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## Racial Issues/Tension in the Albina District (Portland, Oregon) Mid - Late 20th Century

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The paper talks about discrimination of African Americans in the Albina District of northeastern Portland, Oregon. The paper examines the effect of housing discrimination of the early twentieth century had on the mid twentieth century and how systematic oppression was enabled because of the concentration of African Americans in one area. The thesis is that the housing discrimination of the twentieth century that caused the concentration of African Americans in the Albina District was the cause of limited opportunities, lacking infrastructure, and reduced rights of African Americans that became ingrained into the Portland culture.

RACIAL ISSUES/TENSION THE ALBINA DISTRICT (PORTLAND, OREGON)

MID – LATE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

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History 203: History of the United States  
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## RACIAL ISSUES/TENSION THE ALBINA DISTRICT (PORTLAND, OREGON)

### MID – LATE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

During the twentieth century, racism, perhaps unsurprisingly, remained ingrained in the culture of the growing Portland metropolitan area. Racist attitudes were not limited to Portland, however; Oregon had historically been one of the most racist areas of the United States, only trailing states where slavery continued to be practiced. The original state constitution made little attempt to hide the blatant racist attitudes held by the majority of (white) Oregon residents, as Section 34 of Article I made it clear that African Americans were not only culturally unwelcome, but also explicitly barred from entering the state of Oregon because of actual written legislation itself:

No free negro or mulatto not residing in this state at the time of the adoption of this constitution, shall come, reside or be within this state or hold any real estate, or make any contracts, or maintain any suit therein...<sup>1</sup>

Despite being generally ignored, and eventually being overturned in 1926, Section 34 of Article I was reflective of the other forms of legislation that directly affected African Americans

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<sup>1</sup> Charles H. Carey, *Transcribed 1857 Oregon Constitution* [Oregon State Archives]; available from <https://sos.oregon.gov/archives/exhibits/constitution/Documents/transcribed-1857-oregon-constitution.pdf>.

negatively in twentieth century Portland. Perhaps the most important of these forms of legislation was housing discrimination, which ensured that African Americans were forced to live in the poorest areas of the city without access to the opportunities available to their white counterparts. In addition to limiting opportunities, the legislative housing discrimination implemented in Portland during the early twentieth century allowed for the systematic destruction of homes in the traditionally African American district of Albina later in the century and resulted in the forced relocation of thousands of African Americans out of Portland.

The housing discrimination implemented in Portland during the twentieth century limited African Americans into the Albina District of Portland and allowed public development projects to specifically target African Americans. In addition, the concentration of African Americans in one of the poorer areas of the Portland metropolitan area allowed law enforcement officials to disproportionately target African Americans. Articles including “Building a West Coast Ghetto: African-American Housing in Portland, 1910-1960” and “Invisible Walls: Mapping Residential Segregation in Portland” explored the specific impacts of housing discrimination in Portland, building the narrative of how African Americans were ultimately forced into the Albina District by housing discrimination practices throughout the twentieth century. Stuart Mcelderry, the author of the first article, also explored the anti-African American feelings held by the majority of white Portland residents. However, other literature pointed to other causes for urban segregation in Portland. Katayoun Aidinezhad’s dissertations and theses, “The Effects of Income Inequality on Racial Residential Segregation in the Portland Metropolitan Area”, examined the specific causes of the observed phenomena of African American housing being generally located in poorer areas of major cities. Ultimately, Aidinezhad, using 1970 and 1980 Census of Population and Housing Data, concluded that Portland housing discrimination was more of a

result of income inequality as opposed to targeted housing discrimination practices. Regardless of the cause of African Americans being forced into Albina, however, the majority of works agreed that targeted racism was practiced once African Americans became concentrated in the Albina District. Both city club reports and Matt Hern's "What a City is For: Remaking the Politics of Displacement"<sup>2</sup> agreed that once African Americans were in Albina, they were almost immediately forced out as well as subject to racist practices within the district. The works also came to the consensus that African Americans who lived in Albina had significantly fewer economic, social, and political opportunities than Portland's white residents who lived in other locations of the city. In addition, the text "Black and Blue" revealed that in the Albina District, police-community relations were extremely tense due to racist attitudes that were prevalent among law enforcement officials.<sup>3</sup>

