Ethnic Conflict and the Polish Americans of Detroit, 1921-42

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Ethnic identity in the industrialized world, like class or national identity, is a modern phenomenon. It sometimes developed in conjunction with those other identities and at other times and places in opposition or reaction to them. Ethnicity replaced older local and status identities which lost meaning and relevance on the journey from the village to the city. Among European immigrants to the United States, ethnicity became a complex of identities organized around the notion of membership in a certain national group in America. The component identities of ethnicity, such as class or occupational identification, ties to region of origin, local parochial or civic loyalties in the United States and religious affiliation existed in a dynamic tension with each other. The saliency of each, alone or in combination, for a group or individual, changed with time, place and circumstance.

Periodically, events crystallized a particular combination of loyalties and characteristics into a pattern that for a time defined the boundaries of a group's ethnicity. In the process some elements were sloughed off and others were added. In the Polish community several such junctures can be identified. Victor Greene has analysed the importance of the struggle among elite elements over the nature of the community and its relationship to the American Catholic church at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century in shaping Polish American consciousness. The First World War and the battle for Polish independence created another period of critical re-examination in the Polish American community.[1] I would suggest that the experience of Polish Americans in the depression and the struggle to unionize industrial workers during the 1930s constituted still another set of events that had a decisive impact on the self-definition and world view of the community.

The effect of these events on Polish Americans has never been closely studied. Yet the depression and unionization were the central external events that affected them just as the various Polonias were making the transition from immigrant community to ethnic community. The depression hit Polish Americans harder than most other groups in American society, set them back in their struggle to achieve a minimum level of economic security and, in fact, for a time seemed to jeopardize almost all of their gains. The New Deal Coalition and the drive to unionize the industries in which they worked mobilized them on an unprecedented scale. It emphasized and gave new meaning to their awareness of themselves as a working-class group.

By the hundreds of thousands they poured into the ranks of the new unions in the short space of a few years. In those industries in which the CIO effort was concentrated—steel, auto, coal mining, meat packing and agricultural machinery—Polish Americans formed the largest single group. It is clear that without their support the new industrial unions would have been crippled or defeated. We have begun to understand the effect of their ethnicity on their actions during this period but we still have little sense of how their participation in these events transformed their ethnicity.[2]

These large questions are beyond the scope of a short paper. However, I would here like to look at one important aspect of that crucial era: the way the events of this period shaped the reaction of Detroit's Poles to the growing Black community.

Detroit's Polonia was founded shortly after the Civil War by skilled artisans from Prussian Poland. They were followed by peasant migrants who came in a moderate stream to take jobs as field hands for the Ferry Seed Company and as labourers in the city's foundries, stove factories, railroad shops and cigarette factories. By 1900 the Polish community in Detroit numbered 50,000. The stream became a flood after the turn of the century as new Polish immigrants joined thousands of fellow countrymen who had earlier found work in the upper Michigan copper mines and the Pennsylvania coalfields to flock into the booming auto factories. By the time the First World War cut off immigration the Polish community in Detroit had more than doubled to over 110,000. Fifteen years later when the Great Depression struck it had almost doubled again to well over 200,000 people.[3]

Prior to the thirties, the history of Detroit's Polonia was not marked by any violent struggle for jobs with the city's Blacks. Although Detroit Poles were no doubt aware that such battles had taken place elsewhere, there was no Lemont Massacre, Pullman or Packinghouse strike in their experience. The competition for work between the two groups was initially confined to a small number of jobs on the docks and for the custom in a few trades [illegible] Black community numbered only

4,000 at the turn of the century—about one-twelfth of the size of the city's Polonia. As a result, there was also little competition for housing. In a few older areas of the city Blacks and Poles shared the same very poor neighbourhoods without friction. For the most part, however, the incoming Poles did not move wholesale into old neighbourhoods abandoned by earlier immigrants but created new ones around their new churches in farmland on the eastern and western edges of the rapidly expanding city.

