

such places as the railroad shops, cotton mills, brick and cement factories. About 6 per cent were semi-skilled workers in coal mines and tobacco factories. Only 3 per cent were listed as servants. Two per cent were engaged in the building trades as contractors, carpenters, brick layers, and painters. A large number of professional men were listed: Kentucky had 649 clergymen, 112 musicians and teachers of music, 128 physicians and surgeons, and 321 school teachers.

As these figures indicate, black men in Kentucky were increasingly employed in industries rather than on farms. The number of Blacks occupied as servants was very low while the number of professional men was high compared to other states.

Less than half of Kentucky's black women were employed in 1910; most of those who were not employed were probably wives for whom working was not a financial necessity. About 37 per cent of the working women were servants; another 37 per cent were laundresses. Only about 3 per cent were paid employees on farms. An amazingly large number of Kentucky's black women were teachers—two per cent or 1,006 black women. Maryland, a border state with about the same number of employed black women, had half as many teachers as Kentucky had.

By 1910, industrialization had had little effect on the employment of black women in Kentucky. Most of those women who did work were servants or laundresses.

## Home Ownership

A higher percentage of Kentucky Blacks owned their own homes than in any other state. Of the black homes in Kentucky, 32 per cent were owned by their occupants.

From these figures, we can draw a picture of Kentucky's black population in 1910. Half of Kentucky's black families lived in cities and towns; the other half lived in rural areas. Many of those in the city owned their own homes; over half of the farmers owned the farms they worked. Most of the men in the cities worked as laborers; many of their wives did not work but those who did were probably either servants or teachers.

## Black Businesses

Many black people in the early twentieth century owned their own businesses. Barber shops, beauty parlors, grocery stores, and small restaurants were owned by Blacks. Most towns with a sizeable black population had black-owned mortuaries.

Some larger financial institutions owned largely by Blacks also developed. The emergence of such companies was due in part to the reluctance of white-owned companies to insure Blacks. Two black insurance companies, Mammoth Life and Accident Insurance Company and Domestic Insurance Company, were formed. A black bank, the American Mutual Savings Bank, was organized in Louisville in 1922.

## Mammoth Life

Kentucky's largest black-owned business, Mammoth Life and Accident Insurance Company, was founded in 1915. Black businessmen W.H. Wright, Rochelle I. Smith, B.O. Wilderson and H.E. Hall organized a life and accident insurance company with its office in Louisville. Representatives who sold the insurance found such a great demand for it that offices were established in Lexington, Paducah, Bowling Green and Hopkinsville.

In 1924, stock in the company was offered for sale in Kentucky. Within 90 days, \$100,000 worth of stock was sold, principally to black Kentucky residents. President H.E. Hall then urged his board of directors to increase the amount of stock offered to \$200,000, which they did. Within a short period the entire amount of stock was sold.

The company continued to grow and prosper. Branching into business in several states, Mammoth Life became one of the largest black-owned corporations in the area. A large office building was erected in Louisville at Sixth and Walnut. During the economic depression of the early 1930's, Mammoth Life faced its greatest financial challenge but was able to survive the financial pressures that closed so many other banks and insurance companies.

Mammoth Life and Accident Insurance Company in 1970 has offices in eight states: Missouri, Tennes-

see, Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Ohio and Kentucky. The company employs more than 500 people and lists total assets of over \$19 million (\$19,000,000).

## Labor Unions

Kentucky black workers joined with white workers in the early organization of labor unions during the 1880's and 1890's. One early union movement, the Knights of Labor, was especially active in recruiting both black and white men to meet together in interracial local organizations. But as the union movement became more widespread, many Kentucky unions organized separate locals for black workers.

Black workers have played important roles in two of Kentucky's major industries—the tobacco industry and the coal mines. Although workers in every different industry have different histories to tell, we can understand some of the problems faced by black workers by studying these two industries.



## Tobacco Industry

The tobacco industry in Kentucky has always employed a large number of Blacks. In the early twentieth century, about half the employees of the tobacco industry in Kentucky were Black.

The Tobacco Workers International Union was founded in 1895. Its earliest Kentucky local was established shortly thereafter. Black workers were early members of the union; in 1900, Thomas Williams, a Black who lived in Louisville, was Second Vice-President of the national organization.

As segregation developed in Kentucky, however, the union also became segregated. Blacks belonged to one local group; whites belonged to another. The segregated black locals found it difficult to press for better jobs for its members. The white locals often opposed such demands because they were afraid their members would lose the better jobs.



*W. H. WRIGHT AND H. E. HALL, founders of Mammoth Life and Accident Insurance Company, one of Kentucky's largest black-owned businesses.*

In many cigarette factories, when machines began to be used for certain tasks, they were usually operated by white workers while the black workers did most tasks that involved heavy manual labor.

One observer described this racial division of tasks in his description of a tobacco factory in the 1940's:

"The leaf is first removed by Negro men from the auction room, where it has been purchased from farmers, to the redrying plant. The redrying machine is operated by white men, and the tobacco is fed into it by Negro men. Going into a cooling chamber, it is packed into hogsheads and stored in the warehouses by Negro men. After aging, the tobacco goes to the factory for the first stages of preparation. Negro women perform the operations preparatory to stemming, and remove the stems, either by hand or, more recently, by machinery. They also handle the other processing operations. The leaves are then blended and flavored by Negro men and shredded by a machine operated by white men and fed by Negro men. The shredded tobacco goes to the cigarette-making machine operated by white women. Foremen, inspectors, mechanics, and other skilled maintenance workers are white. White women do the weighing and counting; Negro men, the sweeping and cleaning. White men and women perform the various operations of packing and boxing; Negro men make the box containers and remove them for shipment."<sup>1</sup>

Thus, Blacks found themselves working in jobs with little hope for advancement to higher paying positions with more attractive working conditions. The black worker who entered the tobacco industry upon graduation from high school might retire at 65 doing essentially the same kind of work.

The civil rights pressures of the 1960's produced some changes in the black worker's position in this and other industries. Black union locals were abolished; black workers are now part of desegregated locals. Blacks have been hired or allowed to transfer into jobs that previously had been held by whites

However, the patterns of discrimination remained apparent as late as 1969. A Kentucky Human Rights Commission investigation of that year revealed that one group of 154 Blacks who had worked for a tobacco company since 1961 had been forced to give

up all their seniority rights if they chose to transfer to previously all-white departments. A public hearing was held in which the Commission ordered that the company must stop its unfair treatment of minority employees. Only after this order was issued did the company accord the black workers their rightful seniority.

## Coal Mining Industry

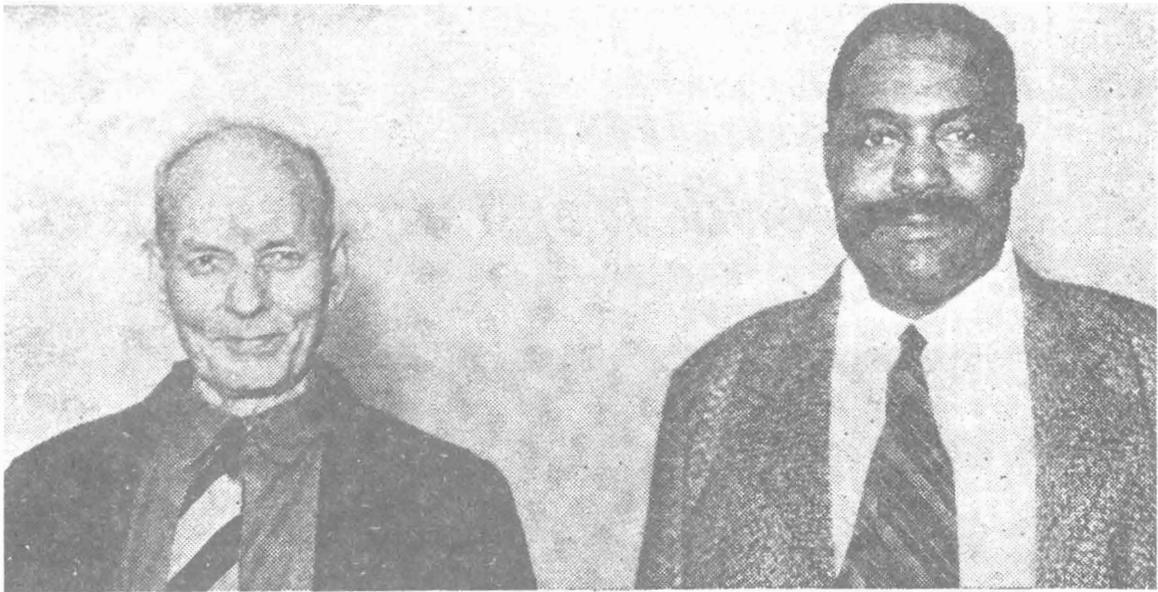
Black workers have played an important role in Kentucky's coal mining industry. Coal was first mined in Kentucky in 1850's and by 1890 coal was a significant product of eastern Kentucky. Most of the coal was originally mined by white miners because the coal deposits were located in areas in which few Blacks lived.

In the 1880's, coal miners began to organize themselves into unions and to strike to demand higher pay or better working conditions. Mine owners tried to end the strikes by importing black workers to take the jobs of the striking miners.

The union, however, approached the black workers and invited them to join the union also. Many black workers did join the unions and participated with white workers in the strikes. The United Mine Workers, which eventually became the dominant union, organized all who worked "in and around the mine" into integrated local chapters. By 1900, Blacks worked in the coal mines under the same conditions as white men worked and joined with their fellow miners in union activities.

But in the 1920's, Kentucky mines became increasingly more mechanized—machines undercut the coal for blasting, drilled holes, stuffed in explosives, and loaded the coal onto conveyors. The jobs involving working with machinery were generally given to the white men. Supervisory and white collar jobs were also given chiefly to white men. In Kentucky, in 1940, for example, of 5,474 black miners, only 52 men (.9%) were in clerical or supervisory positions. For white miners, of 49,202 miners, 4279 (11%) held these higher positions.

So as machines replaced the traditional pick and shovel miners, black miners found themselves without jobs.



**WILLIAM HIGHTOWER AND ELZIE PHILLIPS**  
**Released from Prison in December, 1935.**

*TWO HARLAN COAL MINERS who were involved in the 1931 battle to organize all Harlan coal miners, black and white, in one union. The unjust treatment of the miners attracted nation-wide attention. A committee of prominent writers including Theodore Dreiser, John Dos Passos, and Sherwood Anderson provided a legal defense fund for these and other union organizers who had been arrested.*

Although the union had fought for the Black's right to equal pay for the same task, the union did not help black workers to upgrade their jobs, to get jobs operating the machines, for example. And so the number of Blacks working in the coal mines declined noticeably. In 1930, 13.5% of those employed in the coal mining industry were Black; in 1940, only 10%

were Black; in 1950, 4.6%; and in 1960, only 3% of those employed were Black.

In many other industries in Kentucky, the black worker found it difficult to advance to higher paying or supervisory positions.

## Summary of Chapter Fourteen

Blacks left Kentucky in ever increasing numbers in the early twentieth century. Better jobs and educational opportunities and the lack of legal segregation in northern cities were the principal reasons for this migration.

The majority of those Blacks who remained in Kentucky worked as laborers or as farmers. Some, however, owned businesses. Several black-owned financial institutions began during the early twentieth

century. The most prominent of these was Mammoth Life and Accident Insurance Company.

Black workers often joined integrated local labor unions during the last part of the nineteenth century. However, as other areas of life became segregated, segregated labor union locals also developed. One notable exception to this process was the United Mine Workers, which almost always included black and white members in a single local.

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<sup>1</sup>Herbert R. Northrup, *Organized Labor and the Negro* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1944), p. 103.

## Chapter Fifteen

### World War I and Its Aftermath



*COLONEL CHARLES D. YOUNG was the highest ranking black officer in the United States at the beginning of World War I.*

When the call for troops to fight World War I came, Kentucky black men and women volunteered in large numbers. Final figures from Kentucky's Adjutant General's office showed that of 84,172 Kentuckians who served in the armed forces in World War I, 12,584 were Black. In other words, 14 per cent

of Kentucky's service men were black. In 1910, Blacks made up only 11 per cent of Kentucky's population. So a higher proportion of black Kentuckians than of white Kentuckians fought "to make the world safe for democracy."

## Colonel Charles D. Young

The highest ranking black officer in the United States at the beginning of World War I was a Kentuckian. Colonel Charles D. Young was born in Mays Lick, Kentucky in 1864. After moving to Ohio, Young received an appointment from that State to the United States Military Academy in 1884.

A man of many talents, Young taught Military Science and Tactics at Wilberforce University in Ohio. He also composed music for both violin and piano. He was proficient in Latin, Greek, German, French, Spanish, and Italian.

During the Spanish American War, Major Young was in charge of the Ninth Ohio Regiment which was made up of black volunteers. After the War, he served in the Philippines, Mexico, and Haiti.

When the United States entered World War I, Young was retired because his high blood pressure made him physically unfit for duty. To prove this was not so, Young rode his horse all the way from Wilberforce, Ohio, to Washington, D.C. He was reinstated, promoted to the rank of Colonel, and later sent to represent the United States as military attache in Liberia. There he contracted a tropical fever and died. He was buried with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery.

## Rufus B. Atwood

The United States Army in World War I was a strictly segregated army. Black soldiers were formed into all-black units; most of these units were part of the Ninety-second Division. The black troops had a distinguished combat record. One unit, the 369th United States Infantry fought in the front lines for over six months and never lost a trench, a foot of ground, or a man through capture. Showing their respect for this fighting unit, the Germans called them "Hell Fighters."

Black soldiers performed many acts of heroism. One Kentuckian who was awarded the Bronze Star for his bravery was Sergeant Rufus B. Atwood, who later became President of Kentucky State College.

When a switchboard necessary for important communications between troops was destroyed by an enemy shell, Atwood reconstructed the switchboard

and connected many new lines. As the official order reported:

"When the ammunition dump began to explode in the same neighborhood, he remained on the job, tapping new connections. After repairs were made from the first explosion, there were two to follow which completely wrecked the switchboard room and tore out all the lines which were newly fixed. Sergeant Atwood was left alone, and he established a new switchboard and the same connections they had at first. The coolness with which he went about his work and the initiative he took in handling the situation justifies his being mentioned in orders."<sup>1</sup>

And yet, when this same hero returned home to Hickman, Kentucky after the war, his father advised him not to wear his uniform home because some uniformed black soldiers had been attacked by local residents.

"So, I did as Papa had advised, and went home in a civilian suit, my uniform folded in my suitcase. I passed unnoticed through the depot and reached the house on Cedar Street without incident. Once inside the safety of my home, I put on my uniform so my family could see how I looked as a soldier. That was



*RUFUS B. ATWOOD, awarded the Bronze Star for bravery in World War I, later became President of Kentucky State College.*

the first and last time my family saw me in uniform—I had not been home since my enlistment—and I never wore that uniform outside our door.”<sup>2</sup>

## Mob Violence in the Twenties

The period just after the end of World War I, from 1919 until 1929 was marked by violence toward black citizens in many parts of the country. Membership in the Ku Klux Klan surged upward. White sheeted marchers appeared openly in Fourth of July parades, marching alongside of victorious army veterans or the local high school bands. Lynchings became more and more frequent, and nighttime burnings of barns and houses owned by Blacks increased at an alarming rate.

Kentucky escaped violence, for the most part. Governor Augustus Stanley had taken a firm stand against violence in Kentucky, vowing eternal opposition to the Ku Klux Klan. In 1917 Governor Stanley subdued a lynch mob in Murray by insisting they would have to attack him before he would let the



*DR. JAMES BOND, after volunteering for the army and being rejected because of age, served as YMCA Camp Service Director at Camp Taylor during World War I.*

prisoner become their victim. When the Klan entered Louisville, Mayor George Smith vowed to “use every lawful means to suppress its growth in our community.” He forbade the street sale of Klan literature and Klan meetings often had to be held across the river in Jeffersonville. Louisville and New Orleans were the only two southern cities to successfully resist the encroachment of the Klan.

## Klan Membership in Kentucky

In total Klan membership of all persons initiated between 1915 and 1944, the State of Kentucky ranked twentieth out of the forty-eight states. Kentucky had an estimated membership of 30,000 over the 30-year period, compared to an estimated 140,000 members in Indiana over the same period.

## Lynchings

Between 1882 and 1927, there were 233 people lynched in Kentucky including 154 Blacks and 5 women. Only eight other states had a higher number of lynch victims during this period.

After World War I, the statistics in regard to lynchings sharply declined. In the twenty-year period from 1919 to 1939, there were eight recorded lynchings in Kentucky. This figure was a marked decrease from earlier years. (In the period between 1882 and 1903, 103 Blacks were lynched. Between 1904 and 1918, 45 black people were lynched.)<sup>3</sup>

Although the total number of lynchings decreased through the years, the horrors and injustice of Lynch Law did not. When a 20 year old Maysville Black, who confessed to murdering his employer’s wife, was burned at the stake in 1899, thousands of spectators watched his death without protesting the action of the mob.<sup>4</sup> In 1921, a mob of 50 hung a black man in Versailles after a jury failed to convict him of murder.<sup>5</sup>

In some cases, the victims of lynchings were not even accused of a specific crime. For example, in 1913, officials found the body of a Louisville black man hanging from a tree. This lynching happened after the man had frightened a white woman by asking her whether her husband was at home. For asking this question, the black man was killed.<sup>6</sup>

## Avoiding "Lynch Law"

One important factor in the decrease of lynchings in Kentucky was that State government officials demonstrated their determination to avoid "Lynch Law." In 1920, a ten-year-old white girl was brutally murdered. A black man named Will Lockett was arrested for that crime and jailed in Lexington. As news of the crime traveled, a mob began to form. Knowing his jail was not secure enough, the Lexington sheriff hustled Lockett off to Frankfort where he was held in the State penitentiary. Sheriff Bain Moore of Franklin County set up roadblocks outside of Frankfort and when the angry mob reached the roadblocks, he informed them in no uncertain terms that all penitentiary guards had orders to shoot to kill anyone who tried to take the prisoner from the penitentiary. So the crowd dispersed, planning to make their move when Lockett was returned to Lexington for trial.

In the meantime, State officials conferred as to the best means of protecting the prisoner. Governor Edwin P. Morrow wanted to call in U.S. Army regular troops, stationed nearby at Camp Taylor; but he did not have the authority to do so unless a clearcut state of emergency existed. So, instead, he ordered the State Guard to Lexington to guard the Courthouse.

Very early in the morning of the trial, the prisoner was secretly brought from Frankfort to the Lexington Courthouse and concealed in a protected inner room. State guard troops, under the command of Adjutant General J.M. Deweese, were stationed on the steps of the courthouse with weapons loaded but with orders to fire only on the command of General Deweese. Before 9:00 A.M., a crowd, drawn from areas all over the South, filled the streets around the Courthouse.

Convinced that the guardsmen would not fire on so large a white mob, at a given signal the leaders attacked General Deweese, who as he went down, gave the signal to fire. The Guardsmen fired into the mob, killing four persons immediately and injuring many others. Two others died by evening. Stunned by this unprecedented move, the crowd dispersed very quickly. Will Lockett's trial could continue.

At this point a real state of emergency did exist. There was talk of retaliation against the State Guard or against officials who had stood so steadfastly for Lockett's right to a trial. Governor Morrow called for

the Army troops and by 3:20 p.m., the First Division Regulars from Camp Taylor arrived. Martial law was declared for Lexington. Soldiers began patrolling the black districts, the tobacco warehouse district (which had been threatened because the sheriff and several other county officials were shareholders in the tobacco companies), and Union Station (where sharp-shooting mountaineers were rumored to be arriving). This show of strength wilted the opposition.

Will Lockett's trial concluded with a verdict of guilty and a sentence of death in the electric chair. Although Lockett was punished for the crime, civil authorities protected his rights for a trial. A lynch mob would not have respected those rights. They would have lynched him even if he had been innocent, "without an opportunity to tell his story."

Undoubtedly this willingness of state and local officials to use the power at their disposal to protect the legal rights of one black man was one reason why Kentucky escaped much of the violence that erupted in other parts of this country in the 1920's.

## Black Voters

Many of the black soldiers who fought in World War I came back to Kentucky with a wider knowledge of the world and a greater sense of their own importance. Having fought for their country, they now wanted to take full advantage of their citizenship.

One way they could do this was by voting. Blacks



*AFTER WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE WAS GRANTED BY THE NINETEENTH AMENDMENT, black women actively campaigned for candidates who offered the best program for black citizens.*

in Kentucky had rarely been prevented from voting as had Blacks in states farther south. However, before World War I, the black vote had not had much power because the State had voted so overwhelmingly Democratic. This pattern was changing. In 1918, a Republican was elected Governor of Kentucky. As the Republican Party gained strength, the black vote gained strength. In a state in which the two parties polled about the same number of votes, the black vote might swing the election to one or the other party.

Black voters might either vote for the party that offered the best program for black citizens or they might form an independent party.

## Independent-Lincoln Party

In Louisville, in 1921, a group of black voters did form an independent party. Calling themselves the Independent-Lincoln Party, this group nominated the following black candidates for the city election:

A. D. Porter, Mayor  
A. C. Garvin, County Judge

W. F. Gurley, Alderman  
Lindsay Garrison, Alderman  
Leonard Haley, Alderman  
Dr. Morris Blackburn, Alderman  
Owen Evans, Alderman  
Dr. Wilson Ballard, Alderman  
William Warley, Magistrate  
N. M. Willis, County Attorney  
Mrs. Nora King, Park Commissioner  
Dr. J. O. Catalan, Coroner  
Willis Cole, Senator  
Wilson Lovett, Legislature  
W. W. Wilson, Legislature

After an incredibly bitter campaign in which both Warley's newspaper office and Porter's mortuary were attacked by vandals, the Lincoln Party polled only 274 votes. Ten times that many ballots were thrown into the Ohio River, charged an article in the NAACP magazine, *The Crisis*.<sup>7</sup>

While the independent Lincoln Party did not succeed in electing black candidates to office, it did successfully demonstrate that black voters did have political power.

## Summary of Chapter Fifteen

A higher percentage of Kentucky Blacks than Kentucky whites fought in World War I. They fought in segregated units. Many of those units earned distinguished combat records. Colonel Charles D. Young and Sergeant Rufus B. Atwood were two of the many outstanding black soldiers Kentucky produced.

Although racial violence increased markedly after the war in many states, in Kentucky state and local authorities took a strong stand against such violence.

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted in John Hope Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom*, (New York: Vintage, 1969), p. 465-6.

<sup>2</sup>Rufus B. Atwood manuscript autobiography, unpublished, in possession of R.B. Atwood, Chapter 2, p. 31.

<sup>3</sup>Walter F. White, *Rope and Faggott* (New York: Knopf, 1929), p. 255.

<sup>4</sup>Ralph Ginzburg, *One Hundred Years of Lynching* (New York: Lancer, 1962), p. 24-30

The Ku Klux Klan did not become a strong force within the State. In a 1920 attempted lynching, state guardsmen fired upon the mob of white citizens attempting to lynch a black man. This determination to enforce the law probably was a cause of the decline of such mob violence in Kentucky.

The 1920's were also a period of political awakening for many black Kentuckians. This awakening was highlighted by the attempt to form the Independent Lincoln Party.