Several public improvement projects during the late twentieth century resulted in many African American families in Portland's Albina District losing their homes, as well as the erasing of the culture associated with the only historically black district in Portland. Such projects included construction of the Memorial Colosseum and Interstate 5, both of which required land from the Albina District where most African American homes were constructed, resulting in the destruction of a large number of these homes. During the period of such urban development and

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<sup>3</sup> Stuart Mcelderry, "Building a West Coast Ghetto: African-American Housing in Portland, 1910-1960"; *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, Summer 2001; Katherine Barber, Lily Hart, Curtis Jewell, Madelyn Miller, and Greta Smith; "Invisible Walls: Mapping Residential Segregation in Portland" [Oregon Historical Society]; Vol. 119, No. 3 (Fall 2018) p. 400-405; Katayoun Aidinezhad, "The Effects of Income Inequality on Racial Residential Segregation in the Portland Metropolitan Area" (1985). *Dissertations and Theses*. Paper 2876; Matt Hern, *What a City is For: Remaking the Politics of Displacement* (MIT Press, 2017); Leanne C. Serbulo and Karen J. Gibson; "Black and Blue: Police-Community Relations in Portland's Albina District, 1964- 1985" [Oregon Historical Society]; Vol. 114, No. 3 (2013).

renewal, the majority of African Americans residences were concentrated in the Albina District; in 1960, approximately eighty percent of Portland's 18,000 African Americans resided in Albina<sup>4</sup>. This was no coincidence; the fact that most African American's lived in the Albina District was a direct consequence of the legislative housing discrimination that had been implemented during the earlier half of the century. In Portland, there were multiple forms of housing discrimination against African Americans used, including national legislation and realtor codes. These forms of housing discrimination led to race divisions within the city of Portland and the creation of ghettos, ultimately allowing for the systematic removal of African Americans from the city.

The first major implementation of housing discrimination in Portland stemmed from national housing discrimination laws. In 1934, the United States Congress passed the National Housing Act of 1934, which created the Federal Housing Authority (FHA)<sup>5</sup>. The FHA was tasked with insuring private mortgages in order to decrease interest rates, required minimum down payments, and ultimately, overall housing prices in order to combat the economic impact of the banking crisis that resulted from the Great Depression. However, similar to many other New Deal initiatives, the FHA had another effect: segregating United States cities while indirectly promoting general racism. Although the government explanation regarding the phenomena of urban segregation observable in most major United States cities blamed income disparities, cultural differences, and individual prejudices for racially based geographical

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<sup>4</sup> Jordan Aleck, "Displacement of Black Portlanders began Long Ago" [KOIN6] (June 7, 2017); available from <https://www.koin.com/news/displacement-of-black-portlanders-began-long-ago/870080775>

<sup>5</sup> The Federal Housing Administration was created as a part of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal which promised the end of the Great Depression. Information from: *Federal Housing Act* [Ohio History Central]; available from [http://www.ohiohistorycentral.org/w/Federal\\_Housing\\_Act](http://www.ohiohistorycentral.org/w/Federal_Housing_Act).

divisions, the effect of government action (including the creation of the FHA) on the racial division of cities was undeniable. This was due to the FHA's system of rating neighborhoods in major cities. Using maps, the FHA rated neighborhoods based upon the supposed favorability of the racial composition of residents. This practice embodied the blatant racism of housing discrimination, as primarily white neighborhoods received higher ratings and were presented as being more desirable to reside in compared to neighborhoods with any amount of African American residents. Even one African American resident could lower a neighborhood's FHA rating from an A to a D, resulting in significant reduction in the value of all houses in the neighborhood. In addition to ensuring that African Americans could only reside in poorer neighborhoods, the FHA's rating system also increased anti-African American sentiment among white individuals who did not want the value of their homes to drastically plummet because of colored neighbors.

