before. Later, evidence from outside Detroit will be presented which shows that "little Italy's" have much in common with Detroit's Polish and Hungarian neighborhoods with respect to racial stability.

The non-ethnic areas of Detroit, like the city of Highland Park, exhibited none of the unusual stability found in ethnic communities confronted with the approach of the black ghetto. Detroit's Jewish areas form a very special case of the ethnic community whose vulnerability to racial transition is even greater than that of non-ethnic communities.

Is this model of differential neighborhood response to the approaching ghetto a peculiarity of Detroit, or is it found in other urban areas? Early in this discussion of ethnicity it was noted that it has been observed for years that different types of city neighborhoods reacted in different ways to black neighborhood expansion. There is some contemporary evidence that suggests in varying degrees that it is true. Greeley (1974:200) noted that Jews were more likely

than other ethnic groups to live in neighborhoods containing blacks, according to two different N.O.R.C. measures. Twenty-eight per cent of the Jews in the sample lived in racially mixed neighborhoods, and 21 per cent lived in census tracts five or more per cent black. This probably reflects in large measure the massive racial change underway in New York City. The Flatbush area of Brooklyn and the Grand Concourse area of the Bronx were heavily Jewish and are now undergoing racial change. Glazer and Moynihan (1963:187) observed that the New York Jewish neighborhoods in 1960 corresponded very little with the pattern that existed forty years before. On the other hand, the Italian neighborhoods of 1920 were still almost entirely intact in 1960.

Louis Wirth (1928:230) observed that blacks moved into the old Jewish area on the near West Side of Chicago because the residents offered much less resistance than whites in other parts of the city. He also noted the spread of the South Side black ghetto into the wealthy Grand Boulevard Jewish area (Wirth, 1928:231). During the 1950's the North Lawndale section of Chicago underwent an extremely rapid change from predominantly white and heavily Jewish to mostly black (Spear, 1967:223). Lawndale is west of the older neighborhood in which Wirth (1928:231) saw the beginning of black residential succession three decades before. There is a very close parallel, both in time and in circumstances, between the racial change in Wirth's old Chicago neighborhood and the lower East Side of Detroit. The same holds true for Lawndale in Chicago

and Twelfth Street-Russel Woods in Detroit in the 1950's.

One especially striking case of the marked tendency of Jewish neighborhoods to become black neighborhoods occurred in the northeastern Philadelphia district called Kensington. It contained an extremely small Jewish residential area occupied by neighborhood merchants. This section of several blocks subsequently became a tiny black speck in a part of Philadelphia that has otherwise resolutely maintained its racial exclusiveness (Binzen, 1970:93). An attempt by a black family to move into a house on a white Kensington block in 1966 set off five nights of rioting by the people in the neighborhood (Binzen, 1970:112). The contrast between the behavior of the Kensington Jews in their tiny enclave and the conduct of the other whites in the rest of the huge neighborhood many years later graphically symbolizes the two extremes of neighborhood reaction to black entry.

Other cities also have neighborhoods from which Jewish populations have departed and been replaced by blacks. McAllister Street in San Francisco's Western Addition was once the main street of the city's principal Jewish community. The whole area now comprises the southern part of the black Fillmore ghetto. A small black neighborhood off Western Avenue in South Bend, Indiana still contains synagogues that serve its former residents and their descendants.

Since it has been determined that there are real differences in the way that different types of ethnic neighborhoods react to the approaching edge of the black ghetto, an



attempt should be made to discover the attitudes and values behind this behavior. Since it might reflect badly on an ethnic group to be known either as the first group to flee at the sight of blacks or as the chief guardian of the racial purity of white neighborhoods, there is, understandably, little explicit literature on the subject. It may be possible, however, to put together a rough sketch of the origins of some ethnic attitudes on race and how this ties in with the actual course that racial transition has taken through the white neighborhoods of Detroit.

Recent attitude surveys indicate that there are definite differences in the ways that various white groups feel about race. Greeley (1971:210) quoted the answers to two questions on race given by four white ethnic groups. When asked if they would object to blacks' moving onto their block 46 per cent of the Germans, 40 per cent of the Irish, 34 per cent of the Poles and 29 per cent of the Italians said "no." When asked if they would approve of black members in their church, the affirmative percentages were 41, 28, 13 and 22 for the four groups, respectively. Poles in the Midwest had particularly high scores in one survey on measures of racism and anti-Semitism. Greeley (1971:69) said that the concentration of Poles in the Midwest probably caused the formation of large, tightly-knit communities with unfavorable attitudes toward blacks and Jews.

Greeley (1971:69) also noted that both Poles and Italians scored lower than other ethnic groups on a measure of

happiness. This may be of some importance in helping to understand their racial views. In another book on American ethnics, Greeley (1974:218) made a comparison, most useful for this study of Detroit, of the divergent racial views of Poles and Jews. The two groups were at the opposite extremes on every racial question, in a 1968 survey of fifteen cities. Several questions evaluating government performance led Greeley (1974:238) to surmise that Poles may feel considerably more alienated than other white groups. A lack of trust in government, doubts about their upward mobility and doubts about their acceptance in the society at large may be behind much of the racial animosity seen in these surveys. Shogan and Craig (1964:19) stated that in Detroit the more established ethnic groups did look down on the Poles who in turn disparaged the blacks, whom they also feared as an economic threat.

The Jewish answers to racial attitude questions were always diametrically opposed to those given by the Polish sample. Greeley (1974:237) said that this tolerance may stem partly from the generally more urban origins of the Jews in Europe as well as the radical and socialist views that many of the immigrants held. One of the Jewish property owners summed up his feelings rather succinctly for Louis Wirth (1928:231): "We Jews ought to be the last ones to hold a prejudice against another race, after all that we have been through."

Most of the ethnic neighborhoods in Detroit are surprisingly durable in spite of massive racial change in much of the city. Jewish neighborhoods are the exception, now in

the final stages of disappearance from Northwest Detroit. Survey data show that Poles, and probably the other groups in Detroit's stable white areas, have more negative attitudes toward blacks than the white population in general. Jews are at the other extreme, giving more support to black aspirations than any other white group. The next task is to ascertain the views of the ethnics, on the one hand, and the Jews, on the other, about their own city neighborhoods, especially in the context of the possibility of black residential succession.

The best, and possibly the only, recent analysis of this issue is found in a Commentary article by Marshall Sklare. His main purpose was to examine at some length the relationship between American Jews and American cities, but he looked at the attitudes of the other ethnics toward their neighborhoods, if only to establish a contrast with the Jews:

Ethnic Americans, in particular, of whatever origin, even after long residence in America, always retained an affection for the village life of their youth, and significant numbers actually returned to the native villages which they had never ceased to regard as their true homes. Of course, the majority of ethnics remained in America, but on their own terms; that is, they sought to recreate the life they had known in the old country. The Italians, for instance, had always lived in close-packed villages rather than in isolated rural cottages or farmhouses, and they moved more aggressively than other immigrant groups to replicate their native patterns in the "Little Italy's" which still exist in every large American city. (Sklare, 1972:70)

In contrast to these enduring ethnic areas, Jewish neighborhoods seldom retain such a hold on their populations.

Sklare (1972:76) believes that the exceptional upward mobility of the Jews may be part of the answer. They simply move to better neighborhoods more frequently because of their greater degree of economic success. He believes that the Jews, being more thoroughly acculturated than the other ethnics, have never been reluctant to leave the "old neighborhood." Sklare continued:

There is a further factor, the most important of all, and that is the Jews' lack of commitment to their physical environs. The Jewish neighborhood per se seems to have little symbolic, or even actual, significance for its residents, and its special facilities--synagogues, schools, kosher butchers, delicatessens, etc.--are looked upon as mere conveniences. There is little feeling for the area itself, and hence no overwhelming desire to preserve it from decay. The explanation which first suggests itself for this attitude is that Jewish psychology has been conditioned, by thousands of years of living in Exile, to react to situations of stress by a kind of avoidance behavior. Thus Jews did not feel that Brownsville (now a black neighborhood in Brooklyn), say, really belonged to them; when others claimed it, the Jews moved elsewhere. (Sklare, 1972:76-77)

Sklare (1972-76) demonstrated that in a general sense, Jews have been the most successful urbanites in American history. Their concern for the city as a whole is thought to exceed that of any other identifiable group in the country. It is the lack of deep feeling for and commitment to their individual neighborhoods, in conjunction with the massive growth of the urban black population, that influences American Jews to abandon many neighborhoods in a number of cities. Sklare noted the rapidity of this process:

The most striking case in point is the rapid decay--in some instances, the total disappearance--of many of the old urban Jewish neighborhoods. The cycle from non-Jewish to Jewish neighborhood and back to non-Jewish

is sometimes a mere thirty years. In communities where blacks form a high proportion of the population, as in Detroit, the cycle has been played out even more quickly. (Sklare, 1972:76)

It appears that the influx of blacks may inspire more precipitous departure by Jews than by other groups for two important reasons. First, a major black movement into a neighborhood would interfere with the desire of many Jews to live in heavily Jewish neighborhoods. Glazer and Moynihan (1963:161) noted that the proportion thought most desirable for a neighborhood by Jewish survey respondents in New York was half or more. Most Jews in New York live in relatively few, but heavily Jewish areas. Mayer (1960:216) found this concentration in the 1950's in Detroit. Ninety per cent of the Jews lived in a limited part of Detroit and in two north-western suburbs. Russel Woods had been 80 per cent Jewish just before the spreading West Side ghetto absorbed it (Mayer, 1960:201). The attractiveness of two suburbs and a north-western city neighborhood because they were "clearly Jewish" drew Russel Woods residents away as blacks moved in. Mayer (1960:216) observed that parents wanted their children to meet other Jewish children.

The deterioration or threat of deterioration of the public schools is one issue vital to Jewish residents when racial change is in progress. Sklare (1972:73) commented that when Weequahic High School in Newark declined, the Jewish population rapidly left the city. In Russel Woods, fear of the decline of the public schools was apparently the major factor in decisions to leave, even among those who

were not prejudiced against blacks (Mayer, 1960: 215-6).

Besides the widespread desire of Jews to cluster in their own areas and to maintain top grade public schools, another factor that may contribute to the rapid turnover of their neighborhoods once racial change starts is the lack of violent resistance. Glazer and Moynihan (1963:57) said that there has been less violent reaction to black entry into New York neighborhoods than elsewhere because the Jews would not use such tactics. General knowledge of this may help steer blacks seeking new housing to Jewish areas at the edge of the ghetto instead of trying to enter neighborhoods whose residents are inclined to use violence if necessary to keep the area white (White, 1963:110).

The combination of disinterest in the local neighborhood, desire to live in thoroughly Jewish surroundings, concern for the state of the schools, and a deeply-held disinclination to violently oppose black entry not only creates rapid racial change; it also fosters an attitude that is likely to sustain that process. One resident of the West Side serves as an example of the type of thinking that produces the self-fulfilling prophecy: "Our respondent in Russel Woods, for example, often said spontaneously: 'I know what's going to happen. I've seen it before in my life--first on Hastings, then Oakland, then 12th St.'" (Wolf, 1957:14).

This, then, is the urban Jewish neighborhood. It is a delicate entity, sensitive to the pressures that racial

change may bring to bear on a number of different facets of community life. This contrasts strongly with the Polish, Hungarian, Italian or other ethnic neighborhood, much loved by its residents and not as vulnerable to the same factors that rapidly empty Jewish areas of their residents. Many of the ethnics send their children to parochial schools, and are thus unaffected by the decline of the public system. By and large, the ethnic commitment to black civil rights is much lower than that of the Jews. In Detroit and elsewhere ethnics have rioted against actual or proposed black entry into their neighborhoods. Such outbreaks have given them a reputation that discourages blacks who have any regard for their personal safety from trying to settle among them. In Detroit this has meant that during the modern period of black population growth, the expanding ghetto has surged through non-ethnic areas and absorbed several successive Jewish districts, but has very obviously skirted the solidly-Polish zones on both sides of Woodward.

A very thorough examination of the phenomenon of ethnic differences in neighborhood resistance to racial change would have to look at education, economic factors and other salient variables before coming to any strong conclusions on what is definitely a very sensitive subject. However, it has been shown that there is a wide variation in neighborhood susceptibility to racial transition in Detroit and that the very stable white areas of central Detroit are mostly what could be defined as ethnic neighborhoods. Some reasons have been

suggested for their resistance as well as for the unusually rapid departure of nearly the whole Jewish community to the suburbs. The pursuit of these leads might bring some deeper understanding of the workings of Detroit and other urban areas.



## CHAPTER V

### SO WHAT IF WE DO NOTHING?

This study has described at length the recent racial history of Detroit, including the very significant new trend of racial turnover in much larger sections of the city than has occurred in connection with the normal process of block-by-block change. The question now arises concerning what will happen in Detroit if no remedial action is taken to prevent a general white stampede out of the city. There are already some indications.

