

**DISCRIMINATION IN HOUSING**

**A Comparison Study**

**Levittown, N.Y. and Levittown, Pa.**

**June 1957**

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**American Friends Service Committee  
20 South 12th St.  
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## Introduction

As the North has steadily rolled back barriers of race prejudice in education, recreation and employment, it has become more evident that segregation in housing is perhaps the chief challenge to our practice of democracy for all Americans.

This form of discrimination -- this American apartheid -- has been particularly effective in the large-scale residential developments which have mushroomed in suburbia as booming city populations reached countryward following World War II. The two Levittowns, with about 33,500 homes and no more than a dozen sold to Negroes, have received world-wide notice. But, what are the facts in 1957 about actual numbers of Negro families living in these sprawling "cities"? What combination of factors has kept non-whites almost entirely out of the Levittowns? Was there anything anyone could have done to insure a more democratic pattern of residential growth in these communities? What general conclusions may be drawn from a comparison of discriminatory events in the two Levittowns? How does desegregation in the Levittowns relate to similar conditions in other large-scale private developments of the United States?

The American Friends Service Committee -- through its Community Relations Committee -- has been dealing daily with these questions for years. No one at the AFSC had answers. This study is an attempt to supply some of the answers. Section One deals with Levittown, N.Y. Section Two reports on current conditions in Levittown, Pa. Section Three draws some conclusions and suggestions. The material in the study has been compiled from a variety of personal interviews and written documents. A list of references is supplied at the end, correlated with identifying numbers in the text.

The author wishes to acknowledge with gratitude the freely expressed views of all who are quoted herein, together with the generous cooperation of other organizations working toward a more perfect democracy for this nation. Particular thanks should be directed to the National Committee Against Discrimination in Housing, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Urban League of America and the American Jewish Congress.

It is our hope in preparing this study that findings on discrimination in the Levittowns may throw a little fresh light on how we can learn to treat all men more equally in the eyes of God.

Paul Blanchard Jr.

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Highlights of Study Findings

- That the two Levittowns, with 33,500 homes sold and only a maximum of one dozen owned or occupied by Negroes, stand as America's most impressive monument to discrimination in housing.
- That white buyers of Levittown homes seem relatively indifferent to making their communities integrated, or, in the words of William Levitt: "Let's face it. Whites simply aren't ready for Negro neighbors."
- That Levitt & Sons -- selling on the basis of model homes and with all sales concentrated through a central office of the firm -- appear to have found in Bucks County, Pa. the most effective way of keeping out non-whites.
- That William Levitt -- perhaps typical of most "big operators" in the home construction business -- feels no social pangs about the moral issue of integrated housing, considers this form of "do-gooding" completely outside his realm of hard-headed business.
- That liberal whites are critically slow to move Negro families into the Levittowns of America, many of them feeling that "block busting" is an unethical practice.
- That national race relations organizations could well feel a greater responsibility to work directly with liberal local groups in fostering integrated housing.

(Highlights - continued)

- That, lacking the effective participation by liberal whites and national race relations organizations on moving in Negro families early in the development of Levittowns, the breaking of the color bar may well, by default, be left in the hands of Communists or Communist-front members.
- That middle and upper-income Negroes have much more to learn both about the value of their "pioneering" in such places as Levittowns and, later, about taking responsible positions in such communities.
- That all the educational work in the world toward integration in housing will not overcome the fears of whites a fraction as much as delivering integration next door in the form of a Negro family with comparable social and economic status.
- That whites, in general, are not properly aware of the moral significance of integrated housing to the future success of democracy.
- That where housing is segregated, the pattern tends to spread to education, employment, recreation -- to every other aspect of living.
- That, accordingly, housing integration is the next front in the unceasing battle to free men from their eyes and deliver to this nation a population actually practicing full democratic principles.

SECTION ONE  
Levittown, N.Y.

Physical Appearance

Located 33 miles from Times Square, Levittown, Long Island is today a crowded, horizontal, busy community of 17,500 homes. Architectural style is mostly Cape Cod or rancher. The community is bounded on all sides by more established towns -- Hicksville on the North; Farmingdale on the East; Bellmore on the South, and Hempstead-Garden City-Hisnola-Westbury on the West. Entirely residential itself, Levittown is the focal point of a thriving business strip ranging in appearance from the still-modern shopping center to the quick-deal honky tonk along Jericho Turnpike.

Pavements seem to be wearing suitably within the "city". The vertical street marker signs are fading beyond legibility in some sections. Trees stand no higher than 30 feet, but around many of the homes the abundant shrubbery had attained eight-foot height. Most homes have no garages; some have carports. TV aerials sprout from approximately one home in every two. A high percentage of the population was obviously enjoying the swimming facilities on the blistering-hot week-end we did our interviewing.

We were told by Levittown Homes Sales, Inc. that about ten percent of the homes are sold annually. <sup>1</sup> A number of different sales agents have resold the homes since Levitt & Sons, Inc. turned over this share of responsibility to a subsidiary agent about January 1954. The main pitch of the brokers is the convenience of Levittown to New York City and to shopping, the availability of new schools now numbering about fifteen and the durability of the homes themselves. Our own inspection and conversations with a dozen residents substantiated the

claim of realtors as to durability. A further indication of this is the claim that costs on the same houses have risen from the range of \$7,990-\$8,100 in 1947 to \$10,500-\$17,000 in 1957. <sup>2</sup>

### People

The approximately 60,000 residents have visibly done their share to increase the U.S. population. Adults appear to average mid-30s in age, many of the males having been World War II veterans starting families in 1947-48 when the community began to be the nation's biggest housing development. About 70% of the residents are estimated to work in Manhattan or Brooklyn. <sup>3</sup> The initial religious census showed: 50% Roman Catholic, 30% Protestant, 15% Jewish, 5% various, but the latest count shows 60% Catholic. <sup>4</sup> Residents belong to about 150 community organizations, one of the most influential being the 500-member Levittown Property Owners Association. <sup>5</sup> In many sections you see not one but six name signs in a row of identical design, not an individual kind of window shutter but ten houses in a row with windows shuttered identically. These symbols lend weight to the claim that Levittowners are highly conventional. <sup>6</sup> This conformity has a bearing on the problem at hand, discrimination in housing.

### The Color Situation

We found three Negro families in Levittown, N.Y.: Leroy Cannon, 100 Old Farm Road; William Cotter, 22 Dufferin Lane; Ernest Cooke, 15 Kingfisher Lane. From the comments of Cotter, Cannon and others, it seems reasonable to guess that nine more Negro residents have by Summer 1957 found their way to Levittown. Of the town's 17,500 homes, a maximum of twelve are occupied by Negroes.