The FHA practice of rating neighborhoods based upon racial composition also resulted in "redlining", the term used to describe poorly rated neighborhoods because of the red lines with which they were outlined on FHA maps. Neighborhoods faced a plethora of consequences as a result of being "redlined" that were not limited to extremely low real estate value; in addition to facing low housing prices, "redlined" neighborhoods were given no federal funding and residents were ineligible for nearly all forms of bank loans. The Federal Housing Authority's Underwriting Manual<sup>6</sup> outlined the process and impacts of a neighborhood being "redlined" as an attempt to justify FHA actions as not being racially motivated. Produced in 1938, the FHA

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<sup>6</sup> *Underwriting Manual: Underwriting and Valuation Procedure Under Title II of the National Housing Act* [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Files]; available from <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/Federal-Housing-Administration-Underwriting-Manual.pdf>.

Underwriting Manual's supposed purpose was to give "instructions and regulations governing the procedure and policies to be followed by Underwriting Staffs of the Federal Housing Administration".<sup>7</sup> In reality, the manual attempted to provide justification for FHA policies and actions that was meant to dispel the perhaps obvious notion that such policies and actions were racially motivated and reaffirmed racist attitudes prevalent in the twentieth century. The FHA Underwriting Manual characterized FHA actions as steps to create an identification process for relatively poor neighborhoods with low property and real estate values to prevent further negative consequences from the Great Depression, giving the process of "redlining" a seemingly legitimate economic motivation. However, in reality, the FHA's actions only ensured that African Americans remained in poverty and were forced to live in the poorest areas of cities. Portland was no exception to this effect; African Americans were forced into hastily constructed government developments in the poorest districts of the city. However, the effect of the FHA's actions remained on a relatively small scale in Portland during the early nineteenth century due to the extremely small number of African Americans that lived in the city. However, this soon quickly changed as Portland's African American population began to drastically increase during the mid-twentieth century.

The growth of Portland's African American population led to the development of more explicit forms of housing discrimination that contributed to the concentration of African American's in the Albina District. Prior to 1942, the African American population in Portland had numbered merely 2,000, a direct and unsurprising consequence of the extreme anti-African American sentiment that was widely accepted throughout the city and surrounding areas. However, significant weaponry shortages and increased demand for unskilled labor during

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<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

World War II attracted thousands of African American workers to shipyards in Portland. This increase in the African American population also coincided with an increase in housing discrimination practices, as both realtors and banks became wary of the economic impacts that African American arrival had due to FHA ratings. Since the economy was still recovering from the devastating effects of the ten-year depression in the early twentieth century, realtors were focused on maintaining housing values to the best extent possible. Because FHA ratings caused neighborhoods with African Americans to experience depressed real estate value, realtors became hesitant to sell to African Americans, making realtors use creative methods to avoid selling property and homes to the many African Americans that were moving into the city of Portland in search of work.

Although there was no clear indication that realtors themselves were consciously making racist decisions by refusing to sell to African Americans, the FHA's rating system effectively forced realtors to avoid selling to African Americans and other individuals of color. This practice was not only generally accepted but also encoded into the governing document of realtors because of its legitimate necessity in order to maintain real estate values while the FHA continued its practice of "redlining" neighborhoods. The California Real Estate Association and National Association of Real Estate Boards 1950 Code of Ethics, the governing document for the Portland Realtor's Board, stated in Article 34: "A Realtor should never be instrumental in introducing into a neighborhood a character or property or use which will be detrimental to property values in that neighborhood."<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> *Code of Ethics: California Real Estate Association and National Association of Real Estate Boards* [National Association of Realtors Archives]; available from <http://archive.realtor.org/sites/default/files/COE1950.pdf>.

Although race was never specifically mentioned, FHA tactics effectively guaranteed that all African Americans fit the description of a “character... which will be detrimental to property values”<sup>9</sup> making it in violation of ethical codes for realtors to sell to African Americans because of the reduction in property value that followed. Therefore, the Code of Ethics all but guaranteed that African Americans could only live in areas where other African Americans already lived, leading to the rise of African American neighborhoods in specific parts of the city while the rest of the city remained primarily white. The limited opportunity for African American housing only compounded to the effects of general racism in Portland, resulting in the formation of ghettos and low-quality housing in segregated portions of the city that were rarely improved or maintained by public services.