The Census Bureau estimated that on July 1, 1973 Detroit's total population was 1,386,817. This represents, if accurate, a staggering loss of 125,000 residents in just over three years. To see how this huge decline affected the racial composition of the city, a 1973 black population estimate was calculated for this study. To estimate the size of the Detroit black population, an annual net increase of 18,000, which was the mean annual increase during the 1950's and 1960's according to the actual census enumerations of 1960 and 1970, was used. The resulting estimate of 715,000 black Detroiters can be considered close to the mark, if not actually conservative, for three reasons. First, the black public school enrollment continued to rise between 1970 and 1972. Second, there was no massive black increase in the

inner suburbs between 1970 and 1973. The growth of the black communities of Cleveland, St. Louis and other central cities had begun to slacken after 1960, after the ghettos had expanded into the adjacent parts of the inner suburban rings. Thus East Cleveland and University City received thousands of blacks who would otherwise have settled in their respective central cities. By 1973 Detroit's black community had expanded to the point that it adjoined, but had not massively spilled over into, suburban Southfield, Oak Park, Ferndale, Grosse Pointe Park and Dearborn. Thus, the growth of the major Detroit black neighborhoods from 1970 to 1973 was confined within the city limits. The third reason that this estimate is plausible is that it would have been somewhat difficult for the massive post-census neighborhood transformations already described to have taken place, if Detroit's black population had slackened its growth rate or actually begun to decline.

The black proportion in Detroit in 1973, based on the official census estimate and on the above black population estimate, is 51.6 per cent, a dramatic increase of nearly eight percentage points in only one-third of a decade. During the 1940's, 1950's and 1960's the increases in the proportion black were approximately seven, thirteen and fifteen percentage points, respectively. The apparent shift in Detroit between 1970 and 1973 would be a nearly unprecedented twenty-four percentage point change if projected over a complete decade. Such a change would exceed any actual decennial

rise in proportion black for any major central city in American history. Only turnover figures for racially changing inner suburbs, specific city neighborhoods or other extremely limited areas have exceeded this remarkable rate of transformation.

The decennial transformation of nearly one-fourth of its total population from white to black would, if sustained throughout the 1970's and 1980's, mean that by the time of the 1990 census, the city of Detroit would be over 90 per cent black.

The concentration of black population growth in Detroit can only continue, and even exacerbate, the racial polarization both in the metropolitan area and in Michigan as a whole. Table 6 shows that the percentage of Detroit metropolitan area blacks living in the central city is actually rising. Highland Park and Detroit accounted jointly for 90 per cent of the metropolitan black population. Most of the remainder lived in outlying ghettos, and most whites lived in virtually all-white suburbs. A measure based on the Taeuber index of segregation shows that the Detroit SMSA has just about the highest concentration of blacks in the central city of any metropolitan area in the country (Taeuber, 1966: 29). This measure, discussed in Appendix B,<sup>1</sup> uses municipalities rather than city blocks as the unit of analysis and measures segregation of metropolitan blacks within the central cities rather than the segregation of the blacks within

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<sup>1</sup>p. 115.

TABLE 6

DISTRIBUTION OF BLACK POPULATION OF THE DETROIT STANDARD  
METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREA, 1950-1970

	1950	Per Cent of Black Popu- lation	1960	Per Cent of SMSA Black Popu- lation	1970	Per Cent of SMSA Black Popu- lation
Detroit	300,506	84.0	482,223	86.3	660,428	87.2
Pontiac	6,867	1.9	13,774	2.5	22,760	3.0
Highland Park	3,877	1.1	7,947	1.4	19,609	2.6
Inkster	8,975	2.5	13,498	2.4	17,189	2.3
Ecorse	5,840	1.6	5,721	1.0	6,716	.9
River Rouge	6,527	1.8	5,861	1.0	5,094	.7
Hamtramck	4,733	1.3	4,908	.9	3,270	.4
Balance of SMSA	20,475	5.7	24,938	4.5	22,017	2.9
SMSA Total	357,800	100.0	558,870	100.0	757,083	100.0
Per Cent Black of Total Population	11.9		14.9		18.0	
SMSA Black Population as Per Cent of State Black Population	80.9		77.9		76.4	

Most of the SMSA black population not itemized in the list above was located in the following places, mostly in segregated neighborhoods:  
 Wayne County: Romulus, Westland. (Both incorporated after 1960)  
 Oakland County: Royal Oak Township.  
 Macomb County: Mount Clemens, Clinton Township, Roseville.

a given city by blocks. The score for Detroit in 1970 was 62.5, and using estimated population figures, a score of 69.1 was obtained for both 1973 and 1976. Combining Detroit with Highland Park as the central city figure in the statistic, raises the scores to 64.6, 71.9 and 72.4, respectively, for the three years. Using the inner suburb as part of the numerator of the equation gives a more realistic measure of racial concentration. As previously noted, Highland Park is becoming indistinct from the Detroit racial ghetto except for the legal boundaries. These large segregation scores are so high that they actually fall in the lower range of Taeuber segregation scores within cities (Taeuber, 1966:32-34).

On the state level, ever since the 1920 census, Detroit has contained about two-thirds of the Michigan black population.<sup>2</sup> Now the city has a black majority, and the danger is that geographic racial polarization may bring about political polarization along racial lines. Grodzins (1958:14) predicted this possibility and expressed his concern that racial animosity would fan historic rural-urban or geographic rivalries in state legislatures. Metropolitan cooperation could also become a victim of color.

The political isolation of a major city is not sheer imagination. In 1976 the bankrupt city of New York was castigated from all sides, allegedly for being wasteful. The distribution of the two major racial groups in Michigan

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<sup>2</sup>See Table 7.

TABLE 7

TOTAL AND BLACK POPULATIONS OF MICHIGAN, 1850-1970, PER CENT  
BLACK OF TOTAL POPULATION, AND PROPORTION OF STATE  
BLACK POPULATION LIVING IN DETROIT

Year	Total State Population	Black State Population	Per Cent Black	Proportion of State Black Population Living in Detroit
1850	397,654	2,583	.6	22.7
1860	749,113	6,799	.9	20.6
1870	1,184,059	11,849	1.0	18.9
1880	1,636,937	15,100	.9	18.7
1890	2,093,890	15,223	.7	22.5
1900	2,420,982	15,815	.7	26.0
1910	2,810,173	17,115	.6	33.5
1920	3,668,412	60,082	1.6	68.0
1930	4,842,325	169,453	3.5	70.9
1940	5,256,106	208,345	4.0	71.6
1950	6,371,766	442,296	6.9	67.9
1960	7,823,194	717,581	9.2	67.2
1970	8,875,083	991,066	11.2	66.6

virtually assures that a city-suburban or everyone else vs. Detroit conflict would have strong racial overtones. Suburbia and the rest of the state will probably be less than 10 per cent black for the foreseeable future, with most of their small black populations in ghettos and most whites in nearly all-white jurisdictions. On the other hand, Detroit will probably be 70, 80 or 90 per cent black within a very few years. The city's need for outside help will continue to grow, while its store of goodwill in the dominant, white part of the state may dwindle rapidly. Such a situation would be a source of great tension and would be made to order for political opportunism and shortsighted, selfish policies.

Increasing physical separation of the races and racial polarization are two likely results of the developing situation in Detroit. The heightened possibility of mass violence is a third major consideration.

Racial violence has a long and ugly history in Detroit. Whites were the instigators of most of the early incidents. In 1863 whites tried to lynch a black criminal suspect. One person was killed, and twenty black homes were burned (Shogan and Craig, 1964:17). When a black-occupied house in a West Side white area caught fire, thirty years later, the volunteer fire department deliberately confined its efforts to saving the adjacent property (Katzman, 1973:78).

During the tense period of rapid black growth in Detroit in the decade following World War I, a black doctor, Ossian Sweet, managed to purchase a house near Charlevoix

and Garland. This was a white neighborhood, several miles east of the crowded ghetto. When a white mob attacked the house, gunfire killed one of the rioters and drove the rest off. Dr. Sweet and eleven friends were acquitted of murder in a well-publicized trial in which they were defended by Clarence Darrow (Shogan and Craig, 1964:20-21).

The next serious racial incident also occurred during a period of rapid black influx and rising tension. In 1942 the government built the Sojourner Truth housing project expressly for black workers. The problem was that it was in a white neighborhood that was heavily Polish. These North-east Side people drove off the first would-be black tenants in February. Two months later, 760 policemen supervised the successful entry of the first black families (Shogan and Craig, 1964:30). This incident was only a foretaste of much worse to come. The explosion of pent-up tension occurred on Belle Isle Park in June, 1943. Interracial fighting broke out and spread rapidly to the mainland, accompanied by rumors of atrocities by both sides. Blacks in the ghetto looted stores and attacked whites, while white mobs roamed Woodward Avenue and other business streets, attacking blacks. The different tactics used by police in quelling the black and white disturbances were reflected in the fact that all seventeen individuals killed by the police were black (Shogan and Craig, 1964:118). The final toll was nine white and twenty-five black dead, 675 injured and over two million dollars in damage from looting, vandalism and burned



cars (Shogan and Craig, 1964:89).

The race riots in various cities during World Wars I and II were mostly what Janowitz (1969:417-418) characterized as "communal" riots--mass clashes between black and white civilians. During some of the 1943 riots a new pattern became evident. This was the "commodity" riot. It consisted of looting within the racial ghetto unaccompanied by large-scale fighting with white citizens. Thus the conflict was between the blacks and the police in the black neighborhoods. The 1943 Detroit riot was mostly communal, although the looting of white-owned stores in the Paradise Valley ghetto conformed to the newer trend.

After a twenty-four year lull in racial violence, Detroit suffered its worst upheaval ever. Fortunately, the communal aspect of massive interracial fighting was absent, but the city witnessed the largest commodity riot in American history. More than four hundred stores were burned, and many others were looted. The riot cost forty-three lives, mostly black and mostly at the hands of police and National Guardsmen. Federal troops showed admirable discipline in not using wholesale gunfire, in contrast with the other agencies involved (Janowitz, 1969:423-424).

The 1967 riot, as has been previously noted, occurred just prior to the apparent beginning of accelerated white departure from the West Side. To many whites it must have served as a very graphic symbol of the twilight of white control within the city.

The 1967 riot also serves as strong support for the contention that major rioting remains a possibility in the future. Smelser (1962:269) defined five conditions that are necessary, in the order given, to produce mass rioting. These are structural conduciveness, strain, generalized beliefs, precipitating factors and mobilization. One type of structural conduciveness is racial division of the population in question into two or more categories (Smelser, 1962:229). Conflict of interest along racial lines is one form of strain (1962:241). Precipitating events channel existing, unfavorable generalized beliefs into fear and antagonisms and need only the subsequent mobilization of the population to produce a riot (1962:249).

The continuing structural conduciveness and strain in Detroit are very evident. The entire chain has been carried through to mobilization in the black community on two major and several other serious occasions since the early 1940's.

The present danger of new mass rioting is more credible when viewed in the light of black attitudes toward past riots. In 1965 at least 46 per cent of the adults in the Los Angeles riot area approved of the outbreak to some extent (Skolnick, 1969:147). A study done for the Kerner Riot Commission is further evidence in favor of the contention that rioting had considerable support and that the participants were a fairly representative sample of neighborhood people in those particular age groups. In each city surveyed, 10 to 20 per cent of the riot area population may have been involved. Seventy-

five per cent of those arrested were employed, and most of them were semi-skilled or skilled workers. The proportion of those arrested in the Northern cities in the sample ranged from 30 to 60 per cent Northern-born. As in Los Angeles two years before, many blacks saw rioting as a legitimate form of protest (Skolnick, 1969:147). In the 1967 Detroit riot, the participants were a cross section of the riot area population and not especially unbalanced. The Detroit juveniles arrested in the riot were actually more stable than the delinquents arrested during more normal times (1969:148).

Recent Census Bureau income data show that although Detroit ranks at the top among large cities in median black income, there is still a noticeable disparity between white and black income, and a large poor group remains. The median family income of blacks was still only 86 per cent of that for the city as a whole (U.S. Bureau of Census, 1972:131). Twenty-two per cent of all black persons and 19 per cent of all black families in Detroit were below the poverty line (1972:131).

If all these statistics on attitude and poverty do not convey the reality of the current danger of rioting, the story of a brief, but violent, outbreak in 1975 will. Near the end of July, the shooting of a black man by a white bar owner triggered a serious outburst of rioting along Livernois near Fenkell. Two police cars were burned, and stores were looted. Mayor Young and neighborhood volunteers were successful in

limiting the violence. Sixty-three rioters were arrested on the first day, and no shots were fired by the police. One white man was dragged from his car and beaten to death at the height of the rioting (Alpern, 1975:31).