Leaving the other nine for later discovery and interviewing, we can learn much of Levittown's attitude toward discrimination in housing by analyzing the cases of Cannon, Cotter and Cooke, plus related happenings along the road.

Levitt & Sons, Inc. made their discriminatory sales policy toward Negroes plain from the beginning. Negro veterans of World War II applied as early as March 1949, and were refused frankly because of their color. That same month the Committee to End Discrimination in Levittown (CED) was formed, with support from 25 Long Island Organizations, and William G. Cotter of Fort Washington was a leader. <sup>1</sup> Shortly thereafter the CED handed around a flyer saying that those who had carried placards protesting segregation in a demonstration outside the Manhasset office of Levitt & Sons had been told their leases would not be renewed. <sup>6</sup>

The rest of 1949 and early 1950 was devoted to building up the CED strength and to mounting an attack on a clause. This clause was contained in all leases of the 5,400 dwellings scheduled for rental: "The tenant agrees not to permit . . . premises to be occupied by others than . . . Caucasian race. . . . But employment and maintenance of other than Caucasian servants shall be permitted."

A vocal core of tenants assaulted the clause. Joining in were the NAACP, American Veterans Committee, B'nai B'rith, American Jewish Congress, the CED -- and the American Labor Party. <sup>2</sup> In the face of such opposition, the clause was omitted from all leases. Negroes again applied for rentals. Again they were turned away, with the same candid statements that their color ruled them out.

There were in Summer 1950 still no Negro residents. But the liberal white families of the CED wanted their children to experience recreational contact, at least, with Negro children. A lawn party was arranged for 16 children, including Negroes, on the adjoining front lawns of the Ross and Novick families. Two weeks later Levitt & Sons notified Ross and Novick that when their leases expired they would not be renewed. Julius Novick told us this action was clearly based on their being hosts to Negro children. <sup>10</sup> So, evidently, believed the NAACP. Constance Motley, legal counsel for the NAACP, sought a court injunction to prevent Levitt



from evicting the Ross and Novick families. The affair drew the support of other sympathetic national and local groups. A fourteen-month legal battle to stay the evictions was finally lost in October 1951. The New York Supreme Court ruled every consideration irrelevant to the issue except whether a landlord shall have the right to select his tenants. Ross had to move. Novick already had, to another part of Levittown.

While the Ross-Novick case ground through the courts, other developments were altering the housing pattern. Leroy Cannon, a shy Negro employed as a body and fender repairman, rented a house on Old Farm Road through a friend. He and his wife were received without incident in December 1950. "The fact we were both away at work all day and had no children to advertise our being here was a help," he told us. <sup>11</sup> He is buying his home now and has two happy children. He is proud of his "wonderful" neighbors, but wonders how his little boy will be received when starting public school in Fall 1957. This first Negro resident insists that his family moved to Levittown because of price. "Most anyone could afford it. That's why we came, and not to prove anything at all."

There was, however, no one behind Cannon -- no horde, no group, no individual -- to move in now that the color bar was silently broken. Madison Jones of the NAACP reported speaking in Levittown shortly thereafter and encouraging a policy of integration. He also urged Negro churches, civic groups and individuals to work so that more Negroes could find the comfort the Cannons were enjoying. <sup>12</sup> The results were nil. "I guess Negroes just aren't going to queue up for housing, that's all," he said. Paget Alves of the New York Urban League pointed out, on the other hand, that surveys show only eight percent of the Negroes in Greater New York can now afford to buy homes, of the Levittown or other variety. <sup>13</sup> "It's not so much that Negroes are unwilling to pioneer," he said. "They mostly can't."

One who did, in a strong voice and with reverberations still being heard in Levittown, was William Cotter. Head of the GED while a Port Washington resident, he moved his family (four children) into Levittown in Summer 1952. He first occu-

pied on a sub-lease the home of Harold Johnson, who had to "take a trip to California" but never returned. Even Cotter's arrival was controversial. Having been told on the telephone that he could rent in Levittown, he gave up his Fort Washington apartment only to be refused at the Levittown sales office. The CED let the world know of his plight. Harold Johnson let Cotter settle down to an uneasy squatter's role on a sub-lease.

In sharp contrast, as the Cotter situation became Levittown's only real racial squabble to date, the cousin of Leroy Cannon, Ernest Cooke, became the third Negro family of the community in August 1952. Roy Wilkins, NAACP administrator and now executive head, sent Cooke a congratulatory letter dated Sept. 3, 1952. No one seemed to care. The Cookes, as quiet as the Cannons, were received with similar indifference by white neighbors.

William Cotter, however, was sitting on an uneasy chair. All through late 1952 and the first half of 1953 he tried every way he knew to arrange a legal rental or purchase through official channels. He failed. He was advised that when the Johnson lease ran out, he would have to leave. Cotter marshalled CED's 100 members and others. Prominent among his backers was the American Labor Party, labeled a Communist-front group by the U.S. Attorney General. The CED distributed leaflets portraying the pending eviction in dire, emotional terms. Cotter and family became members of the Levittown Community Church.<sup>14</sup> Cotter, on the other hand, ran for a seat in the New York legislature on the American Labor Party ticket at the time of this trouble. "A lot of people felt that Cotter and the CED was just a bunch of controversy to gain personal attention," we were told by Mrs. Dorothy Erenagal of the LEVITTOWN PRESS.<sup>15</sup>

Others responded in different ways. A letter to the editor of the NATION magazine <sup>16</sup> was written by a paralytic white neighbor, Laurence Alexander. Alexander

wrote to explain how he had told the Levittown management what good neighbors the Cotters were, and had protested their eviction. The management had simply said that if the Alexanders did not like the impending action, they too could get out. "I cannot believe it is the American way of doing things," wrote Alexander, "to deny a man a home because of the color of his skin."

But Cotto, like Ross and Novick before him, was evicted. On a rainy December 1, 1952 his possessions were neatly stacked on the curb under borrowed tarpaulins by the local sheriff as 20 pickets sang hymns and carried placards on the Cotto lawn. The local minister and policemen sat in nearby cars, praying against or looking for trouble which did not develop. "Why does Cotto allow the American Labor Party [visibly present at the picketing] to jump on the bandwagon and scare off other support?" asked one bystander quoted by the leading Long Island newspaper THURSDAY.<sup>17</sup> Another watcher, a Negro from Great Neck, was quoted by the same paper: "When you try to fight this discrimination, no one else will help you. I'm a registered Democrat, but I got no help from my party when I tried to move here."<sup>18</sup>

Cotto and family were evicted in the rain amid mixed community feelings, which remain mixed toward them. Not two weeks later, though, after neighbors and friends boarded the family, a white purchaser, Daniel Eisen, decided that Cotto deserved a home and sold his to Cotto -- the latter's present home.