About a decade after the Poles, Black immigrants in large numbers began to arrive in the city. Escaping the poverty and oppression of the South and lured by a hope for steady work and better pay, Blacks came north to fill the demand for labour that had been created by the halt to immigration caused first by the war and then later by immigration restriction. By the depression the number of Blacks in Detroit had risen dramatically to about 120,000—one-half the size of the Polish population. The depression cruelly extinguished their prospects and crushed their hopes for a better life. The stage was set for a deadly competition between the two groups at the bottom of Detroit's society for work and space.[4]

Both groups brought with them into the competition a strong sense of oppression, a feeling that they were victims of profound historic injustice and of brutal persecution. For Polish Americans this sense was a product of the historic national consciousness they distilled out of the brooding, romantic tragedy of the partitions and the poverty and discrimination they suffered in America and Europe. The two sources reinforced and fed one another and each received additional impetus as the events of the twentieth century unfolded.[5]

Several historians, including myself, have pointed out that the class and ethnic prejudice directed against the Polish community in Detroit was perhaps more intense and persistent than elsewhere and that fact markedly affected the Poles' attitude toward their Black rivals. Robert Shogan and Thomas Craig note, for example, that "The Poles, looked down upon by the more established groups in Detroit, took out their resentment against Negroes, whom they regarded as a threat to the economic gains they were struggling to make."[6]

It is worth noting that some Black leaders in Detroit clearly recognized the importance of anti-Polish discrimination and prejudice and the resultant feelings of anger and alienation in poisoning relations between the two groups. In 1942 during the Sojourner Truth incident (to be discussed below), Rev. Charles Hill, a leading Black spokesman, in an appeal to the Polish community for cooperation assured the Poles that unlike others who disliked them in Detroit, Blacks did not believe that "Polish people are stupid, uncouth and unfit for anything except manual work."[7]

A consciousness of historic injustices and a knowledge that

they were the victims of discrimination increased the intensity of the confrontation between the two groups when it came, but the real cause of the contention was rooted in the poverty and difficulties each faced and the scarcity of the resources for which they struggled. The problems of the Black community prior to the depression are well described elsewhere and are not within the scope of this paper. They were heavy indeed. The Polish community, however, was only a little better off in the twenties. The wartime boom notwithstanding, the Poles in Detroit found themselves economically and socially near the bottom as the postwar depression inaugurated the twenties. The community struggled in these difficult conditions to absorb a large number of recent immigrants, many of them young single men, and to stabilize itself at a time when other Polish communities were already moving into a more mature stage of development. The 1922 Detroit Welfare report described the problems faced by Polish immigrants in the city:

> Detroit [in 1921 and early 1922] . . . was faced with a situation more serious than that which confronted other large cities. Unemployment extended over a longer period in Detroit and affected largely a recent population who had not yet been able to achieve that degree of economic security which comes with thrift exercised over a long period of time.[8]

A more detailed and personal account of the plight of many people in Polonia came from the pen of Helen Wendell, a writer and social reformer, who visited Hamtramck in 1921. Even allowing for exaggeration, it is a grim description. She writes:

> Please believe me when I assert that there lies within our very gates tragedy and privation and sorrow and these deplorable conditions have called forth no flood of commiseration, no deluge of merciful aid.
>
> In Hamtramck, starvation is the slow kind because the destitute contrive by some means or other to obtain a little food now and then and by this uncertain sustenance to keep going, their undernourished condition offering less resistence, day by day . . . to lurking disease germs which finally attack it. It is unbelievable on what little they can subsist.[9]

Helen Wendell's examples are pitiful: lack of basic sanitation measures by the city, intense overcrowding, rampant tuberculosis, unemployment, cruel treatment of sick and injured employees by the auto companies, hunger and poverty. She wonders that Detroiters committed to the cause of "famished China" or "starving Poland" should be so ignorant or indifferent to their own "starving Poland" in Hamtramck. The plight of Hamtramck's poor, she writes, was aggravated by the depletion of the relief funds because the demand for aid was so great.[10]