Without the quick action by the mayor and local peace-makers and without the professionalism of the police, this West Side riot could have mushroomed into a repeat of 1967. The location of the 1975 riot is itself cause for concern about future peace in Detroit. The intersection of Livernois and Fenkell is situated beyond most of the 1967 riot area. Schnore (1972:52) has demonstrated with 1960 census data that in major Northern cities the black population is somewhat segregated into poorer and wealthier neighborhoods in the pattern proposed for the general population by Burgess. This means that the poorest black areas are found nearest the center of the city. More distant neighborhoods are more affluent, and the wealthiest black neighborhoods are found near the outer edge of the ghetto. That such a violent outburst should occur so far from the downtown district in what was presumably one of the better black areas of Detroit is a danger sign.

It is appropriate to consider the possible consequences of a new riot of the general magnitude of the 1967 disorder. If, for some reason, a disturbance should get completely out of control, the results could be worse than in previous major outbreaks for a number of reasons, which will be enlarged upon below.

One major reason that a renewed outbreak of violence

like that of 1967 could be so much worse is that Detroit's black population is so much bigger today. During the 1943 race riot the black community probably numbered around 200,000. In 1967 the figure was probably closer to 600,000. Today the black population of the city is closer to three quarters of a million.

Another danger connected with any future upheaval in Detroit is that the police and military would have a much larger area that would need to be patrolled. In 1943 the violence was limited to a relatively small part of the central area of the city. The interracial clashes were mainly in the central business district and along Woodward Avenue for several miles north of it. The black rioting occurred in the Paradise Valley ghetto just east of the scene of the interracial fighting. The entire affected zone was probably much less than 5 per cent of Detroit's total land area.

Map 16<sup>3</sup> shows those areas of Detroit that were involved in the 1967 riot. The riot area extended both east and west of Woodward and stretched fairly far out from the downtown district. Viewed with regard to the 1960 racial pattern of Detroit, the zone of disorder was almost entirely confined within the black and racially mixed areas of the rapidly-growing main racial ghetto and covered about half of its area. This was still quite a bit larger than the trouble area of 1943.

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<sup>3</sup>P. 106.

There are disquieting indications that any major riot in the future might affect much more of Detroit than even the massive 1967 disorder. For example, the July, 1975 disturbance, which for its short duration and limited area was quite severe, took place almost entirely beyond the limits of the great 1967 upheaval. The 1975 disorder began near Livernois and Fenkell, and during its peak some vandalism took place as far as two miles west of that location. When the rapid expansion, in terms of land area, of the ghetto in recent years is also taken into consideration, the potential consequences in case of major disorder become more evident. It is entirely possible that a riot that somehow reached major proportions could involve the whole central zone of the city. This would mean that in the event of a fast-growing, extremely violent disturbance, the authorities might be confronted with the necessity of restoring order within an area of sixty, seventy or even eighty square miles.

Even if the authorities showed considerably more professionalism and restraint than in 1967, thereby reducing the death toll, any new major riot would be a catastrophe for Detroit. Today many more miles of arterial streets in neighborhood business districts would be subject to riot damage than in 1967. Property damage could be much more extensive than that suffered by the smaller stores in the very poor inner city neighborhoods in 1967. The social damage could be almost as great. A massive eruption in half of the city could trigger a white exodus from even the most stable neigh-

borhoods in the same manner that the West Side is changing now.

It is quite possible that there may never be another huge riot in Detroit. Perhaps the police will always be fast enough and astute enough in their response that small riots won't turn into big ones. However, these matters are notoriously unpredictable. Massive black unemployment and recurrent tension over school integration are major problems unlikely to go away soon. In such an atmosphere it is possible that some violent incident--such as an attack against school children by white bigots--could cause a major eruption. The black reaction to the King assassination is an example on a national scale of how such news brought a rapid, violent response in an incredibly short time.

It is regrettable to have to propose that the increased danger of mass violence is one of the principal reasons for trying to break down the system of residential segregation in Detroit and other cities. Unfortunately, such good reasons as opening up suburban housing near where the jobs are and giving black Americans in fact the rights which the laws and the American Creed say they should have so far have failed to bring any great improvement. The prevention of major riots is one goal that is more obviously in the enlightened self-interest of white citizens and government leaders.

## CHAPTER VI

### A LOOK AT THE FUTURE. WILL ANYTHING HELP?

This paper has presented evidence that shows that racial transition is accelerating in Detroit and that black residential succession is no longer taking place merely on a block-by-block basis. It now affects large zones simultaneously and may become general throughout most of the remaining white neighborhoods in the city. This has immediate significance for Detroit and potential significance for many other American cities where the black population is rapidly approaching, or already has become, the majority. This conclusion is strengthened by an examination of the Census Bureau's estimates of the July 1, 1973 populations of most American cities. Detroit's population had declined to 1,386,000, a loss of about 125,000 residents in only thirty-nine months. This unprecedented, steep population loss was duplicated or exceeded in numerous other central cities and some suburbs, according to the estimates. Characteristics common to most of these declining municipalities were: (1) that they were generally old, (2) almost all available residential land had been utilized, and (3) expansion of the city limits was blocked by the hostility of adjacent unincorporated suburban areas, or the actual presence of other municipalities surrounding the city limits or other legal barriers such as county lines.



Another characteristic found among many cities that suffered the sharpest population losses was a large and growing black population. Most of the following cities had black populations that were in excess of 30 per cent of the total in 1970 and had increased considerably since 1960. Most of these same cities lost 5, 10 or more per cent of their total populations in three years, according to the census estimates. They were: Atlanta, St. Louis, East St. Louis, Chicago, Buffalo, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Dayton, Flint and of course, Detroit.

Detroit is certainly the most advanced case of a central city black population becoming the majority while general white abandonment of the rest of the city begins. There are several other locations in which this trend has also surfaced. In Gary, Indiana, blacks entered the formerly all-white downtown and Miller residential areas before 1970, and change began in Glen Park, the last major white zone in the city, soon after.

The large scale turnover from white ethnic to black and Puerto Rican in two New York City boroughs in the 1960's and 1970's resembles the Detroit situation. In Brooklyn the two minority groups are now nearly half of the population, while in the Bronx that point was reached by 1970. In 1940, the combined black and Latin population of both was well under 10 per cent. The Bronx was less than 2 per cent black in 1940. The elongation of transitional neighborhoods, especially in the Bronx, is similar to that found in the 1970 Detroit racial block map. The main foci of this trend were the portion of

the Bronx east of the high-density South Bronx ghetto and the area in Brooklyn south of the Bedford-Stuyvesant district.

Besides Detroit, Gary and New York, there are many American central cities where conditions are, or will be, favorable for the start of a precipitous flight of many or most of the remaining white residents. In 1970 Washington, Atlanta, Newark and Gary were the only four large American cities with black majorities. Besides Detroit, a number of other cities have apparently reached that point since 1970. They include Baltimore, New Orleans, Wilmington, Delaware and some inner suburbs. In 1970 there were numerous cities and suburbs that were more than 30 per cent black. In the 1970's and 1980's many, if not most, of these places will probably become predominantly black. A partial listing includes Chicago, Philadelphia, Cleveland, and St. Louis among the largest cities. Smaller central cities include Dayton, Oakland and Trenton. Suburbs would include Richmond, California, Harvey, Illinois and Plainfield, New Jersey. Some other American cities that were less than 30 per cent black in 1970 are undergoing rapid racial transition that could lead to black majorities by 1990. The best examples are Hartford, Paterson and Flint.

If the general white exodus indicated in this examination of Detroit is a foretaste of what many other cities can expect, what can be done to forestall it? In the case of Detroit itself, this question may already be moot. A good estimate is that in 1976 Detroit was about 60 per cent black. Other estimates also rate the proportion to be that high, or

nearly so (Chicago Tribune, 1976:4). A study of racial change in Chicago's South Shore area makes an important point that has much bearing on Detroit's future: "For the racial change process to be halted, a community must have some important resources peculiarly attractive to whites" (Molotch, 1972:207). South Shore failed to secure such facilities, but the author noted how the presence of the University of Chicago in the Hyde Park community helped to maintain a white population in that neighborhood while most of the surrounding areas became all black (1972:169). In Washington, which is now about three-quarters black, the presence of the seat of national government probably plays a leading role in keeping the white population in a zone west of Rock Creek Park and in the new downtown apartment complexes.

The remaining white neighborhoods in Detroit have nothing comparable to the great institutions found in Washington or in urban neighborhoods containing large, affluent universities. On the other hand, the many worsening problems in Detroit are a powerful force driving whites away from the city. The continued confinement of most black neighborhood expansion within Detroit will insure continued pressure along those neighborhood racial boundaries that are still intact. With limited holding power and growing within-city black housing needs, the remaining white neighborhoods in Northeast and Southwest Detroit will likely undergo the same process of transition now visible throughout much of the far West Side. Barring a dramatic shift in present trends, Detroit could be 90 per cent or

more black in 1990.

The other cities mentioned are generally in a much better position to maintain their multiracial character. In the 1950's Grodzins (1958:16) listed a number of measures that might, if used jointly on a large enough scale, have saved Detroit from much of its present plight and would be useful today in preventing other metropolitan areas from reaching such a dangerous state of racial polarization. Grodzins proposed opening all of the white neighborhoods in the central cities to blacks. This might work in cities with relatively low black proportions; general white panic is starting to do the same thing in 60 per cent black Detroit. He also suggested controlled black migration into city neighborhoods (1958:17). This would keep the per cent black below the "tipping point" in the affected areas. If adequate housing were found for growing black populations in other white neighborhoods, this program might preserve the stability of neighborhoods at the edge of the ghetto that were just starting to change. Such a plan could even preserve the stability of some of the remaining white areas in Detroit.

Grodzins (1958:18) suggested returning whites to the central cities. While limited slum areas around some downtown areas have been rebuilt as luxury high-rise neighborhoods, the number of whites brought in by these projects comes no where near the number who continue to flee racial change in ordinary city neighborhoods.

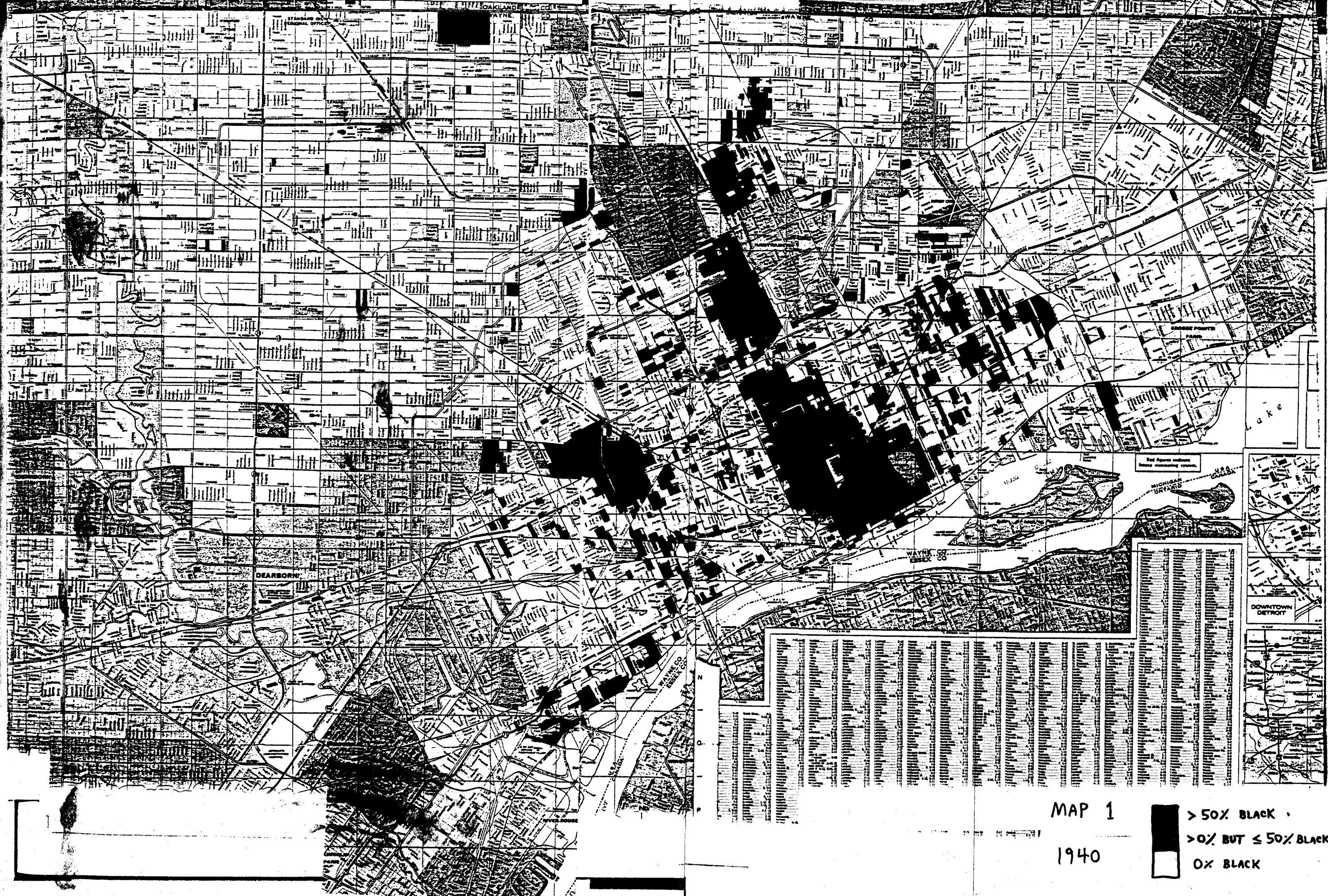
The most promising of Grodzin's proposals is the

movement of black families to the suburbs (1958:20). A combination of metropolitan scattered-site public or subsidized housing and strict enforcement of antibias laws in all private housing transactions throughout the metropolitan area would probably stop white-to-black neighborhood turnover in short order. If all additional black housing demand can be satisfied in the suburbs and city areas away from the ghetto, the pressure on white and mixed neighborhoods next to the black zone should abate dramatically.