And so the three known Negro families became a part of Levittown's 17,500. It remains to examine more closely the role of individuals and organizations in this color change to see why, after their arrival, all has been so quiet on this Northeastern front in the housing segregation picture. Who were the key people in this situation? What did the interested organizations do to help or hinder Cotto -- and so the process of integration?

### Main Characters

(A) WILLIAM LEVITT -- the dynamic, personable, mentally agile spokesman for Levitt & Sons, Inc. not only stood for segregation from the start of the Levittown, N.Y. project. He or his employees took repeated punitive action against those favoring integration. Madison Jones of the NAACP reported a personal interview with Levitt to sound out the latter's views about the time of the first Negro move-in on Long Island. <sup>19</sup> Levitt told Jones that whites and Negroes are not ready to live together. Levitt offered to build a separate section of his community for colored only -- "apparently so they could prove or disprove their ability to maintain property standards." Jones said he felt that Levitt is typical of those builders who claim they are not prejudiced, but their business is to sell houses along lines the public is ready to accept. "This is hogwash," said Jones. "You wouldn't expect such people to be sociologists. As it is, they are the prime spreaders of prejudice." Our Levittown interviews turned up several allegations that William Levitt thought his discriminatory practices were, in effect, fighting for democracy, and that those opposing him were slightly subversive and entirely nasty. <sup>20</sup> (For a more complete analysis of Levitt's reasoning, see Section Two of this study).

(B) WILLIAM COTTER -- this tall, soft-spoken man with a depth of inner conviction made a logical hero for the liberals opposing Levitt's policies. He now has five children, the oldest two being active in Levittown Community Church affairs. Cotter has an analytical mind and the ability to view himself objectively as part of a larger racial problem. For example, he feels that most whites still concerned about his presence would state their case this way: "I'm opposed to Negro neighbors but not to you."

The important point he wishes to get across to Negroes now is that "with a little effort, any Negro should be able to enjoy the comforts of suburban living."

To the wider white community, he wishes to convey the general statement of his own white neighbors that they "seem to feel better down inside, living in an integrated fashion." Cotter feels that this message would apply to any presently all-white neighborhood in the United States.

Cotter, in the eyes of many local whites, appeared to have made two mistakes establishing himself and family in Levittown. One person we interviewed (who did not want to be quoted directly) described the first "mistake" this way: "He went at everything in slam-bang style, claiming he was pioneering and leading the CED to action for his own benefit. No one kicked up a fuss when the other two colored families came in. The fuss was his own making."

This leads immediately to what many residents call the second mistake: he identified himself prominently with the American Labor Party at the height of his trouble locating a permanent family home in Levittown. He thus opened himself to political suspicion in the salad days of McCarthyism and in the center of a highly conventional community. The consensus today is that it was tragically easy for whites to transfer this suspicion to the whole movement toward integrated housing.

Whatever the right answer to the second mistake -- liberals dismiss the first by noting that, after all, Cotter was head of the action-group CED and ~~and~~ had been personally insulted repeatedly when trying to buy a home through channels -- that which Cotter learned as a Negro on the firing line has importance to this study. We quote directly from a portion of our interview with him on June 14, 1957.

Q: What qualities does a Negro need to succeed in breaking an all-white residential pattern?

A: He must have a strong enough feeling against discrimination to want to do something about it. He should not be over-educated; that is, he should not be the worrying type. He should have a real calmness and ability to take abuse. He must have the vision to see that what he is doing has application, has importance, all over the world. He should find his means of livelihood outside the community into which he is moving; it is better to keep this weapon

out of the hands of those who are afraid. His type of work should have the same general prestige level as that of white neighbors. By the same token, his economic level should be the same, so that in no way does he feel inferior -- you know what I mean, subservient.

Q: How do you feel representing so small a number of Negroes in a community still so nearly all-white?

A: Disappointed. We had hoped that the wide publicity given to our success in moving in would encourage more Negroes. They could find their own homes here in so many different ways. It just didn't happen that way. Maybe the failure is due in part to the lack of any program by Negro organizations.

Q: Are you suggesting that national organizations could be doing more to match up available housing and home-hunting Negroes?

A: It is time they endorsed heartily the moving in of Negroes into the suburbs as a benefit to democracy. They don't actually have to get the families in, but they should endorse move-ins on some basis like "We will defend every home purchased by Negroes." It is time to act more than talk.

Q: What about this talk that Communists and Comdie-front people were mixed up in the Levittown move-ins?

A: The American Labor Party was in the action from the beginning. They have a representative in this area. The local papers also played up early CED work as "Comdie-inspired." So far as I know, there were no real Communists in the CED.

There were other important people in the struggle for Levittown integration. REV. DONNER ANWOOD, pastor of the Levittown Community Church, accepted the Cotters into membership, sat in his car ready to aid them as necessary when they were evicted from their rental home in 1953 and heard first-hand many whites say they did not mind having Negro neighbors, but they did not like Cotter's and the CED methods. JULIUS NOVICK, loser in the celebrated Ross-Novick eviction case, was given an opportunity during that legal battle to meet privately with William Levitt "so you both can apologize to each other for the ruckus." Novick indignantly declined, saying "What am I going to apologize for, wanting to live democratically?" <sup>21</sup> MRS. BETSY YALLEN (interviewed earlier by Jane Reinheimer of the American Friends Service Committee, but not by us) was publicity chairman for the CED during the Cotter incident, and her publicity efforts led to someone furtively streaking her driveway with tacks in protest. She was also

described as "the subject of a fat roster in the files of the F.B.I., a Communist sympathizer but not a card carrier." <sup>22</sup>

### The Role of Organizations

It remains to examine here the role of organizations working for or against Levittown integration, and then to state some personal conclusions.

(A) The Committee to End Discrimination in Levittown (CED) was the principal, and only articulate, group taking part in the Cotter incident -- the one time Levittowners were fully mobilized and called on to stand up and be counted. The CED was a product of the liberal thinking of 25 Long Island groups, guided by William Cotter who had been a leader previously of the local NAACP branch. Upon being identified in the public mind with the American Labor Party, the CED fell rapidly out of favor. It did serve vigorously the cause of integration in housing from 1949-54. Its membership numbered a maximum 100, and there were perhaps another 100 meeting attenders. <sup>23</sup> The CED was largely Jewish, and in addition to carrying a red tag, it was rumored by non-members to be a vehicle for victims of anti-Semitism to get back at white gentiles. <sup>24</sup> Following the Cotter buying of a permanent home, the CED faded from the scene.