Similarly, banks avoided issuing loans to African Americans due to FHA practices and policies. In addition to being labeled as unfavorable locations to reside, “redlined” neighborhoods were also flagged by the FHA as being financially challenged. Although this was often the case due to systematic racism that limited opportunities for African Americans, the FHA’s rating system still had further negative effects because all residents in such neighborhoods were labeled as lacking financial assets to repay any borrowed money. Thus, banks rarely issued loans to African Americans because FHA maps indicated that such loans would not be paid back for seemingly legitimate economic reasons. Just as in the case of realtors, although banks did not necessarily have racist motivations of their own, FHA policies required banks follow racist practices that were seemingly justified by actual economic concerns which needed to be addressed in the years immediately following the Great Depression. In Portland, loan records from the twentieth century showed that African Americans received a

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

disproportionately low number of loans from banks compared to residents of other races. Because African Americans were not given loans, they were often unable to gather the money necessary to purchase reasonable housing, leading to further creation of ghettos comprised of extremely low quality residencies that were the only form of housing affordable to the majority of African Americans.

The housing discrimination that allowed for the division of Portland into racial ghettos was the same driving force that ultimately allowed for the mass displacement of African Americans later in the twentieth century. Beginning from the early twentieth century, African Americans were already historically unwelcome from the city of Portland, and even more generally, the entire state of Oregon. However, once black exclusion laws were overturned in 1926, the number of African Americans in Portland drastically increased. Despite this however, the Portland Realtor's Board and its Code of Ethics, as well as FHA policies and bank/realtor reactions, ensured that African Americans were limited to certain areas of the city until (at least) 1952, when discriminatory practices were finally abandoned.<sup>10</sup> Even after African Americans were allowed into the Portland metropolitan area, the majority of Portland's African American community lived in government constructed temporary housing in Vanport, a city constructed on marshlands for the purpose of housing shipyard workers, which the majority of African Americans in Portland were.

However, a 1948 Columbia River flood led to the forced movement of African Americans into the actual city of Portland itself. The FHA and the Portland realtors still

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<sup>10</sup> Although the majority of racially discriminatory practices were outlawed in 1952, it did not stop most African Americans from facing daily discrimination because of prevalent racist attitudes held by individuals throughout the city of Portland and more generally, the entire state of Oregon. Information from City Club of Portland. *Study of racial and ethnic relations in Portland: Report of the Housing Subcommittee* [bulletin; v. 72, no. 39]; Portland, OR, 1992.

successfully limited African Americans to the district of Albina, located in the northeastern portion of the city of Portland, using the practice of “redlining” as well as racial specifications on individual housing deeds in the city. Thus, the majority of Portland’s African American population (approximately eighty percent) resided in the district of Albina during the mid-twentieth century. Although there was no questioning the fewer opportunities offered to African Americans as a result of being limited in the Albina District, the area began to develop into a thriving hub for African American culture in Portland. In addition, the booming United States economy of the 1950s and 1960s allowed African Americans to obtain similar economic gains to their white counterparts that had previously been impossible. However, despite the seemingly positive economic and social trends observed in the Albina District, the fact that the majority of the area was comprised of African Americans continued to lead to racial problems and discrimination within the city of Portland.