This author's analysis of a rare, naturally occurring case of this phenomenon within a central city lends much credence to this contention. In San Francisco between 1960 and 1970 the black population increased from 74,000 to 96,000, or from 10 to 13 per cent of the city's population. Because the city's white neighborhoods opened up during the 1960's, half of the net black increase of 22,000 occurred outside of the ghetto areas. Because of this new development, the boundaries of the predominantly black districts expanded much less than would have been expected. Thus the scattering of much of the black increase citywide helped racially mixed areas bordering the ghettos maintain their heterogeneous character.




The blueprints for solving our urban racial problems, thanks to Grodzins (1958), have been in existence for two decades. Now there is a graphic example in the city of Detroit of the results of the neglect of those problems. What is needed is both a general awareness of the coming

crisis and a national resolve to make our metropolitan areas places in which living conditions are adequate for all and in which genuinely open housing is the rule and not the exception.

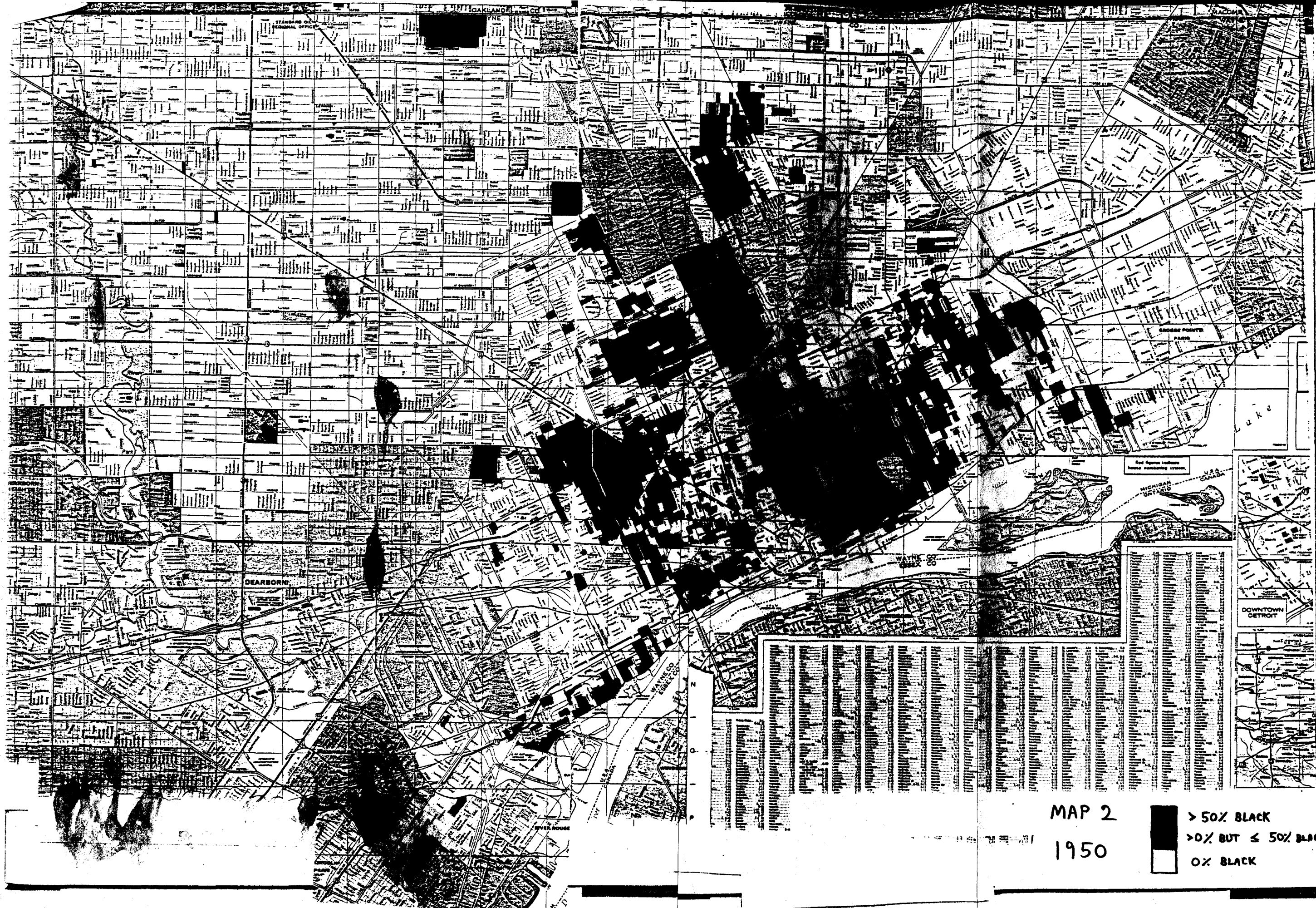


MAP 1

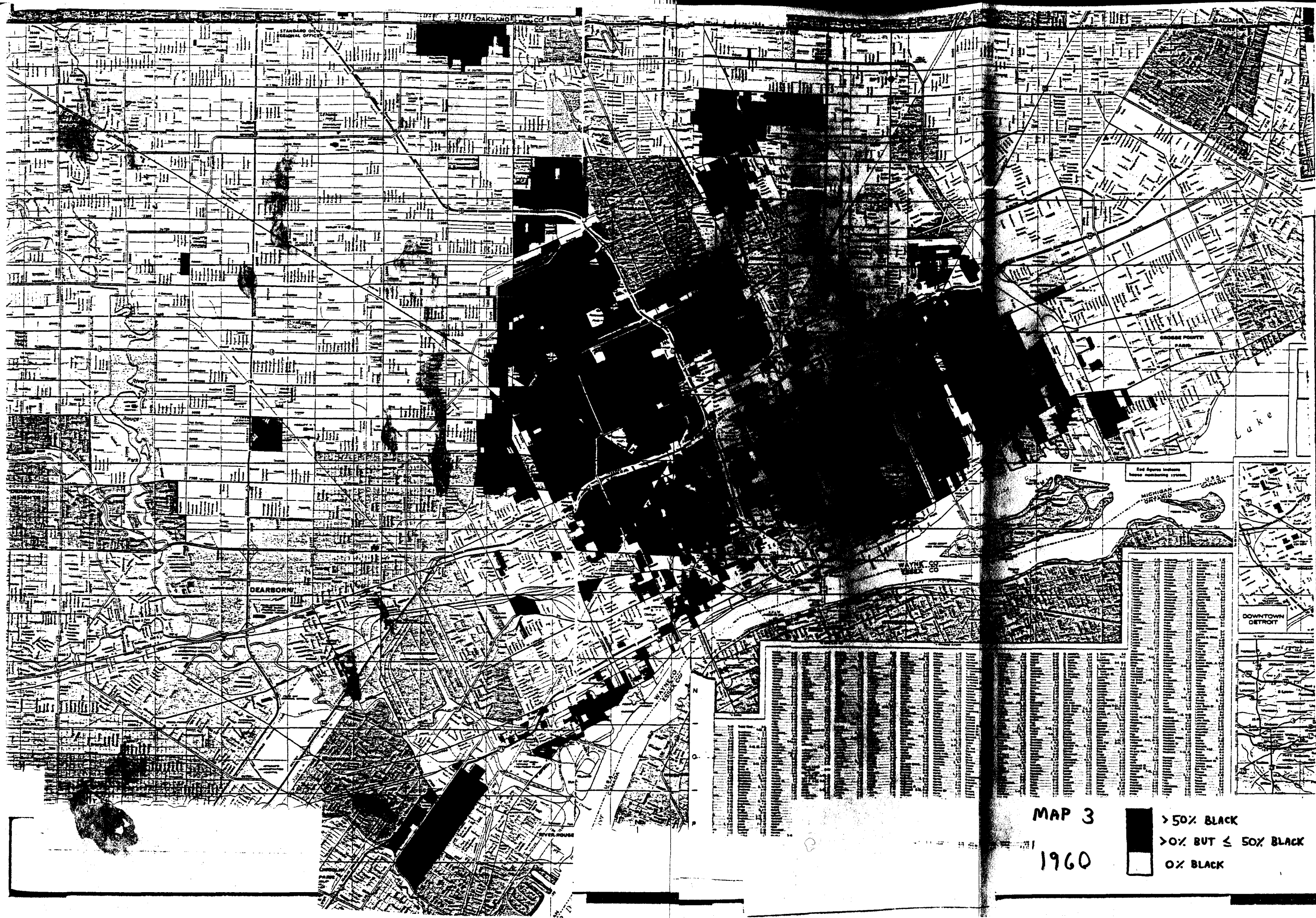
1940

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MAP 3

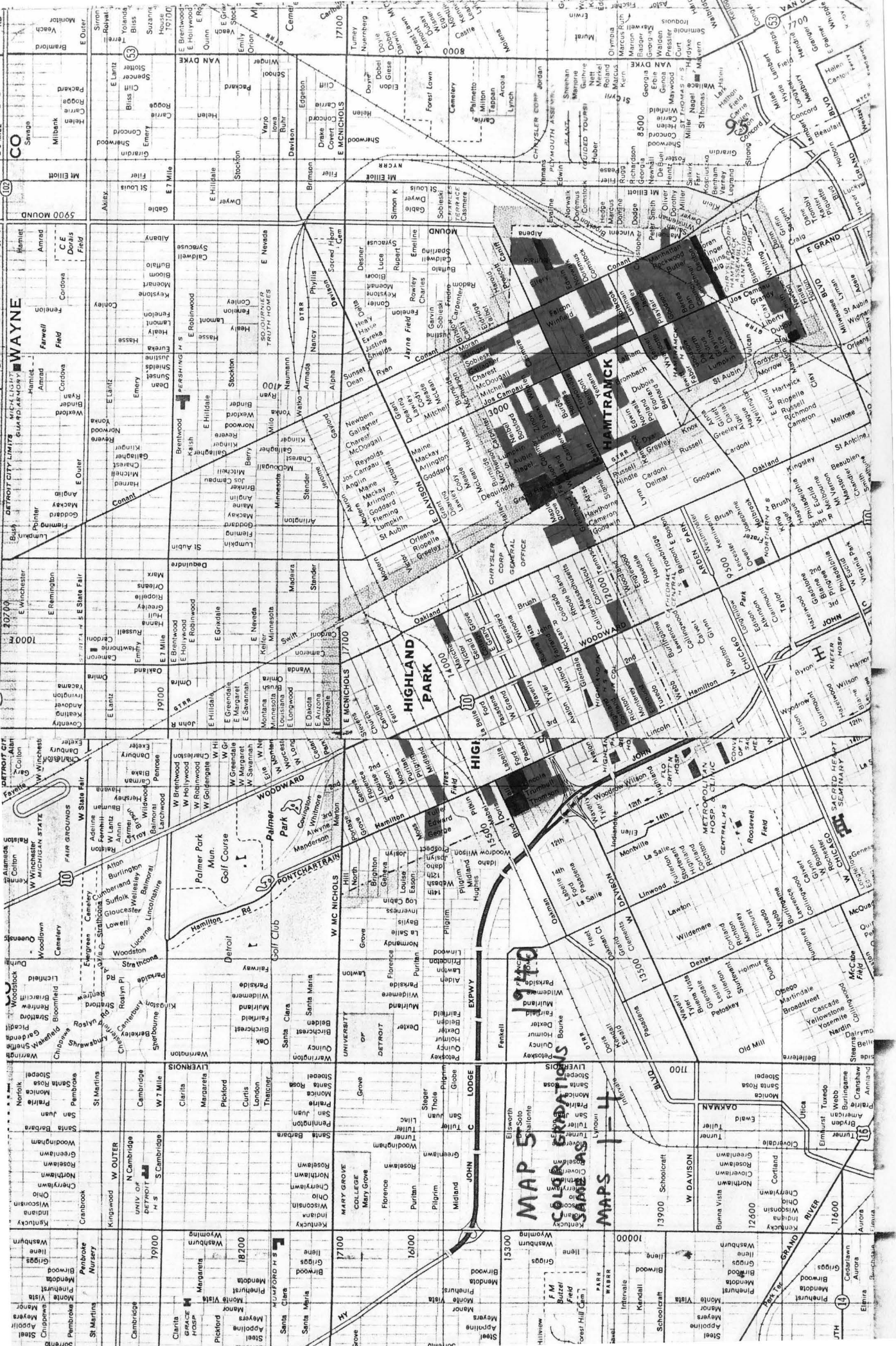
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MAP 5  
CLUB 5  
SAVES 5  
MAPS 1-4