<sup>5</sup>From a New York *Times* article dated March 14, 1921, quoted in Ginzburg, *Ibid.*, p. 88-89

<sup>6</sup>From a *Birmingham News* article dated September 23, 1913 quoted in Ginzburg, *Ibid.*, p. 88-89

<sup>7</sup>W. F. Woolsey, "Equality: Struggle of Louisville Negroes isn't new; it began dramatically over 50 years ago," *Louisville Times*, September 25, 1971, p. 8.

# Unit Four

## The Struggle Against Discrimination-- 1930-1970

The 1930's began with Kentucky Blacks living in a segregated society. Schools, parks, libraries, trains and waiting rooms were all labeled "For White Only" or "For Colored Only." A few organizations such as the Council for Interracial Cooperation provided links between the black and white communities but essentially Kentucky was a land of two worlds.

Federal programs designed to combat the financial depression that gripped the land in the early thirties provided one of the first cracks in the segregation barrier. Whites and Blacks served together on some of the work projects. Some black students received training in fields such as business, nursing, carpentry, and stenographic skills enabling them to enter professions that otherwise would have been closed to them. Adult education programs provided new skills and learning for an ever increasing number of Black adults.

World War II also provided new opportunities for black Kentuckians. Black soldiers who traveled to all parts of the world learned that the segregated society they knew in Kentucky was not universal. As a result of protests by black citizens, President Roosevelt ordered that defense industries must not discriminate against black workers. Throughout the war, black people continued to demand an end to segregation in the armed forces. However, it was not until 1948 that segregation of the armed forces was banned by an executive order issued by President Truman.

After the war, Kentucky's black leaders turned their attention to the problem of breaking down further the segregation barriers that condemned Blacks to second-class citizenship. Court suits requesting equal educational opportunities and equal park facilities were filed in several communities.

One by one the barriers slowly fell. Black students were admitted to white nursing schools. Black doctors could train in white hospitals. Black sportsmen could play golf on city-owned golf courses. Black teams could play baseball against white teams in city-owned parks.

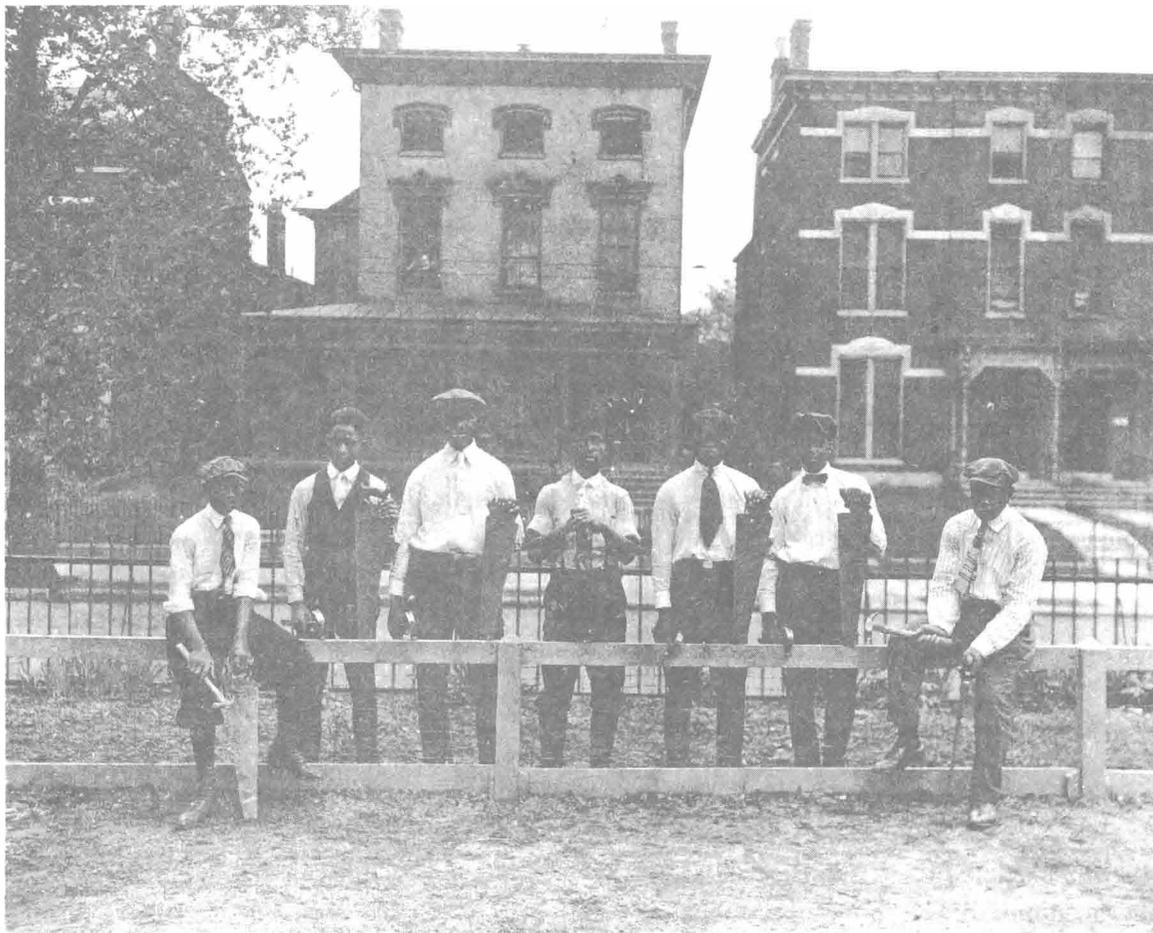
The 1954 Supreme Court decision outlawing segregated public schools was met with general acceptance in Kentucky. Within two years after the Court's decision was announced, over half of Kentucky's black children were attending school districts in which some plan of student integration was operating. Persistent legal pressure from the Kentucky NAACP did not end until 1965 when the last Kentucky school district announced desegregation plans.

The establishment of a Kentucky Commission on Human Rights in 1960 indicated the State's official commitment to obtaining equal rights for all Kentuckians. These rights were further defined in the Kentucky Civil Rights Act of 1966 and the Fair Housing Act passed by the General Assembly in 1968. The State guaranteed to all citizens the right to equal employment opportunities, the right to be served in public accommodations, and the right to purchase or rent housing in any area without regard to race, color, religion or national origin.

During the late sixties, many Kentucky Blacks became disillusioned with the slow progress in Civil Rights which followed the end of legal segregation. "Freedom Now," the slogan of the Civil Rights Movement was replaced by demands for "Black Power" as many Kentucky Blacks organized to find solutions to the problems experienced by black people as a result of centuries of oppression, segregation and discrimination.

## Chapter Sixteen

### *Negroes and the Depression*



*DURING THE DEPRESSION, WPA TRAINING PROGRAMS such as the Louisville carpentry class pictured above gave black people the opportunity to learn new skills.*

The depression which began with the stock market crash in 1929 subjected numerous people to severe economic conditions. People who were willing to work simply could not find jobs. College graduates found themselves sweeping streets and digging ditches. Men were forced to sit at home while their wives took employment as domestic servants.

Black people, of course, faced these conditions and worse in the depression; but they had faced similar conditions before. Now the white man was learning that people could find themselves at the bottom of the economic heap *through no fault of their own*. And so the cry came for government action.

## Federal Programs

The federal government responded with a number of programs to combat joblessness. The Civilian Conservation Corps organized jobless young men and boys to work with conservation authorities in developing natural resources. The Works Progress Administration built public buildings, roads and bridges. The WPA also provided work for unemployed intellectuals and artists by organizing research programs and sponsoring public art programs.

The National Youth Administration established part-time jobs that would enable high school and college students to remain in school. The NYA also set up training programs for young people who had left school. The Tennessee Valley Authority built dams and electrical generating plants in Kentucky, Tennessee and North Carolina.

In all these projects, Blacks and whites both were taught new skills and given new ways to improve their economic conditions. In Kentucky, the percentage of Blacks involved in the CCC, WPA, and NYA was high in comparison to the percentage of Blacks in the total population. This reflected their disadvantaged economic status.

## NYA in Kentucky

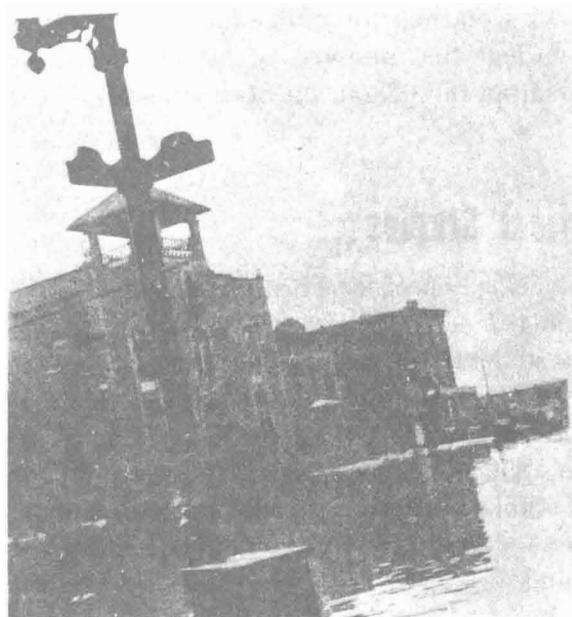
A typical NYA program, for example, was the one administered by the Louisville Municipal College. College officials made two strategic decisions:

1. While federal regulations allotted \$15 per month for each student, at Municipal more students would be helped with smaller monthly payments.
2. Students would be given work that corresponded as closely as possible with their career plans. They were put to work as laboratory assistants and research aides rather than as janitors.

The following chart indicates the number of black students in Louisville receiving NYA assistance:

SCHOOL	1934-35	35-36	36-37	37-38	38-39
Central H.S.	21	33	45	52	76
Madison J.H.S.		10	16	7	4
Municipal College	43	39	114	63	73

The high rate of increase in 1937 reflects the aftermath of the 1937 flood when many black families were made destitute by flood waters.



*THE 1937 FLOOD DESTROYED PROPERTY AND LEFT MANY LOUISVILLE BLACKS HOMELESS. Some churches such as St. Augustines (shown above) assisted the refugees. A plan by city officials to segregate flood victims was abandoned after black leaders protested.*

Several different job training programs were established for black youths under the auspices of the NYA. In Louisville, for example, a program for girls included instruction in sewing, washing, ironing, garment construction, and personal hygiene. One project for boys improved recreational facilities. These young men constructed eighteen softball diamonds, three croquet courts, cleaned and leveled playgrounds, and reconditioned and cleaned various recreation centers. Another workshop instructed boys in drafting, carpentry, painting, bricklaying and plastering. Boys from this program actually built a needed building on the Lincoln Institute campus at Lincoln Ridge, Kentucky. Another program trained young Blacks in recreation. Working on public playgrounds as assistants to city recreation workers or in nursery schools and child care centers, these young people taught games and handicrafts and led nature study programs.

Programs of adult education were also established. Many cities in the State established night schools for adults. Kentucky Blacks were eager to receive this education. In Louisville, an average of five-hundred students attended the night school in 1934, the first year it was established. The following year there were 473 enrolled in literacy classes, 893 in general adult classes, and 277 in vocational schools. The demand for adult education was so strong that a Kentucky workshop for adult education teachers was held during the summer of 1936. Seventy-one teachers from throughout the State attended.

## Historical Studies

The collection of local historical material was one interesting federal project which employed many college students and educated black citizens. One group in the south, for example, tried to find Blacks who had been alive before the Civil War. (A slave born in 1850 would have been 80 years old in 1930.) Young scholars interviewed these ex-slaves and asked them to tell as much as they could remember about living under slavery. This Slave Narrative Collection of the W.P.A. Federal Writers Project is available in many libraries and is an absorbing account of what slavery was like by those who knew it best.



*SAMUEL PLATO, LOUISVILLE CONTRACTOR, operated a successful contracting business during the depression years.*

Another such W.P.A. study was done under the direction of Dr. G.D. Wilson, a professor at Louisville Municipal College. Dr. Wilson sent his workers to find out all they could about the history of black education in Louisville. The results of this study were collected in "A Century of Negro Education," an unpublished manuscript that is now available at the University of Louisville and the Louisville Free Public Libraries.

## Financial Institutions

The depression severely affected many black owned businesses and financial institutions. The largest financial institution, Mammoth Life and Accident Insurance Company, survived the depression but the First Standard Bank was forced to close and many black depositors lost their hard-earned savings in this financial disaster.

Although the depression brought severe hardships to many Kentucky Blacks, not all Kentucky Blacks were poor or unemployed.

## Samuel Plato

One successful black businessman was Samuel Plato. Plato came to Kentucky in the 1920's after having lived his early years in Marion, Indiana. Plato was a contractor who had his own construction firm. He had learned the essentials of the construction business through a correspondence course. With hard work and great ingenuity, he established his own company.

During the depression, many public buildings were built in order to provide jobs for unemployed men. Samuel Plato's construction company contracted with the federal government to build post offices in several different cities. The firm also built an 88 unit segment of housing for servicemen at Camp Taylor, near Louisville. In 1941, the firm was awarded the contract for a \$1,000,000 defense housing project in Baltimore, Maryland.

Among the buildings in Louisville constructed by Plato Construction Company were the Virginia Avenue School, the Green Street and Lampton Street Baptist Churches, and the AME Zion Church at 13th and Broadway and many beautiful homes ranging upwards of \$50,000 in the vicinity of Southwestern Parkway.

## Political Life

The financial depression that began in 1930 marked the end of the solid black Republican vote. The amazing political appeal of Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal reached deeply into the ranks of black Kentucky voters. Many disenchanted Republicans switched their registration to the Democratic column in national elections.

### Charles W. Anderson

Aware of these defections, the Republican Party nominated a black candidate for the State Legislature in 1936. Charles W. Anderson was elected to the Kentucky House of Representatives from Louisville and became the first black man to serve in the legislature of a southern state since Reconstruction days.

Anderson was a skillful and highly effective legislator who was re-elected for six consecutive terms. He introduced many bills providing for better education for Kentucky Blacks. He sponsored the measure which outlawed public hanging in Kentucky.

Anderson understood the problems of Kentucky's poor—both black and white—and worked effectively to improve their economic conditions. As a result of his bill enabling married women to teach, a needed extra income was made possible in many families. Anderson also helped improve the lot of Kentucky's



*CHARLES W. ANDERSON, KENTUCKY'S FIRST BLACK LEGISLATOR, was elected to six consecutive terms in the State General Assembly.*

domestic servants by sponsoring bills providing minimum wages and working condition standards.

Anderson resigned in 1946 to become the Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney for Jefferson County. In 1959, President Eisenhower nominated him to serve as an alternate United States Delegate to the United Nations General Assembly. Through Anderson's untimely death in 1960 in an automobile accident, Kentucky lost one of its most creative public servants.

## Summary of Chapter Sixteen

The depression of the 1930's caused great financial hardships to large numbers of Kentucky black citizens. Job training programs and work relief programs sponsored by the federal government, however, provided some Blacks with training and job opportunities that proved to be most beneficial. The fact that white men too, were having employment difficulties gave some white men new insight into the black man's economic plight.

Some Kentucky Blacks were able to take advantage of the opening economic opportunities for black

citizens. One of the most outstanding examples of this process was the black contractor, Samuel Plato. His skill as a contractor resulted in contracts for his company to build large buildings and projects, not only in Kentucky but throughout the United States.

During the 1930's, another Kentucky black man, Charles W. Anderson, became the first black member of a Southern state legislature since Reconstruction days. As a champion of both poor and black Kentuckians, he produced a notable legislative record.

## Chapter Seventeen

## World War II



*FRANK STANLEY, SR., SHOWN INTERVIEWING BLACK SOLDIERS IN MANHEIM, GERMANY, was commissioned by the Secretary of War to study race relations among American occupation troops in 1946. Stanley's report, based on his inspections of troops stationed in 22 European cities, urged that military segregation be ended immediately.*

World War II brought significant changes to the lives of Kentucky citizens, black and white. Black men and women from Kentucky served in all branches of the armed services. The shortage of manpower in some areas opened job and job training opportunities to black citizens. Many black civilians received their first industrial jobs working to manufacture tanks or ships or arms and ammunition for

the war effort.

World War II also caused Americans to ask an important question: How could the United States fight against Hitler's Master Race Doctrine abroad and, at the same time, allow widespread discrimination at home?

## Civil Rights Issues

Black people began to protest against the treatment of Blacks as second class citizens in a country which claimed to be fighting for freedom and democracy abroad but did not allow Blacks to enjoy freedom at home.

Their protests focused on two main issues:

1. Employment discrimination against Blacks in the defense industries
2. Segregation of the armed forces

## A Bread and Butter Issue

The issue of employment discrimination in defense industries was the bread and butter issue of the war years. As we learned in the last chapter, black people were subjected to severe economic hardships during the depression. By 1939, the national economy began to recover and the build-up of defense plants opened up new jobs. These defense plants had been awarded huge government contracts for war materials to be paid for by public funds. Since black as well as white taxpayers contributed taxes to these public funds, black people felt they had a right to employment in these industries.

However, the first factories manufacturing war equipment—guns, ammunition, tanks, ships, and trucks—employed few Blacks. Some plants hired no Blacks at all. In the few factories that did hire Blacks, policy dictated that Blacks be hired only for menial jobs such as janitors and not for skilled positions. Black author and writer, Langston Hughes, described the situation in these words: “On the verge of another war for democracy, the deep roots of prejudice in American life were still effective in keeping the Negro poor, helpless and hungry.”<sup>1</sup>

## Executive Order on Fair Employment

In 1941, A. Phillip Randolph, president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, proposed that Blacks from throughout the country march to Washington, D.C., to ask for the right to be employed in the defense industries. Not wanting to risk the



*AFTER PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT BANNED DISCRIMINATION IN DEFENSE PLANTS, many new jobs were opened to Blacks. Pictured above is an integrated assembly line at International Harvester's Louisville plant about 1948.*

divisions such a march might bring, President Roosevelt asked black leaders to call off the march. In return, Roosevelt issued an Executive Order banning discrimination in defense industries and required that defense contracts contain an anti-discrimination clause. As a follow-up to the Executive Order, Roosevelt established a Fair Employment Practices Committee to investigate charges of discrimination.

While this executive order did not do away with job discrimination, it did open many industrial jobs to black citizens. In Kentucky, as in other parts of the country, many Blacks found jobs other than as janitors for the first time in American industry.

Although black people were hurt economically by employment discrimination, they were also frustrated by the fact that they were not allowed to participate fully in the war effort. Most Blacks supported the war and they wanted to serve their country. However, they deeply resented being forced to serve their country in segregated armed forces.

## Military Segregation

Kentucky Blacks entered a segregated army in 1940. United States policy in all branches of the

service was to organize Blacks into separate units. Housing on army bases was segregated. At Camp Breckinridge in Kentucky, for example, the barracks for Blacks were on one side of the parade grounds, the barracks for whites on the other. The black part of the base usually had its own branch exchange and recreation hall.

Often black units were led by white officers. Many reasons for this practice were given by military policy makers. Some said Blacks worked better under white commanders. Others said there were simply not enough black officers to command all the black units. (In 1940, there were only five black officers in the regular army—3 chaplains and 2 combat officers.)<sup>2</sup> Black leaders, both civilian and military, again and again asked the army to establish an intensive program of recruiting and developing black officers but no such program was ever established.

## Black Kentuckians in World War II

As in previous years, Kentucky Blacks responded to the call to fight for their country. Of the 282,198 Kentuckians who were drafted into all branches of the armed forces between 1940 and 1947, there were 20,220 black men—approximately 7% of the total servicemen drafted in Kentucky.<sup>3</sup>

Some Kentucky Blacks who joined the Army in 1941 were sent to Camp Breckinridge, Kentucky, where they were trained as part of the black 92nd Infantry Division. Units from this division were sent to Europe and fought in the invasion of Italy in 1944.

Other Kentucky Blacks served as members of the 93rd Infantry Division which was sent to fight in the South Pacific. The first black soldier to die in land combat with the Japanese was a Kentuckian, Private Robert Brooks. Black soldiers fought at Guadalcanal and Okinawa and waded ashore with General Douglas MacArthur on his victorious return to the Philippines.

Kentuckians served in engineering units like the black general service regiments that built large sections of the Alcan Highway which ran from Alaska to the Canadian border. Other all-black construction units built airports on South Pacific Islands as those islands were recaptured from the Japanese.

Six hundred black pilots were trained at Tuskegee, Alabama, during the war. The first black Air

Force Squadron, the 99th Pursuit Squadron, was sent to North Africa. There the pilots' bravery in dive-bombing attacks on the enemy caused the group to be called the "Falcon Desert Fighter Group."

## Benjamin O. Davis, Jr.

The 99th was commanded by Captain Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., a black career officer who had graduated from West Point in 1936. This young pilot's father had been the first black man to attain the rank of brigadier general in the U.S. Army having been appointed to this rank in October, 1940.

In December, 1943, Davis was appointed Commander of the 332nd Fighter Group which was made up of several black flying units. This group provided air cover for the invading allied troops at Anzio, Italy, and later was awarded the Distinguished Unit Citation for "extraordinary heroism in action" in a raid over Berlin.

By the end of the war, Davis had risen to the rank of Colonel and had received many decorations including the Legion of Merit and the Distinguished



*COLONEL BENJAMIN O. DAVIS, JR., the highest ranking black officer in World War II, became commander of Godman Field, Kentucky after the war.*

Flying Cross. After the war, he was made Commander of Godman Field, Kentucky, becoming the first Black to command an air base. In 1965, Davis was promoted to lieutenant general and named Chief-of-Staff, United Nations Command in Korea.

## Front Line Volunteers

Towards the end of the war, the demand for manpower in the front lines became crucial. In January, 1945, General Eisenhower issued a call for black volunteers to serve as replacements in the front lines. Over 4,000 black volunteers responded within the first month. These volunteers were grouped into platoons which were then sent to fight in previously all-white divisions.

Some people were afraid that the black volunteers would not be accepted by the white soldiers with whom they were to fight. But the courage and skill of the black platoons soon ended all doubt. White soldiers were glad to have the Blacks fighting beside them. As one commander stated: "in courage, coolness, dependability and pride, they (the black troops) are on a par with any white troops I have ever had occasion to work with."<sup>4</sup>

## Desegregation of Armed Forces

Throughout the war, Blacks continued to protest the injustices of segregation in the armed forces.

Among the Kentuckians who led such protests was publisher Frank L. Stanley, Sr., who was President of the National Negro Publishers Association. In 1946, Stanley was commissioned by the Secretary of War to study race relations among American occupation troops. Stanley's Commission wrote a scathing report recommending that military segregation be ended immediately.

In July of 1948, President Truman issued an Executive Order barring segregation in the armed forces and creating the President's Committee to end discrimination in the military facilities and units. Truman's Executive Order, occurring six years before the Supreme Court Ruling on desegregation of schools, was one of the first federal actions against segregation.

## Seeds of Protest

Protest movements against employment discrimination and segregation of the armed forces, which occurred during World War II, were like the seeds of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950's and 1960's.

After obtaining victory on the two main civil rights issues of World War II, black people could turn their attention to desegregating all areas of civilian life. Chapters 18 through 22 will describe the story of these later battles for equality.

## Summary of Chapter Seventeen

During World War II, the two main civil rights issues were employment discrimination in the defense industries and segregation of the armed forces. An Executive Order issued by President Roosevelt gave black Kentuckians the opportunity to work in defense industries. On the home front, other Kentucky Blacks contributed to the war effort by taking part in war bond campaigns.