(B) The NAACP, American Civil Liberties Union, National Committee Against Discrimination in Housing, American Veterans Committee, American Jewish Congress and B'nai B'rith all were active in the Ross-Novick case. An ACLU letter in the files of the American Jewish Congress <sup>25</sup> in Manhattan set up the prolonged legal fight waged by the combined organizations to save Ross-Novick. Said the letter, in part: "We felt that the Communist sympathy issue Levitt had been widely quoted as evicting Ross and Novick for such sympathy was irrelevant and . . . after as much investigation as possible, we felt they were being dispossessed solely for inviting Negro guests." However, the interest of these groups re-

remained essentially legal, or academic. None were represented when Cotter made the big bid to challenge discrimination. Many whites told us in Levittown that they wished the national organizations could pursue principles into the thick of local tests, not to be disturbed by temporary political labels affixed to such local testing groups as the CED. The inference, unmistakably, was that the red tinge applied to the CED had scared off the national organizations. If this is so, one Communist or Communist-front member who is vocal and willing for his affiliations to be known could scare these organizations away from any local test, leaving the field wide open to the Communist or Communist-front.

(C) Levittown Property Owners Association, led today by lawyer Jerome Lilienthal, represents 500 home owners. It has no policy toward Negro entry; Lilienthal told us on the phone that the Association had never been called upon to state a position. <sup>26</sup> He said that he personally had nothing against any man because of skin coloring. As president of this most influential among Levittown's 150 civic groups, he felt bound to ask what present Negro residents were doing for their community? Rev. Atwood later seconded his question to us; he said the feeling is widespread among whites that if Negroes are to gain full acceptance, they must accept their share of civic responsibility. More than any resident of another background, the Negro must be active. <sup>27</sup>

(D) American Labor Party was a crusading, axe-grinding bunch led by area representative Henry Doliner. It played a role in the CED almost from that committee's birth in 1949. The ALP was the only outside force making any noise for Cotter when he was trying to attract public attention for his cause. No white we interviewed, in Manhattan or Levittown, felt that the ALP had played a helpful role; the stigma attached to the CED when the ALP was shown by the papers to be affiliated with the CED was, many felt, the undoing of the whole integration cause. However, it should be repeated that the ALP found an open field down which to run. Other groups had defaulted.



(3) The local newspapers evidently treated with reason the early call by liberals for an integrated housing policy -- until the ALP arrived on the scene and identified itself with the CSD. WEDNESDAY, Long Island's most important paper, and the LEVITTOWN TRIBUNE continued to give fair treatment to the subject itself, we were told, although they condemned Cotter's acceptance of ALP support.<sup>28</sup> The LEVITTOWN TIMES appears to have lost faith with the cause as well as the liberals advocating integration, we surmised. The editor protested that the CSD would not even cooperate with her to the extent of telling her where CSD meetings were being held.<sup>29</sup> She erroneously believed that Levitt had won the skirmish over the Caucasians-only clause in his first rental contracts. She said that a secret ballot today -- "permitting residents to express themselves without guilt feelings" -- would result in a firm refusal to allow, say, 25% of Levittown families to be Negro.

#### Conclusions from Levittown, N.Y.

Perhaps the most important finding from this study was that about twelve Negro families are presently living in Levittown, N.Y. Only in the Cotter case, one which is widely felt to have been self-propelled, was there a fuss over the coming of Negroes to the community. There was no violence, no unusual example of fear spilling over into hate, as Levittown became integrated in token fashion. "The fact that no one seems to know the precise number of Negro families there is, itself, significant," commented Frances Levenson.<sup>30</sup>

Then, too, this partial move toward integration exploded another theory of those who fear the coming of Negroes to all-white developments -- once a Negro family arrives, the gates are thrown wide open to a tide of color. This community was clearly not stampeded into vacating their homes when the Carrons, Cotters and Cookes became neighbors. Experience here suggests that when non-whites arrive

without fanfare, it is far better for long-term harmony than if the coming of Negroes is treated by liberal organizations as a cause celebre.

A further, and obvious, conclusion is that politics do not mix with the winning of moral issues. Respectable political groups had nothing to do with the cause of integration. Other groups can and will step into the vacuum with glee.

There is reason to wonder, also, why national organizations failed in Levittown, N.Y. to practice something like the Housing Bulletin Service of the New York Urban League -- locating available housing, matching up Negro buyers with the housing, then educating in-coming Negroes to their community responsibility in largely-white areas. <sup>21</sup> Not only did the organizations fail to act in this way. There was only a token role here, despite the world-wide publicity about Levitt's housing policy being a severe challenge to democracy.

This leads directly to the ethical question: why do many liberal whites feel that the moving in of Negro families early in the game is slightly unfair, maybe even "dirty pool"? The hesitancy of whites to work vigorously this way was a tangible help to the builder and sales agents seeking to enforce discrimination.

Finally, the question arises, how much is enough? Where do promoters of integrated housing rest content -- when one Negro family has been included among 17,500 families, when a dozen are moved in, 50, 100? Even with a dozen families present in Levittown, it seems doubtful that the average white feels he is living in an integrated community. Yet even the OED stopped working in 1954, and most race relations agencies outside Levittown seemed not to have any information about current integration levels there. How much is enough?

Turning now to Section Two, it seems plain that Levitt & Sons learned more on Long Island about keeping Negroes out than white liberals learned about getting Negroes in.

