

Documents:**5A) Can Long Island Avoid Racial Turmoil?****LI Confident on Racial Problems, *Newsday*, March 1, 1968**

Based on the findings of the presidential riot study commission, a number of local officials and civil rights experts agreed today that Long Island does have some of the ingredients for trouble but can head it off through increased public awareness and action.

Among the gains that can be made, officials said, were greater freedom for Negroes in choosing where they can live on Long Island, improved methods of bringing non-white children into the education pattern such as the new integration plans in Malverne and in Bellport-Brookhaven-East Patchogue; more emphasis on job training via government and industry for work above the \$1.50 hourly minimum; improved relations with various government agencies and greater absorption of Negroes into the political structure.

Perhaps the core problem on Long Island, officials said, is housing discrimination, an area where civil rights leaders have found only token success. The Nassau-Suffolk Regional Planning Board, in a report issued last September, noted that there were about 25,000 substandard housing units on Long Island housing 100,000 persons, most of them nonwhites.

Newsday noted in a series, "the Negro on Long Island in 1962," that with about three percent of the population in Nassau and about five percent in Suffolk, Negroes had a median income 60 percent more than the national median; the buying power of the Long Island Negro in 1966 was about \$100,000,000 and more than half the Negro families owned their own homes.

"The figures may show that Negroes out here are relatively better off," one official said last night, "but in terms of applying the broad problems of housing, jobs, etc. you have to remember that there is some ghettoization and so there is area-wide discontent in some cases. Sure, there could be trouble anytime. The seeds are there, but not like in the city. The problem on Long Island at least is manageable."

The problem of ghetto growth was pointed up by a Nassau Council of Churches study that predicts that five of the 15 communities in which most Negroes live will become 75 percent Negro by 1985 and four others will then be just under the 40 percent mark, which the council uses in establishing what constitutes a ghetto.

Most experts believed that it would be difficult to stem the growth of Long Island ghettos in the next two decades simply because of population trends. The estimate is that by 1985 the Negro population will double to about 200,000. Between now and then, they agreed, the public would have to take firm action to prevent the small disturbances that, as the presidential commission noted, can suddenly "spill over into violence ... because of the racial-attitude and behavior of white Americans toward black Americans."

Questions:

- 1- What gains did African Americans on Long Island make during the 1960's?
- 2- According to this article, what major racial problems remained on Long Island?
- 3- Why did Long Island official consider racial problems on Long Island "manageable"?
- 4- Do you agree with their conclusion? Why?
- 5- The 1968 presidential commission concluded that the major racial problem in the United States was "the racial-attitude and behavior of white Americans toward black Americans." Do you agree or disagree with this conclusion? Why?