Even when economic conditions improved during the 1920s, a substantial segment of the Polish American population remained

in difficult straits. During the entire decade the percentage of welfare recipients in Wayne County (Detroit) who were members of families headed by parents born in Poland remained constant: 14.8 per cent in 1922, 15 per cent in 1926, 14.9 per cent in 1927, 16 per cent in 1929.[11] In 1929, the last year before the Great Depression, the number of Polish Americans served by the Welfare Agency exceeded all others (including the hard-pressed Blacks) with the sole exception of native-born whites.[12]

The 1929 Annual Report of Public Welfare for Detroit offers a detailed picture of indigence in the city—the only report in the inter-war period that does so. Because it lists the recipients of welfare by place of birth and also indicates the cause that led them to seek aid, it gives us some idea of the problems faced by the poorer elements of Detroit's Polonia. The numbers of Polish Americans served by relief agencies exceeded that of *all* other groups except "Native Whites" in cases arising out of alcoholism, death in the family, handicaps, injury at work, marital incompatibility, child neglect, non-support, sickness, widow or widowerhood and imprisonment. In cases of illegitimacy they were also second in the city, this time exceeding native-born whites but second to Blacks. They were the third-largest group of clients in the city, behind Blacks and native-born Whites, in cases of desertion, divorce or separation, insufficient income, insanity or feeblemindedness and unemployment. In only one category, cases arising out of problems of old age, reflecting the youth of the Polish population, were they not among the top three groups.[13]

Several observations should be made about those statistics. First, the percentage of Poles on welfare is approximately equal to their percentage in the city population. Secondly, it must be noted that welfare services were on a small scale and offered only in cases of dire necessity. The absolute number of those served was small by modern standards; about 5,700 Poles were on the rolls. Thirdly, the report clearly understates the problems of the Polish community. Polish immigrants were likely to resort to social service agencies only in extremity and as a last resort when family, church and neighbourhood resources had been exhausted, were unavailable for some reason, or were non-existent. Also, by 1929 there was already a significant number of families headed by second-generation Polish Americans. If they turned to the public agencies for support, they would be enumerated among native-born whites. Lastly, because the report lists all ethnic groups in the city, it is a good indicator of the problems of the Polish community relative to those of all other groups in the population.

If a significant minority in Detroit's Polonia were in difficulty during the relatively prosperous twenties, the thirties saw a majority of the community driven to extremity. An immigrant group still in the first stages of a boot-strap operation had its progress

stopped and the basis on which it hoped to build its security severely undermined. The Great Depression attacked two of the most important pillars of Polish American working-class life; a secure job and homestead. In their urban forms, these transformed village values provided the fabric of respectability, pride and dignity which held the community together. Unemployment, poverty, foreclosure, led Polish Americans to reaffirm them with considerable force and in this new emphasis change their meaning. The threat to jobs and housing was so severe that the struggle to maintain them took on tones of desperate defensiveness rarely encountered prior to the depression.

The collapse of auto production made the 1930s particularly grim for Polish Americans in the Detroit area. Unemployment at the height of the depression in 1932 was close to 50 per cent in the Polish community. In Hamtramck more than half of the 11,000 families were on public relief. All those families in the city with less than three children were removed from the welfare rolls in a desperate effort to conserve resources and get aid to the neediest. In Detroit, where Polish Americans were one of the largest groups on welfare, public assistance fell to fifteen cents per person per day before running out entirely. Those few who worked suffered intolerable conditions, low pay, incessant demands for the speed up of production and the constant threat of being fired. The speed up at the Dodge Main plant with its predominantly Polish American work force was one of the worst in the industry in the mid-thirties.[14] A recent history of Detroit notes that after each annual model changeover,

