

"We want white tenants in our white community"

Analysis



This sign was directly opposite the Sojourner Truth homes, a new U.S. federal housing project.

White neighbors attempted by rioting to prevent African American tenants from moving in Detroit, Michigan, United States. February 1942.

Photos used in the 1984 Truman Centennial Exhibi

HISTORICAL DETAIL:

In 1941The need for labor brought an influx of African Americans to Detroit, who encountered stiff resistance from whites who refused to accommodate them in their neighborhoods or work alongside them on an assembly line. African-Americans, who already densely populated the few neighborhoods in which they had been confined because of segregation policies, continued to suffer grave injustices regarding the housing in which they lived. Many in fact lived in poorly reduced houses but paid rents 3 or 4 times higher than white roommates.

In June 1941, the Detroit Housing Commission approved two sites for federally financed public housing - one for whites, the other near Dequindre just south of McNichols for African- Americans.

However, due to protests by the white neighbors, the Federal Housing Administration, fearing racial violence, announced on 20 January 1942 that Sojourner's homes would be designated only to whites.

Appeals from Detroit Mayor Edward Jeffries, Detroit housing officials and civil rights groups convinced FHA officials to reverse their decision again, in favor of black residents, who would be able to legally move in on 28 february 1942.

That day, therefore, the first black families were welcomed by a crowd of white protesters, who molested black families and threw stones at them. The demonstrations of the white tenants continued until the end of April, when 1100 municipal and state police officers and 1,600 members of the Michigan National Guard were sent to the area to protect six African- American families who moved into the Sojourner homes.

CONCLUSION:

I analyzed this document because I think it clearly expresses how black people were discriminated against during the 1900s, and how difficult it was for them to be able to live in a community of whites. Infact they preferred to go on protests against African Americans for months rather than having them as neighbors

SITOGRAPHY:

<https://calendar.eji.org/racial-injustice/feb/28>

<https://www.trumanlibrary.org/photographs/view.php?id=58442>

https://www.reddit.com/r/HistoryPorn/comments/6nlm1n/we_want_white_tenants_in_our_white_community_sign/

<https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2015/01/detroit-in-the-1940s/384523/>