Although military segregation was not abolished until 1948, black Kentuckians served their country in

all branches of the service. Throughout the war, black units fought in each of the major areas of the war—the South Pacific, North Africa, Italy, and the European mainland. In 1945, volunteer black platoons served as replacements in previously all-white units along the battlefield.

One outstanding black airman was Benjamin O. Davis, Jr. After the war, he commanded Godman Airfield at Fort Knox, Kentucky.

<sup>1</sup>Langston Hughes, *Fight for Freedom: the Story of the NAACP*, (New York: Berkley Medallion, 1962) p. 84.

<sup>2</sup>Pittsburg *Courier*, October 5, 12, 1940

<sup>3</sup>Kentucky State Selective Service Headquarters, "Final Report of Registrants under the Selective Service and Training Act of 1940 to 1947," Unpublished report in possession of the agency.

## Chapter Eighteen

### *The Demand for Equality*



*BISHOP C. EUBANK TUCKER (holding newspaper) led a sit-in in the "white only" section of Louisville's bus terminal in 1954.*

1945—The Second World War was over and everywhere people were eager to get back to normal. But “normal” would never be the same again—especially not for the black man. For he had been too far and seen too much to go back to where he was before the war.

The returning black soldier who had fought alongside white men on the beaches of Normandy and Iwo Jima faced discrimination in the restaurants of Pikeville and Elizabethtown. The black worker, who had made good wages assembling rifles in a defense industry was not willing to go back to sweeping the floor when the white workers returned to the plants. Black nurses who had worked in field

hospitals in France and North Africa knew they had the qualifications necessary to work in hospitals in Hopkinsville and Lexington. And they weren't willing to accept second-class citizenship any longer.

Today's students will find it difficult to imagine how many areas were closed to Kentucky's black citizens in 1945. Schools, parks, and entertainment facilities were segregated. In most stores, Blacks were not allowed to try on clothes before purchasing them. Even the city government divided the jobs available into “white” and “colored” categories: the “white” jobs were generally clerical positions, the “colored” jobs were more likely to be janitorial jobs.

## The Separate but Equal Doctrine

The problem that black leaders faced went back to the Supreme Court decision in the *Plessy v. Ferguson* case of 1896. The Court then said that any community had the right to segregate its public facilities as long as it provided *separate but equal* facilities for its black citizens.

Kentucky communities claimed to be providing separate but equal facilities for their black citizens. In practice, however, the facilities available to Blacks were inferior to those available to whites. In Louisville, for example, of 29 municipal parks and playgrounds, 24 were opened to whites, 5 were open to Blacks. The white parks occupied 2,129 acres of land; the black parks 167 acres.

Although Blacks knew that segregation was wrong, the highest court in the land had given segregation its stamp of approval. So Blacks had to attack, not only segregation itself, but also the failure of the community to provide separate but equal facilities.

Blacks hoped that insisting on equality would force desegregation. They thought that ultimately government officials would rather desegregate existing facilities than spend all the money required to maintain separate but equal facilities.

## The Fight Against Segregation

One by one rules, regulations, and customs designed to “keep Blacks in their place” were challenged by black citizens.

Each step toward a desegregated society was the final result of constant pressure applied by the black community against the forces of segregation. The pressure took many different forms.

## The Louisville Defender

This black-owned newspaper with state-wide circulation, was a major factor in this struggle. The newspaper wrote stories about discrimination against Blacks and urged its readers to protest this discrimination. Frank Stanley, Sr., the editor, interviewed public figures and constantly reminded them about the needs of Kentucky’s black citizens.

## NAACP

The local NAACP Chapters were also very active in this crusade for equal rights. More than half of Kentucky’s NAACP Chapters were organized in the period between 1945 and 1955. These groups encouraged their members to file law suits which charged public agencies with discriminatory practices. Money to pay the legal fees involved in court battles was often raised by the membership. Local chapters also organized letter-writing campaigns, urging their members to write letters of praise to public officials who took steps toward desegregation and letters of complaint to those officials who refused to take such steps.

## KNEA

The Kentucky Negro Education Association, founded in 1877, also worked towards full equality for all black citizens. For many reasons, the black teacher has occupied more of a leadership role in his community than his white counterpart has occupied. KNEA leaders were among the first to see that the segregation barriers had to be broken down in order to have the best education possible for all Kentucky’s children. The KNEA was one of the first state organizations to desegregate. In 1950, acting on a



*CONTRIBUTING TO THE EFFORTS OF THE KENTUCKY NEGRO EDUCATION ASSOCIATION to upgrade the quality of education for black children were many outstanding black educators. This photograph, taken at a state-wide KNEA meeting includes (standing, left to right) A.E. Meyzeek, Rufus B. Atwood, H.C. Russell, S.L. Barker, Eugene Goodloe, William H. Perry, Jr., W.O. Nuckolls. Other persons in the group are (front row, left to right) D.H. Anderson, Whitney M. Young, Sr., Atwood S. Wilson, and Lucy Harth Smith.*

suggestion introduced by its President, Dr. Whitney M. Young, Sr., the Association voted to change its name to Kentucky Teachers' Association in order to admit white teachers to its membership.

## Churches

Churches and church leaders were also in the forefront of the civil rights struggles. The church had always been an effective force for social change in the black community. Clergymen had led the fight for black education before and just after the Civil War.

Protesters marched from Quinn Chapel, A.M.E. Church to integrate Louisville streetcars in 1870. Money to finance the successful fight against segregated housing in 1914 was raised in that same chapel. Protesters marched again from Quinn Chapel in 1961 to express demands for a public accommodations ordinance and again in 1967 to dramatize the need for an open housing ordinance.

Quinn Chapel was used as a central meeting place because it was located in the heart of what was then Louisville's black community. Many of the programs that were held there were planned and led by cooperating clergymen from churches located in the outlying areas.

## Methods

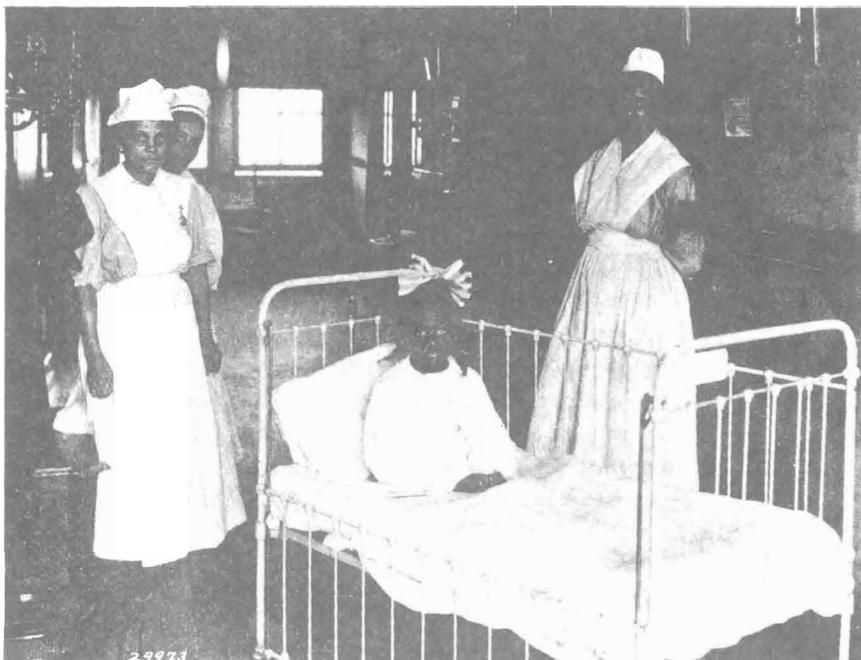
To describe all the ways in which Kentucky's

black citizens worked to obtain their constitutional rights in the period after World War II would be impossible in this short booklet. A few examples will indicate the variety of methods used:

In 1945, when Henderson Blacks learned that no state law prohibited their using the state parks, a large group of black families simply paid the required admission fee and entered Audubon Park.

In 1947, when he was not allowed to play golf on a city-owned golf course, Doctor P.O. Sweeney, with the backing of the Louisville NAACP, filed suit against the City of Louisville. In 1952 after many court hearings and appeals, Federal Judge Roy Shelbourne ruled that the City of Louisville must allow Dr. Sweeney and other Blacks to play golf on city-owned courses until separate-but-equal courses were provided for Blacks. On a brisk January Sunday, a number of black golfers enjoyed their first golf games on Louisville courses.

In 1951, the Interracial Hospital Movement presented petitions bearing 10,000 signatures to Governor Lawrence W. Wetherby asking the Governor to open all tax-supported and tax-exempt hospitals to all Kentucky citizens. The petitioners told the story of one black man who was injured in an automobile accident and taken to Breckinridge County Hospital. There he was refused care and died in the emergency room. Hospital authorities later sent a bill for \$11.00 to his widow for the "use of the emergency room."



*MOST KENTUCKY HOSPITALS MAINTAINED A POLICY OF SEGREGATING PATIENTS ACCORDING TO RACE. A few hospitals in the State refused to admit black patients for medical care even in emergency cases.*

## Employment

In April, 1951, Harry S. McAlpin, Louisville NAACP President, attacked a want-ad placed by the City of Louisville which stated, "Civil Service needs Fire-Fighters and Police Patrolmen. White—\$220; Typist, White—\$152; Electrician, White—\$194; Maintenance Worker, White—\$135; and Hospital Attendants, White and Colored, \$105. Apply 300 City Hall."

On May 5, the Board of Aldermen recommended that the City's discriminatory advertising and hiring practices be discontinued. However, on May 26, the Louisville Civil Service Board refused to change hiring policies. Some Louisville department heads agreed to hire black applicants for previously "white" positions but others refused to take such action. Not until 1954 was the issue finally resolved when newly elected Mayor Andrew Broaddus declared that all civil service jobs in the city would be filled without regard to race.

In 1952, when the telephone company would not hire black women as operators and clerks, black men and women throughout Kentucky began paying their monthly telephone bills in pennies. As the pennies began to pile up in the company office, taking untold hours of valuable time to count and process, tele-

*MRS. W. H. FAUS OF LEXINGTON (right) holds the certificate appointing her to serve on the Kentucky Commission for the Study of Negro Affairs, created in 1944 by Governor Simeon Willis.*

*This bi-racial Commission, the first special Commission in the South to focus attention on the problems of black people, was instructed "to obtain and study the facts and conditions relating to the economic, educational, housing, health, and other needs for the betterment of the Negro citizens in Kentucky."*

*To direct this work, the Commission elected J. Mansir Tydings as its chairman; William H. Perry (Secretary of KNEA) as its co-chairman; and Robert E. Black (Secretary of the Louisville Urban League) as its secretary.*

*Emphasizing the greatest barrier to the advancement of black people in Kentucky was segregation, the Commission recommended the enactment of legislation to: abolish "Jim Crow" policies on trains; amend the Day Law so black students could attend professional and post graduate schools, require non-discrimination provisions in State contracts and public projects.*

phone officials began to listen to the demands of Blacks for equal employment opportunities.

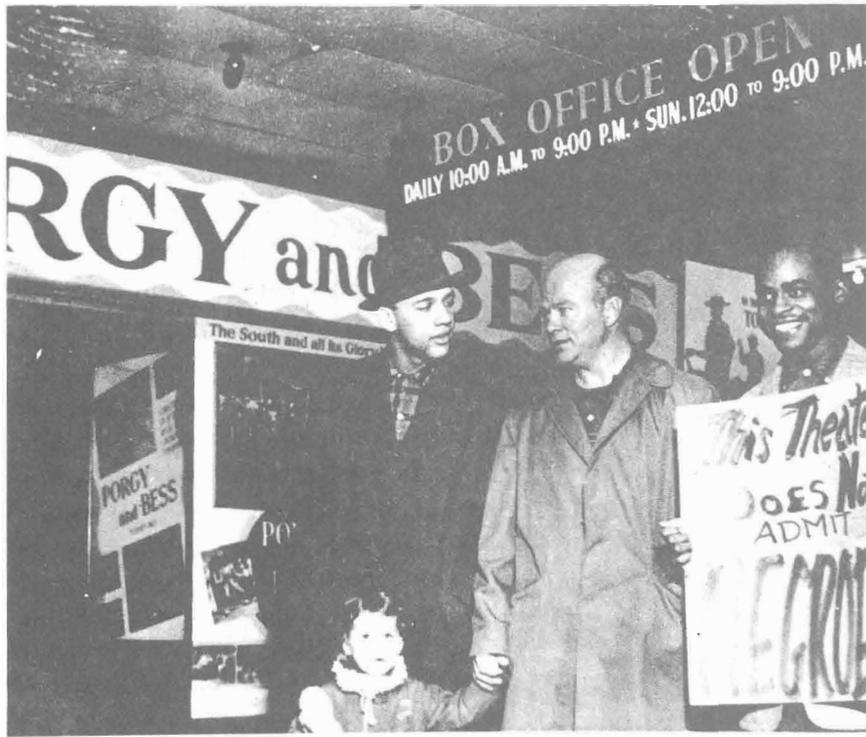
## Housing

The first attempt of a black family to move into a new all-white subdivision in Louisville ended in disaster. In the spring of 1954, a white couple, Carl and Ann Braden, bought a newly constructed house in the Shively area and sold it to a black couple, Andrew and Charlotte Wade. White neighbors in the area were very angry.

After the Wades moved into their house, they were subjected to threatening phone calls and letters. A cross was burned in the field next to the house. That same night someone with a rifle shot through the house. Windows were broken but fortunately no one was injured by the shots. About six weeks later, the house was partially destroyed by a bomb.

Those who terrorized the Wades were never apprehended. Instead, the attention of the city was focused upon the white couple who sold Wade the house. After a grand jury investigation, Carl Braden was tried and convicted on a charge of sedition. He served seven months in prison before the Kentucky Court of Appeals reversed his conviction. The Wade family did not move back into their damaged house.





*AN INTEGRATED PICKET LINE AT LOUISVILLE'S BROWN THEATRE protesting the showing of "Porgy and Bess" to all-white audiences.*

## Summary of Chapter Eighteen

The period between 1945 and 1954 was a period of increasing agitation on the part of the black community for constitutional rights. Black leaders demanded that local governments either live up to their pledge to provide separate but equal facilities for black citizens or allow those black citizens to use community facilities. Blacks attacked job discrimination on the basis of race.

This battle was fought on many fronts, by many different individuals and organizations. Progress was sometimes very slow. Dr. Sweeney waited five years for his golf game. Two young men who applied for admission to Paducah Junior College in 1949 were not able to be admitted until 1953. By that time they

had been drafted and were receiving a different type of education from Uncle Sam.

Segregation barriers did fall during this period. Some parks and libraries were opened to all. Racial restrictions on city jobs in Louisville were removed. Many tax-supported hospitals hired black nurses and accepted black patients.

Although some barriers fell, many others remained. At this point many people felt that desegregation of educational facilities would be the quickest route to an open society. The next chapter discusses the battle for equal rights in education.

## Timetable on Louisville Desegregation

The following timetable on desegregation in Louisville will give some idea of the scope and magnitude of the discrimination faced by black leaders in Kentucky's largest city.

- 1941: Salaries of all teachers in city equalized when the differential of 15% between wages of white and black teachers was eliminated. As a result of Louisville's success, the movement to equalize teachers' salaries, spread to other communities across the state.
- 1941: Black nurses were given some of their training at General Hospital.
- 1943: Safety Director, Joseph F. Donaldson, doubled the size of the black police force and named three sergeants.
- 1947: Four black ministers asked by Mayor Frank E. Leland Taylor to permit Blacks to use all the city parks. Mayor declined on the grounds that this action might touch off a race riot.
- 1948: Augustus W. Edwards appointed the first black Police Lieutenant.
- 1951: Louisville Municipal College closed and admission to the University of Louisville opened to all races. Dr. Charles H. Parrish, Jr., became the University's first black faculty member.
- 1951: Federal Judge Roy M. Shelbourne ruled that Blacks must be allowed to play golf on city courses or the city must provide separate facilities.
- 1952: Trustees of Louisville Free Public Library voted to open all branches of the library to all persons.
- 1952: Two black girls accepted for nurses training at St. Joseph Infirmary.
- 1953: Black girls accepted for nurses training at Louisville General Hospital, St. Anthony's Hospital and SS. Mary and Elizabeth Hospital.
- 1953: Blacks allowed to attend three-week performance of *The Tall Kentuckian* (a tribute to Abraham Lincoln) at the Iroquois Amphitheater. But after this play, they were again excluded from the amphitheater.
- 1954: Theatrical Association voted to sell tickets to anyone.
- 1954: Mayor Broaddus announced that all civil service jobs in city departments and agencies would be filled without distinction because of race.
- 1955: All city parks, swimming pools, amphitheatre opened by order of Mayor Broaddus.
- 1956: Louisville public schools began desegregation.
- 1960: Brown Theater picketed by NAACP youths and white friends for playing *Porgy and Bess* to white-only audience.
- 1962: Louisville Human Relations Commission established.
- 1963: Louisville Public Accommodations Law passed.
- 1965: Louisville Equal Employment Ordinance passed.
- 1967: Louisville Open Housing Ordinance passed.

# Chapter Nineteen

## College and University Desegregation

AS A RESULT OF A FEDERAL SUIT FILED BY LYMAN JOHNSON (right), the University of Kentucky began desegregating its graduate facilities in 1949.

A year after the Federal Court ordered the University of Kentucky to open its graduate and professional schools to Blacks, Kentucky passed an amendment to the Day Law permitting students of both races to attend the same institutions of higher learning.



Black veterans returning from World War II, found Kentucky universities still strictly segregated. Those Blacks who wanted to use the G.I. Bill to continue their education could do so only at Kentucky State in Frankfort or at Louisville Municipal College. There was no place in Kentucky where black students could receive graduate training so they could become doctors, lawyers, dentists, or engineers.

Opportunities for vocational courses, too, were very limited. The only vocational courses open to Blacks in Louisville, for example, were courses in secretarial work, barbering, beauty culture, and radio repair from a few small, commercially operated schools.

### Changing the Day Law

The Day Law was still an obstacle. Since 1904,

when the Day Law was passed, educating white and black students on a single campus had been considered illegal in Kentucky. Even politicians who favored integrated education felt that to tamper with the Day Law would be political dynamite.

### Tuition Payment Plan (1936-1939)

This same problem had existed before the war. The tuition payment plan of 1936 was an attempt by the State to provide some graduate study opportunities for Kentucky Blacks. Under this plan, the State would pay the tuition for Kentucky Blacks to study at out-of-state universities when the courses of study they wanted were not available within the state.

Although a few black students were able to study at some of the nation's finest universities, funds for

this program were limited. Only a very small number of black students could afford to pay the many expenses (transportation, books, room and board) that were involved in attending an out-of-state institution.

Although the original appropriation for tuition payment was exhausted in 1939, some money from the governor's emergency fund was provided to continue the program for a very few students. Many people felt, however, that opportunities for higher education could be more available to black people only if all Kentucky colleges were integrated.

## Desegregation of Nursing Schools and Hospital Training Programs

A small group of citizens including black leaders Rufus B. Atwood, Whitney Young, Sr., Frank Stanley, Sr., and white leaders, J. Mansir Tydings and Hugh Brimm, discussed how the process of desegregating Kentucky schools could begin.

They believed that desegregation might most easily be obtained on the post-graduate level. There were far fewer colleges than high schools in Kentucky and public objection to the desegregation of those colleges would probably not be as strong as it would be to the desegregation of the high schools.

Their decision was to start with nursing schools. Since many Kentucky communities had a shortage of trained nurses, a way to provide more nurses would be viewed with favor.

Furthermore, many felt that one of the strongest objections to desegregated education was the fear of racial intermarriage. Since the nursing schools had only women students, desegregating those schools would mean integration of those races, but not integration of the sexes.

The first amendment to the Day Law came in 1948 when black Representative, Charles A. Anderson placed a bill before the General Assembly which provided that nursing schools could accept members of both races. The legislature amended the bill to include post-graduate courses for doctors in hospitals so that black physicians could take their residencies at white hospitals in Kentucky. Even those who had worked on this bill were amazed at the favorable vote it received—only one representative

voted against it and in the Senate it received unanimous support.

Schools of nursing throughout the state began to open their doors to black students. Using the provisions of this bill, Dr. Maurice Rabb of Louisville was able to study anesthesiology at the Louisville General Hospital and became the first black physician to practice that specialty in the city.

## U. of K. Courses at Kentucky State

Efforts to desegregate the University of Kentucky began as early as 1936 while Charles Anderson was serving as the first black member of the legislature since Reconstruction. An interracial committee met with Governor A.B. Chandler, then serving his first term, to obtain his support. Governor Chandler's answer was a prediction that "Such will not happen in your time nor mine."

Students continued to urge the University of Kentucky to open its graduate school to them since Kentucky State College offered no graduate classes. In 1948, the Board of Trustees of the University met with the State Board of Education which was the governing body of Kentucky State College at that time. These two bodies decided upon a new plan to make post-graduate work available to black students.

Any graduate course of the University of Kentucky would be available to qualified black applicants at Kentucky State College at Frankfort. To offer the courses, University of Kentucky professors had to drive from Lexington for each class. In the fall of 1948, six members of the Kentucky law faculty drove back and forth to Frankfort to instruct one black law student, John Hatch, who had been refused admission to the University's Law School.

## Desegregation of U.K. Graduate School

In 1949, as a result of a Federal Court suit by Louisville civil rights leader Lyman T. Johnson, the University was desegregated.

In 1948, Lyman T. Johnson, a teacher in the Louisville public school system with a Master's degree from the University of Michigan, applied to the Graduate School at the University of Kentucky. He refused to attend the special classes for blacks at

Frankfort. University of Kentucky authorities denied him admission to the Lexington campus.

With continuing support from the Louisville NAACP, he then took his case to Federal Court charging that the State did not provide separate but equal facilities for graduate students. One of the attorneys for Johnson's case was Thurgood Marshall, now a U.S. Supreme Court Justice. In March, 1949; Judge H. Church Ford ordered the University of Kentucky to admit Blacks to the College of Law, Engineering, Pharmacy, and the Graduate School since Kentucky State did not offer these courses. The following summer, thirty black students enrolled in the classes at the Lexington campus.

Trying to maintain separation of the races, the University set aside specific desks or tables marked "Reserved for Special Students," in classrooms and the cafeteria. Many black students refused to sit at those tables, claiming that they would be the last to accept "special privileges" denied other students. Protests against the separation of black students also came from some white students who joined their black classmates in the back of the classrooms and at the special cafeteria tables. The signs were soon removed, and thus, the University of Kentucky graduate and professional schools were desegregated.

## Paducah Junior College

Encouraged by the success of Lyman Johnson's case against the University of Kentucky, the NAACP Chapter in Paducah decided that the time was ripe to try to integrate the Paducah Junior College, an institution supported by city taxes. Accordingly, on September 12, 1949, a local attorney, Joseph S. Freeland, appeared in the Dean's Office with a black student who desired admission to the college.

When the application was turned down because the student was black, Freeland filed suit in the United States District Court. Claiming that the city of Paducah did not offer any separate but equal facilities for college training for black students in Paducah, Freeland argued that black students must be allowed to attend Paducah College.