> older men used shoe polish to darken their hair when they reapplied for work, fearful the foremen would pass over them and hire younger workers. Men left baskets of food and liquor at the gatehouse for the foremen in the hope that they could buy their way back into the plant. Women were forced to give sexual favors if they wanted to get and keep jobs.[15]

The situation for Polish Americans in housing was as unsettling and insecure as their employment prospects. By 1932 as many as 4,500 families a month were being evicted in the Detroit area.[16] Polish Americans who lived through that period remember the anguish when they, or their friends and relatives were evicted or lost homes they had struggled to buy. Those who lost homes or were forced to move often took up residence with relatives. Three or even four families in a single home were not rare occurrences in Detroit's Polish neighbourhoods. Many who did not lose their homes still recall vividly how close they came to that catastrophe. The struggle to hold on to the family home is often the central memory of the depression period. In Hamtramck, candidates for constable hoped to win the homeowners' and renters' votes with promises to conduct evictions and foreclosures in a dignified and humane manner.[17]

Ownership of a house and a bit of land was of prime importance to Polish Americans in Detroit as elsewhere. At the beginning of the century their desire to acquire their own homes led them to become the leading group in Detroit's "informal" housing market, as the recent work by Olivier Zunz has pointed out. Rather than wait to accumulate the relatively large sums necessary to buy an existing house or one built for them by a professional builder, they often built their own small inexpensive houses with the aid of friends and neighbours.

Detroit's Poles, like Stephen Thernstrom's Newberrysport Irish, chose a mobility strategy that centred on property rather than education or the accumulation of capital for entrepreneurial activity. In the traditional world that shaped their values, land was the only sure guarantee of status, position and respect. But land did more than confer status. Its possession was also essential to survival. In traditional societies such as rural Poland, all property was considered as a productive asset and Polish immigrants brought that notion with them to the city. Polish workers used their small plots, even in densely settled industrial areas, to grow vegetables and raise animals in order to supplement the family's earnings. House and land therefore, not only gave Polish American families a place in the physical and social universe but, in their minds, was also essential to economic survival.

One of the indicators of the gradual recovery from the depression by Detroit's Poles was the slow but steady increase in the homeownership rate in Polish neighbourhoods. In Hamtramck, it rose from 38.9 per cent in 1936 to 42 per cent in 1945. In the areas adjacent to the Polish churches—in which almost all the residents were Polish—the concentration of homeowners comprised 48 to 57 per cent of the total number of residents in 1940. Yet it is an indication of the lingering poverty that most of the homes were classified as substandard during the 1940 census. For example, on the area closest to St. Florian Church on the west, 100 out of 143 housing units were classified as in need of major repair or a private bath.[18]

Average monthly rent is a good index of the relative economic level of an area. In spite of distortions caused by scarcity or abundance of housing, transportation facilities or distances from work, it is also a fair indicator of family income. It is instructive to compare the rents in Hamtramck and the Polish areas of Detroit with other areas of the city. The average monthly rent in Detroit in 1940 was $35.88, ranging from a low of $18.00 in the poorest areas to $120.00 in the wealthiest. The average rent in Hamtramck was $23.97 a month, with a low of $18.26 in the poorest section—an area almost 30 per cent Black—to $26.45 in the areas nearest St. Florian and St. Ladislaus churches. In the other heavily Polish areas the rents were in the $20.00 to $29.00 average range.[19]

Other data from the period give additional indications of the problems and marginal condition of the Polish American population of Detroit as it emerged out of the depression. The tuberculosis death rate in the Polish neighbourhoods south of Hamtramck was 40 to 79 per 100,000, a rate exceeded only in some of the poor Black and southern White areas of the city. The infant death rate in east side and west side Polish neighbourhoods was one of the highest in the city in 1939/40, ranging from 40 to over 60 per 1,000 live births. Finally, the juvenile delinquency complaints in the Polish areas of the city centre between 1936 and 1939 showed rates considerably above the city averages. In some sections in the heart of the Polish east side it ranged as high as .40 to .74 complaints per 100 children of school age, according to court records.[20]