References for Section One

- 1 - Interview with realtor on duty, Levittown Homes Sales, Inc., June 15, 1957
- 2 - Ibid
- 3 - Ibid
- 4 - Interview with Rev. Donner Atwood, pastor, Levittown Community Church, June 15, 1957
- 5 - Telephone interview with President Jerome Lilienthal, Levittown Property Owners Association, June 15, 1957
- 6 - Interview with Julius Novick, loser in court case v. Levitt, June 15, 1957
- 7 - From the New York files of the National Committee Against Discrimination in Housing, June 14, 1957
- 8 - Ibid
- 9 - Ibid
- 10 - Interview with Novick (see ref. 6)
- 11 - Interview with Leroy Cannon at his home, June 15, 1957
- 12 - Interview with Madison Jones, special assistant for housing, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, New York, June 14
- 13 - Telephone interview with Paget Alves, housing secretary, New York Urban League, June 15, 1957
- 14 - Interview with Atwood (see ref. 4)
- 15 - Telephone interview with Mrs. Dorothy Brungel, editor, Levittown Press, June 15, 1957
- 16 - NATION, July 18, 1953, letter to the editor, from Laurence Alexander
- 17 - From the Levittown scrapbook of Julius Novick, June 15, 1957
- 18 - Ibid
- 19 - Interview with Jones (see ref. 12)
- 20 - Interview with Novick (see ref. 6, 10)
- 21 - Ibid
- 22 - Interview with Brungel (see ref. 15)
- 23 - Interview with William Cotter in his home, June 14, 1957
- 24 - Interview with Atwood (see ref. 4, 14)
- 25 - From the files of the American Jewish Congress, New York, June 14, 1957
- 26 - Interview with Lilienthal (see ref. 5)
- 27 - Interview with Atwood (see ref. 4, 14, 24)
- 28 - From the Novick scrapbook (see ref. 17)
- 29 - Interview with Brungel (see ref. 15, 22)
- 30 - Interview with Frances Levenson, director, National Committee Against Discrimination in Housing, New York, June 14, 1957
- 31 - Interview with Alves (see ref. 13)

SECTION TWO  
Levittown, Penna.

One Hundred Miles Southwest

Some time before Leroy Cannon broke the all-white pattern in Levittown, N.Y. great excitement blossomed on spinach fields 100 miles southwest of where Levitt & sons had perfected contour-housing on Long Island. This was Bucks County, Pennsylvania -- where William Penn had made history being kind to Indians, where Joseph Grundy had created a political dynasty as formidable as any in history, and where celebrities like Pearl Buck, Oscar Hammerstein, Budd Schulberg, James Michener and Moss Hart were a prominent part of the landscape.

On Sept. 29, 1950, the United States Steel Corporation announced plans for constructing a \$400,000,000 Fairless Works on 3,800 acres of farmland near Morrisville, Pa. Big business soon voiced hopes for permanent deepening of the Delaware River all the way to Trenton, N.J. -- across from the proposed Fairless Works. A sleepy, rural county was soon to be the focal point of some 300 new industries using the river as a waterfront to serve the world. Levitt & Sons announced the coming of a new 16,000-home Levittown divided into 16 sections, each accessible to recreational facilities and space for schools. <sup>32</sup> Not since General Washington used Lower Bucks County as the springboard for crossing the Delaware a few miles northwest of where U.S. Steel and Levitt promised a new kind of revolution had there been such excitement, so many misgivings.

The writer had the opportunity to be a part of the startling change in Bucks County for five years thereafter. It was our privilege also to be given a leadership position in the struggle to achieve integrated patterns as housing multiplied. What follows, then, is a personal and factual account of how discrimination in housing became a part of Bucks County's mores after the arrival of Levitt & Sons.

### Physical Appearance of Levittown, Pa.

Levitt & Sons learned much about housing -- as well as housing policies -- from their 17,500 homes built on Long Island. The Pennsylvania project was divided into 16 orderly sections, whereas on Long Island the development had seemed to grow like Topsy. Each section in Bucks County has streets whose names start with the same letter; all Lakeside Section homes have streets named so that the first letter is L. The four basic designs were painted in seven varieties of color. Only once in 28 homes, therefore, is there exact duplication.

The streets curve pleasantly through each section, providing a safety factor against the incessant auto traffic. You will not see wash hung out on Sundays, uncut lawns or fences dividing the small lot. These conditions were in the deed. Or perhaps it should be said that these conditions once were in effect; with the virtual end of Levitt's role in 1956, residents promptly enjoyed their violation.

The result leaves Levittown, Pa. looking much like Levittown, N.Y. There is, to be sure, a decidedly smaller yield from the abundant shrubbery plantings which were the specialty of father Abraham Levitt. But the Bucks County community is the same never-ending cluster of low-flung homes on small lots, about the same percentage of TV aerials sprout from roof-tops, and the street wiring is similarly hidden underground. The second Levittown has greater provision for auto storage in attached carports. It also has a more legible system of street marking, signs printed horizontally on metal rather than vertically on wood. The 16,000 homes

were priced from \$10,500 to \$17,000 -- each price category carefully separated so as to give the visitor the impression of class distinction. No less an authority than city planner Lewis Mumford credited the Levitt house with "superior interior design," and offering the public "a great deal of value for the price." He added: "It is a one-class community on a great scale -- too congested for effective variety and too spread out for social relationships necessary among high school children, old folks and families who cannot afford outside help."

### People

Levittown Pennsylvanians display the same penchant for boosting the U.S. population as do their "forebears" on Long Island. Experts estimated that the completed 16,000 homes in Bucks County would be occupied by 70,000 inhabitants -- or an average 4.4 persons, compared with the national family average of 3.5.

Father works in Philadelphia, Trenton, N.J. or Harrisville, Pa. in two thirds of the families, and his use of the car to drive 22, 10 or 5 miles made the "isolation" of housewives a favorite subject for neighborhood coffee hours.

The Bucks County Planning Commission learned, in a 1953 survey, that 57.7% of Levittown's population was to be found in age brackets 0-4; or 25-34. <sup>35</sup> Folks over 50 were seldom discovered. Percentage-wise, there were twice as many people under age ten in Levittown as in Greater Philadelphia.

The same study indicated that Levittowners were more educated than Philadelphians, in general. Citizens over age 25 completed a mean number of nine years of schooling in Philadelphia; the figure was eleven years in Levittown.

No precise figures are at hand on religious distributions; it is believed, on the basis of having seen statistics previously, that Protestants make up 50% of the population in Levittown, Pa., with Roman Catholic 35% and Jews 15%.