On October 27, 1950, Federal Judge Roy Shelbourne upheld this claim and ordered the college to admit the students. The college replied that the Day Law prohibited such admittance, and appealed, finally, to the United States Sixth Circuit Court at

Cincinnati. This court did not announce its verdict until February, 1953, at which time it upheld Judge Shelbourne's ruling that the students must be admitted. (The Court did not rule on the question of the constitutionality of the Day Law.) On June 9, 1953, four black students enrolled without incident at Paducah Junior College.

## Day Law Amended

In 1950, the Kentucky General Assembly further amended the Day Law to permit students of both races to attend the same institution of higher education providing that the governing body of the institution approved and that a comparable course was not taught at Kentucky State College.

This amendment was handled by Jesse H. Lawrence, the only black representative in the legislature. With the support of citizens of both races, Lawrence succeeded in obtaining the passage of this legislation.

Immediately after the amendment was passed in March, 1950, Bellarmine College, Nazareth College, and Ursuline College opened their doors to black students. Shortly afterward, the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and the Louisville Presbyterian Seminary took the same action. In keeping with its traditions, Berea College was among the first Kentucky Colleges to desegregate.

Because the University of Louisville had a student enrollment of nearly 7,000 students, the speedy desegregation of this large educational institution was an important objective for the city's black community.

Closely observing the situation at the University of Louisville were officials of the local NAACP, which had prepared a suit to be filed in the event that the University attempted to delay the desegregation process. However, it never became necessary to file this suit.

The University of Louisville Trustees voted to open the graduate and professional schools immediately (Summer 1950) and the rest of the University beginning with the 1951-52 school year. Meanwhile the Louisville Municipal College would remain open for one more year and would close down June, 1951.

## Southern Regional Compact

In 1950, Kentucky planned to join the Southern Regional Compact in order to participate with other southern states in cooperative programs in certain areas of higher education. Fearing that Kentucky participation in this program might extend segregation, a group of black citizens, Dr. J.A.C. Lattimore, A.E. Meyzeek, Frank L. Stanley, Sr., and Charles Steele, protested to Governor Earle C. Clements. As a result of their efforts, Kentucky participation in the Southern Regional Compact was not used to force black students to go outside the State for courses available in Kentucky Colleges.

## Advantages of Desegregation

The desegregation of the University of Louisville in 1951, taken in conjunction with the opening of the Catholic Colleges the year before, offered many advantages to black students. They were able to choose from a wider range of courses. They were able to receive their undergraduate and graduate school training from the same institution in fields such as medicine and law. They were able to meet and exchange ideas with a greater variety of students than was possible at the segregated Municipal College. In spite of the higher tuition cost on Belknap Campus, there was no decline in the percentage of Central High School graduates attending college.

## Municipal Faculty

During the last year of the operation of the Municipal College its staff had been reduced to fourteen persons including two librarians and an administrative assistant. Seven of these faculty persons had contracts with the University extending

beyond the closing date of the Municipal College. Four professors (Drs. William Bright, C.H. Parrish, G.D. Wilson and H.S. Wilson) had indeterminate contracts and could not be legally dismissed except for gross inefficiency. Nonetheless, letters of dismissal were sent in October, 1950.

After receiving these letters the faculty members secured a legal opinion as to their position and on its basis prepared their case for presentation before the Board of Trustees. As a result of the hearing a compromise agreement was reached. The Board would keep one of the professors with tenure on the University staff and would grant 2 months of severance pay to all the faculty members. Two professors who had tenure would be granted one year's severance pay. Fellowships provided by the Ford Foundation would be made available to any faculty members who wanted to do further study.

Realizing that a court fight might arouse antagonisms that would interfere with the orderly desegregation of the University, the Municipal faculty accepted the Board of Trustees' proposal. Dr. Charles H. Parrish, Jr., was selected to remain on the University faculty as professor of Social Science. Dr. Parrish's title was changed to Professor of Sociology during the spring semester of 1952 and in 1959, he was named chairman of the Sociology Department of the University.

Some of the municipal faculty members remained in Louisville in other positions. One man, Dr. G.D. Wilson, was hired by Kentucky State College. Another, Dr. H.S. Wilson, after a short stint with an insurance company, became chairman of the chemistry department of Bellarmine College. Most of the faculty, however, left the state; and Kentucky lost some of its leading black educators.

## Summary of Chapter Nineteen

Desegregation of higher education in Kentucky began on a very limited basis in 1948 with the passage of a law allowing integrated education in hospitals and nursing schools. Following this, a suit in federal court directed against the University of Kentucky resulted in the ruling that the University must open its graduate and professional schools to black applicants.

Another court ruling ordered Paducah Junior College to accept black applicants. Finally, a 1950

resolution passed by the General Assembly allowed integrated higher education for courses of study not offered at Kentucky State College. Many private colleges desegregated after this decision.

The desegregation of the University of Louisville provided Blacks with many educational advantages, but the desegregation process eliminated all but one of the teaching positions and thus had the immediate result of forcing several excellent black educators to leave the state.

# Chapter Twenty

## Public School Desegregation



*THIS INTEGRATED GROUP OF 1958 BERA FOUNDATION STUDENTS were participants in a special program for high school students. Berea College had re-opened its doors to black students in 1950 after an amendment to the Day Law permitted desegregation of Kentucky's colleges and universities. However, not until 1954 when the Supreme Court declared segregated schools unconstitutional were students of both races allowed to attend the same secondary and elementary schools in Kentucky.*

In the early 1950's, Kentucky's black leaders had concentrated their efforts on desegregation of higher education in the State. But they were also concerned about public education at the elementary and high school levels.

The segregated system of public education caused problems and inconveniences for Kentucky's black students. According to Kentucky law, black and white students were required to attend separate schools. Even if a white school were less crowded or better equipped or closer to their homes than a black school, black students were not allowed to enroll there. In counties where the black population was small, many black high school students had to travel

eight or ten miles to reach their schools, often passing several white schools on the way. When the black population of a county was extremely small, black students were sent to school in an adjacent county or to Lincoln Institute in Shelby County.

In some communities, the schools provided for black students were obviously inferior to those schools attended by whites. While white students went to school in a brand new building, black students might attend classes in a one-room school. However, even when the facilities of white and black schools were similar, black people maintained that the very existence of separate school systems was a badge of second-class citizenship.

## Public Support for Repealing Day Law

Public support for school desegregation increased during the period from 1950 to 1954, among whites as well as Blacks. In the winter of 1953-54, an organization called the Committee for Democratic Schools began circulating petitions for repeal of the Day Law.

A bill repealing the Day Law was introduced in the General Assembly in 1954. A public hearing was held on the bill. Testifying at the hearing were a variety of people, black and white, including ministers, labor leaders, teachers, and students. White students from newly re-integrated Berea College told how well desegregation was working there.

While the bill did not pass, the hearing and the interracial campaigns to obtain desegregation helped create an atmosphere which assisted Kentucky's officials in complying with the Supreme Court decision of May, 1954.

## Segregated Education Declared Unconstitutional

On May 17, 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court by a 9-0 decision, ruled that school segregation was unconstitutional because "separate education facilities are inherently unequal." In this historic *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling, Chief Justice Earl Warren said, "We conclude that in the field of public education, the doctrine of separate but equal has no place."

The Supreme Court decision, which echoed what black leaders had been maintaining for years, led the nation and Kentucky into an era of changes. Kentucky reaction to the ruling was swift and positive. "Kentucky will do whatever is necessary to comply with the law," announced Governor Lawrence W. Wetherby. Attorney General J.D. Buckman, Jr., announced that the Supreme Court decision nullified the Day Law so that no legal barrier to desegregation in Kentucky remained.

## Early Questions

Most Kentucky educators considered school desegregation a difficult and complicated task. In 1954, Kentucky had 155 school districts which had black students. Each district was controlled by a local school board.

Even if local school boards and school administrators were totally committed to the principle of integration, the administrative problem of desegregation would have demanded considerable effort. There were many decisions to be made. Should the board desegregate the high schools first? Or would it be easier to start with the grade schools? Or to desegregate the entire system at once? What about teachers? Should pupil desegregation precede teacher desegregation or both be done together? If the black schools were simply closed, what would happen to the black teachers?

Black parents had questions. In most cases, black students would be going to classes where the majority of the students were white. How would the black children be accepted? Would their classmates be cruel to them? How would white teachers treat the black students? Would the black child's father lose his job if he sent his children to a formerly all white school? Might the family suffer physical harm?

These were some of the real and imagined issues with which some superintendents and school boards delayed desegregation in the first years after the 1954 Supreme Court decision.

In practically every case, those who moved ahead found positive solutions to these problems and their schools desegregated with surprising ease. Within two years after the announcement of the Supreme Court decision, a majority of Kentucky black students were attending schools in districts that had begun desegregation.

## Factors in Speeding the Process

Among the factors which significantly influenced Kentucky school desegregation were:

1. The percentage of Blacks in the overall student population was small (in comparison with states farther south, for example). In only a few districts were more than 20% of the students black. Thus in most cases, desegregation meant a small number of black students going to predominantly white schools.
2. The State had already begun desegregation on the college level. Some Kentucky teachers had attended summer school on campuses that had desegregated classes.

3. A background of interracial cooperation existed on a statewide level and in many local communities. The State Board of Education had predicted the Supreme Court's decision and had begun to prepare for the inevitability of desegregation. A private organization, the Kentucky Council on Human Relations, set up a desegregation consultation service for local communities.
4. School desegregation made economic sense. The cost of maintaining two separate schools in some districts made per pupil school costs far higher than they would be in a single school. Since school boards rarely have enough money to provide the kind of education the voters would like to see for their children, the boards tended to favor the financial savings desegregation offered.
5. The Kentucky NAACP applied effective legal pressure by filing court suits to obtain desegregation in school systems that did not develop desegregation plans. In December, 1955, the NAACP lawyer James Crumlin, filed the first such suit. The next three years saw a succession of court suits to force desegregation.
6. As was true of the Ku Klux Klan in the twenties, the White Citizens Councils did not attract a large number of people or substantial support in the fifties in Kentucky. The prevalent attitude on the part of most citizens seemed to be, "I'm not really in favor of school desegregation, but since the Supreme Court said that is the law, I guess Kentucky will have to go along with it."
7. Governmental leaders and politicians agreed that Kentucky would follow the Supreme Court directive. Both Democratic Senator Earle C. Clements and Republican Senator John Sherman Cooper agreed that Kentucky must abide by this new ruling. While 1955 was an election year, both candidates for Governor indicated that they would support the Supreme Court decision so that desegregation did not become a major issue in the election campaign.

## Desegregated Schools—1955

A few days after the Brown decision, one black Fayette County student enrolled in the summer school session at Lafayette, previously an all-white

school. However, full scale plans for desegregation did not go into effect until the summer of 1955.

The first Kentucky schools to open on a desegregated basis were those of Wayne County. In July 1955, County Superintendent Ira Bell announced that black students would be admitted to the white schools nearest them. In August these schools opened without incident.

In September 1955, the Lexington and Fayette County schools, with a total of 14,410 white students and 3,284 black students, desegregated with a freedom of choice plan. Students were free to register at any school they chose. Five black teachers were assigned to teach at formerly all white schools. They were not given regular classes but served as librarians, resource teachers, or had other special assignments.

Without fanfare, Knobb City High School, which served the black students of Russellville, was closed in the fall of 1955. Those black students were sent to Russellville High School. The schools in Prestonsburg and Owensboro also opened in September, 1955, with partial desegregation plans. In Prestonsburg, all but two of the schools were desegregated. In Owensboro, black students were allowed to attend the white high school for classes not available in their own school.

## Desegregated Schools—1956

The greatest number of Kentucky pupils entered desegregated schools for the first time in the fall of 1956. That year, about 75 per cent of the State's school districts announced some kind of desegregation plans. About 50 per cent of Kentucky's school age black children were enrolled in desegregated systems.

On September 10, 1956, school began in the desegregated Louisville School District. School Superintendent Omer Carmichael described what happened at Male High School where he was observing.

"Before any pupils arrived, the group assembled at Male included Mayor Broadus, School Board President Spears, Assistant Superintendent W.F. Croslow, Male Principal W.S. Milburn—and a throng of reporters and photographers representing newspapers, news magazines and radio and television



*MALE HIGH SCHOOL, which was all white before Louisville schools began desegregation, is now predominantly black.*

stations, local and national. The preceding week had seen the outbreak of racial violence in several cities attempting desegregation and the press was fully aware that Louisville was the largest city on their list of potential trouble spots.

“But there was no trouble! . . . The first pupils came singly or in small groups, some laughing and gay, some solemnly alert or inquisitive. Most of them went promptly into the building, but a few lingered outside . . . At about 8:20 Chief Heustis asked if I didn’t think he should order the pupils to go into the building. I replied that a pre-school gathering was natural, the group was well-behaved and the warning bell would ring in a few minutes. It seemed better to me to have everything go along naturally, if possible.

Five minutes later the warning bell rang. And all the students, white and Negro went into the building as on any other opening day.”<sup>2</sup>

## The Louisville Plan

The Louisville school desegregation plan of 1956, which was copied by many of the nation’s school systems, had three basic features:

1. desegregation of all grade levels,

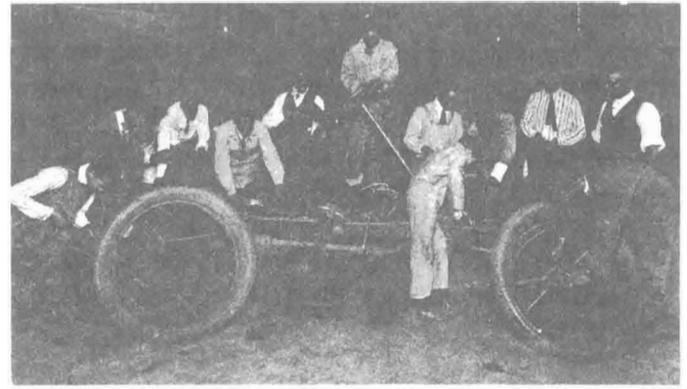
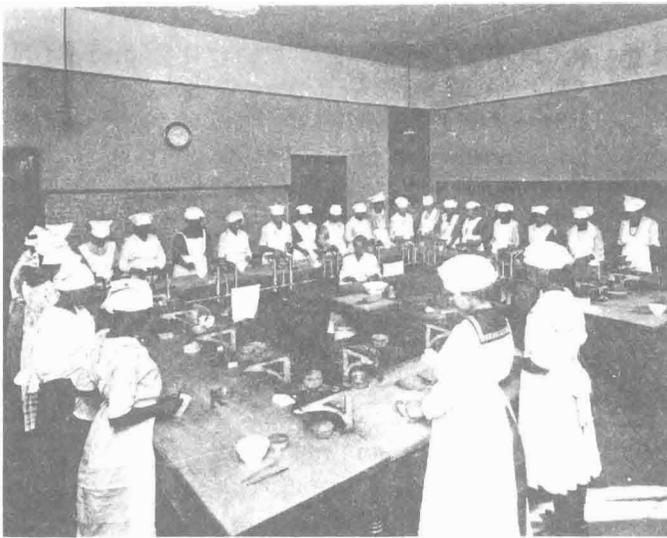
2. redistricting of the entire school district “to serve all children as conveniently as possible without regard to race.” After redistricting was completed, all parents were sent written notification of the school to which their child was assigned.
3. establishment of a freedom of choice plan under which any parent, black or white, could request to transfer his child to other schools. Transfers were granted unless the school which the student wanted to attend was filled with students from its own district.

When this school desegregation plan was put into operation, segregated housing patterns did exist in Louisville. However, in the West and Central areas of the city, many neighborhoods had a checkerboard pattern. That is, several blocks occupied by white families were adjacent to several blocks occupied by black families. Because of the checkerboard patterns, many of the newly created school districts in the West End and Central areas of the city included students of both races.

However, some parents decided to transfer their children to different schools than those to which they had been originally assigned. Eleven percent of the total school population requested transfers the first year. In most cases, they received transfers to their first choice schools.

Transfer requests for the 1956-57 school year reveal an interesting pattern. Of black children assigned to formerly all-white schools, the parents of 45 per cent requested transfers back to formerly black schools. Of white children assigned by redistricting to formerly all-black schools, the parents of 85 per cent requested transfers back to formerly all-white schools. Although the “freedom of choice” plan could have been used by students of both races to promote school desegregation, these figures indicate that many white parents requested transfers because they wanted to keep their children in predominantly white schools. Such transfers resulted in significant delays in the desegregation process.

Central High School, which had been the only senior high school which black students could attend before 1956, remained all black. Despite the fact that attending other high schools would have been more convenient for many black students, few Central



*CLASSES IN HOME ECONOMICS AND AUTO MECHANICS AT CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL. Before 1956, all black senior high school students in Louisville were enrolled at Central.*

students transferred to the five formerly all-white high schools in the city. Many people believe that the school's transfer rate was low because Central had the newest and best equipped school facilities of any city high school. Approximately, one-hundred black students, promoted from junior high schools, chose to enroll at formerly all white senior high schools located in the districts where they lived.

## Sturgis High School

While pupil desegregation proceeded with a minimum of difficulty in most Kentucky schools, there were some trouble spots. On August 31, 1956, eight black students enrolled at the previously all-white Sturgis High School. When they attempted to attend classes on September 4, a crowd of local citizens blocked the way. Deciding not to try to force their way through the crowd, the black students returned to their homes. Next day, Governor A.B. Chandler ordered the State Police and National Guard to Sturgis. With 200 guardsmen and 20 state policemen as protectors, the black students attended school for several days. Many white students stayed home from school.

At the same time, a similar confrontation was taking place at Clay, Kentucky, in Webster County. There almost all the white students boycotted the grade school when two black students enrolled. The National Guard kept order outside an almost empty school.

Finally on September 13, State Attorney General Jo M. Ferguson ruled that since the Webster County School Board had made no provisions for an "orderly process" of school desegregation, the black students

could not be admitted until the School Board made adequate plans. After several days in which black students attended classes in Sturgis with National Guard support, Ferguson ruled on September 19, that the Clay ruling could apply in Sturgis also.

James A. Crumlin, Louisville NAACP lawyer, immediately filed suit against both Clay and Sturgis school systems in the Federal District Court. The suit asked the court to enforce desegregation of these schools.

On December 12, Federal Judge Henry Brooks directed the two school boards to file their desegregation plans with the court by February 4. Both school boards established desegregation procedures. The following September, Sturgis High School and the schools of Webster County were open to black students.

## Henderson

The White Citizen Councils, which organized the opposition to school desegregation in Clay and Sturgis tried to take similar action in Henderson. Although Henderson schools had opened on a desegregated basis in September, 1956, a White Citizens Council meeting led to a walkout of about 400 white children from Weaverton Elementary School on September 22. The boycott spread to two city schools where about 180 students stayed out of school.

Two Henderson ministers, C. Sumpter Logan (Presbyterian Church) and Ted Braun (Evangelical and Reformed Church) led community efforts to encourage school attendance. Hecht Lackey of local

radio station WSON broadcast hourly pleas for law and order. Henderson citizens responded to this leadership and the desegregated schools remained open.

To avert further trouble in already desegregated school districts, the leaders of the Kentucky Council on Human Relations asked the Kentucky Attorney General to clarify the legal situation. He ruled that school districts could not re-segregate themselves once their desegregation had begun. Furthermore, he ruled, those who attempted to interfere with the desegregation process might be charged with conspiracy under an old Kentucky statute.

This ruling, along with the successful effort of the Henderson citizens severely crippled the activities of the White Citizens Councils in Kentucky and they never gained a real foothold in the State.

By the fall of 1956, most of Kentucky's urban schools had begun some kind of pupil desegregation.

But there were still many districts which had announced no school desegregation plans. Black and white leaders alike felt that some kind of outside pressure would be necessary to begin the desegregation process in these areas.

Black leaders turned to legal pressure. Representing black parents in districts which had not announced desegregation plans, Kentucky NAACP President, Attorney James A. Crumlin, began to file suits asking the federal courts to end segregation. In December, 1955, federal District Judge Mac Swinford ruled that Adair County High School must open to black pupils by February, 1956, since the county made no other provisions for the education of black high school students. The county's elementary schools were to open on a desegregated basis by September, 1956.

A suit filed in July, 1956, charged that the Owensboro twelve year desegregation plan was "inadequate" and lacked "deliberate speed." The District Court Judge ruled that Owensboro must revise its plan to complete desegregation more quickly.

During the next ten years, NAACP attorneys James A. Crumlin and Joseph Freeland filed federal court suits to desegregate schools in the following districts:

Scott, Fulton, McCracken, Hopkins, Owen, Richmond, Madison, Jessamine, Mayfield, Frankfort, Bowling Green, Warren, and Knott.

In each case, the federal judge ordered pupil desegregation and in six cases, teacher desegregation.

## Teacher Desegregation

In many areas, black teachers became the real losers in the desegregation process. They faced two problems:

1. Many black teachers lost their positions when the black schools in which they were teaching were closed.
2. The rate at which black teachers were transferred to desegregated faculties was very slow.

Let us look more closely at these problems:

### 1. Lost Positions

Black teachers who had taught in the same school districts for more than five years were protected by tenure laws—that is, the school districts could not dismiss them except for incompetent teaching. Most school districts respected the tenure rights of black teachers but some did not. For those black teachers, fighting school boards took both time and money, and many black teachers had little of either. They simply tried to find other jobs as quickly as possible. A more serious problem occurred for black teachers who had not established tenure. Since very few Kentucky schools were hiring new black teachers, most of these teachers either left the State or found other kinds of jobs.

In 1970, Kentucky had almost the same number of black teachers (1,559) that it had in 1956 (1,439). In this same period, black pupils increased from 40,000 to 64,429—a more than 50 per cent increase. So the ratio of black teachers to black students declined substantially during this period.

Some black leaders knew that teacher dismissals would accompany desegregation and offered a creative solution for this problem.

A Citizens Committee on Desegregation was formed in 1955. Members were James A. Crumlin,

Kentucky NAACP President: Mrs. Anita W. Robinson, Executive Secretary of the Kentucky Teachers Association; Harry McAlpin, Louisville attorney and NAACP Board member; and Rufus Atwood, President of Kentucky State College.

This group appeared before the Kentucky Board of Education to suggest that the board establish a statewide pool of qualified teachers, black and white, who might be forced out of their positions by the closing or merging of schools in the desegregating process. Teachers from this pool could then be used to replace the “emergency teachers” (teachers that did not qualify for Kentucky teacher certification) who were teaching in schools throughout the state. The board, busy with pupil desegregation, did not act upon this suggestion.

In 1956, the Kentucky Council on Human Relations and its Executive Director, Galen Martin, began implementation of an extensive campaign “to insure that black teachers do not become the victims of pupil desegregation.” Although black teachers were losing their jobs to white teachers, the figures compiled by the Kentucky Council on Human Relations for the academic year 1955-56, showed that Kentucky black teachers held more college degrees

and more advanced degrees than their white colleagues. (See Chart on the Page opposite.)

Within the State Board of Education, a black member from Louisville, Mrs. John Walls, spurred the effort for pupil and teacher desegregation from her appointment in 1956 until 1962. Harry McAlpin, a black attorney of Louisville, followed her and between 1963 and 1968 provided leadership to insure that Kentucky schools followed State and Federal laws to protect the rights of black pupils and teachers.

## 2. Teacher Desegregation Slow

Accompanying the loss of qualified black teachers in Kentucky was the problem of the slow rate of teacher desegregation.