Because the majority (if not all) of Portland’s African American population was concentrated in the Albina District, the area was disproportionately affected by FHA policies and housing discrimination practices compared to other areas of the city. However, the concentration of African Americans in one area of the city allowed for another result: city officials could specifically target and forcefully remove African Americans from Portland by embarking on urban development and renewal projects that required residents of the Portland’s Albina district to relocate. The first, and perhaps most destructive, of these initiatives was the construction of the Memorial Coliseum, built in the early 1960s by the Portland City Council and pro sports team developers. The construction of the Memorial Coliseum was followed by the construction of Interstate 5, which became the first Federal Interstate that passed through the city of Portland. The final project was the publicly funded nationwide urban renewal project that

disproportionately affected African Americans and came to be known as “Negro Removal” by critics. The three development initiatives all resulted in the destruction of an immense number of African American homes in the Albina District and thus yielded immense criticism from a variety of groups and individuals. In addition to forcing many African Americans to move because of destroyed homes, the three development projects also resulted in the Albina District becoming in close proximity to an interstate, hospital, and sports-event parking areas causing property values to significantly decrease as well as white business disinvestment in and abandonment of the area.

The first of the urban development initiatives that resulted in mass displacement of African Americans because of the destruction of a large amount of homes was the construction of the Memorial Coliseum by the Portland City Council and pro sports team developers (including representatives from the Portland Trail Blazers) in 1960. The project was forcefully pushed through city officials and approved for construction in the year’s prior, and destroyed 476 homes in the present-day Rose Garden, most owned by African Americans. Thus, destruction of the historically African American Albina District had begun. The construction of the Memorial Coliseum was immediately followed by the construction of Interstate 5 (completed in 1966). The freeway was the first federal highway to reach Portland and traveled directly through the Albina District, not only forcing many African Americans to move, but also reducing property values in the districts because of the increased proximity to a frequently used interstate. Many highway lanes and ramps were constructed in areas where African American homes formerly stood. Although there were other locations that the interstate could have been built, including the Highway 30 Industrial Area, the interstate was built through the Albina District supposedly due to its relative lack of political residencies. However, this justification did not silence critics who

pointed to racism as being the motivation for constructing Interstate 5 through the Albina District because of its historically African American dominated population. Such critics pointed to Portland city officials desiring the construction of a “white corridor” leading into the city in order to make the overall city more appealing and to increase property values as the motivation for the construction of Interstate 5 in the Albina District. This explanation had significant validity, as the displacement of African Americans did result in increased property values due to the discriminatory practices of the FHA.

The final urban development project that resulted in the displacement in many African Americans from the Albina District was a national initiative not limited to Portland. Through the 1950s and 1960s, the federal government funded a nationwide urban renewal and development project meant to clear “urban blight” and improve the appearance of major cities. However, African American neighborhoods were disproportionately targeted, leading to the destruction of a number of African American homes. In Portland, since the majority of the African American population was concentrated in Albina, the national movement manifested itself as a targeted effort to destroy many homes in the Albina District of Portland. Nearly the entire historic black business district was bulldozed over the course of two decades, along with 300 homes, in order to make room for the new Emanuel Hospital, which despite being located in the Albina District, was still primarily meant for white residents of Portland. Because of the disproportionate effect the urban development initiative had on African American populations, it soon became known as “negro removal” among working-class African Americans who witnessed the destruction of their homes, neighborhoods, and communities in order to accommodate interstates, hospitals, and other federal services that were generally intended only for the use of white Americans as opposed to African Americans. Thus, the national urban development initiative in the 1950s and

1960s was another method in which African Americans were forced out of the Albina District, and consequently, the entire city of Portland.

In addition to being displaced from their historic home, African Americans also faced other consequences due to the African American concentration in the Albina District. Portland City Club Reports from the 1950s and 1960s confirmed that the increased concentration of African Americans in the Albina District of Portland allowed for increased discrimination targeting African Americans. Perhaps best summarizing the conditions of African Americans in Portland's Albina District was a 1957 City Club of Portland report that stated: "We find [that] a combination of enforced segregation in housing and poor economic opportunities [has] created Negro slum ghettos of the worst order right in the City of Portland".<sup>11</sup> Although the City Club acknowledged the difficult conditions that African Americans faced in the Albina District during the late 1950s itself, future city club documents revealed that the issue remained and was continually discussed over the course of (more than) the next decade. Relationships between law enforcement and the Albina community remained tense, and the majority of Albina residents still did not have the same access to opportunities and resources that their white counterparts in other areas of Portland generally enjoyed.