1940

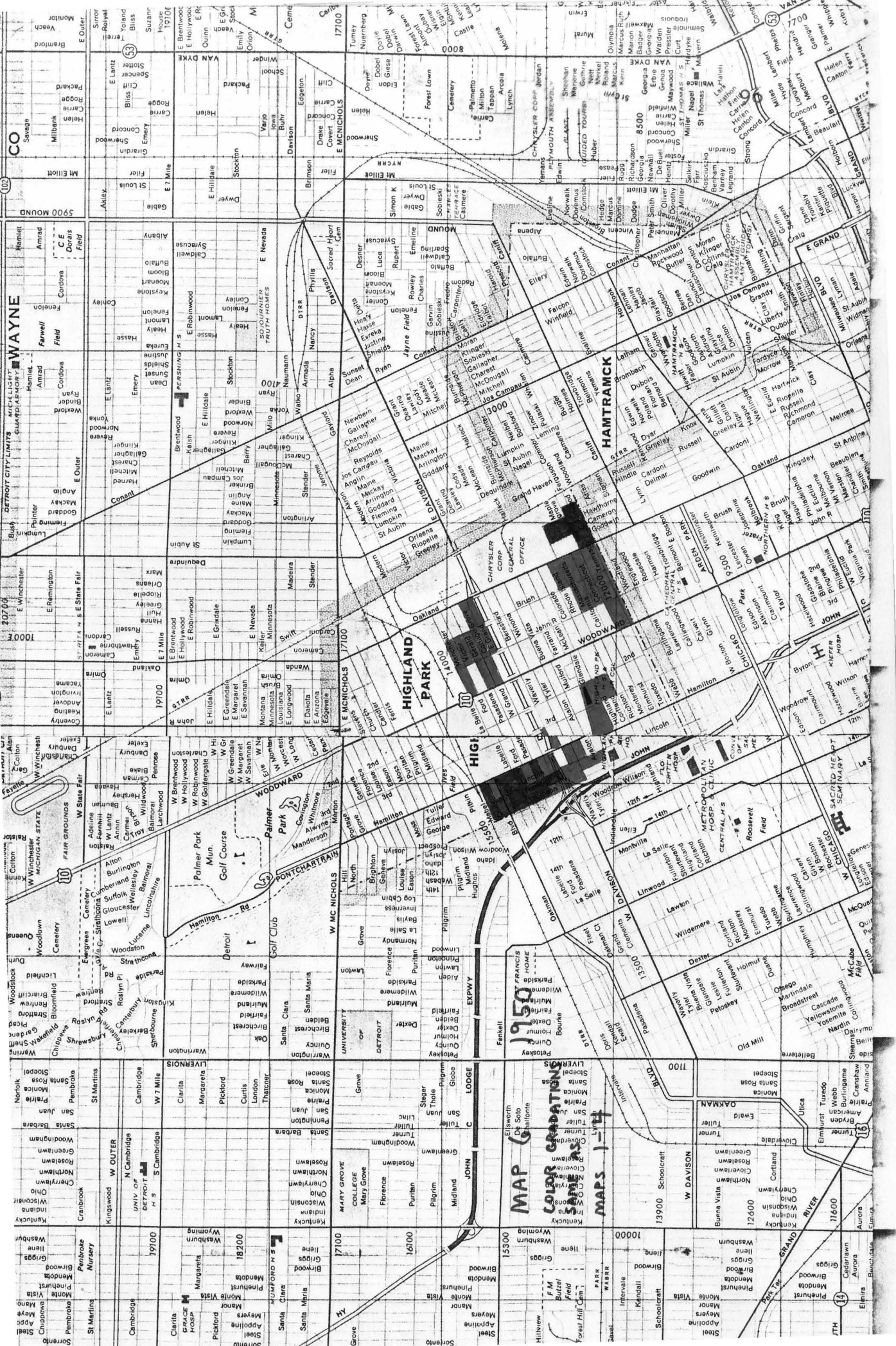
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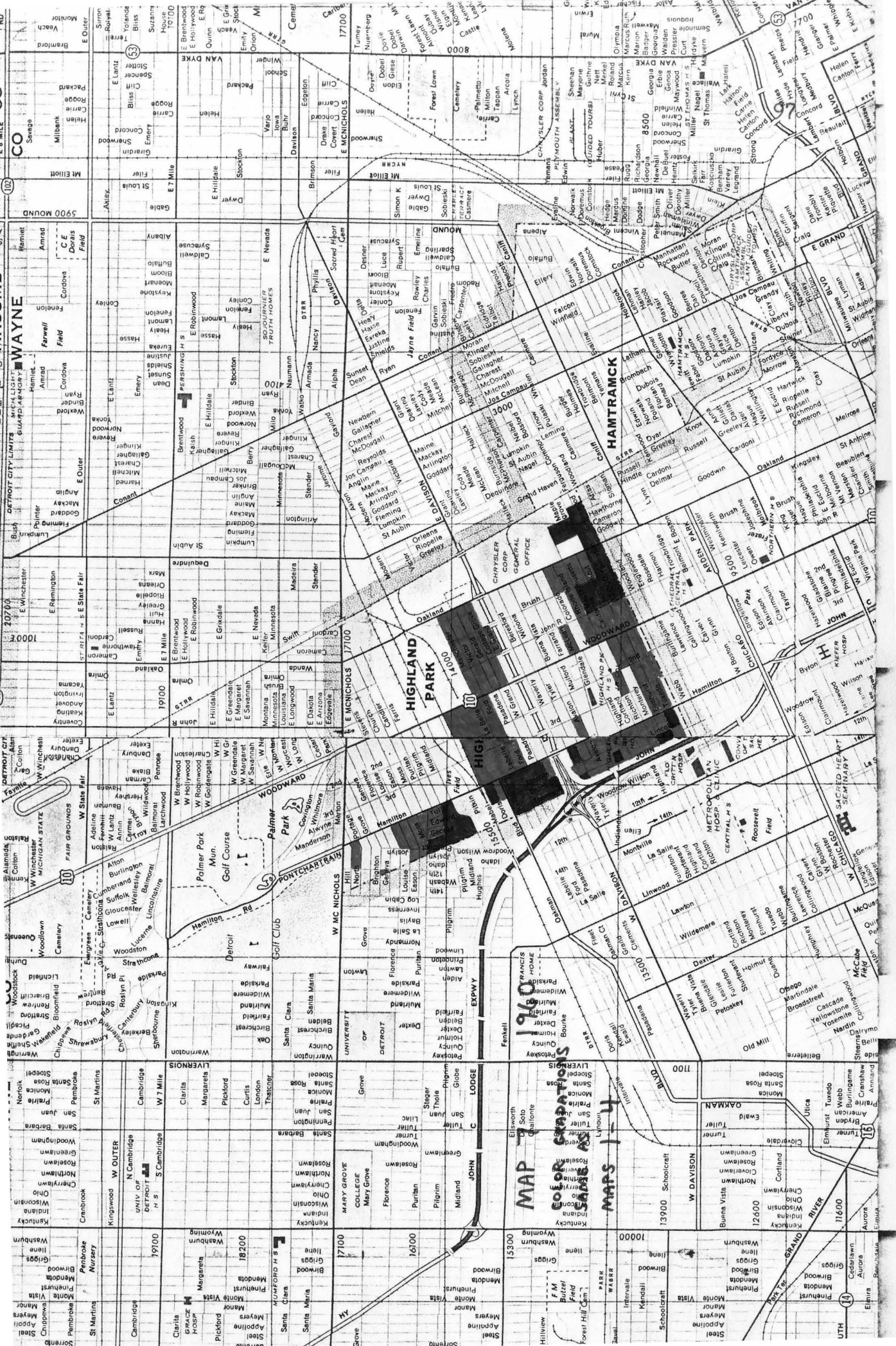
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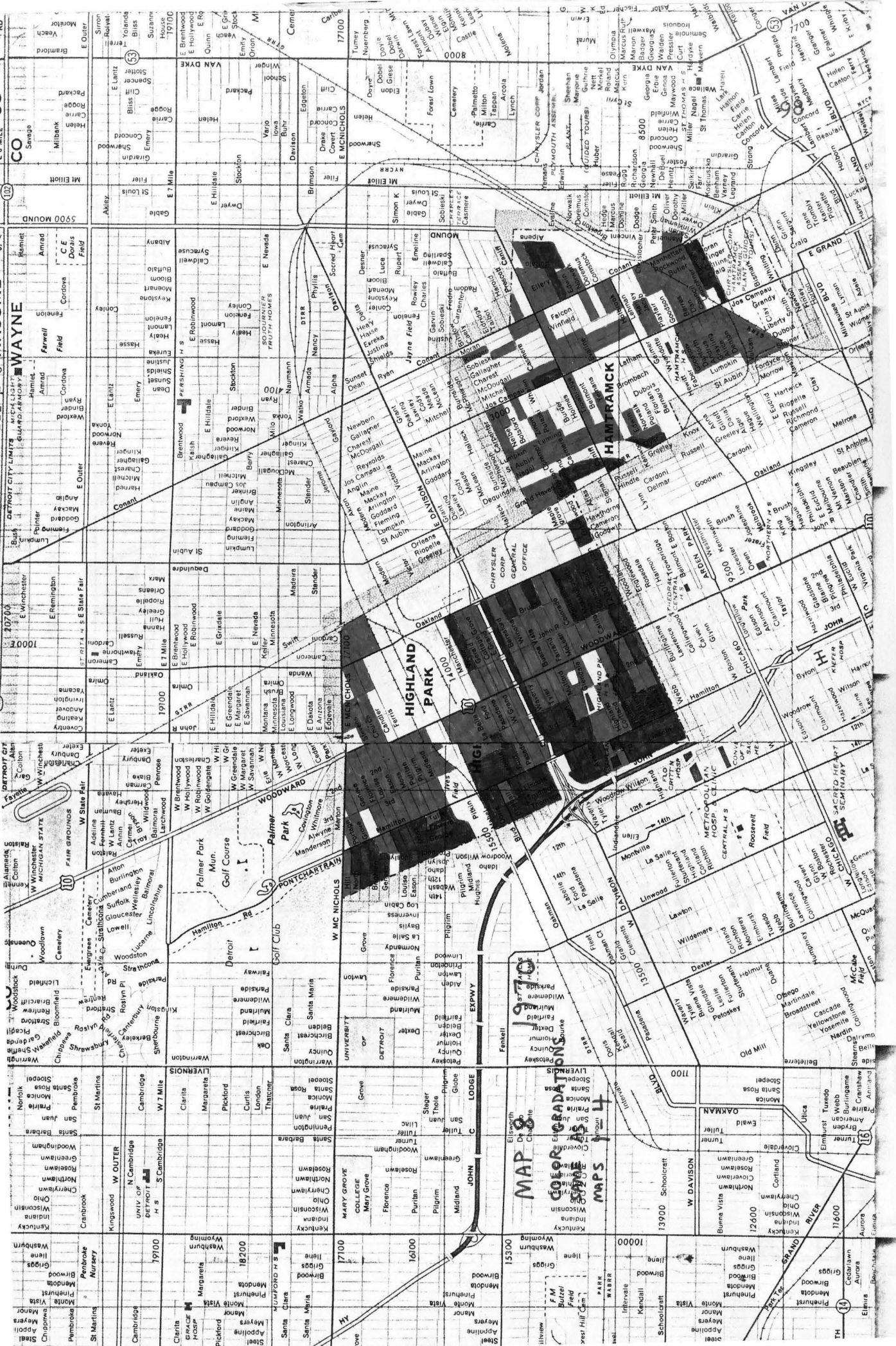
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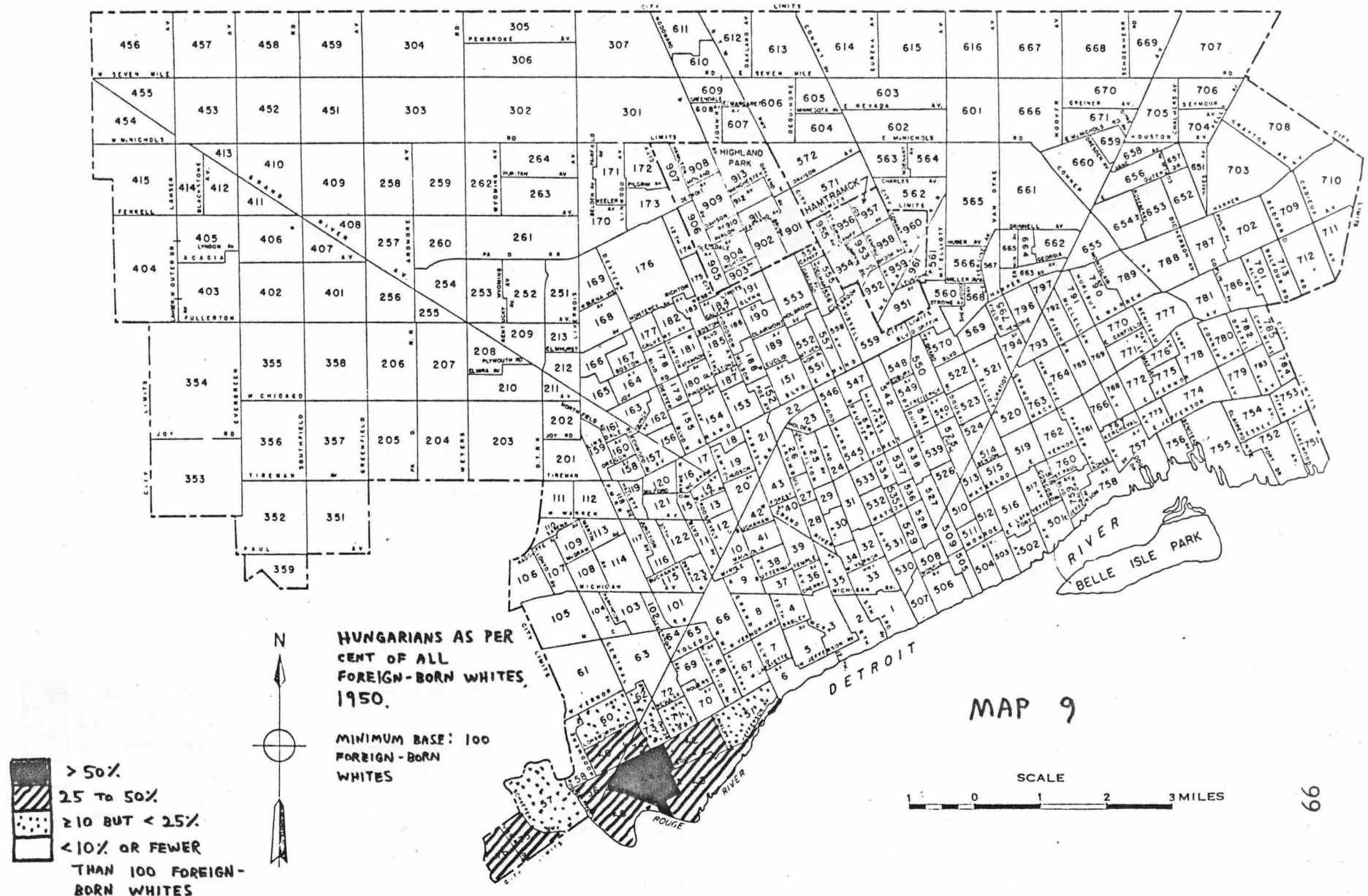