Few districts in the State provided for teacher desegregation when they desegregated student bodies. The Lexington and Fayette County Schools placed five black teachers on white faculties in 1955. In 1957, there were only five black teachers and 359 white teachers serving on desegregated faculties. While Louisville and Jefferson County pupil desegregation began in 1956, as late as the 1958-59 school year, neither school system had placed black and white teachers on the same faculty.

Most districts proceeded very slowly with teacher desegregation. As late as school year 1961-62, seven years after the Supreme Court ruling, only 17 Kentucky school districts had placed black teachers in formerly white schools, involving a total of only 119 black teachers. The following school year only 43 districts had begun teacher desegregation involving only 248 out of nearly 1,500 black teachers.

For the school year 1965-66, 90% of Kentucky’s black pupils were attending racially desegregated schools. But only half of Kentucky’s black teachers were on desegregated faculties. In that school year, 721 black teachers were on desegregated faculties in 252 schools involving 92 school districts. Not until 1969 were most Kentucky black teachers serving on desegregated faculties.

## Teacher Desegregation Survey

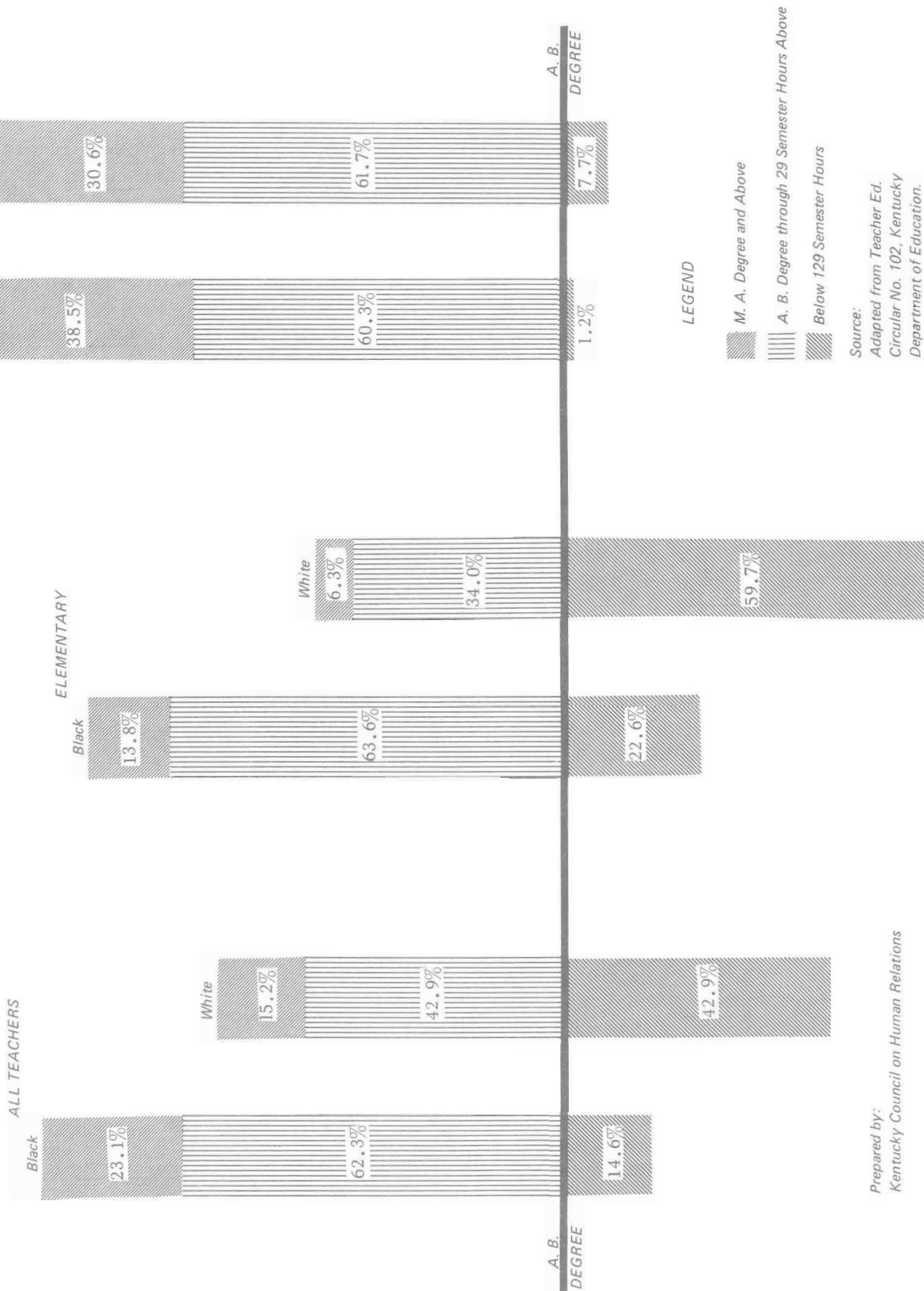
As part of its plan to promote teacher desegregation, the newly formed Kentucky Commission on

### Black Teachers on Desegregated Faculties 1956-1966

	No. of Districts	No. of Schools	No. of Teachers
1956-57	4	8	9
1957-58	7	13	15
1958-59	10	18	20
1960-61	13	28	58
1961-62	17	41	119
1962-63	25	52	145
1963-64	45	110	248
1964-65	60	147	393
1965-66	92	252	721

Source: *Compiled from Racial Integration in the Public Schools of Kentucky, 12 periodic reports, State Dept. of Education*

# COMPARATIVE PREPARATION OF NEGRO AND WHITE TEACHERS EMPLOYED IN KENTUCKY'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS, 1955-1956



Prepared by:  
Kentucky Council on Human Relations

Source:  
Adapted from Teacher Ed.  
Circular No. 102, Kentucky  
Department of Education.

Human Rights made a 1961 report documenting the success of teacher desegregation where it had been tried. Two University of Kentucky professors, Dr. A. Lee Coleman and Dr. Sidney J. Kaplan, interviewed teachers, principals, and superintendents of schools which had desegregated faculties. The survey found that most of those interviewed felt that faculty desegregation had worked much better than expected. Black teachers reported that they felt that they had been accepted as equals by their white colleagues. White parents reported they had been impressed by the teaching ability of the black teachers.

## Loss of Black Administrators

Black administrators faced the same problems faced by black teachers in the desegregation process. The number of Kentucky black principals and superintendents has declined substantially since Kentucky desegregation began. In 1954 there were approximately 200 black principals in Kentucky. As of 1969-70 (according to a survey made by the Kentucky State Department of Education), there were only 36 black principals in the State, including two black high school principals.<sup>3</sup>

## Resegregation

Avoiding resegregation is a problem faced by school systems in many of Kentucky's larger cities. Even where school boards had drawn school bound-

aries to promote desegregation, the racial composition of some neighborhoods rapidly changed as families moved in and out of an area. In recent years, an increasing number of white families residing in Kentucky's metropolitan areas have moved to the suburbs, leaving inner city neighborhoods predominantly black.

One city where resegregation occurred was Louisville. Between 1956 and 1965, the number of students attending desegregated schools increased each year. By 1965, 20.3 per cent of the city's pupils were in schools that were neither predominantly white or predominantly black. (A school is considered predominantly black or white when students of one race represent more than two-thirds of its total enrollment.)

However, since 1965, this trend has reversed and Louisville's school system has moved toward segregation. By 1968, only 9.6 per cent or one of every ten students in the city were enrolled in schools having less than a two-thirds majority of either race. This meant that 90 per cent of the city's students were enrolled in schools that were predominantly black or white.

In 1970, more than 95 per cent of Louisville's students attended schools which were predominantly black or white. Only three schools in Louisville were not predominantly white or black in 1970.

## Summary of Chapter Twenty

Desegregation of Kentucky public schools began with relative ease just one year after the Supreme Court decision that public schools segregation must end. Compliance with the Supreme Court Ruling rather than resistance to it was the prevailing attitude in Kentucky.

However, many school districts took initial steps to desegregate their student bodies and then considered the job done. The more difficult problem of teacher desegregation was ignored. Many school

districts offered freedom of choice integration; but few districts tried to solve the more difficult problem of how to draw school boundaries to insure maximum integration in communities with segregated residential patterns.

All of the problems of desegregation have not been solved. Two serious problems which continue are the lack of black teachers and administrators in Kentucky's schools and the resegregation of schools in larger cities.

<sup>1</sup>Omer Carmichael and James Welden, *The Louisville Story*, (New York: Simon and Shuster, 1957), p. 98-99

<sup>2</sup>J. C. James, "The Black Principal: Another Vanishing American," *The New Republic*, CLXIII (September 26, 1970), p. 19

<sup>3</sup>Charles Walden, "The Louisville Story is Out of Date: Schools Move Back Toward Segregation," *Louisville Times*, December 20, 1968, p. 1

*A SMALL GROUP OF CIVIL RIGHTS SUPPORTERS marching in front of the State Capitol Building in March 1964. Over 10,000 Kentucky citizens travelled to Frankfort from all parts of the State to demonstrate support for the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.*



## Timetable on State-Wide Civil Rights Action

- |       |  |       |  |
|-------|--|-------|--|
| 1949: | University of Kentucky admitted Blacks to graduate and professional schools.   | 1963: | In March, Governor Bert T. Combs issued Governor's Code of Fair Practice covering internal operation of State Government, contractors, etc.  |
| 1950: | Day Law amended and Berea, University of Louisville, Bellarmine, Ursuline, Nazareth colleges opened to Blacks.   | 1963: | In June, Governor Combs issued Fair Service Executive Order to encourage State licensing agencies to discourage discrimination by places of public accommodations they license. The order was later suspended. |
| 1954: | University of Kentucky opened undergraduate divisions to Blacks.   | 1964: | Civil Rights groups held March on Frankfort: General Assembly fails to pass public accommodations bill; starve-in held in House gallery.   |
| 1955: | Other State colleges opened to all applicants.   | 1966: | General Assembly passed model Civil Rights Act which prohibits discrimination in employment and public accommodations.   |
| 1960: | General Assembly established Kentucky Commission on Human Rights and prohibited discrimination in state employment.  | 1966: | General Assembly repealed "dead letter" segregation laws, the Day Law, etc.  |
| 1961: | 70% of Kentucky's drive-in movies admitted Blacks, and 114 of 116 libraries admitted Blacks.   |       |  |
| 1962: | Legislature empowered all cities to create local commissions on human rights and to prohibit discrimination in places of public accommodations: discrimination banned in teacher employment. |       |  |

## Chapter Twenty-One

### A Policy of Equality



*KENTUCKY BECAME THE FIRST STATE SOUTH OF THE OHIO RIVER to enact a broad coverage civil rights law on January 27, 1966 when Governor Breathitt signed the 1966 Civil Rights Act. Robert Estill, chairman of the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights (far left) and A.D. Williams King participated in the ceremony, which was held at the base of a statue of Kentucky-born President Abraham Lincoln in the Capitol Rotunda.*

From the beginning, white Americans had carefully and purposefully denied black Americans equality. After the Civil War ended slavery, Jim Crow segregation gradually developed and laws were passed to make certain that Blacks were kept as second class

citizens. Very slowly, as we have read, this policy of separateness and inequality began to give way as Blacks continued their struggle for the rights and opportunities so long denied them.

## The Brown Decision

The 1954 Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* marked the turning point in the national attitude towards segregation. The Supreme Court had finally proclaimed as doctrine what Justice John M. Harlan of Kentucky had written fifty years before:

“Our Constitution is color-blind, and neither knows nor tolerates classes among citizens. In respect of civil rights, all citizens are equal before the law. The humblest is the peer of the most powerful. The law regards man as man and takes no account of his surroundings or of his color when his civil rights as guaranteed by the supreme law of the land are involved.”<sup>1</sup>

In the first six years after the Brown decision, Kentuckians became aware that the policies of the State, which had previously supported segregation and discrimination, were also embarking on a new direction. In the legislature as well as in the courts of Kentucky, the State’s first commitments to a policy of equality began appearing during the late fifties and early sixties.

## Desegregation of Public Parks

Kentucky’s first step in desegregating facilities other than schools came in 1955. On December 16 of that year, the Kentucky Court of Appeals banned racial segregation in all public recreational facilities—parks, playgrounds, and swimming pools—throughout the State. The twenty-four State parks that had been open to whites only and the one State park for Blacks only now were open to all. In Louisville, Mayor Andrew Broaddus pledged that “we will observe the spirit as well as the letter of the decisions.” He announced that all city parks and recreational facilities would be open to all.

Throughout the rest of the fifties, most civil rights activities in Kentucky took place in the federal courts as one ruling after another ordered the desegregation of certain Kentucky school districts.

## Legislative Action

In 1960, however, the focus shifted from the courts to the State legislature. The 1960 General

Assembly, under the leadership of Governor Bert Combs, passed two significant civil rights laws.

1. A prohibition of discrimination on the basis of race or ethnic origin in employment under the newly created State Merit System.
2. Adoption of a public policy against discrimination and creation of the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights to implement that policy.

The provision in the Merit System Act was intended to bring fair employment coverage to 15,000 State jobs. It was designed to insure that State agencies didn’t use their selection procedures to avoid hiring black employees.

The bill creating the Commission on Human Rights was supported in the House of Representatives by Louisville black Representative William H. Childress and by many white legislators. When it first came up in the House, it failed to pass. Its supporters then regrouped and obtained the necessary votes.

The function of the Commission was “to encourage fair treatment for, to foster mutual understanding and respect among and to discourage discrimination against any racial or ethnic group or its members.”

The legislature gave the Commission no enforcement powers and a budget of only \$12,500 a year to carry out its responsibility.

Governor Bert Combs appointed a Lexington clergyman, the Reverend Robert W. Estill, Chairman of the Commission. In the early years, Frank Stanley, Sr., of Louisville served as Vice-Chairman and Charles Steele of Louisville, as Secretary-Treasurer. Other members serving that first year included: Jesse J. Dukeminier, Lexington; Gilbert W. Kingsbury, South Fort Mitchell; Dr. Frank Kraus, Bardstown; James A. Logsdon, Livermore; Mrs. Robert Low, Pineville; Jack Page, Pikeville; and Charles Williams, Paducah.

Meeting for the first time in September, 1960, the Commission members discussed ways the Commission could promote equal rights for all.

Speaking to the Commission, Governor Combs said, “We want you to understand we are looking to

you to take the initiative and to show the way to us, as to all other Kentuckians. I hope that whatever approach you have to your job, you will be positive and take the initiative. I hope you lead the way in this field, and I want to say to you as Governor I will give you full support, this administration will, and I think the people will.”

The Commission began its early work in three areas: teacher desegregation, equal employment and public accommodations. In December, they chose Galen Martin as Executive Director, and in September, 1961, L. Clayton Jones joined him as Assistant Director.

## Working with Local Commissions

The State Commission chose as a particular objective the creation of local commissions on human rights. The first local commissions were established by 1961 in Frankfort, Henderson, Lexington and Louisville. By 1970 sixteen Kentucky cities had established official commissions. In six other cities, such groups existed on a voluntary or unofficial basis. Three commissions—Hopkinsville, Lexington and Louisville—employed full-time staff members.

The creation of such local groups in the early sixties was one sign that times were changing in Kentucky. Many citizens of both races voiced their opposition to legal segregation and other forms of discrimination. The State Commission staff met



*DISCUSSING CIVIL RIGHTS LEGISLATION AT A 1965 GOVERNOR'S "OPEN OFFICE" session in Louisville are (left to right) Governor Breathitt, Galen Martin, Robert Estill, F.G. Sampson, Garland T. Offutt, and A.D. Williams King.*

periodically with these local leaders to provide counsel, materials and information. Draft ordinances were prepared and program ideas shared from other cities.

## Education and Persuasion

During the sixties studies and reports were made by the Commission to promote voluntary desegregation in public accommodations businesses before the laws were passed to insure service for all. These surveys, which helped create a favorable climate for the passage of enforceable laws, reported on desegregation in:

Drive-In Theatres  
Restaurants  
Municipal Recreation  
Indoor Movies  
Libraries  
Colleges  
Vocational Education

Each of these had two goals:

1. to learn about progress made in Kentucky toward equal treatment of all citizens, and to share this information with others who might follow the good examples already set.
2. to learn about the continuation of discrimination and unfair treatment in Kentucky and to tell about it through objective reports which help awaken the public conscience to the continuing brutality of discrimination.

## Recommending Necessary Legislation

The experience of other states convinced the members of the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights that voluntary methods were not sufficient to end discrimination. Many Commission projects were planned to show the need for Kentucky laws against discrimination. From its first year, the Commission began recommending the passage of enforceable, anti-discriminatory laws at the state and local level.

The Commission worked with black representatives and other supporters in each successive session of the General Assembly to obtain needed laws. Some of the laws on which the Commission cooperated were:

- 1962: Act to enable cities of all classes to pass public accommodations ordinances and to create their own local commission on human rights
- 1964: Proposed statewide public accommodations bill which failed to pass
- 1966: Comprehensive fair employment and public accommodations act
- 1966: Repeal of dead-letter segregation statutes
- 1968: State fair housing law

## Black Elected Officials

The creation of the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights and local human rights commissions were signs that times were changing for Kentucky's Blacks. Another sign began to appear in Kentucky politics. Although a few Blacks had held elective office in Kentucky before 1960, these officials were generally elected from districts where a majority of the voters were Black. The sixties saw a new phenomenon—Blacks elected in districts that were predominantly white.

This trend began in 1958 when Woodford Porter became the first Black to be elected to the Louisville Board of Education. Porter was the only one of the three candidates elected who campaigned on a platform calling for teacher desegregation in the Louisville schools.

In 1963, Harry N. Sykes was elected City Commissioner in Lexington where 80 per cent of the registered voters were white. He was re-elected three times; in 1967, he received more votes than any of the other three commissioners.

Luska J. Twyman was elected to the Glasgow City Council in 1963. He served on the City Council until 1968 when he was elected by the other councilmen to fill the unexpired term of a mayor who resigned. In 1969, he was elected to a four-year term as Mayor by the voters of Glasgow, a town with a black population of less than 10 per cent.

Francis E. Whitney was elected to the Hopkinsville City Council in 1952 and served continuously on



*J. DANIEL F. MASSIE of Hopkinsville (left), magistrate of Christian County's First District since 1945, has been in office longer than any other black elected official now serving. LUSKA J. TWYMAN of Glasgow (right), Kentucky's first black mayor, was voted into office by an electorate which is approximately 90% white.*

that Council until 1970 when he became mayor pro-tem. Another Hopkinsville Black, Philip C. Brooks was elected to the School Board in 1962 and continued to serve on that Board through 1971.

By 1970, there were 41 Blacks serving in elective offices in Kentucky. Only 10 of these officials represented predominantly black wards or districts. Five of the other 31 officials estimate that 90 per cent of their total votes came from white voters.

While the achievements of these black elected officials have been notable, black citizens were still under-represented in Kentucky governmental offices. In 1970, out of a total of 6,000 elected officials in the state, the 41 black officials comprised less than 7/10 of one per cent (.7%). Blacks made up just over 7% of Kentucky's population.

During the 1960's some of Kentucky's black elected officials were involved in gathering government and legislative support for enforceable Civil Rights Laws. For example, State legislator Charles W. Anderson, acted as the spokesman for a group who went to Louisville's City Hall to demand a local public accommodations law. Together with the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights and local commissions, black officials like Anderson worked to create a favorable climate for the passage of such laws on both the local and the state level.

## Pressure for Desegregation

For the first five years after the Supreme Court school desegregation decision, black leaders were

largely busy working with school desegregation—encouraging black parents to send their children to integrated schools, pressuring slow-moving school boards to speed up the desegregation process, and stressing the necessity that school boards retain qualified black teachers. But once a substantial beginning had been made in school desegregation, these leaders began to turn their efforts to other areas.

In Kentucky, as in the rest of the country, the process of desegregation did not begin immediately. The court opinion which called for desegregation “with all deliberate speed” was used to delay a beginning in many areas. Some Kentucky counties had waited as long as ten years before beginning desegregation of their schools. Desegregation of other facilities took even longer and did not come about automatically.

Each step in the process came about because black people and white supporters requested that step and, in most cases, used some kind of pressure to enforce that request. The pressure came in many forms: sit-ins, wade-ins, marches, demonstrations, “don’t buy downtown” campaigns, and voter registration drives. The variety of methods used by citizens committed to equality will become evident as we discuss the major steps toward that goal.

## Public Accommodations

The next immediate target in Kentucky’s civil rights movement was the desegregation of public accommodations—such as restaurants and lunch counters. Most business establishments outside the black community treated black customers differently from whites or refused service to Blacks entirely.

Black teenagers could not stop for a Coke after school like white teenagers. Nor could black businessmen “grab something to eat” in local restaurants. Students at Kentucky State College in Frankfort would be served at nearby drive-ins if they stayed in their cars but were refused service at the tables inside.

Across the country, methods of peaceful resistance such as sit-ins, marches and economic boycotts were gaining national publicity. Kentucky Blacks, watching the success of some of these methods on television news programs, began to consider using the same tactics to desegregate individual establishments.

Also they began work toward the passage of laws which would prohibit discrimination.

## Louisville Public Accommodations Drive

In Louisville, on January 4, 1960, a delegation of 35 black and white leaders appeared at a City Hall “beef session” to request a law that would end segregation in city theaters, restaurants and other business places. Charles W. Anderson who had been the first black man elected to the Kentucky General Assembly in 1936, was the spokesman for the group. The city had done all it could, replied Mayor Bruce Hoblitzell, “but trying to force integration in private business is another matter.”<sup>2</sup>

On February 10, William W. Beckett, a black Alderman, placed a public accommodations ordinance before the Board of Aldermen. Two weeks later, the Board rejected this ordinance on the basis of an opinion from the City Law Department that such an ordinance would be illegal.

Mayor Hoblitzell then reassembled his long-dormant Mayor’s Committee on Human Relations which heard pleas for a public accommodations ordinance from spokesmen from the NAACP and the Unitarians for Social Action.

In March, 1960, at the request of Alderman Beckett, Kentucky Attorney General John Breckinridge reviewed the proposed Louisville public accommodations ordinance and ruled that there was no conflict between the proposed Louisville ordinance and Kentucky law. Louisville had the legal power to adopt such an ordinance, Breckinridge ruled. Alderman Beckett then reintroduced his ordinance, but it was rejected by the Board by a vote of 11 to 1.

Because the Democratic Board of Aldermen refused to pass a public accommodations ordinance, black leaders changed their tactics. They began a campaign to defeat the Democratic administration and replace it with aldermen and a mayor who would pass such an ordinance.

## Voter Registration

Woodford Porter, first black member of the Louisville School Board, became chairman of a voter registration campaign. In August, 1960, he announced that their slogan would be “51,000 voting

Negroes will desegregate Louisville.” On August 23, a registration rally held at the county armory with the Reverend Martin Luther King as the main speaker drew 9,000 people.

The voter-registration campaign continued through the fall and winter of 1960 and added many new black voters to the rolls. The following February, 1961, William S. Milburn announced as a Democratic candidate for Mayor of Louisville. Milburn was the Principal of Male High School. While serving on the Board of Aldermen, he had voted against Alderman Beckett’s public accommodations bill.