### The Color Situation

(A) The Score --- "There are no Negroes in Levittown, Pa. as of this writing. For five years it has been expected that the first Negro family would move in at any time. This has never happened." <sup>36</sup> It is reliably reported that there are one or more families of Chinese, Japanese, Jamaican, Puerto Rican or American Indian background. <sup>37</sup>

(B) Early Attempts to Score --- On opening day for the sale of Levittown, Pa. homes (Dec. 8, 1951) a white visitor told an information clerk at the model home about a Negro friend who would like to buy. Bristling, the clerk snapped: "This is a white community." <sup>38</sup> Later the same day a young Negro veteran from Trenton, N.J. applied, was given a blank to fill out and told to return on Monday. Returning, he was informed that he was barred because of his color, and had only been given the application on the busy week-end to avoid embarrassment. <sup>39</sup>

By the time the first families began moving into Levittown, Pa. on June 23, 1952, the word had gotten around in the liberal white community of Lower Bucks County. Spearheaded by Rev. E. Clarendon Hyde of the Hulserville Episcopal Church, a new Human Relations Council of Bucks County took shape that summer and autumn. Efforts toward integrated housing began with public speeches on the moral benefits of integration, before civic and service groups and church organizations. A new Friends Service Association of the Delaware Valley also took on this concern as a sideline, being mainly established to facilitate the education, recreation and adjustment of newcomers to "natives". The writer was a member, then housing committee chairman, then president of the Council, as well as first chairman of the Association. In a variety of appearances delivering moral talks, it was found that people felt good while you talked -- even sounded de-

termed to help change Levittown's policies. But how do you do this? Levitt was reportedly fixed in his stand against an open sales policy. White buyers seemed unconcerned about becoming part of a white island.

(C) Visits to Levitt --- On February 25, 1953 the first citizen delegation from Bucks County met with William Levitt in his office to discuss the practice of housing discrimination in Levittown. Present were Pearl S. Buck, author; Rev. E. Clarendon Hyde; Negro housemaker Madeline McCruder, and the writer --- all representing the Human Relations Council --- and liberal businessman Louis Dries. "People are terribly prejudiced in Pennsylvania, just like anywhere else," said Levitt with confidence. "They are not ready for Negro neighbors now." He assured us that he was "on your side of the fence, and when the whites get ready for Negro neighbors, I'll be among the first to open up my sales policy." <sup>l0</sup> When Levitt said he was on our side, Pearl Buck announced she had never heard "such specious reasoning," and got up and left the conference room. In a subsequent letter of explanation, she wrote:

"I have learned by long and frequent experience that men like Mr. Levitt exploit the reasonableness, patience and rectitude of such people as called upon him yesterday, and by experience, too, that it is better to deal firmly with Mr. Levitt and not let him think he has coaxed us into thinking he is anything but what he is." <sup>l1</sup>

Levitt challenged those who remained to name a single large community which was planned on an interracial basis and ended up that way. He challenged us to name one businessman who has made money out of such ideals as interracial housing. The problem, Levitt said, comes down to simple economics. Could we guarantee his firm against economic loss if he opened up his sales policy? He said that he was willing to demonstrate through a few hundred homes built outside his assembly line and available to Negroes --- "if the government is willing to go along on the financing." He declared that whites have great ideals. "What we should have to make things right," he concluded, "is a law telling whites they must live next to Negroes." <sup>l2</sup>



The second time we interviewed William Levitt was a solo flight. We were doing an article for the "Bucks County Traveler" on prejudice in Levittown. He consented to answering specific questions on April 20, 1954, when he was completing work on the 3,500th of his intended 16,000 Bucks County homes:

Q: How do you feel now about selling homes to Negroes?

A: The same as the last time we talked. Sales would die within twenty-four hours if I sold to Negroes today.

Q: Would you be willing to open up sales if the Levittown Civic Association (main civic group, included many liberals) approved?

A: No. You would never get approval of the ICA.

Q: Under what specific terms would you be willing to change your policy?

A: If you could underwrite the success of my venture, that would change my policy. This I guarantee (he had suggested in 1953 interview that we might go to a liberal foundation seeking funds for such "experimentation" but we had declined to try).

Q: For twenty years you say you have been talking to liberals about housing discrimination. What thoughts would you have on ways whereby citizens might end discrimination in housing?

A: Underwrite the construction projects first. Provide equal opportunity in jobs and education -- real equality -- over a period of 75 years. Then build equal facilities open for everyone.

Q: How would you feel if the courts slapped an injunction against your use of FHA funds? Where would you turn for money?

A: This would be a catastrophe -- if you mean that such a move would force me to build and sell for all now. It would be a set-back of 100 years for the Negroes. I personally could not build in volume, of course, without government credit.

Q: Against the inevitable moving in of a Negro family, how might Levitt & Sons react? What do you consider your responsibility if a Negro family does move in?

A: We would have no reaction. This problem is not our business.

Levitt concluded our second interview by saying his prime concern was to keep his staff of 400, plus 4,000 workmen, rolling along at 40 houses a day toward the finish of the \$250,000,000 development. He saw no real tie at all between his personal business goals and the public morality of integrated housing; in

a word, his moral values appeared to be entirely material. He was justifiably proud of having revolutionized the home-building industry and having done more than anyone else to meet the housing shortage after World War II. He had plans, which he would not divulge to us, for multiplying Levittowns all over America. <sup>42</sup>

(D) Related Events -- The Levittown housing policy had wide repercussions in Bucks County, and a variety of combative steps other than those outlined above were taken as well. In May 1953 representatives of the Human Relations Council and Friends Service Association met with H. B. Jordan, executive vice president of the U.S. Steel Corporation and an assistant at a meeting arranged by the American Friends Service Committee. Purpose of this meeting was to explore employment policies of U.S. Steel at the new Fairless Works, and the relationship of that policy to segregation in Fairless Hills (a U.S. Steel-backed development of 4,000 homes near Levittown). Jordan admitted that the firm hired 21% Negroes on a nation-wide average but only one percent at Fairless Works, and the lack of housing for Negroes had something to do with it. He did not feel in a position to change the Fairless Hills housing policy.

Four months later, the NAACP, Urban League, American Friends Service Committee, U.S. Steel and Bucks County's two organizations (Council and Association) met to see if, jointly, we could work out any new policies in regard to fair employment. After two hours of jurisdictional wrangling between Walter White of the NAACP and H.B. Jordan and others of U.S. Steel over employment, it was suggested that the Human Relations Council should try to weld together all national and local efforts on matters of integration. Maybe U.S. Steel could help. <sup>43</sup>

A meeting in New York of the AFSC, NAACP, Urban League and the Bucks County Human Relations Council tried to arrive at a common working plan to tackle the integration plans jointly. The Council, AFSC and Urban League were willing each

to pay one quarter salary for a full-time field worker who could work out of the William Penn Center (headquarters of the Friends Service Association and Council, in Bucks County). Walter White said he did not feel the NAACP could go along; it could not delegate to a field worker, serving so many groups, the proper funds and authority to speak for NAACP. The meeting did recommend the exploration of a legal suit against Levitt & Sons to restrain the firm from using FHA money to practice discrimination. The meeting also set up a working party to draft a letter and deliver it to President Eisenhower.<sup>44</sup>

The legal brief was filed by the NAACP seeking an injunction in Philadelphia Federal courts to prohibit Levitt use of FHA funds on a discriminatory basis. It was thrown out of that court on a technicality and not pursued after 1954.