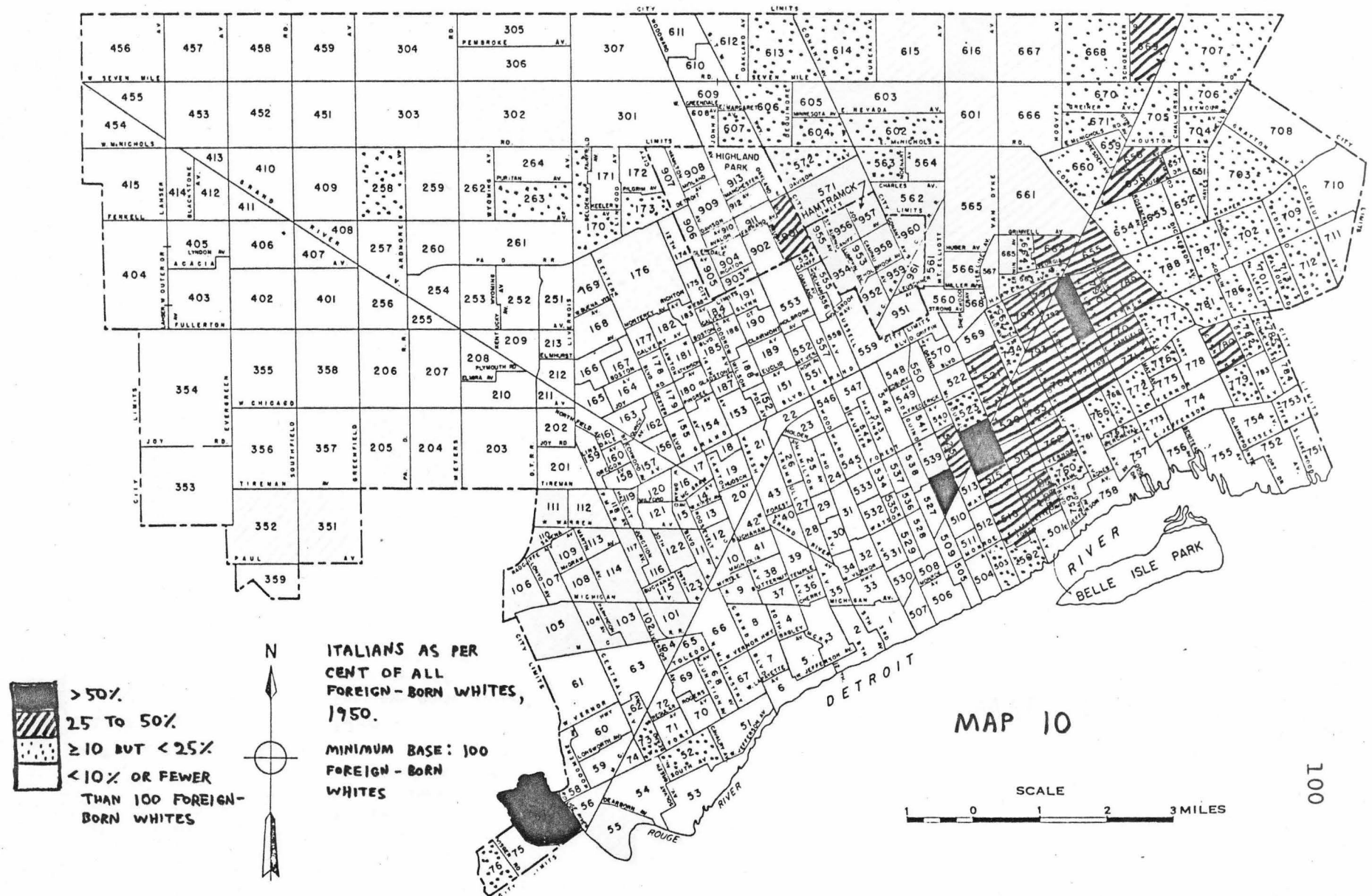
# DETROIT, MICH., AND ADJACENT AREAS BY CENSUS TRACTS

## Part 1.—Tracts in Detroit, Hamtramck, and Highland Park cities



# DETROIT, MICH., AND ADJACENT AREAS BY CENSUS TRACTS

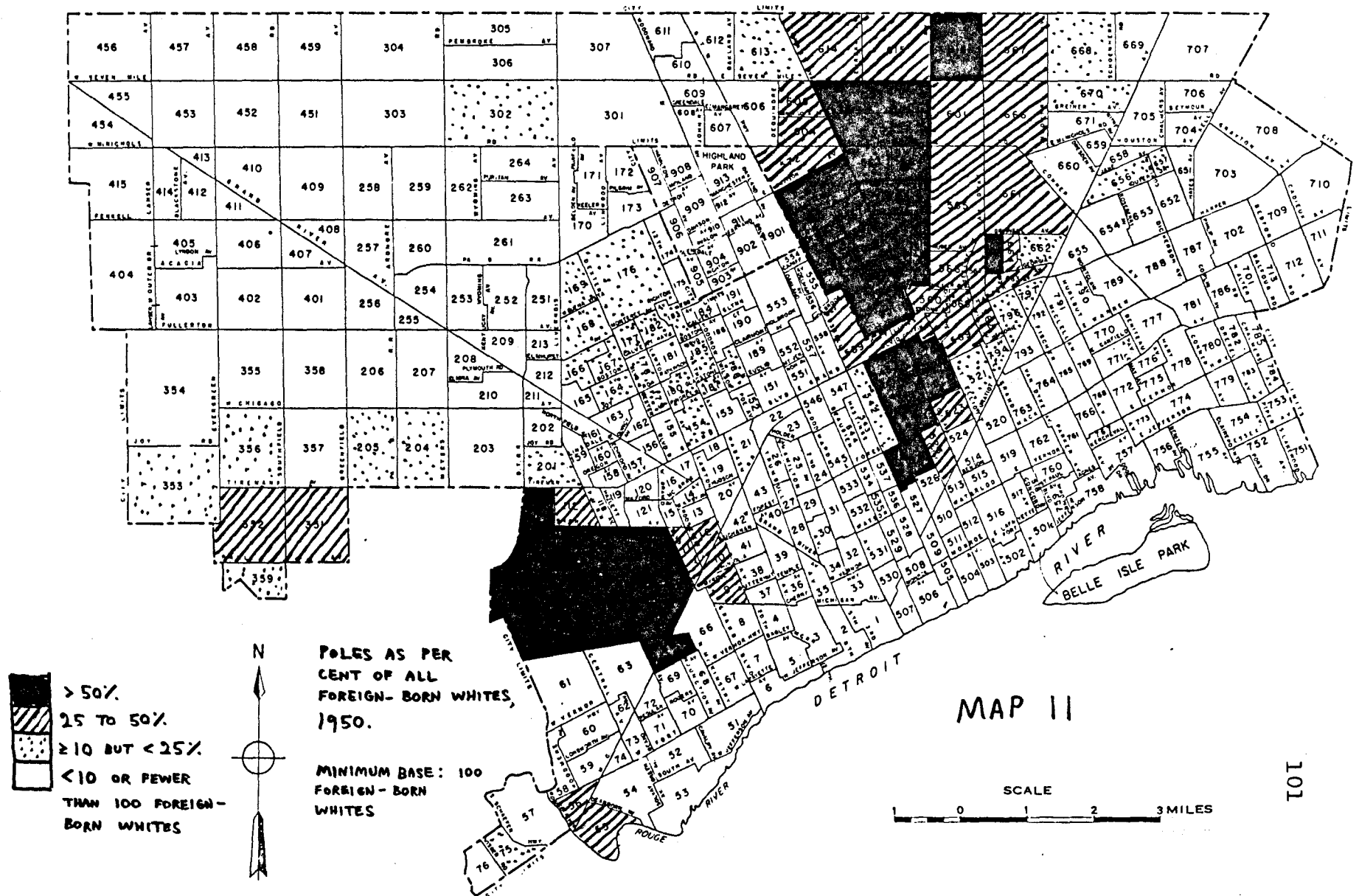
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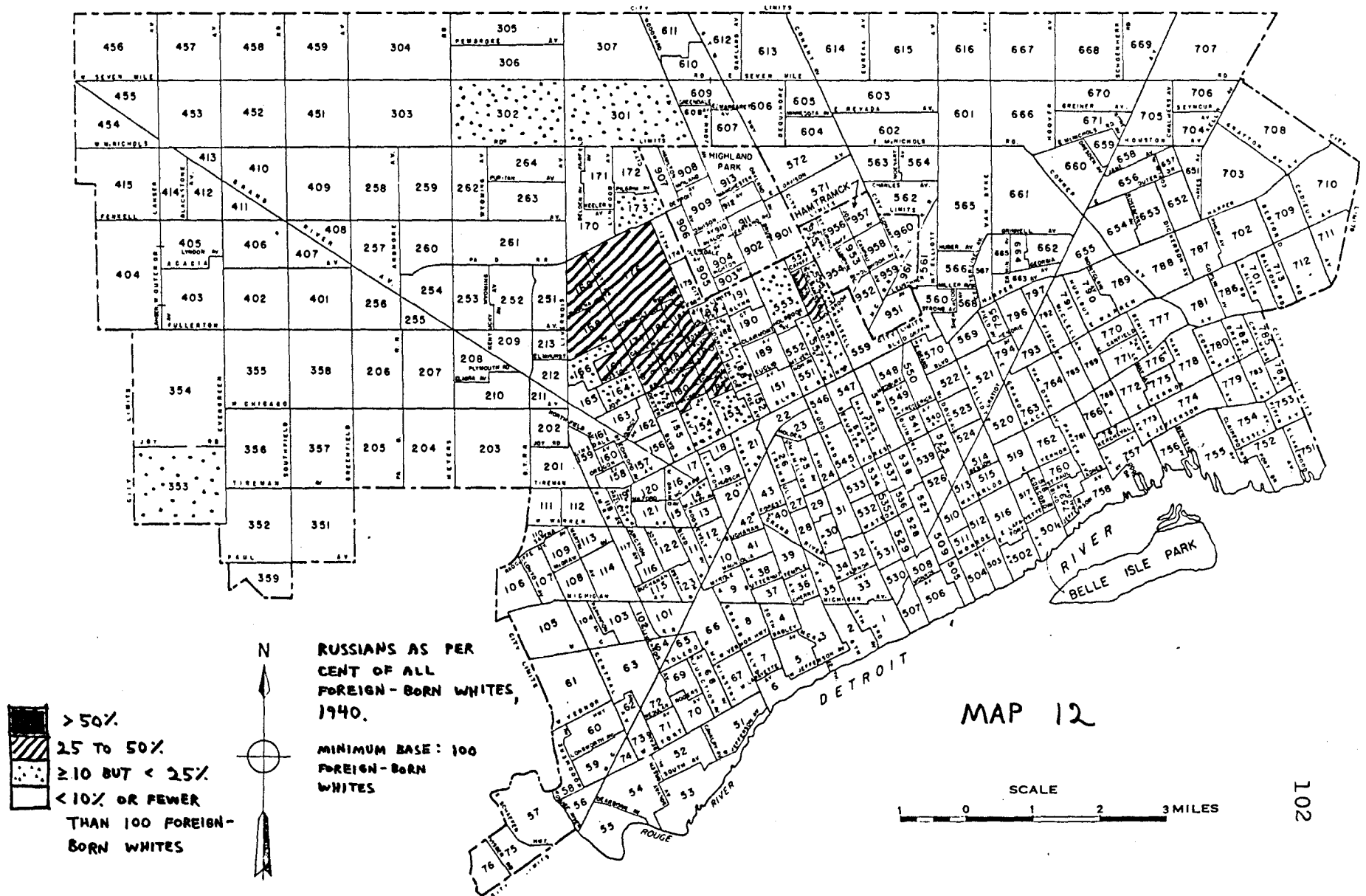
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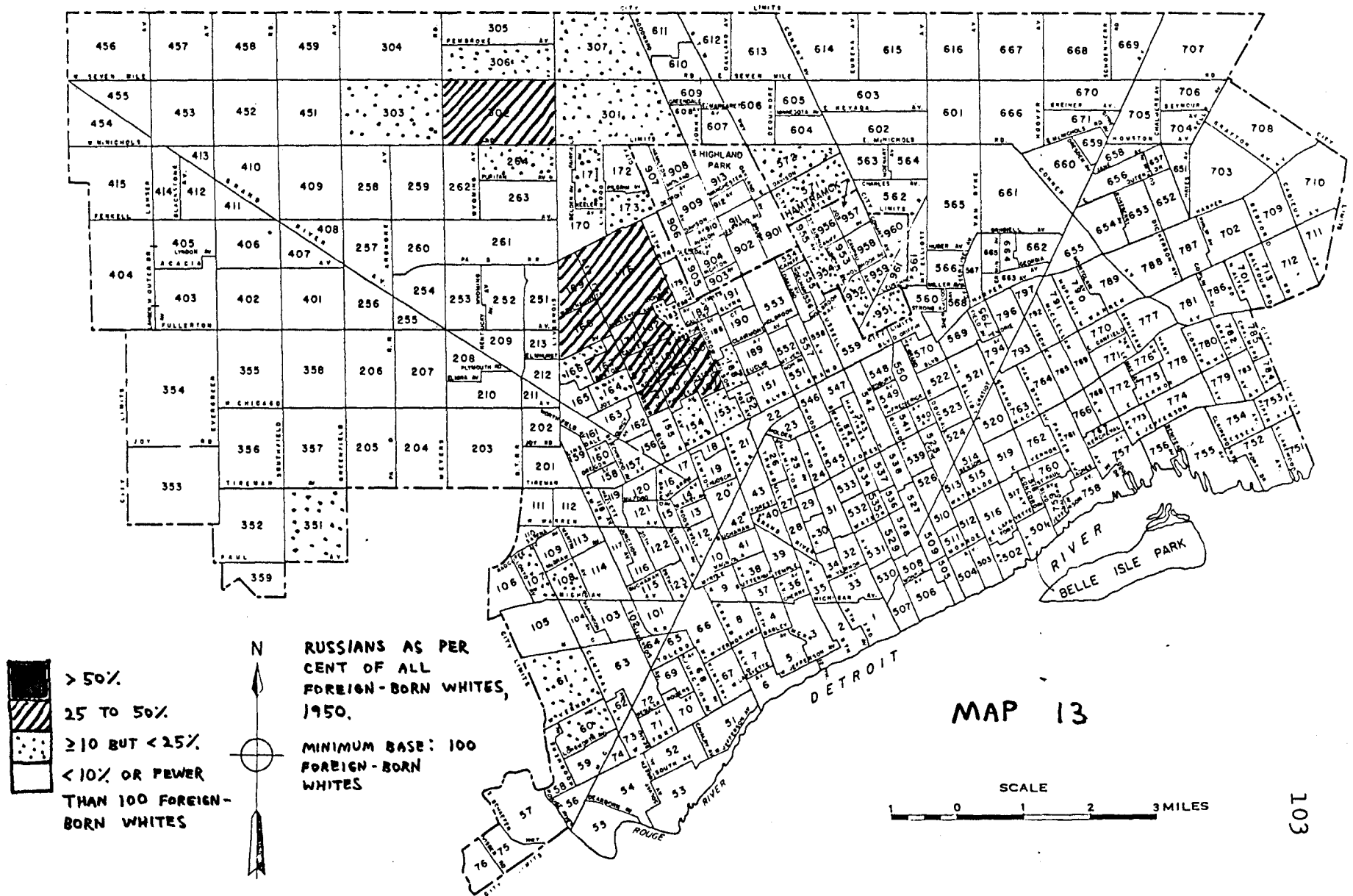