Statements urging black voters not to vote for Milburn were issued by various organizations and individuals. Among those who voiced their opposition to Milburn’s candidacy were: J. Earl Dearing, President of the Kentucky NAACP; representatives of the Louisville NAACP Chapter; a Sunday school association representing 32 churches; and the Right Reverend C. Ewbank Tucker, Presiding Bishop of the Kentucky Conference of AME Zion Church.

## Peaceful Demonstrations

While political leaders were attempting to organize black voters, other black citizens—especially students and young people—were demonstrating their opposition to racial discrimination. Day after day, in downtown Louisville large groups of Blacks and some white supporters marched back and forth in front of business establishments that refused to serve Blacks.



*DURING THIS 1961 DEMONSTRATION AT LOUISVILLE’S FONTAINE FERRY PARK, black and white marchers carried signs protesting the park’s policy of segregation.*

Blue Boar cafeterias managed by L. Eugene Johnson, a member of the Louisville Board of Education, were primary targets for the marchers. The marchers stopped once at the Mayor’s request so that his emergency committee could try to negotiate an end to discriminatory policies. When those negotiations failed, the marching resumed. At this point, Louisville police began to arrest the marchers, charging the young people with delinquency and the adults with disorderly conduct.

A boycott by Blacks of the downtown businesses was also used as a means of economic pressure to deflate the usual Easter sales boom.

## November Election, 1961

Mayor William O. Cowger and a Republican Board of Aldermen swept to an easy victory in November. Black voting for the Republican candidates was especially high because Cowger had promised to establish a human relations commission to deal with the desegregation of public accommodations. The results from 33 predominantly black precincts showed that while in 1957, the Republicans had captured 54 percent of the vote, in 1961 they captured 64 per cent of the vote, an amazing 10 per cent increase. White high-income and blue collar precincts also showed significant shifts to the Republican side.

Two Blacks, Russell P. Lee and Mrs. Louise Reynolds, were elected to the Louisville Board of Aldermen and one black woman, Mrs. Amelia M. Tucker, was elected to the State legislature.

## Louisville Human Relations Commission

The new Republican administration was committed to action in the field of civil rights: but even with that commitment, the wheels of government moved slowly. Mayor Cowger announced the creation of a Louisville Human Relations Commission, but not until June 1, 1962 did they have their first meeting.

The Louisville Commission hired Mansir Tydings as its first director, and elected University of Louisville Professor Marlin Volz, Dean of the Law School, as Chairman. Under this leadership, the Louisville Commission worked to draw up a public accommoda-

tions ordinance and enlist community wide support for the measure.

Finally, on May 14, 1963, the Louisville Board of Aldermen passed the public accommodations law. Now Louisville businesses open to the public could not bar customers or treat them differently because of their race. The law provided for fines of up to \$100 for each violation.

The following day, 73 Louisville Blacks "went out to dinner" in 49 different restaurants in the city. In almost every case, they were served with no unpleasantness on the part of waitresses, cashiers, or other customers.

The Louisville Public Accommodations Law was passed as a result of a three-year effort on the part of both black and white leaders. Tactics used to gain passage included direct confrontation with the Mayor and Board of Aldermen, political pressure, economic pressure, and peaceful demonstrations.

## State Public Accommodations Effort

While Louisville Blacks were working toward passage of a city public accommodations law, similar activities were taking place in many communities throughout the state. A sit-in campaign in Frankfort led by students from Kentucky State College received national television coverage in April, 1960. Similar tactics led to the passage of the Lexington Public Accommodations Law.

Louisville officials who had refused to pass local public accommodations laws said that the State did not give them the power to pass such laws. Local civil rights leaders brought this problem to the attention of Governor Bert Combs and they urged him to use his leadership to persuade the General Assembly to pass a bill granting cities of all classes the power to pass public accommodations anti-discrimination laws. The bill was passed on March 1, 1962.

## Combs Fair Service Executive Order

In an effort to discourage discrimination by places of public accommodation throughout the State Governor Combs issued a Fair Service Executive Order in June, 1963. The order directed State Licensing agencies to examine their existing powers

over businesses they licensed and report what the agency might do to curb unfair treatment by businesses. Although the order did not add to the power of any agency, it directed them to do what they legally could to promote fair treatment for all citizens.

The Governor's action was based on his belief that just as it is unconstitutional for a state to discriminate, so a State cannot constitutionally license private businesses which discriminate on the basis of race, or color. This was the same view expressed in the famous civil rights dissents of Supreme Court Justice John M. Harlan in the last century.

The Louisville Tavern Owners instituted a suit against this order, charging that it was unconstitutional. The order was suspended, pending the outcome of the suit.

During the election campaign for governor in 1963, the Fair Service Order became a campaign issue. Attacked as illegal and dictatorial, the order provoked much controversy, and was never implemented. However, several businesses (notably a group of thirty-five stores in Bowling Green) did begin equal service to all Kentuckians as a result of the initial order and continued policies of fair service after the order was suspended.

## Toward State P.A. Law

The need for a statewide law banning discrimination in public accommodations became more and more apparent. In 1963, the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights drafted a proposed public accommodations bill to be presented to the General Assembly when it met the following January.

A group called the Kentuckians for Public Accommodations Legislation, headed by Joe C. Graves, Jr., of Lexington, held workshops throughout Kentucky to build support for this bill.

When the Assembly met in January, 1964, two Louisville black Representatives, A.L. Johnson and J.E. Smith, and a white Representative, Norbert Blume, introduced the public accommodations bill. It soon became evident that only with a massive show of public support would the bill have any chance of passage.



*THE 1964 MARCH ON FRANKFORT, led by the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.*

## 1964 March on Frankfort

On March 5, 1964, citizens from all over Kentucky came and stood before the State Capitol on a bitterly cold day to demonstrate their support for a statewide public accommodations bill. The Reverend Martin Luther King addressed the 10,000 citizens thus assembled. Other speakers included Jackie Robinson and the Reverend Ralph Abernathy. Folk-singers Peter, Paul and Mary performed.

For the first time, a united effort of religious, civil rights, and community leaders had demonstrated massive support for fair treatment for all persons. A larger number of black and white leaders worked together on an equal basis to organize the March on Frankfort than had ever worked on one effort in the State before.

The March was coordinated by the Allied Organizations for Civil Rights (AOCR). The guiding spirit and organizational spark for the AOCR was provided by Chairman Frank Stanley, Jr., a black Louisville newsman; Dr. Olof Anderson, Synod Executive of the Presbyterian Church, served as co-chairman; the Reverend John Loftus, Dean of Bellarmine College,

was secretary; and Louisville insurance man, Eric Tachau, served as treasurer.

Eleven days after the March, when it became increasingly apparent that the General Assembly would not act favorably, twenty-five individuals took seats in the gallery of the House of Representatives, announcing they would refuse food until the House passed a public accommodations bill. No effort was made to remove these fasting demonstrators and they remained in the gallery for the entire week of the legislative session. While some legislators regarded this demonstration as bothersome or meaningless, others admitted that they were impressed by the seriousness of purpose of those who fasted.

## 1964 Bill

Despite the strong showing of public support, the public accommodations bill was not passed by the 1964 General Assembly. Various assemblymen made attempts to revise or amend the bill but each new version of the bill was rejected either by the opposition for being too strong or by the supporters for being too weak a version.



*THE 1963 MARCH ON WASHINGTON attracted black and white participants from all over the nation, including many Kentuckians. Pictured above is a Louisville delegation led by Frank Stanley, Jr.*

In late February Governor Breathitt announced his support of a bill being introduced in the Senate with coverage of fewer businesses. The civil rights groups quickly opposed the weaker bill. The split was healed later in the session, but despite the skillful Floor leadership of Representative Blume and many attempts to get a clear-cut vote, no bill was passed.

While some people believe that the civil rights groups should have accepted the compromise bill in 1964, few will deny that a much stronger and broader civil rights act was obtained in 1966 because of the 1964 struggle.

## **U.S. Civil Rights Act of 1964**

While the battle to pass a State Public Accommodations law was being waged in Frankfort, Black and white civil rights advocates were urging Congress to pass a national civil rights law. Starting in 1963, and throughout 1964, black and white Kentuckians wrote Kentucky's congressmen and visited them in Washington, D.C. asking them to support this bill which would make discrimination in employment and public accommodations illegal. An interracial delegation of Kentucky leaders traveled to Washington, D.C. to express support for the proposed Federal Civil Rights Act. Headed by Hal Thurmond of Hopkinsville, the

delegation included the following members: Reverend Austin Bell, Henderson; Mrs. John H. Young, Hopkinsville; Mrs. Laura Massie, and O.M. Travis, Jr., Lexington; Mrs. Milton Young, Louisville; Dr. W.H. Harvey and W.C. Young, Paducah.

Three of the seven Kentuckians serving in Congress supported this act and voted for it. They were Senators Morton and Cooper and Representative Perkins. The remaining Kentucky Representatives voted against the act. The act was passed and was signed into law on July 2, 1964.

## **A New Effort Begins**

Immediately after the 1964 General Assembly adjourned, civil rights leaders began to plan their strategy for the next legislative session. Workshops were held in several cities throughout the state. The NAACP and KCLC sponsored a statewide conference on civil rights legislation in December, 1965, with addresses by Governor Edward T. Breathitt and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The passage of the federal civil rights act encouraged those who were working on a Kentucky bill. They decided to press for a strong, effective bill which prohibited discrimination in employment as well as in public accommodations.

## **Black Employment Disadvantages**

While public accommodations discrimination had received much attention from Kentucky Blacks, they were also greatly concerned about the disadvantages caused by employment discrimination. The 1960 census data showed the earning power of Blacks was less in that year than that of whites—and the gap had widened since 1950.

For every dollar earned by white workers in 1960 on the average Blacks earned only 54 cents. Ten years earlier 61 cents was earned by Blacks for every dollar earned by whites in 1950. Black workers also decreased in importance in white collar jobs in relation to whites in the same period. Even though they had shown faster educational gains than whites in this period, Blacks held fewer white-collar jobs in relation to whites.

Most economic differences persisted throughout the 60's with Blacks being the last hired and the first

fired. Black income tended to be just slightly more than half of white income. And the ratio of black unemployment remained double that of whites.

## Governor's Code of Fair Practice

In March, 1963, Governor Combs had issued a Governor's Code of Fair Practice. This Code, which has been continued in force by Governors Breathitt and Nunn, was the first statewide effort to deal with the problem of employment discrimination. The Code was primarily designed to eliminate discrimination in all aspects of state government and require contractors with the State to refrain from discriminating.

This Code was useful in eliminating some discrimination, but it did not affect the majority of Kentucky's black workers who were employed by private businesses.

## General Assembly, 1966

As Kentucky civil rights groups made plans for passage of an anti-discrimination law by the 1966 legislature, it was not surprising that they developed a draft bill which also included employment.

Neither the Governor, the legislators, nor the civil rights leaders wanted another split like the one which



*THE 1966 KENTUCKY CIVIL RIGHTS ACT was introduced in the House of Representatives by State legislator, Jesse Warders.*

occurred in 1964. They backed a broad bill which was taken from a model act of a national group.

## Passage of the Kentucky Civil Rights Act

With the support of Governor Edward T. Breathitt, Jr., and key legislative leaders, the civil rights bill was introduced on January 4, 1966.

The only black member of the legislature, Jesse Warders of Louisville, was applauded after he spoke for the bill in the House of Representatives.

"It is altogether wrong that I should have to . . . speak on the issue of the civil rights bill," he said. "It is not wrong that I do so but wrong that I have to do so.

"It is wrong, but nevertheless true that in 1966 Negroes are turned away from places of public accommodations in Kentucky because of the color of their skins.

"It is wrong, but true that in our State qualified Negroes are denied equal access to job opportunities.

"It is wrong, but true, that each year Kentucky loses the cream of the crop of Negro college graduates . . . because they are unable to find meaningful work."

The civil rights leaders had done their homework well. The 1966 civil rights act passed the House of Representatives, the vote was 76 to 12 in favor of the act in the Senate, the vote was 36 to 1. On January 27, at the base of a statue of Abraham Lincoln in the Capitol Rotunda, Governor Edward T. Breathitt, Jr., signed the historic act.

The Act prohibited discrimination by employers of eight or more persons. It provided that all places of public accommodations (except barbers, beauty shops and rooming houses) must be open to all races. The enforcement provisions were among the most comprehensive and complete in the country.

## Complaints and Enforcement

For the first time, the 1966 Civil Rights Act gave the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights the

enforcement power it had been seeking to insure that individuals and groups within the State must comply with the law.

People who believed themselves discriminated against because of their race, color or religion could use this new law by filing complaints. The first employment complaint was received July 6, 1966, just five days after the law became effective. The first public accommodation complaint was filed on July 11, 1966. Between the date the law was signed and January 1971, 185 employment complaints and 96 Public Accommodations complaints were filed. In addition, 28 complaints of housing discrimination have been filed under the 1968 Fair Housing Act.

## Process and Procedure

A typical case first begins when a written sworn complaint is filed with the Commission. A typical example was the complaint filed by a black coal miner. He complained he was denied promotion to foreman because of his race. He further charged that the company (called respondent) refused to hire and promote Blacks into the higher skilled and better paying jobs because of their race.

The complaint was investigated by the staff of the Commission. Records of the company hiring and promotions were examined. After all this evidence was studied and evaluated, the Commission decided that there had been discrimination and they advised

the company of the findings. (If the Commission had found no evidence of discrimination they would have dismissed the complaint.) Next the staff talked with the company in order to settle or conciliate the complaint.

As in most cases, this complaint was conciliated. The black miner was promoted and became the first black foreman in the history of the company. Since that case was settled, several other Blacks have received promotions to better jobs and the company has promoted four more Blacks to foreman.

By this method, the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights has investigated and settled hundreds of complaints all over Kentucky. A few cases were not settled through informal conciliation; these were taken to public hearing. At these hearings, evidence was heard by the Commissioners who acted as a Hearing Panel. After the evidence was presented and the testimony heard, the Commission issued written Findings of Fact, Conclusion of Law and an Order. The respondent could appeal his case by taking it to court.

## Employment Discrimination and the Black Community

For over a hundred years, black workers were denied employment opportunities by policies of segregation and discrimination. State and local ordinances did help Blacks combat employment discrimi-

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### SCOTT AND HOWARD VS. L&N

*Two black men, W.A. Scott and Melton Howard both long-time employees of the L&N Railroad and members of the International Association of Machinists Union challenged the discriminatory system by filing complaints and won. These men and nine other Blacks had been placed on a separate and segregated roster by an agreement made between the Union and the Company in 1943. Although they were paid the same wages as their white co-workers, they had no opportunity to advance up the apprentice-helper ladder to become machinists. This was a benefit open to whites only.*

*Although it was disguised as a separate seniority roster, its effect, as Mr. Scott and Mr. Howard testified, was to discriminate against Blacks because of their race. Additionally, their complaint brought forth stark evidence of the kinds of jobs Blacks normally hold in American industry. This pattern is not uncommon and similar patterns were found in most Kentucky companies during this period.*

### CARR, ET AL VS. PHILIP MORRIS, INC.

*With assistance from the Louisville chapter of the NAACP, four black women, Carrie Carr, Gwendolyn Wilson, Vera Pruitt and Amanda Cooper successfully regained for themselves and for 151 black co-workers, years of seniority rights previously withheld. These Blacks had lost varying amounts of seniority (some as much as nine years) because of an agreement between the Philip Morris Company and the Tobacco Workers International Union, Local 16.*

*This agreement provided that persons transferring from the stemmery (a division of the company) to the main plant must forfeit some of their seniority rights. Since Blacks prior to 1961 were denied most jobs in the main plant and hired only in the then all-Black stemmery, the effect of this agreement was the same as racial discrimination. After receiving the evidence in six days of hearings, the Commission ordered their seniority rights returned to them.*

nation. However, the deep scars of those years of economic deprivation were not easily healed.

Much discrimination also remained. Some employers continued to use subtle methods of discrimination to keep black workers in the lowest paying jobs.

Employment cases involving Blacks employed by the L&N Railroad and the Philip Morris Company demonstrate how some subtle practices discriminate against black people.

## Louisville's Black Businesses

Just as the black worker is usually found in the least skilled and lowest paying jobs, so too is the black businessman at the bottom of the economic heap.

A 1969 report, *Black Business in Louisville*, showed that blacks owned only 490 or 4.6% of the businesses in Louisville and Jefferson County. Black

owners employed only 1,623 persons or .6 of one per cent of the people employed in Jefferson County. This compared with a black population of 20% of Jefferson County.

When asked why so few black businesses were operating, the black owners frequently mentioned the barriers Blacks face in borrowing money or obtaining insurance.

## Deadletters Repealed

The 1966 legislature also passed another act which repealed outdated statutes requiring racial segregation in such areas as schools, textbook use, and railroad cars. These statutes had been invalidated by court decisions, but they had never been repealed by the legislature. Louisville Representatives Jesse Warders and Bob Henry Eicher introduced the Deadletter repeal. In supporting his "housecleaning" bill, Warders said that the continued presence of the antiquated statutes was an "affront to Negro citizens." Two votes were cast in opposition to the repeal of the deadletter statutes.

## Summary of Chapter Twenty-One

In 1959, with the creation of the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights, the State of Kentucky had taken the first step towards guaranteeing equal rights to all its citizens. The next six years saw the enactment of specific laws banning discrimination in public accommodations and employment. This period also saw the formation of many community civil rights agencies. Several Kentucky Blacks were elected

to office by predominantly white constituencies.

Failure of the Louisville Democratic Mayor and Board of Aldermen to pass a public accommodations ordinance was a significant factor in a shift of black voters to Republican candidates. The newly-elected Republican Mayor and Board of Aldermen passed such a law in May, 1963.

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<sup>1</sup>*Plessy v Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537, at 559, (1896)

<sup>2</sup>"Governor Wins Test Vote, New School Chief Installed," *Southern School News*, VI, (Nashville, Tennessee), February, 1960), p.8

## Chapter Twenty-Two

### *Equal Housing Opportunity*



*THROUGHOUT THE SPRING OF 1967, OPEN HOUSING MARCHES were held in Louisville to demand passage of an ordinance that would effectively end housing discrimination against black people.*

A basic question for every family is, “Where shall we live?” In choosing a home, most Kentucky black families had severely limited choices. For in most Kentucky towns there were certain areas where Blacks were allowed to live and other areas where they could not live.

No law required this housing segregation. In 1917, the Supreme Court case of *Warley v. Buchanan*, which originated in Kentucky, had established that housing segregation on the basis of race was illegal. (see Chapter 12) However, segregation did exist and was enforced by a kind of unwritten understanding.

The black man who tried to buy a house or rent an apartment in an area that had all white residents ran into many kinds of problems. Perhaps the person who was selling or renting might suddenly decide not to sell or rent that day. Perhaps the real estate dealer would say he already had a buyer for that house when he did not. Even if the black man thought he was being denied the chance to live in a neighborhood of his choice because of his race, he had no way to enforce his rights until the 1966-68 period.

Segregated housing often meant that a black family would have to pay more than a white family would have to pay for the same type of house. There were usually more Blacks looking for houses than there were houses available in the areas where Blacks could live. So a landlord could charge an unusually high price for his house, knowing there was no where else the black family could go.

For the same reason, housing in the area reserved for Blacks often became overcrowded. Families had to have homes, and if there were no new homes available, the families would crowd into the existing ones.

If a housing area is racially segregated, then the schools, churches, and stores in that area are generally segregated too, not by law but simply because everyone in the neighborhood is of the same race. Thus people are denied the opportunity to get to know people of a different race.

After legal segregation of the public schools and public facilities was ended and Blacks established their rights to be served in facilities that were opened to the public, black leaders turned their attention to this difficult housing problem. The question they asked was, "How can the government best protect each citizen's right to live where he wished to live?"

## Louisville Housing Problem

In 1965, almost 40 per cent of Kentucky's Blacks lived in Louisville. Let us study the housing problems faced by Louisville Blacks and their difficult struggle to obtain a local ordinance against housing discrimination. Similar conditions existed in many other Kentucky towns.

During the 1940's, the greatest concentration of



*AFTER BLACK FAMILIES MOVED into Louisville's West End during the early 1960's, many white residents in the area posted "Not for Sale" signs on their lawns to demonstrate their belief that integration would not be detrimental to their neighborhood. The signs, which were provided by the West End Community Council, were also intended to discourage panic selling.*

black population in Louisville was in the area just to the east and to the west of the central city. This area contained many old homes, some of which were built before the Civil War. The homes had been divided into apartments and often many families lived in houses that had been designed for only one family.

After World War II ended and construction materials again became available for peacetime uses, many new houses were built in Louisville. These new houses were located principally on the east and south ends of the city.

Blacks who lived in the crowded central areas of the city found they could not buy homes in the new subdivisions that were developed. However, as white people who lived in the west end of Louisville moved into some of the newly constructed houses, they began to sell their west end homes to Blacks.

This process was encouraged by some unscrupulous real estate agents who urged white people to sell their homes quickly when a black family moved into the neighborhood. By playing on the fears of the white families, the unfair real estate agent

was able to buy their homes and sell them to other Blacks at a much higher price. Reputable real estate agents condemned this practice but it was difficult to stop. By 1960, many black families had moved from the central city to the West End.

A 1967 study of 200 real estate sales in three “changing neighborhoods” in Louisville’s West End showed that property values had increased or remained the same after black families moved in. The report answered the claim of some people that black families would lower property values. One area check showed that 12 black families were charged 18% more for a home than the average buyer.

## Urban Renewal

In 1960, the city of Louisville with funds from the federal government, began the first of several urban renewal projects. The Urban Renewal and Community Development Agency bought a large tract of land in the West End.

On that Urban Renewal land, the houses which had been declared substandard were torn down. Modern public housing was built in their place. This project was known as the Southwick Project.

In 1962, work began on clearing out the East and West Downtown Urban Renewal areas. The West Area extended from Market to Broadway between Sixth and Fifteenth Streets. The East Area extended from Market Street to Broadway between Jackson and Second Streets. Over 1,300 families who lived in these areas had to find other places to live. Many small black owned stores that operated in these areas had to close and were not able to relocate elsewhere.

Since the majority of the families who lived in these areas were Black, the need for adequate housing available to black people increased. One obvious way to provide for that need was to end the unwritten discrimination that barred Blacks from certain residential areas. However, Louisville did not take this course. By the time an enforceable open housing law was passed in Louisville, the inner city had become a ghetto.

## Unenforceable Housing Ordinance

In August, 1965, the Louisville Board of Aldermen passed a Freedom of Residence Ordinance that

was voluntary only. This ordinance stated the principle that every person had the right to purchase any house he could afford in whatever neighborhood he chose. If someone felt that he was refused housing because of his race, he could ask the City Freedom of Housing Panel to investigate the complaint. But no provisions were made for the enforcement of this law. The Human Relations Commission could only encourage voluntary acceptance of fair housing.

Not until February, 1966, was the seven-member Freedom of Housing Panel named. The Chairman was Mrs. William M. Flarsheim who also served on the Louisville Human Relations Commission. Two Blacks, Jesse Warders and Lou Lipscomb, served on the panel.

In March, 1966, in a joint statement, leaders of the NAACP and KCLC (Kentucky Christian Leadership Conference) urged the Board of Aldermen to provide an enforceable open housing ordinance. Signing this statement were the Reverend W.J. Hodge, Kentucky NAACP President; Neville M. Tucker, Louisville NAACP President; and the Reverend A.D. Williams King, Chairman of the Executive Board of KCLC.