The joint memo to the President was written and presented, instead, by Walter White and an NAACP party, saying they spoke for the Human Relations Council, AFSC and Urban League. The President was reportedly interested. Neither he nor FHA administrator Albert Cole ever replied in specific ways showing that the FHA would no longer allow its funds to be used for segregated housing. Cole was making many speeches at that time (1954) encouraging integration. But his agency continued to allow use of government money to sell homes with discrimination; a legal loophole in the FHA mortgage application form permits the FHA to lend funds provided there is no recorded restrictive covenant in the seller's policies. And even William Levitt is no longer writing discriminatory practices into contracts.

During all of this public and private maneuvering, the Negro had been virtually shut out of Bucks County. President Richard McFeely and the Human Relations Council saw the Negro percentage of county residents drop below two percent, no public school teaching jobs open to Negroes (this form of discrimination predated Levittown, actually) and ten major employers hiring 3,000 workers not having not having a single Negro on their payrolls.<sup>45</sup>

The Council never had enough money to hire a full-time field worker who might work with Levittown residents and foster re-sales to Negroes. Jane Reinheimer of the AFSC Housing Opportunities Program was nearly that good, with whatever time she could find. From 1953 on, a dozen Negro families were found seemingly ready to pioneer. Each time either limited finances or understandable fear by the pioneering family or a change in the status of "available" housing blocked the moving in of a non-white.

In 1955 the Council even tried, with the cooperation of the AFSC, to sell integrated housing educationally by using the personal endorsement methods of soap and beer salesman. Oscar Hammerstein II of Doylestown signed a special letter to 102 carefully selected and prominent Americans. It began: "Do you believe that the simple fact of a Negro family moving into a neighborhood reduces realty values there?"<sup>16</sup> Sen. Ralph Flanders, Eleanor Roosevelt, Budd Schulberg, Harry Emerson Foedick, Norman Cousins, James Michener and others were quoted as in favor of integration in housing. The folder, widely distributed in Levittown and elsewhere, made not a ripple in the growing pond of Levittown segregation.

(E) Avoiding the Red Tag -- There was, finally, in this situation, a hint of the same red element which played such a factor in Levittown, N.Y. During the late-McCarthy era the Human Relations Council tried to get United Fund support, with an eye out to the hiring of a full-time worker. As president in 1954-55 and active solicitor of such funds for the Council, we were told several times that Morrisville businessmen were calling the Council red-infiltrated. Since almost any case with which a substantial minority could disagree was then being conveniently termed "Communist" or a "Communist-front group," the Council gave no official attention to the charge then. However, when Virgil White became a short-term president of the Council after our own term expired, he suddenly resigned. Word got around that he had done so because his law office boss, now Congressman

Willard Curtin, had information from the FBI about "certain Communists or Communist sympathizers" holding official positions with the Council. As a result, White's successor as Council head, Kent Larrabee, insisted on a kind of general loyalty statement being taken by Council members. A procedural wrangle followed. Larrabee grimly insisted on some form of statement which put Council members on record as not being subservient to any foreign power and championing the American way of life. He was opposed bitterly by some thought to be, possibly, those hinted at around town by Curtin.

However, no Council official admits to having seen Curtin. None appears to have checked with the FBI. The officers did not even go to see the two or three families who, by their bitter opposition to the loyalty pledge, seemed like candidates for the red tag.

Despite this tenderness about coming to grips with the rumors, Larrabee did succeed in getting the statement onto the membership card. In a tense, action-packed annual meeting of the Council, he succeeded in getting removed from the board of directors every individual whose motives might be the least suspect and installing in their places a bevy of distinguished civic leaders. As a result, the Council is today the victor against becoming what the CHD was called in Levittown, N.Y. But Larrabee dropped out along with those against whom he fought a battle of tactics from 1956-57. The Council is today a disorganized organization. And the general public is felt not even to be aware of what took place behind the scenes while Larrabee was earning the title "Fascist" from those once united to end segregation in Levittown.

#### Current Appraisal in Bucks County

There are still no Negroes in Levittown, Pa. -- although this writer could name a new Negro family and their probable address there before Fall 1957. It might be added that this near certainty has existed since 1953.

Given the recent intrasural squabble within the Human Relations Council, it might also be predicted that when the Negro family does break the barrier, that family may be chiefly supported by Levittowners whose past political connections are suspect. The seeds are planted for another Cotter incident -- but without a Cannon and Cocks having gone before, and with a fully-settled, all-white community of 70,000 people standing by to disapprove of the color change.

It would appear that the organizations of Bucks County were, thus, too little and too late effectively to make Levittown an integrated city. Writer Craig Thompson may have properly placed the blame for this situation in saying: "As of this writing, the Negro question seems to have caused more conversation and concern outside of Levittown than in it, which, doubtless, is because Levittowners have been dealing with many other matters of more immediacy [like becoming a separate and self-governing city rather than a community taxed by four different local governments]."<sup>47</sup> The American Jewish Congress local chapter has been interested in integration for some time, and so belatedly has been the Lower Bucks County Council of Churches. But, generally speaking, it was the "old residents" living outside of Levittown and conscious of moral values -- but not always ready to engage in "block busting" to prove those values -- versus the dead hand of Levittown people far more concerned with anything else.

Then, too, the actions of these residents would tend to prove that William Levitt has said all along: "Whites are simply not ready to accept Negro neighbors." And perhaps it would not be carrying quotation too far to document the words of Alan Paton, South African writer studying segregation in the United States: "I heard many a time the generalization that the white Northerner loves the Negro race but not the persons, and the white Southerner the persons but not the race."<sup>48</sup>

One could wonder, finally, if the national organizations -- NAACP, Urban League, AFSC, etc. -- might have failed again here, as they did on Long Island, to take the significant role which was clearly open to them had they pooled forces with local groups and, in 1954, acted in concert to change housing segregation.

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-- END OF SECTION TWO --

## SECTION THREE

### Comparisons and Conclusions

#### Housing Integration -- the Next Front

Massive strides have been made, following World War II, by Americans suddenly challenged as to whether democracy is as dear and beneficial a concept as we had sleepily accepted it to be. In the wake of fair employment bills passed by many states and in the Supreme Court 1954 decision outlawing educational segregation, Americans made real progress toward giving our most deserving minority -- some 15,000,000 Negroes -- the true emancipation called for by Abraham Lincoln in 1863.