In particular, the most important document outlining the issues faced by African Americans in Portland was the City Club of Portland's June 4, 1968 Bulletin titled, "Report on Problems of Racial Justice in Portland".<sup>12</sup> Written by a committee assembled by the club, the

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<sup>11</sup> Mcelderry, 127.

<sup>12</sup> City Club of Portland (Portland, Or.), "City Club of Portland Bulletin vol. 49, no. 02 (1968-6-14)" (1968). *City Club of Portland*. Paper 241. [https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1240&context=oscdl\\_cityclub](https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1240&context=oscdl_cityclub).

report explored the particular issues that arose as a result of racial tensions and attempted to provide concrete and realistic solutions to resolve the issues. The Committee on Racial Justice was created in anticipation of a national report regarding racial issues and was meant to explore the conflict specifically within the city of Portland itself. The report signified perhaps the first attempt by white (or any) residents of Portland to acknowledge and address the race concerns that had previously been brushed aside or ignored. Perhaps idealistically, the report envisioned racial harmony in the future and the end of poverty, injustice, and prejudice throughout the city of Portland. However, the report also made many realistic points that were important to understanding the reason for the relative lack of opportunities that the majority of African Americans residing in the Albina District were subject to compared to their white counterparts in other areas of Portland.

First, the report acknowledged that the lack of local governmental action intending to involve residents of Albina in city projects/matters was one of the primary causes for the depressed opportunity in the Albina District compared to other areas of Portland. The report stressed the importance of effective communication lines to the area, something that had previously never been considered, perhaps intentionally. The Portland government was openly criticized in the report for failing to involve any residents from areas outside of the central part of Portland in important decisions and city projects. Such lack of communication was what was labeled as the cause of the disproportionate effect the many urban development and renewal projects that were carried out during the 1950s and 1960s had on Portland's African American population. In addition, the report criticized the lack of communication as another method with which the Portland government effectively prevented all African Americans from holding positions and office. Thus, the government of Portland acted "for", or on behalf of African

Americans, as opposed to “with” them.<sup>13</sup> This phenomenon led to conflicts between the African American population and city leadership because more often than not, government action negatively impacted the African American community centered in Albina. The city club report’s called into the question the very democracy of the Portland city government, as it clearly lacked representation for a significant portion of the population: African Americans.

In its conclusions, the report came to the arguably obvious conclusion regarding race relations and issues in Portland: that racial tension did exist and needed to be addressed immediately. Although the report acknowledged that the scale of racial issues in Portland was smaller than that of other major United States cities because Portland was a relatively small city, it also acknowledged that the issues were present and had significant impacts that were harmful to African Americans. In fact, the report pointed to the smaller African American population in Portland as a reason for race issues being worse in Portland compared to larger cities, because in Portland, white residents were able to dictate the lives of the comparatively smaller African American community. The report presented four potential steps that closely paralleled the steps presented in the national report regarding race relations that the city of Portland needed to take in order to ease the racial issues that the community faced. The steps were related in that they all called for the Portland government to include the African American community in city decisions as well as address issues in ghettos that were formerly ignored by city officials and the majority of the population.

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<sup>13</sup> The report expressed the idea that oftentimes, when government acted “for” African Americans (or any group) instead of “with” them, government actions were immediately perceived as hostile and contrary to the best interest of the group on whose behalf the government was taking action. Information from *Ibid*, 7.

The City Club of Portland's Committee on Racial Justice's investigation also focused more specifically on the lacking infrastructure for African Americans in the Albina District, including economic opportunity (including employment), education, public welfare, housing, law enforcement issues, and more. The specific studies concluded the expected result: that infrastructure for African Americans in all of the listed areas was severely less developed and maintained than that of their white counterparts. For each issue, the city club also provided specific actions the Portland government could take in order to address the issues discussed. The issues discussed were limited to the Albina District and observed in (generally) no other location in the city, showing that the housing discrimination of the earlier twentieth century that had forced African Americans into the area had allowed for systematic discrimination towards them in the future. For the issue of housing in particular, the city club reported noted a variety of discriminatory practices that were continuations of practices implemented earlier in the twentieth centuries. African Americans were still unable to obtain loans because of unreasonably high standards, were rarely able to rent property without being accused of damages, and were often simply lied to by real estate workers about the availability of properties that were intended to be sold to white individuals. Therefore, the city club's proposed solutions focused upon government funded reconstruction of the housing system for African Americans as well as the overall improvement of civil attitudes by the implementation of anti-discrimination and open-housing laws. Thus, the seemingly first attempt was made by Portland officials in order to eliminate the issue of housing discrimination and allow African Americans similar opportunities to their white counterparts.