This statement began the campaign for an enforceable open housing ordinance. The campaign proceeded much as earlier civil rights drives had proceeded.

## Committee on Open Housing

Black leaders and white leaders formed a loosely organized Committee on Open Housing, which directed the campaign. Representatives of the African Methodist Episcopal Ministerial Alliance, the KCLC, the Louisville Area Council on Religion and Race, the NAACP, and the West End Community Council served on this committee.

The committee’s demand for an enforceable ordinance was met by the pleas for delay from city and county governing officials. County Judge Marlow W. Cook urged a court test to determine the legality of such an ordinance. Louisville Mayor Kenneth Schmied asked his Advisory Committee on Community Development to study all aspects of an open housing law and give him a report.

## Statewide Campaign for Fair Housing Laws

Frustrated in their local effort to obtain an enforceable fair housing law, Louisville civil rights leaders also participated in mounting a state-wide campaign for local housing ordinances. The legal base for that drive was provided in a final section of the State Civil Rights Act which said cities and counties could pass their own acts against discrimination. While the State Act itself covered only employment and public accommodations at the time, the section for local government granted them broad powers so they could enact fair housing ordinances.

Soon after the legislature adjourned, leaders from several cities met with the State Commission on Human Rights to plan for obtaining local anti-discrimination acts. Beginning at an April meeting in Frankfort, a "model" local act covering housing was developed. Participants in the conference wanted to get many local ordinances on housing to pave the way for passage of a State law in the 1968 legislature. They thought Louisville and Jefferson County would be the most likely areas to pass such laws first. As it turned out, Louisville and Jefferson County were among the last to pass fair housing acts, and that came only after election of a new Mayor and Board of Aldermen in Louisville and a new County Judge in Jefferson County.

### Bardstown—Nelson County Act: First and Best

Bardstown and Nelson County became the first Kentucky area with open housing laws. Both the city and county governments passed a law based on the model act proposed at the Frankfort Conference. The law covered the areas of housing, public accommodations and employment. It set forth definite enforcement procedures for those who disobeyed the law. Although this law became effective July 28, 1966, it is still the broadest and strongest local anti-discrimination ordinance in the State of Kentucky.

Following the success in the "Old Kentucky Home" area, the Louisville Committee on Open Housing presented an open housing law based on the "model" to the Board of Aldermen in September, 1966, and to the County Judge in October.

Proposing the law were: the Reverend A.D. King of the Kentucky Christian Leadership Conference; the Reverend W.J. Hodge of the local LAACP; the

Reverend William Daniels and the Reverend James C. Maloney of the Council on Religion and Race; Hulbert James, Executive Director of the West End Community Council; the Reverend Leo Lesser, President of the AME Ministerial Alliance, and Dr. Maurice Rabb, acting President of the Louisville NAACP Chapter.

For the next six months, white and black leaders worked to gather support for an effective open housing law. The Board of Aldermen invited speakers for and against the law to present their views at a public hearing about the law. The hearing was held in a south Louisville neighborhood where opposition to the law was very strong. The Reverend Martin Luther King and other officials of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference conferred in Louisville with leaders of the drive.

### Open Housing Marches

After six months of negotiation and discussion did not produce an enforceable open housing law, the black leaders decided to take more dramatic action to focus community attention upon the problem. On March 7, 1967, a group of blacks and whites who supported the proposed law marched together to a furniture store owned by Mayor Schmied to convince him of their support of the open housing measure. Thereafter, similar marches to the homes or places of business of other Aldermen were held.

The marches usually began with a short service at one of the black churches. Black and white people, old and young, participated. The marchers were coached on the techniques of non-violent resistance



*MANY DEMONSTRATORS WERE WILLING TO GO TO JAIL to express their support for enforceable open housing laws.*

and the necessity of maintaining order. Often white citizens followed the marchers, shouting obscenities at them and sometimes throwing rocks and sticks at them.

On April 11, 1967, the Board of Aldermen defeated the open housing measure by a vote of 9 to 3. Aldermen Oscar G. Stoll joined black Aldermen, Eugene Ford, Sr., and Mrs. Louise Reynolds in favoring the bill. Black leaders vowed the marches would continue until an enforceable law was passed.

And continue they did. Night after night the marchers entered white neighborhoods pledging, "We shall overcome some day." When the city issued an injunction against the marchers, the citizens marched anyway and submitted to police arrest. Juvenile offenders were generally released in the custody of their parents but many of the adult demonstrators spent the night in jail.

The marches continued well into the summer of 1967. Meanwhile in June, 1967, Covington passed an open housing ordinance with enforcement penalties for violators of the law. The next month, Kenton County took the same action.

In August, the Fayette County Fiscal Court passed an open housing ordinance. Lexington, Fayette County's largest city, was covered by this ordinance which included enforcement procedures.

Louisville black leaders warned the Mayor and Board of Aldermen that Lexington was becoming a far more progressive city in the field of civil rights.



*LOUISVILLE'S OPEN HOUSING DEMONSTRATORS marched to the Ohio River to dramatize the need for a local fair housing ordinance.*

Open housing marches were discontinued in August in Louisville so that all available personnel could work on the voter registration drive. Aldermen were to be elected in November. The Committee on Open Housing urged all citizens who were dissatisfied with the failure of the Republican Board of Aldermen to pass a strong ordinance to vote against those Aldermen in November.

## November Elections

Eleven of the Aldermen were defeated. Only one Alderman, Mrs. Louise Reynolds, the black woman who had worked for an open housing ordinance, was re-elected in the November vote. Democrats won the other eleven seats on the Board. By December 13, this newly elected Board had passed an enforceable open housing ordinance with penalties for those who violated its provisions. Again the techniques of non-violent resistance combined with an effective "get out the vote" campaign resulted in a major civil rights victory.

## Kentucky Fair Housing Act

The drive for fair housing protection for all Kentucky black citizens reached a goal on March 15, 1968, when the Kentucky General Assembly passed a fair housing act. It passed the Senate by a vote of 27 to 3 and the House by a vote of 54 to 17. Thus, Kentucky became the first state in the South to enact a statewide fair housing law.

Introduced in the Senate by black Senator Georgia M. Davis, and in the House by black Representatives Mae Street Kidd and Hughes McGill, the fair housing bill received strong support from members of both political parties. The work of the three black legislators was considered a major factor in the bill's passage.

During most of the session, observers thought the bill had little chance to pass, but civil rights leaders persisted in their campaign. Even supporters of the bill were surprised by the strong support it received once it got out of committee.

Influencing the passage of the bill was the two year drive for local housing laws which covered 700,000 Kentucky citizens in four counties and Louisville by the time the General Assembly met. Even so there was opposition and the bill was not passed until the final day of the legislative session, and it became law without the Governor's signature.



*MAE STREET KIDD*



*GEORGIA M. DAVIS*



*HUGHES MCGILL*

The act banned discrimination in all housing sold or rented through real estate agencies and in most housing sold or rented directly by an owner. Sale of a family home by the owner without a real estate agent was exempt from coverage of the act.

Enforcement procedures were similar to those of the Kentucky Civil Rights Act of 1966. Complaints could be filed with the Kentucky Human Rights Commission where they would be investigated, and, if necessary, taken to court.

The passage of this act meant that the right of each Kentucky citizen to live in any area he can afford would be protected by the State government. Thus the State took another step towards providing equal treatment for all.

Bowling Green adopted a fair housing ordinance in February, 1969, and the Jefferson County Fiscal Court adopted fair housing provisions for the County in March, 1970, after Todd Hollenbach was elected County Judge. Hopkinsville also passed a Fair Housing Ordinance in 1971.

## **Making Fair Housing a Reality**

While some communities sought passage of local fair housing ordinance others which had passed them began promoting these newly guaranteed rights.

In Lexington, the Committee on Open Housing began to promote fair housing by urging Blacks to move into neighborhoods of their choice. This committee, made up of Blacks and whites, had been instrumental in getting Lexington and Fayette County to adopt a Fair Housing Ordinance. Holding regular meetings in Lexington's black community, the

committee worked to inform Blacks about their fair housing rights.

Dr. Fred Vetter supervised a training program for white "testers." If a black couple had been told that a certain apartment had already been rented, the white testers would then try to rent that apartment. If the apartment proved to be available to the white couple, a discrimination complaint was filed against the apartment owner.

As a result of this testing, several complaints of housing discrimination were filed and two Federal Court suits were commenced.

In Louisville, the Council on Religion and Race began to operate a Housing Information Service. This service, staffed by volunteers, assisted Blacks who wanted to move to better housing outside the traditionally all-black neighborhoods. The volunteers surveyed apartments in Louisville, compiling a file on the location, size, and rent charged for available apartments. Some volunteers acted as testers to assist Blacks who tried to buy or rent housing in Louisville.

## **Housing Opportunity Centers**

To help black families find housing on a non-discriminatory basis, Housing Opportunity Centers were opened by the State Commission on Human Rights in Louisville and Lexington in 1969.

A black family who contacted the center would be helped to find housing in new neighborhoods. If the black family felt they were discriminated against when they tried to buy or rent a house, the center might check by sending a white couple to buy or rent the same house. The landlord would be urged to

make the housing available to the black family. If that failed, the Housing Opportunities Center would help the black family file a discrimination complaint.

## Changes in Housing Patterns

The Kentucky Fair Housing Law and local ordinances have brought some changes in the housing patterns in the State. As of June 1970, about 854 black Louisville and Lexington families were living in neighborhoods that had previously been all-white. Many large apartment complexes accepted applicants regardless of color. A July, 1970, survey of 47 black

families living in new areas showed they experienced some discrimination from real estate dealers but had practically no problems with their neighbors.

Some of the state's major industries have supported fair housing. In June, 1968, for example, the International Business Machine Corporation of Lexington announced that it would not deal with any real estate agency that did not provide equal service to Blacks. Since IBM employs many Lexington citizens and transfers many employees in and out of the city, this announcement had a major effect on real estate policies in Lexington.

## Summary of Chapter Twenty-Two

The right to choose the area of the city in which they wanted to live was a right that was denied Kentucky black families for many years. A major campaign on the part of civil rights leaders throughout the state produced the enactment of several local open housing ordinances and finally, a statewide fair housing law.

In a parallel to events for the last four years, the defeat of the Louisville open housing ordinance by the Republican Board of Aldermen led to the election

of a Democratic Mayor and Board, who immediately adopted a fair housing act.

Since these laws were enacted, some black families have found housing in areas that were previously closed to them. Some of these families have been assisted by the Housing Opportunities Centers in Louisville and Lexington.

Many forms of discrimination in the sale and rental of housing still exist.



*PROTESTING AGAINST LOUISVILLE'S FAILURE to pass an enforceable fair housing law were many young people of both races including this civil rights demonstrator pictured during a 1967 march.*

## Timetable on Kentucky Fair Housing Actions

- |       |   |       |   |
|-------|---|-------|---|
| 1955: | Suit by NAACP resulted in Federal Court ban against segregation in Louisville Municipal Housing.  | 1967: | December—As one of the first acts, new Louisville Board of Aldermen passed broad enforceable ordinance against discrimination in housing. (It provided “teeth” for voluntary act of August, 1965, which had been the target of civil rights marches.) |
| 1963: | Use of scare tactics to induce a person to move because Blacks moved into a neighborhood banned by Kentucky Real Estate Commission.               | 1968: | March—General Assembly added housing coverage to strong enforcement procedures of Kentucky Civil Rights Act.  |
| 1966: | January—General Assembly passed Kentucky Civil Rights Act which also empowered cities to enact local laws against housing discrimination.         | 1969: | February—Bowling Green Board of Commissioners became fifth local Kentucky government to adopt fair housing ordinance.   |
| 1966: | April—Efforts begun for adoption by cities and counties of “model” local ordinance including housing.   | 1969: | Lexington and Louisville Housing Opportunity Centers of Kentucky Commission on Human Rights opened to assist black families moving to new neighborhoods.  |
| 1966: | July—Bardstown-Nelson County adopted comprehensive “model” ordinance prohibiting discrimination in housing, employment and public accommodations. | 1970: | March—Jefferson County Fiscal Court extends coverage of local housing law into County.  |
| 1967: | July—Covington and Kenton County adopted acts against discrimination in housing.  | 1970: | General Assembly passed Kentucky Housing Fund Act introduced by black Representative Mae Street Kidd to provide money for low-income housing for poor and black Kentuckians. This act was vetoed by the Governor.                                     |
| 1967: | August—Fayette Fiscal Court passed prohibition against discrimination in housing in the County and Lexington.                                     |       |   |

## Chapter Twenty-Three

### The Changing Mood



*THIS UNNAMED MURAL, PAINTED BY TWO OF LOUISVILLE'S YOUNG BLACK ARTISTS, reflects the pride of black people in their heritage and determination to obtain equal opportunities and full participation in the society. The mural hangs in the black library of Plymouth Settlement House in Louisville.*

In the early sixties, "Freedom Now" was the dream of many black Kentuckians. It affected young Blacks who braved taunts and insults and even jail to march for their rights. It affected older Blacks who had worked for and dreamed of the day when their children would be free to attend any school or eat in any restaurant in Kentucky.

### Disillusionment with Slow Rate of Change

When legal segregation was ended, Blacks still experienced discrimination. In desegregated schools, black students often found that they could not

participate fully in extra-curricular activities such as cheerleading.' Because black students were often denied decision making roles in school government, much of the leadership experience they had obtained at black schools was lost to them.

Blacks often found that their opportunities for a better life were not greatly increased after the passage of Fair Employment and Fair Housing Laws. Despite all the civil rights marches, all the anti-discrimination laws and all the talk of ending unfair treatment during the 1960's Blacks still found that discrimination was an every day fact of life in Kentucky.

For example:

- \* While some few Blacks got better jobs, the change seemed to be only token. Black income remained only slightly more than half of white income, and black unemployment remained double that of whites.
- \* Many schools were becoming more segregated.
- \* In November, 1970, a roller skating rink located in Central Kentucky still had a sign which said:

#### New Skating Schedule

Tues.	All	7–10 p.m.
Wed.	Negroes only	7:30–10:30 p.m.
Fri.	All	7:30–10:30 p.m.
Sat.	White only	7:30–10:30 p.m.
Sun. Nite	All	7:00–10:00 p.m.

The sign, bearing the name of a national soft drink company, was quickly removed after the Commission on Human Rights served a complaint, but this was four years after the 1966 law made such signs unlawful.

- \* Black Businessmen played an insignificant part in the economy. Even in Louisville with about 96,000 black people only 1,632 or six tenths (.6) of one per cent of employed people worked in black businesses.
- \* In March, 1969, a movie theatre in North-Central Kentucky was still making Blacks enter by a side door and would only seat them in the balcony.
- \* On January 25, 1968, another roller rink barred a racially mixed group of students from Lincoln School.
- \* December, 1970, an Eastern Kentucky drugstore lunch counter refused counter service to local Blacks. It would serve them only on a carry-out basis.
- \* June, 1969, a Kentucky cemetery refused to sell Blacks burial plots because of their race and printed this white-only provision in their sales contracts.

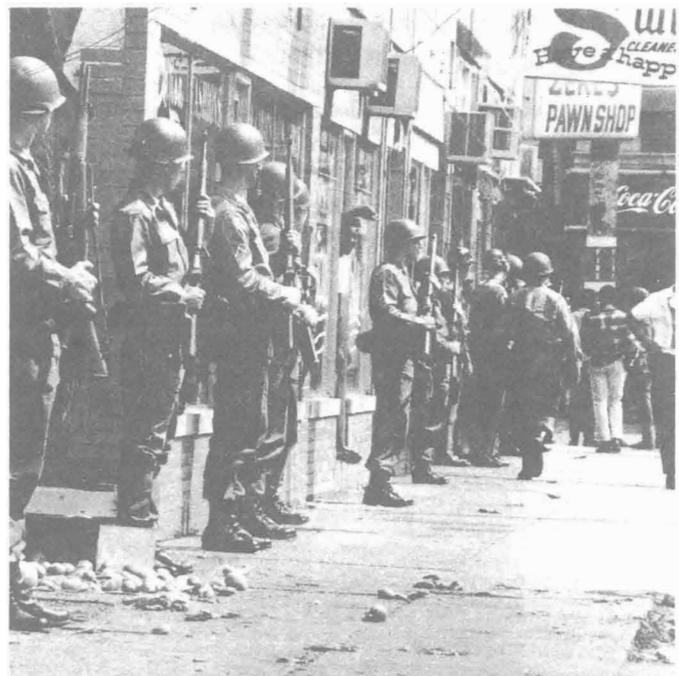
- \* Some middle class Blacks were able to move into desegregated neighborhoods in suburban areas. But for most poor Blacks, the only alternative to substandard, dilapidated housing in ghetto areas was public housing for which there were long waiting lists.

## Racial Violence

This slow rate of absence of real progress for black people after the end of legal segregation disillusioned many Blacks. Progress was often blocked by some whites who bitterly resented the emergence of Blacks as individuals or as a group from the lowest economic, educational, and cultural levels.

Tensions between the races increased and erupted into racial violence on the part of both Blacks and whites. Further disillusionment resulted. The year, 1968, was the worst year for this kind of violence as the chart on the adjacent page indicates.

Black churches and businesses were bombed. Some Blacks were beaten. Others had shots fired at them. Violence infected the black community too. Stores belonging to white owners were looted and vandalized. In May, 1968, the National Guard had to be sent to Louisville to maintain order.



A MAJOR CIVIL DISORDER which occurred in Louisville's West End in May, 1968 left two black teenagers dead, ten persons injured and resulted in the arrests of 472 persons. Pictured above are National Guardsmen standing at attention in the neighborhood where the disorder broke out.

## Incidents of Racial Violence in Kentucky, 1968

<i>Location and Description</i>	<i>Injury—Death—Arrest</i>			<i>Comments</i>
April 9-10, Lexington Civil Disorder			16	Outbreak followed assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
May 27-29, Louisville West End Civil Disorder	10	2	472	1,450 National Guardsmen called to duty. \$200,000 property loss.
June 23, Zoneton, Bullitt County Bombing—Black Church				First Corinthian Baptist Church
July 7, Newburg, Jefferson County Civil Disorder				Rock throwing crowd of Blacks dispersed by police with tear gas.
July 14, Bowling Green Bombing—Black Church				Mr. Hebrew Presbyterian Church
July 20, Richmond Shooting of black man	1			Whites fired shot from passing car.
August 13, Louisville Bombing—Black Church				Zion Baptist Church—Minor violence erupted at rally to protest bombing.
August 16, Newburg, Jefferson Co. Bombing				Fire bomb destroyed black community center.
August 17-21, Owensboro Civil Disorder	2		22	Outbreak followed fatal shooting of black man at night spot.
September 1, Berea Gun Battle	2	2	14	Violence occurred at end of National States Rights Party Rally.
September 4, Lexington—Bombing Black-owned Pharmacy	10			Black owner active in Civil Rights.
September 8, Paducah—Bombing Political Headquarters				Wallace campaign office—Minor damage.
September 28, Halltown, Hart County Bombing—Black Church			1	Mt. Gilboa Baptist Church
October 10, Columbus, Hickman Co. Assault and Battery	1		1	VISTA volunteers—two white and one Black—assaulted by group of 12 whites.



*THIS LEXINGTON DRUGSTORE was completely destroyed by a bomb in September, 1968. Ten persons, including its owner Zirl Palmer, were injured by the bombing. Palmer, a member of the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights, believed the bombing was caused by white terrorists.*



*IN SEPTEMBER, 1968, BEREA WAS THE SCENE OF A GUN BATTLE between local Blacks and members of the National State Rights party. Here State Police peel bullets from an automobile following the shoot-out which resulted in two deaths.*



*ONE OF FOUR CHURCHES BOMBED IN 1968 was the Mount Gilboa Baptist Church in Hart County. In the picture above Trustee Grover Brewer attempts to clear the debris caused by the bombing.*

After this violence in Louisville, six black leaders were arrested and charged with conspiring to destroy public property. After a two year delay because of complicated legal maneuvers, the "Black Six" finally came to trial. The prosecutor could not establish a case against them and they were declared innocent of the conspiracy charge.

The human toll for the racial violence of 1968 in Kentucky was four dead, 25 injured and 525 arrests. Property value loss in the Louisville disorder was placed at \$200,000, and damages to black churches, a pharmacy, a community center and a political headquarters totaled an additional \$250,000.

The causes for the sharp upsurge in racial violence in Kentucky can be traced to several sources. The major civil disorder in Louisville was not unpredictable in light of the 164 similar disorders which occurred nation-wide the previous summer. Certainly the problems faced by Louisville's black community are different only in degree from those in the other cities where disorders broke out. Unemployment and underemployment were serious problems, as well as inadequate housing. Like half of the disorders studied by the Commission on Civil Disorders, the Louisville

violence was touched off by a prior police action: the alleged use of excessive force in arresting a black suspect.

A shootout in Berea, and possibly other incidents of violence, can be traced directly to an increase in activities by the National State's Rights Party and similar hate groups. The Berea outbreak followed a rally by the State's Rights group during which speeches highly critical of Blacks served to incite local residents.

Although there were scattered incidents of racial violence in both 1969 and 1970, these years were quiet compared with 1968. In Kentucky, however, as in the rest of the United States, major problems in the area of race relations remained. Many other basic problems such as poverty and crime control were complicated by racial injustices.

Disillusionment with the dream of "Freedom Now" continued to grow in the black community, particularly among young people. For many Blacks, this disillusionment became complete with the assassination of Martin Luther King, who had been both leader and symbol of the Civil Rights movement.

## The Changing Mood

The changing mood of disillusioned Blacks was expressed in demands for Black Power. The term Black Power has puzzled and alarmed many people, particularly whites who do not understand what it means. Although Black Power has meant many different things to many different people, a definition of Black Power generally includes the following ideas:

1. self-determination or the ability to control one's destiny and community affairs.
2. unity of black people.
3. self-respect and cultural pride.

## Background of Black Power

None of these ideas is particularly new. Throughout the history of black people in Kentucky and in the United States as a whole, Blacks have tried to achieve goals of self-determination, unity, and self-respect and cultural pride. In the efforts of black people to find their own solutions for the problems resulting from slavery and segregation, we can see their attempts to reach these goals.

Self-determination was sought by the thousands of Kentucky Blacks who escaped from slavery so they

could live as they chose. The competent way in which Blacks used the limited authority they were allowed in administering their segregated institutions (such as hospitals and schools) also demonstrated their desire for self-determination.

Feelings of unity and pride among Blacks have also existed for a long time. The oppression of slavery and racial discrimination experienced by Blacks have tended to bring them together as a people. In the struggles against discrimination, black Americans have worked together for the whole black race. Various black nationalist movements (such as that of Marcus Garvey in the 1920's and, more recently, that of the Black Muslims) have stressed the importance of black unity. In Kentucky, black unity was an important factor in the Anti-Separate coach movement of the 1890's, the 1914 campaign to repeal the Louisville segregated housing ordinance as well as in the civil rights movement of the 1960's.

## Black Pride

Traditionally black pride has been expressed in many ways. Since general newspapers ignored the activities of black people for many years, the black community supported black oriented publications such as the *Louisville Defender*. Whenever black men or women were able to break through barriers of segregation and discrimination to achieve national recognition, Blacks took special pride in their accomplishments.