However, the facts about Northern discrimination in housing seem to belie this record. The nation's two largest home developments, Levittown, N.Y. and Levittown, Pa., have become substantial monuments to fear, superstition and prejudice. Although a hundred isolated pockets of housing integration have sprung up since World War II to show that Americans keep trying, segregation is the rule. Negroes continue to migrate by the hundred thousands from the troubled South, searching for economic opportunity in the North and winding up living chiefly in all-black ghettos and slums.

The securing of equal opportunity in housing is clearly the next front in the struggle to live by the principles we profess. What was learned in the two Levittowns has considerable validity to this whole struggle.

#### Some Comparisons

Levittown, N.Y. was a part-rental, part-purchase development, whereas the Pennsylvania step-child was all-purchase. It was far easier to arrange a quiet



Lease or sub-lease on Long Island than to arrange a re-sale in Bucks County.

The Long Island project mushroomed during an acute housing shortage, whereas the Bucks County development actually caused Levitt & Sons considerable anguish before all units were spoken for. The comparison suggests that in a time of economic desperation, it is easier to peddle integration.

On Long Island the silent move-ins were progressing properly -- eleven of the estimated dozen Negro families there today moved in without ruckus -- until the Cotter family arrived. In Bucks County local liberals started making speeches about integration from the outset and treating integration as a cause celebre. The comparison suggests it is better to walk softly.

The New York development was sold through a variety of realtors. Negroes got in. The Pennsylvania sales were handled by Levitt and Sons, working from a tract map and selling homes by number and model home only. Negroes got in where there was a variety of sales approaches. Negroes failed where the builder sold his own. The comparison suggests that liberals should enlist competitive realtors to offer their services at reduced fees to giant home developers, in return for the possibility of Negroes getting in.

It was only two-plus years on Long Island before a Negro managed to rent himself into Levittown. Five years of home sales have gone by in Bucks County without a break in the Caucasian pattern -- except for some slight deviations in home purchasing by non-Negroes. The comparison suggests that the earlier the pattern is broken, the better.

In ten years of home sales on Long Island and five in Bucks County, whites have shown no eagerness to change the sales policies of their builder-paternalist. The comparison suggests that whites really find it more comfortable to live only with their own kind -- despite the protests of non-Levittown liberals.

On Long Island the race relations organizations with national stature spent

early time fighting the Ross-Novick case, which was important but peripheral. In Bucks County the national organizations tested Levitt with talk and a token legal case trying to beat the use of FHA funds for discrimination. The experience suggests that national organizations should develop a much closer rapport with working liberal groups in every concerned area.

The Levittown, N.Y. situation developed pretty much without the full-scale participation of liberal whites outside that community; those Negroes who got in did so pretty much by independent action. In Bucks County, too, liberal whites were loath to become involved in breaking the pattern. The comparison suggests that whites have much to learn about translating theories into action.

Finally, on Long Island home-hunting Negroes have been slow to move in even after the color bar has been soundly broken. In Bucks County a dozen Negro families we know or heard of simply could not bring themselves to breaking the pattern, even though liberal white individuals and organizations assured them of full cooperation. The experience suggests that Negroes have much to learn about the value of pioneering.

### Conclusions

There would seem to be eight general conclusions one could draw following this comparison study and looking toward a day when all men can select and buy homes of their choice in America.

(1) Educating Realtors -- It would seem important for national race relations groups to wage an on-going educational program aimed at removing from the mind of realtors some of the heavy myths which support sales on the basis of segregation. Perhaps prizes or awards could serve as an inducement, if straight moral arguments fell short. Those who handled sales in the two Levittowns clearly believed they were serving democracy best by keeping out non-whites.

(2) Blocking Government Funds -- The national groups could also mount a far more effective try at cutting off FHA funds to builders who discriminate. The NAACP legal feint in connection with Levittown, Pa., funds was thrown out, after all, only on procedural grounds. President Eisenhower and FHA Administrator Albert Cole have made repeated statements favoring equality of opportunity. Perhaps national political parties, or lobbying groups, could be mobilized to bring great pressure against using the people's money to discriminate against some of the people. Levitt has admitted that he could not progress at all without government funds, and if he had to sell to all to keep those funds available, he would simply do so.

(3) Matching Buyers and Places -- The National organizations could also copy widely the Housing Bulletin Service of the New York Urban League. In so doing, they would be delivering educated Negro pioneers into all-white communities many of which would probably gain and grow from the experience. It is not enough for the national groups to build their own membership and preach via the national publicity channels their principles about equality for all.

(4) Churches and Lies -- At the root of segregation's continued success in housing lies the failure of church members to practice their beliefs. Why not have the national race relations groups work with the National Council of Churches and the Advertising Council of America in an educational program putting the lie to myths about what happens when Negroes move in?

(5) Educating the Negroes -- Along the same educational line, it would seem timely for the national organizations to cooperate in a program to acquaint Negroes with the satisfactions William Cottoer found in Levittown -- and what it takes to be a pioneer. The shortage of Negro applicants in both Levittowns appeared far greater than the shortage you would expect due to the Negro having a lesser purchasing power than his white contemporaries.

(6) Concentrate on New Housing -- Local and national groups would seem well advised to put major stress on getting Negro families into new developments in suburbia, rather than spending excess time on changing city neighborhoods. The main movement is country-ward. Open up developments in suburbia to Negroes and we have relieved the entire housing situation in the North. And most whites who have fled urban areas for the safety of all-white suburbia know, anyhow, that there is no escape ultimately from all people living together.

(7) Break the Pattern Early -- The Levittown experiences point up what a burden it is to Negro families, moving in years after the builder has spanned thousands of homes for whites only. To break this pattern early is to give inducement to Negroes with the least interest in pioneering. It is also to teach whites that having Negro neighbors is no horrible experience -- and to enable these educated whites to serve as allies in later move-ins.

(8) Educating Whites to Block Busting -- From the Levittown, Pa., experience in particular, it would seem mandatory that local and national organizations team up to teach liberal whites that giving Negroes a chance to live next to whites is not a "dirty" thing to do, but instead is really putting into practice those Judeo-Christian ideals we cherish. All too many liberal whites appear to feel that "two wrongs do not make a right". But lending vigorous support to the moving in of Negroes is not the second "wrong" to go with the wrong practiced by the realtor in excluding Negroes. Helping to get a Negro family into an all-white community is actually helping white residents to live according to our highest spiritual goals. Getting across this last point may be, in essence, the crux of the whole drive toward housing integration in America.