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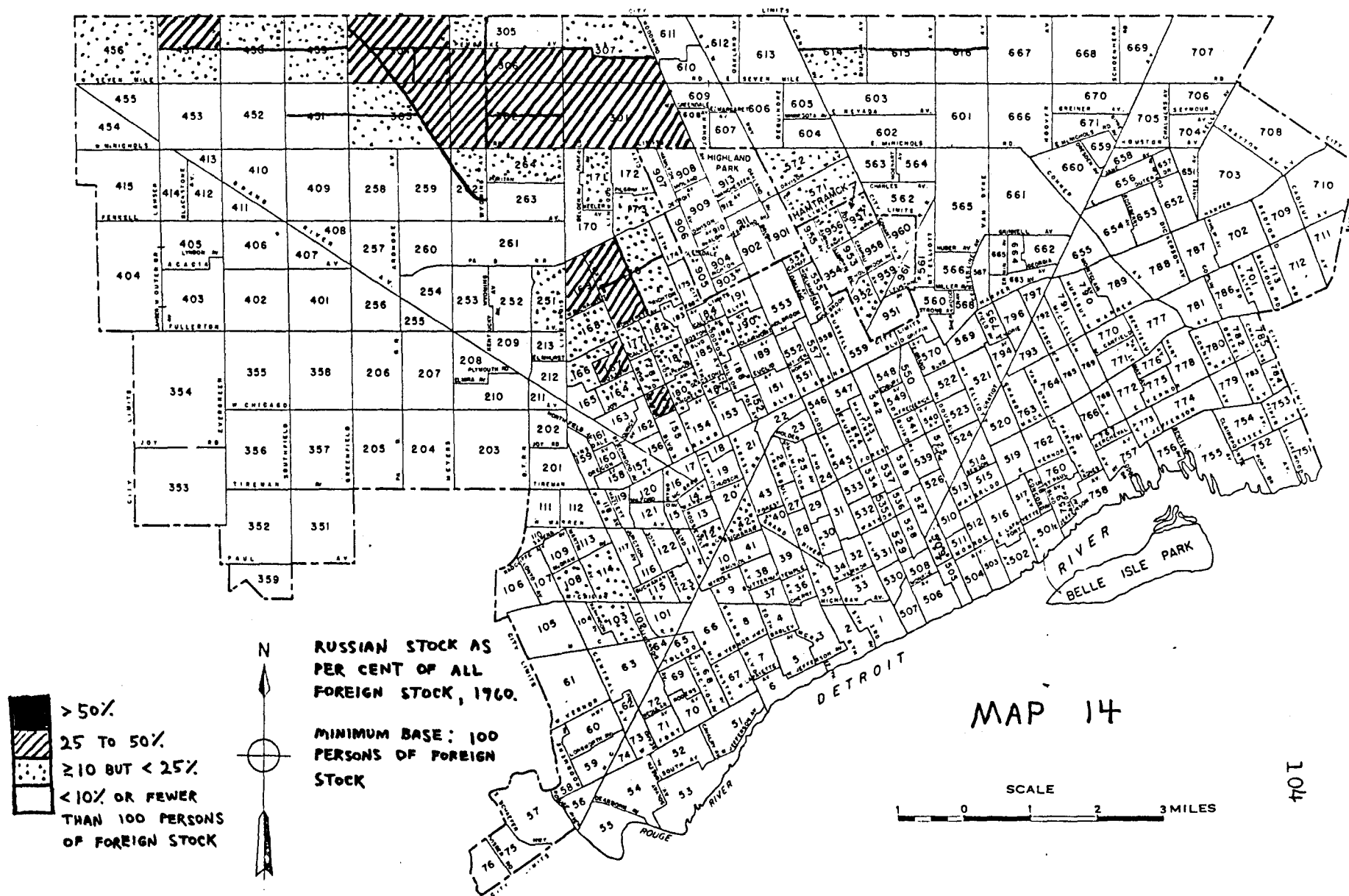
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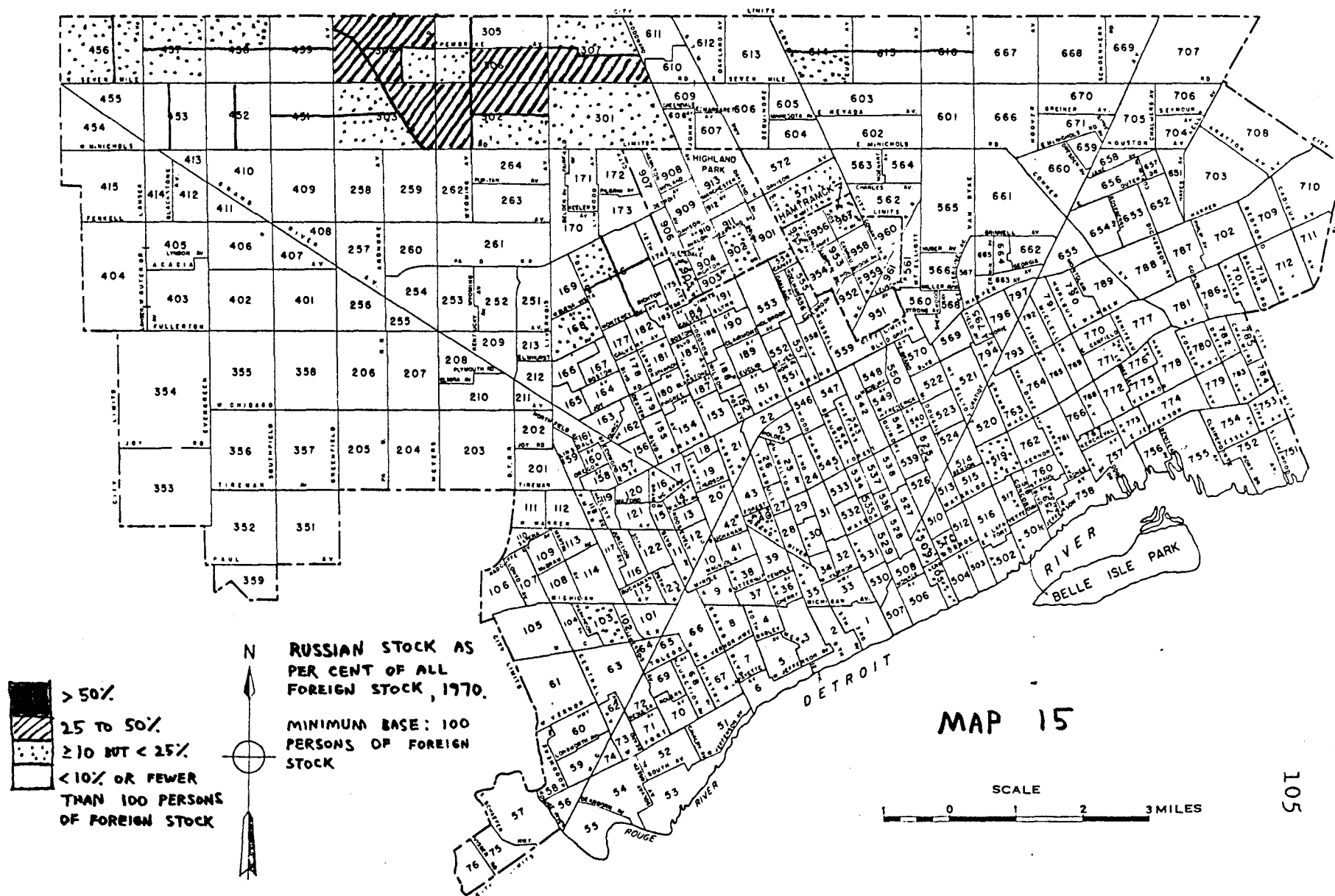
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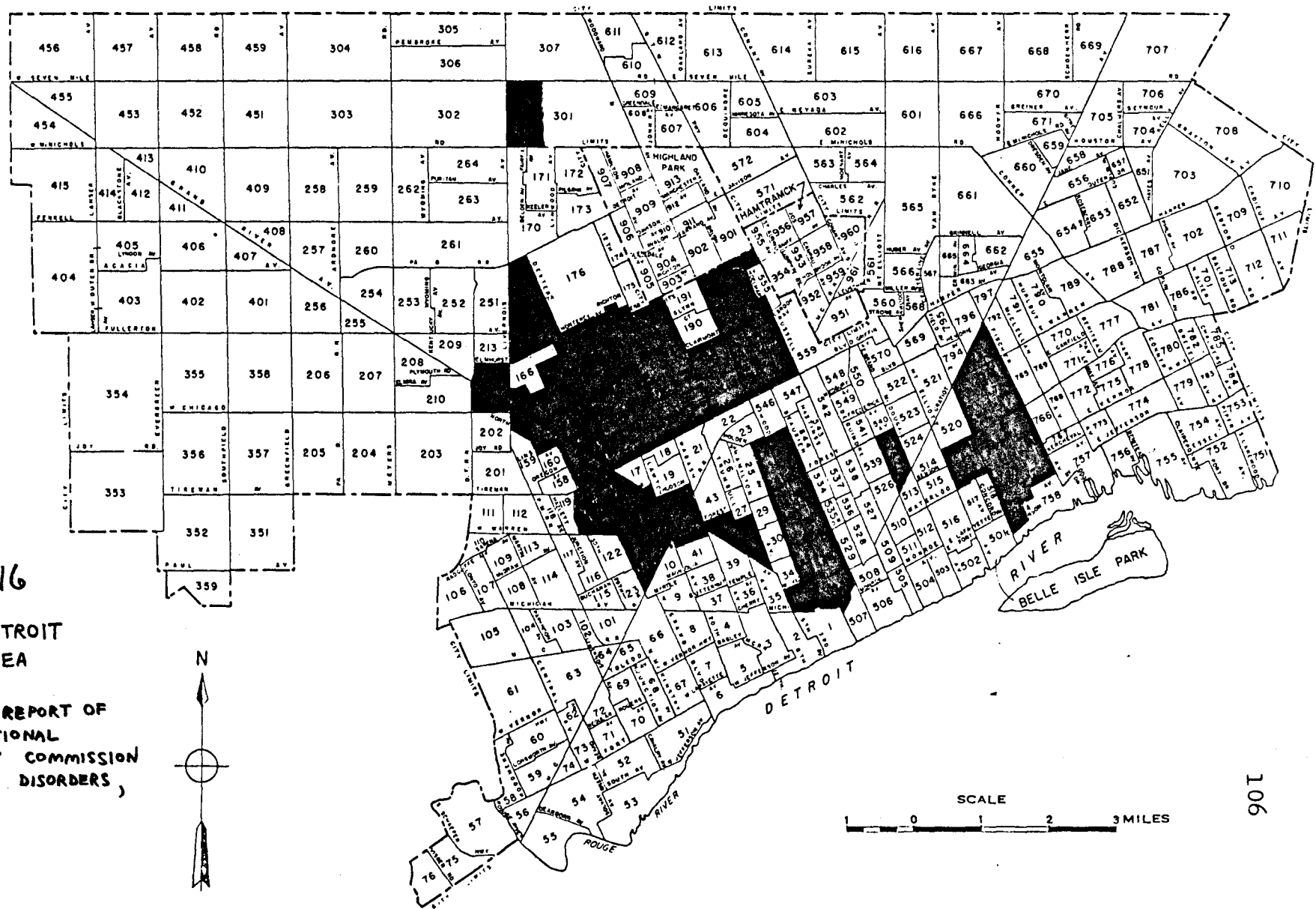
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No. 565 Maryland.  
No. 566 Massachusetts.  
No. 567 Michigan.  
No. 568 Minnesota.  
No. 570 Missouri.  
No. 575 New Jersey.  
No. 577 New York.  
No. 580 Ohio.