**"...we must learn to live together as brothers or we will all surely die together as fools."**

**"...Black Power is not a shout of violence or a shout of separation. Black Power simply means...look at me...I'm here. I have dignity. I have pride. I have roots. I insist, I demand that I participate in those decisions that affect my life and the lives of my children. It means that I'm somebody and that's what Black Power means."**

**"...Black America has said in a thousand ways that it believes in America. It has said it in slavery; it has said it in war; it has said it in peace. It seems to me now the time has come for America to say...black Americans, we believe in you."**

Statement by Whitney M. Young, Jr.





MRS. ERSA HINES POSTON



FRANK STANLEY, JR.



MARK WARREN

## Nationally Prominent Black Kentuckians

Probably the best known black Kentuckian of recent times was the late Dr. Whitney M. Young, Jr., who served as the Executive Director of the National Urban League from 1961 until his death in March 1971. Born and raised at Lincoln Ridge, Kentucky, Young served on seven presidential commissions and received the Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian award.

Lewis Olive of Louisville, who was the first black Kentuckian to graduate from West Point in this century, is head of the Urban League's Veteran's Affairs Program.

Several black women from Kentucky have made their mark in politics and government. The youngest delegate at the 1968 National Democratic Convention was Miss Gail McHenry of Hopkinsville. A Paducah native, Mrs. Ersa Hines Poston, has been President of the New York Civil Service Commission since 1967. Mrs. Poston is the highest ranking woman in New York State government and the only woman to serve on the Governor's Cabinet.

In the business world, Harvey Russell of Louisville is a national Vice-President of the Pepsi Cola Company.

## Four College Presidents

In the field of education, there have been many exceptional black Kentuckians, including four college Presidents. The late Dr. Rufus E. Clement was a Kentuckian who served as President of Atlanta University, and in 1953, became the first Black to be

elected to the Atlanta School Board. Dr. James Lawson, a Louisville native, is now President of Fisk University in Nashville. Also from Kentucky is Dr. Charles H. Wesley, eminent black educator and historian who was President of Central State College in Wilberforce, Ohio. Dr. Horace Mann Bond, another prominent Kentucky educator, served as President of Lincoln University in Pennsylvania and Fort Valley College, Georgia.

## Journalists

Black journalists who come from Kentucky include the editors of nationally distributed magazines which are of special interest to the black community. W. Leonard Evans, a Louisville native, is editor and publisher of *Tuesday Magazine*. Chester A. Higgins, who began his career as a reporter for the *Louisville Defender* is Senior Editor of *Jet Magazine*. Frank Stanley, Jr., of Louisville, is founder, editor and publisher of a Los Angeles magazine called *P.M. (Proud Minorities)*.

Fletcher Martin, a Lexington journalist, was the first black war correspondent assigned to the Pacific Theater in World War II. Martin is now the Information Officer for the U.S. Information Agency in Africa.

## Poets

The poems of three black Kentuckians appear in the Bunstead-Hughes Anthology of Negro Poetry; Margaret Danner, a native of Graves County, who was

the poet in residence at Wayne State University; Joseph S. Cotter, Sr., a Louisville teacher for whom Cotter School is named; and Joseph S. Cotter, Jr.

C. W. Merriweather, a Hopkinsville attorney and newspaper editor, had several books of inspirational poetry published during his lifetime.

## Artists

In the field of art, Isaac Hathaway, the Lexington sculptor who made death masks of such famous black Americans as Paul Lawrence Dunbar and Booker T. Washington, was chosen to design the Booker T. Washington half dollar.

In more recent years, several black artists who studied at the University of Louisville shortly after it desegregated, have earned national recognition.

Robert Carter, an Allen R. Hite Scholar at the University of Louisville, has received numerous awards for his work including first prize in drawing at the Pratt Commercial Art Exhibition in 1966.

G. Coleman Coxe, a Louisville teacher who was the first black artist to be awarded an Allen R. Hite Scholarship at the newly desegregated University of Louisville, earned a BA in Fine Arts from the University. Considered a "Master Painter" by his contemporaries, Coxe was one of the founding members of the Louisville Art Workshop.

Sam Gilliam, who earned an M.A. in painting from the University of Louisville, was awarded a National Endowment of Humanity and Art grant in 1966. His abstract paintings were exhibited in the first World Festival of Negro Arts, Dakar Senegal. Current exhibitions include the Museum of African Art, in Washington, D.C. and the Washington Gallery of Modern Art. Articles about Gilliam's work have appeared in *Vogue*, *The Art Gallery*, *Art Forum*, and *Arts in America*.

Another Louisvillian who studied at the University of Louisville as an Allen R. Hite Scholar was the late Bob Thompson. Although Thompson died in Rome at the age of 29, in his short career he gained international recognition as an artist. In 1965, when Thompson's paintings were shown at the Martha Jackson Gallery in New York, he established a new attendance record for the gallery.



LEON BIBB



TODD DUNCAN

Kenneth Young, another Allen R. Hite Scholar at the University of Louisville, is presently associate director of exhibition design for the Smithsonian Institute. Young's expressionist style paintings have been exhibited at the Washington Gallery of Modern Art, and the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.

## Entertainers

In the entertainment world, folk singer Leon Bibb was raised in Kentucky. Todd Duncan of Danville, Kentucky, was the first black opera singer to sing a white man's role in a white opera company. Lionel Hampton, big band leader, and Jonah Jones, jazz trumpeter, both spent their childhood years in Louisville.

## Television Director

Mark Warren, a Frankfort native who graduated from Lincoln Institute, began directing "Rowan and Martin's Laugh-in" in 1969. In 1971, he received an Emmy award for directing a segment of "Laugh-In" that was broadcast the previous year. In addition to his work on "Laugh-In," Warren has also directed several television specials.

## Black Athletes

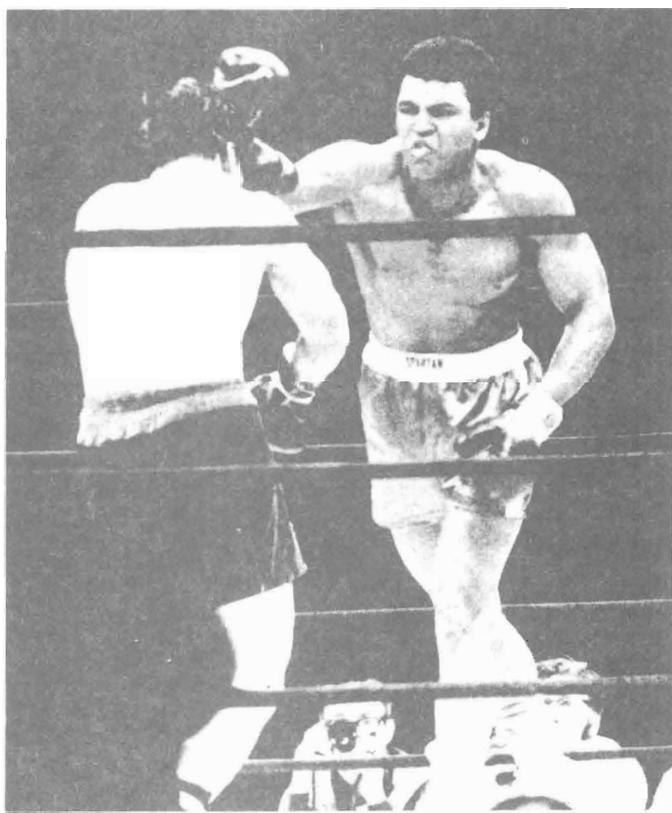
In the sports world, professional boxers, Muhammed Ali and James Ellis, came from Kentucky. Leonard Lyles played defensive back on the Baltimore Colts football team. Wesley Unseld, star center on the University of Louisville basketball team was hired to play for the professional basketball team, Baltimore Bullets. Lou Johnson of Lexington

played baseball with the Los Angeles Dodgers and the Chicago Cubs. Jim Green, track star at the University of Kentucky, will be a candidate for the 1972 Olympics.

The NCAA coach of the year for 1966-67 was Clarence E. (Bighouse) Gaines, a Paducah native who became head coach at Winston-Salem College. In 1968, coach Gaines was installed in the NAIA Hall of Fame for his coaching contributions.

## Unity and Self Determination

In the late sixties, many Kentucky Blacks united to protest their exclusion from full participation in the society. Organizations like the Black Student Union on college campuses and the Black Unity League of Kentucky sprang up to express the demands of black young people to have a positive voice in decisions affecting their lives. In Louisville, black business associations were started to aid black business development through technical assistance. The Black Workers Coalition and the Committee of



*MUHAMMED ALI, a Louisville native, won the title of Heavyweight Champion of the World in 1964.*

United Blacks were formed to promote employment opportunities for Louisville Blacks. Kentucky's black elected officials, whose number rose to 41 in 1970, held meetings to discuss their role in serving the needs of the black community.

## Cultural Pride

Along with renewed growth of black unity and efforts for self-determination among Blacks, there was also a rebirth of black consciousness and cultural pride. Many young blacks became involved in a search for identity which caused them to look back to their African heritage. Afro haircuts and bright colored dashikis became their way of saying, "I'm black and I'm proud" and "Black is Beautiful."

In many high schools and even elementary schools around the state, black students started black history clubs for the purpose of studying their heritage. Art shows and craft festivals displayed the works of proud young black artists. Together with other black artists, Louisvillian Fred Bond (grandson of James Bond) started the Louisville Art workshop to give black artists an opportunity to exhibit their talents and serve the community as artists.

Another Louisville group, the West Side Players gave black youth the opportunity to express their pride through plays and dramatic productions.

## University of Louisville

Sometimes the energy of this growing black consciousness jolted Kentucky citizens who had become accustomed to ignoring Kentucky's black population. The University of Louisville, for example, located within easy commuting distance for over 50,000 black citizens became the focus of attention in the fall of 1968.

The University had black students and black faculty members. One black man, Dr. C.H. Parrish, Jr., was chairman of the Department of Sociology. In 1966, a black woman, Eleanor Young Alsbrook, was employed as the first black administrator at the University. In 1969, Dr. Alsbrook was made Assistant Dean of the University College. In the first months of 1968, the University also had appointed a black member, Woodford R. Porter, to its Board of Trustees.

In April, 1968, a group of black University of Louisville students staged a protest. While noting the presence of black faculty and participation of black athletes on the University teams, the students pointed to the University's responsibility in other areas. They said the University should recognize more problems and opportunities that lay in the black community at its doorstep.

Specifically, the students called for the hiring of a black affairs consultant, an increase in black students and teachers, more black history and culture courses, 200 Martin Luther King Scholarships for black students, and the appointment of blacks to the University's Board of Trustees.

To dramatize their demands, on May 1, 1969,

twenty-one students barricaded themselves in the office of the Dean of Arts and Sciences. They were finally removed by the police. Six of the leaders were expelled from the University.

The University made changes in its program. An Office of Black Affairs was established, directed by Hanford D. Stafford. The office was given the responsibility to recruit black students and faculty members, to establish a tutoring program for black students and prospective students, and to develop a degree awarding program in Black Studies or Afro-American History. More scholarship aid was made available for black students. An Afro-American collection was developed at the University Library.

## Summary of Chapter Twenty-Three

As civil rights battles were won, there was a changing mood among many Kentucky Blacks. Disillusioned with the slow progress in Civil Rights after the end of legal segregation, some black Kentuckians began to seek "Black Power." Black Power meant self-determination, unity, self-respect and cultural pride, as well as voting power.

Black people of all ages organized to demand that society recognize the special problems they faced as Blacks. Black workers and businessmen united to work toward economic development in the black community. At colleges, Kentucky's black students asked for courses in Black Studies and Afro-American

history, for scholarship programs for minority students, and for tutoring assistance for students who had gaps in their educational background.

Some white citizens resented the black man's re-emphasis of the goals of Black Power. In 1968, violence broke out. Black churches were bombed; white stores were looted.

The following two years were marked by little outward violence, but also by little progress in ending the problems of poverty, crime control, and racial injustice that caused the violence.

# The Kentucky Black History Committee Kentucky Commission on Human Rights

Dr. Eleanor Y. Alsbrook, Louisville

Assistant Professor in the School of Education and Assistant Dean of University College at the University of Louisville. The former Eleanor Young, daughter of Whitney Young, Sr.

Education: Kentucky State College; B.L.S., Atlanta University; M. Ed., and A.C.Ed., University of Louisville; and D.Ed., University of Illinois.

Formerly worked as guidance counselor and principal at Lincoln Institute; Director of University of Louisville's Upward Bound Program.

Selected for 1970-71 edition of "Who's Who of American Women."

Offices: Board of Directors of Kentucky Youth Conference; member of the Merit Scholarship Selection Committee; Past Chairman of Kentucky's "United Negro College Fund" Drive.



Dr. Rufus B. Atwood, Cincinnati

President-Emeritus, Kentucky State College, Frankfort, Kentucky; served as President, 1929-1962.

Education: A. B., Fisk University; B. S., Iowa State University; M. A., University of Chicago; L.L.D., Lane College, Jackson, Tennessee; D.Ed., Monrovia College, Liberia.

Awarded Bronze Star for heroism in World War I; Recipient of Algernon Sidney Sullivan Award from University of Kentucky.

Offices: Past Secretary of Conference of Presidents, Negro Land Grant Colleges; Past President of Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools for Negroes; Past Chairman of Kentucky Council on Human Relations.



Dr. Henry E. Cheaney, Frankfort

Chairman of the Afro-American Studies Program and History Professor at Kentucky State College. Faculty member at Kentucky State for more than a quarter of a century.

Education: A. B., Kentucky State College; A. M., University of Michigan; Ph. D., University of Chicago.

Author of the article on "Kentucky" in the International Encyclopedia and a series of newspaper biographies on outstanding Kentucky-born Negroes.

Editorial Board member of the University Press of Kentucky.



Mr. Charles Franklin Hinds, Murray

Director of Libraries, Murray State University, Murray, Kentucky.

Education: Attended American University, Washington, D. C. and the University of Louisville; M. A. and M.S. in L.S., University of Kentucky; Candidate for Ph. D.

Past Director, Kentucky Historical Society.

Former State Archivist of Kentucky. Former field representative of University of Kentucky Libraries.



Mr. Lyman T. Johnson, Louisville

Assistant Principal, Manly Junior High School.

Education: A. B. , Virginia Union University; M. A. , University of Michigan; further study at the University of Wisconsin, University of Kentucky and Union College, Barbourville, Kentucky.

Offices: Former President and Present Treasurer of the Louisville Branch of the NAACP; Past President of Louisville Association of Colored Teachers (1939-41) (before organization absorbed by KEA); former Chairman Deacon Board, Plymouth Congregational Church (UCC).



Mr. Howitt C. Mathis, Paducah

Superintendent, West Kentucky State Vocational-Technical School (Paducah).

Education: Tennessee A. & I University; M. C., Tennessee A. & I University; further study at University of Kentucky.

Member of the Kentucky Advisory Committee of U. S. Commission on Civil Rights and the Small Business Administration.

Offices: Director, Purchase Area Development District, Inc. ; Past President of the Kentucky Vocational Association; Past Director of the Kentucky Teachers Association.



Mr. James O'Rourke, Lexington

Head Librarian, Kentucky State College.

Education: Talladega College; B. L. S. , Atlanta University; M. L. S. , University of Kentucky

Formerly History Instructor, Stillman College, Tuscaloosa, Alabama; Head Librarian, Stillman College, Tuscaloosa, Alabama. Served as Kentucky Chairman, National Library Week.

Offices: Treasurer, Lexington Chapter of St. Vincent DePaul Society; Presiding Chairman and Board Member, Lexington Chapter NCCJ; Chairman, Lexington Steering Committee.



Dr. Charles H. Parrish, Louisville

Served as Chairman of Sociology Department, University of Louisville, 1959-64; Emeritus, 1969 to present. Visiting Professor, Acting Chairman, Division of Social Science, Lincoln University, 1970-71

Education: A. B. , Howard University; M. A. , Columbia University; Ph. D. , University of Chicago.

Former Faculty Member of Simmons University, 1921-30; Louisville Municipal College, 1931-51; Professor of Sociology, University of Louisville, 1951-69.

Served on Committee to evaluate Louisville public schools.

Member of Community Relations Service - U. S. Department of Commerce; Program Associate and Consultant for the Southern Regional Council.

Offices: Past Chairman, Community Action Commission.



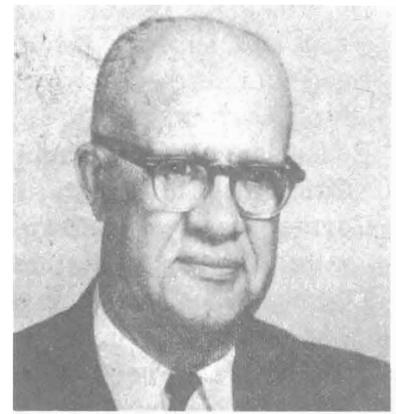
Dr. William H. Perry, Jr., Louisville

Grand Secretary, Prince Hall Grand Lodge, F. & A.M. of Kentucky; Deputy for Kentucky, The United Supreme Council, 33<sup>o</sup>, Southern Jurisdiction.

Education: A. B., Fisk University; M. Ed., University of Cincinnati; further study at University of Chicago and University of Indiana; Honorary L. L. D., Simmons University.

Formerly Principal of Western Elementary (now William H. Perry, Sr. Elementary) School; Retired Principal, Russell Junior High School, Louisville.

Offices: Vice-President, Lincoln Foundation; Co-Chairman, Commission on Study of Negro Education in Kentucky; Past Chairman, Kentucky Council on Human Relations.



Mr. Alvin M. Seals, Lexington

Assistant Sociology Professor, Kentucky State College.

Education: B. A., Philander Smith College; M. A., University of Kentucky; further study at American University, University of Kentucky, and University of Colorado.

Former teacher at Wiley College, Marshall, Texas; and Southern University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana; formerly Director of Neighborhood Centers in Lexington's CALF Program.

Offices: President of Lexington Montessori Society; Supervisory Committee of Lexington public library.



Mr. Frank B. Simpson, Louisville

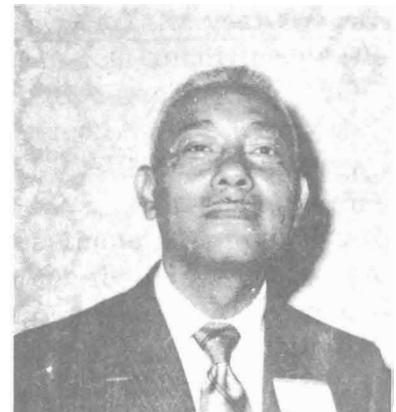
Assistant Superintendent, General Administration, Jefferson County Schools.

Education: B. S., Kentucky State College; M. S., University of Kentucky; further study at the University of Louisville.

Recipient of Distinguished Alumni Award, Kentucky State College, 1970.

Offices: Vice-President, Kentucky State College, Alumni Association; Vice-President, Jefferson County Administrative Club; Former President of Second District Principals' Association, 1966.

Served as member of Governor's Commission on Higher Education.



Mr. Maurice Strider, Morehead

Assistant Professor of Art Education, Morehead State University.

Education: A. B., Fisk University; M. A., University of Kentucky; University of Cincinnati; Southern University, Baton Rouge.

Former press correspondent and photographer, Louisville Defender, Pittsburgh Courier.

Recipient of Chicago Defender Award for news writing designed to improve race relations.

Offices: Past President, Lexington Teachers Association; Lexington Education Association.

Member of Advisory Council, Kentucky Educational Television.



Dr. Rhea A. Taylor, Lexington

Associate History Professor, University of Kentucky; a faculty member of the History Department at the University of Kentucky for 27 years.

Education: Emory and Henry College, Emory, Virginia; M. A., Ohio State University; Ph. D., University of Chicago.

Former head of History Department at Bethel College, Russellville, Kentucky; Reinhardt College, Waleska, Georgia; West Georgia College, Carrollton, Georgia; Transylvania University, Lexington, Kentucky.

Offices: Past President of the Blue Grass Executive Club and Lexington's Rotary Club.



Dr. George D. Wilson, Louisville

Professor Emeritus, Kentucky State College.

Education: A. B., Indiana University; M. A., Teachers College, Columbia University; Ph. D., Ohio State University.

Dean, West Kentucky Industrial College, Paducah, 1931-32; Head of Department of Education, Louisville Municipal College (University of Louisville), 1934-51; Head of Department of Education, Kentucky State College, Frankfort, 1951-65.

Board Member, Plymouth Settlement House, Louisville and Church and Business Foundation, Louisville; Member, Commission on Social Action on the Indiana-Kentucky Conference United Church of Christ; NCCJ; Urban League.



Dr. Whitney M. Young, Sr., Louisville

President Emeritus, Lincoln Institute; President, 1936-1966; faculty member, 1918-1935.

Education: B. A., Louisville Municipal College; M. A., Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee; D. Ed., Monrovia College, Liberia.

Served on four Commissions appointed by Governors of Kentucky. Assistant Supervisor for Negro Education in Kentucky (1935-1943). Appointed by President Johnson to serve on Citizens Committee for the Implementation of the Civil Rights Law (August, 1964).

Offices: Treasurer of the Lincoln Foundation; Secretary of Chief Justice Housing Commission; Former President of Kentucky Negro Education Association.

Member of the State Vocational Advisory Committee.



Tava Taylor, (left)

Kentucky State College

Major: History and Political Science  
Graduate of Paul Lawrence Dunbar High School, Lexington

Home: 354 Ohio Street, Lexington



Charlotte Dunne, (right)

Eastern Kentucky University

Major: Medical Technology  
Graduate of Burgin High School, Burgin

Home: 224 East Mill Street, Burgin 144



# Acknowledgements

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## Cover Illustrations

Black Six Demonstrations (front cover): *Southern Patriot*  
Black Steel Workers (back cover): R. G. Potter Collection, University of Louisville  
Photographic Archives  
Mammoth Cave Explorer (front cover): Filson Club  
Whitney M. Young, Jr. (front cover): *Louisville Courier Journal & Times*

*All other illustrations used on the cover are also included in the text. Sources for text illustrations are listed on the following page.*

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Wilson, G. D.: page 12  
Warren, Mark: page 137 (right)  
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Many comprehensive bibliographies of United States Black History are available. For this reason, only those general works on Black History that contained specific references about Kentucky are listed here.

Since no comprehensive bibliography on Kentucky Black History specifically is available, this bibliographical list has emphasized materials concerning Kentucky. Some of these works are difficult to find; therefore, the following abbreviations listed after such works indicate where they may be located:

UK—University of Kentucky Library  
KSCL—Kentucky State College Library at Frankfort  
U. of L.—University of Louisville Library  
LFPL—Louisville Free Public Library

Other sources that provided material for this text are:

1. Newspapers: especially the *Louisville Defender*, the *Courier Journal* and *Louisville Times*, and the *Southern School News* (which was published between 1955 and 1965 to provide information on the progress of school desegregation.)

2. Interviews with those who participated in many of the events described. In this area, the Black History Committee members were vitally important, both for their own personal knowledge and for their suggestions of other persons to be contacted.

3. Publications of public and private agencies: the yearly reports and other publications of the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights, reports from local human rights commissions, reports and statistics from various school boards, and materials issued by the Kentucky NAACP and the Lexington and Louisville Urban Leagues have proved especially helpful.

4. Manuscript collections at Berea, the Filson Club in Louisville, Kentucky State College in Frankfort, and the University of Kentucky in Lexington also provided valuable information.

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