The city club report's discussion of police relations within the Albina District was critical in showing that racist attitudes were still ingrained into the legislative system of the United

States. The report acknowledged that the majority of African Americans justifiably viewed the police as a hostile force due to the fact that they were representative of the oppressive and discriminatory government that was to blame for the many hardships faced in segregated areas like the Albina District. In addition, the report acknowledged that there was an immense amount of evidence to support the notion that the police was discriminatory towards African Americans, both because of increased arrests but also due to general attitudes and tensions. The report recognized that police officers acted rudely toward African Americans for no other reason other than racism, and that many police officers aimed derogatory comments towards people of color in the Albina District. Therefore, the report proposed the removal of any known police officers from ghettos, including many of the neighborhoods of Albina, and their replacement with well qualified police that had been briefed thoroughly on guidelines regarding anti-discriminatory practices. In addition, the initiative intended to “humanize” the role of police officers in communities, showing real growth towards ensuring that African Americans were comfortable with police officers in the Albina District and not threatened in their own traditional area of Portland. The article “Black and Blue”,<sup>14</sup> written regarding police-community relations drawing from the city club report, reaffirmed the notion that the steps that the city club proposed were to reduce the hostility and tension between police officers and African Americans in the Albina District. In addition, the article noted that the City Club report correctly expressed the idea that to many African Americans in Portland, police officers represented all the issues with the governmental system<sup>15</sup> and structure that resulted in fewer opportunity and worse conditions for African Americans.

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<sup>14</sup> Serbulo and Gibson.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, 2.

Despite the City Club of Portland's best attempts to alleviate racial tensions and issues faced by African Americans in the 1960s, racism continued to cause problems in Portland's Albina District in the following decades. In the 1980s, a variety of lending scandals were revealed, exposing a variety of lenders as discriminating against African Americans in the Albina District. In addition, the effects of the mass displacement efforts from the earlier part of the century continued to have a lasting impact as many African Americans were forced to move out of the Albina District where they had lived for decades prior. More developments negatively impacted African Americans in different ways; although explicit relocation was barred, the Albina District continued to be gentrified as wealthy white residents began to move in due to developments being built in and around the area. Although the homes, neighborhoods, and communities of African Americans were no longer being physically destroyed (as often), African Americans were forced to watch as public improvements and developments intended for white Portlanders were introduced in the areas surrounding their facilities and community in the Albina District. Although blatant discrimination was relatively infrequent, African Americans continued to watch their opportunity disappear because of white Portlander actions and developments in and around the Albina District.

The concentrated racist practices that affected African Americans in Portland in the mid twentieth century were direct consequences of housing discrimination from the decades prior that forced African Americans into the impoverished district of Albina. Because of the FHA practice of "redlining" and the complicity of realtors and banks with governmental racism, African Americans were forced into low-quality housing in the Albina District of Portland and had severely limited economic, social, and political opportunity compared to their white counterparts that resided in other areas of the metropolitan area. In addition, the concentration of African

Americans allowed Portland officials to specifically target African Americans by displacing those in the Albina District. Police officers also were able to act discriminatory towards African Americans by entering the Albina District, which guaranteed that the majority of their interactions with residents would be with African Americans. Thus, the housing discrimination of the early twentieth century allowed for systematic racism towards African Americans later in the century and caused racial tension and conflicts to increase drastically. Because the majority of African Americans were concentrated in the Albina District, city officials were able to effectively remove all African Americans from the city by allowing development which required destruction of homes in the area.

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