## APPENDIX A

## APPENDIX A

### A METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

The block statistics for Detroit from 1940 to 1960 use the racial division white-nonwhite, in contrast to the, for these purposes, better dichotomy of black-other. Therefore, the compilation of block maps of the black population of the city prior to 1970 is subject to a certain amount of error. The nonblack component of the nonwhite population ranges from virtually nothing in many Southern cities such as Macon, Georgia to a substantial, if not preponderant, portion of that group in places like Sacramento and San Francisco, especially in 1940, before the Western black population was large. Fortunately, this is not a major problem with Detroit. The use of census tract reports does help somewhat in constructing a fairly accurate map because of the white-black-other division used in the tracts.

The census does not include the racial composition of blocks with very small populations, so those encountered in compiling these maps were assumed to be of the same composition as the surrounding blocks, if it was obvious. They were not colored in changing or very near to downtown neighborhoods where the race of the occupants was not certain. This also was to avoid erroneously overstating the size of the black areas.

One last note is that the map patterns are based on the

proportion black of all occupied housing units. There may be variations between the proportion of black occupied housing units and the proportion black of the total block population.<sup>1</sup> A block where the number of black and white households was equal might really have a sixty or seventy per cent black population because of differences in family size between the two racial groups. Also, various types of institutions might dramatically alter a block's composition from that of the neighborhood. Since prisons, hospitals and the like are not germane to a study of housing segregation, the maps are limited to occupied housing units.

No formal references to census works are given in the text. A complete list of census references is given in the bibliography.

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<sup>1</sup>Based on the race of the head of the household.

## APPENDIX B



## APPENDIX B

### RACIAL CONCENTRATION INDEX

The index of dissimilarity may also be used as a rough indicator of racial segregation on the metropolitan level. The Taeubers used the index within individual cities to obtain a segregation index whose statistic was the difference between the percentage of the city's blacks who lived in blocks which were more heavily black than the city average and the percentage of the city's whites who lived in those same blocks. The metropolitan concentration index statistic is the difference between the percentage of the metropolitan area's blacks who live in the central city (or cities) and the percentage of the SMSA's whites who live in the same area. The concentration index score ranges from 100 in the unlikely hypothetical case of an SMSA in which the central city was all black and suburbia had no blacks to a low of -100 if the even less likely reverse situation occurred.

When the statistic was calculated for the standard consolidated statistical areas and the standard metropolitan statistical areas that contained the fifty largest American cities in 1970, the results were quite interesting, especially in regard to Detroit. The 46 index scores that were computed ranged from -19.3 to 66.3, with a median of about 39. These scores, especially the lower ones, cannot be taken as measures of residential segregation, except at the level

of municipalities or clusters of municipalities. The accidents of city boundaries and the direction of black neighborhood expansion combine in many cases to create low concentration index scores in places with very high levels of segregation in terms of city blocks as measured by the Taeubers. The Tulsa, Miami and Jacksonville concentration index scores of 22.0, 16.2 and zero, respectively, mask the extremely high degree of segregation that actually exists within those cities.

However, even at the very crude level of analysis used in the concentration index, some SMSA's still exhibited abnormally high index scores. Fifteen had scores over fifty, and three of those were over sixty. The highest score was 66.3, in Washington, and the second highest was 62.5 in Detroit. The fact that these scores are actually so high that they fall in the lower range of the Taeuber block statistic-based city segregation index scores is further proof that extreme racial polarization exists within many SMSA's between central city and suburbia.

During the 1960's some central city black communities became so large that they expanded across the municipal boundary, and large-scale racial transition thus spread to adjacent inner suburbs. In cases in which this has occurred, the central city-suburb dichotomy becomes less meaningful in the analysis of metropolitan racial segregation, if the inner suburbs "annexed" to the city ghetto are ignored. Black spillover into the suburbs was noticeable in eight of the 46 metropolitan areas previously examined. In each of these

cases, suburbs into which the city black populations had expanded were lumped together with the central city or cities. For example, Detroit and Highland Park were combined for the purpose of computing the revised statistic. River Rouge and Ecorse were not included because the direction of black expansion was from those two suburbs into southwest Detroit during the 1940's and 1950's, an unusual turnabout of the currently ever-increasing trend of ghetto expansion from the central city into the suburbs.

A listing of concentration index scores for the same forty-six metropolitan areas with revised calculations for the eight cases of black suburban spillover looks about the same as the original. Amended scores were slightly higher for six of the eight cases and seventeen points higher for Los Angeles. Washington's 63.4 was an actual slight decline. Thus, Detroit's amended concentration score of 64.6 was the highest in the revised group of forty-six metropolitan area scores. Computations of concentration index scores for some smaller SMSA's have generally yielded lower scores than the sample previously mentioned. Thus, Detroit may be the metropolitan area with the greatest degree of black concentration in the central city-inner suburb area of any SMSA in the nation.

To see if there is any trend in the concentration of Detroit-area blacks, index scores were computed for 1973, using the available census estimates and the author's estimates. The score was calculated, using the central city alone and

then using Detroit and Highland Park in the second calculation to correct for black spillover into that inner suburb. The index scores were 69.1 and 71.9, respectively. These large short-term index increases are mainly the result of the estimated large loss in white population in Detroit in the thirty-nine months since the census. These calculations are presented below.

A second pair of index scores was computed using 1976 estimates of population which were calculated on the doubtful assumption that the central city's population losses had virtually ceased after 1973. Thus, white losses in the city were conservatively estimated to be equal to the black increase. The concentration index score for Detroit alone was 69.1 and was 72.4 for Detroit and Highland Park.

COMPUTATION OF CONCENTRATION INDEX  
SCORES FOR 1970, 1973 AND 1976

April 1, 1970

Detroit

$$\frac{660,428}{757,083} - \frac{851,054}{3,442,848} = .872 - .247 = .625 \quad \underline{62.5}$$

Detroit and Highland Park

$$\frac{680,037}{757,083} - \frac{866,889}{3,442,848} = .898 - .252 = .646 \quad \underline{64.6}$$

July 1, 1973

Detroit

$$\frac{715,000}{810,000} - \frac{671,000}{3,500,000} = .883 - .192 = .691 \quad \underline{69.1}$$

Detroit and Highland Park

$$\frac{740,000}{810,000} - \frac{681,000}{3,500,000} = .914 - .195 = .719 \quad \underline{71.9}$$

July 1, 1976

Detroit

$$\frac{750,000}{870,000} - \frac{600,000}{3,500,000} = .862 - .171 = .691 \quad \underline{69.1}$$

Detroit and Highland Park

$$\frac{780,000}{870,000} - \frac{605,000}{3,500,000} = .897 - .173 = .724 \quad \underline{72.4}$$

APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Timothy Joseph Kenny  
has been read and approved by the following committee:

Dr. Kathleen M. McCourt, Director  
Assistant Professor, Sociology, Loyola

Rev. Thomas M. Gannon, S.J.,  
Associate Professor and Chairman,  
Sociology, Loyola

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis, and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the thesis is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Sociology.

April 19, 1977  
Date

  
Director's Signature