It is against this background of poverty, discrimination and a severe threat to jobs and housing that the first major struggle between the Polish community and Detroit's Blacks developed. With the Poles beginning to move in large numbers into the union movement by 1936, they found Blacks the largest and certainly the most prominent group among those recruited to break their strikes. Employers exploited the poverty and catastrophic unemployment in the Black community to recruit workers to replace the immigrants and their sons when they struck. At Dodge Main in Hamtramck, for example, when the predominantly Polish American work force struck in 1939 for relief from a murderous speed up and the sympathetic and largely Polish city police force closed the Hamtramck gates to the plant, Detroit Police held open the Detroit exits for the more than two hundred Blacks brought in to try to smash the strike.[21] The bitterness of the confrontation even erupted at times in violence. During the attempt to organize the Ford Motor Company in 1941, street battles between armed Black men supporting the company and the UAW pickets took place before the gates of the huge Rouge plant, as hundreds of Black and Polish Americans fought each other for precious jobs.[22]

The housing competition began to develop considerably later than the job competition. In the 1920s the burgeoning Black population began crowding into housing on the edges of Polish neighbourhoods but not seriously challenging them.[23] The depression halted the search for more and better housing by both groups. As Detroit began to repair some of the ravages of the depression, however, the competition over housing between the two groups became intense. In little over a decade from 1930 to 1942 the number of families in the city increased by 120,000 while the number of dwelling units increased only by 55,000.[24] As the two largest and poorest ethnic groups in the city, Poles and Blacks found themselves pitted against each other in the neighbourhoods as in the work place. By 1940 frequent violent scuffles between

gangs of young Poles and Blacks heralded the beginning of intense and bitter conflict between the two groups. In the fall of 1941 an argument over control of what became the Sojourner Truth housing project led to the first major housing battle marked by violence. The conflict brought to the surface all of the fears and insecurity of the Polish community born out of longstanding marginal status and the community's recent experience during the Great Depression.

The crises developed when the city of Detroit with federal assistance decided to build desperately needed housing for Black working-class families. The site chosen for the project was next to the newest Polish neighbourhood in Detroit, an area adjacent to three Polish parishes. The intention of the planners has never been revealed but the result of the site choice was clear. It put the undesirable Blacks away from the higher prestige groups in the city and next to the only slightly less desirable Poles. The Poles in the area immediately began to lobby and agitate at municipal, state and federal levels for the transfer of the housing to White occupation. Control of the project shifted back and forth between the groups throughout the autumn and winter as the construction neared completion. The final decision in January 1942 was in favour of the Blacks. As the first Black residents began to move in at the end of February, violence broke out between the newcomers and the neighbourhood people. Outside groups with an interest in racial strife, such as the Ku Klux Klan, rushed into the fray with incendiary leaflets and a burning cross. Finally, in late March 1942, under police protection, the Black families moved in.[25]

The time of the riot was a particularly difficult period in Detroit. The United States had just declared war and the country was beginning full-scale mobilization of its industries. In Detroit this meant the end of resources for the production of civilian automobiles and the changeover to war production. To effect the changeover more than 250,000 workers were laid off and many of them faced the prospect of finding new work because their jobs had been eliminated for the duration of the war. Some corporations were laying off employees in Detroit and gearing up for war production elsewhere. It was unclear in early 1942 just how many jobs would be permanently lost in Detroit. The unemployment of so many of its members agitated the Polish community. The economic news and plight of the unemployed dominated the front pages of the Polish newspaper. John Dingell, the Polish American congressman from Detroit, led the struggle in the U.S. Congress for a special $300 million appropriation to aid Detroit unemployed.[26]

The reaction of the Polish American community to the Sojourner Truth affair is recorded in the reports of the meetings of various concerned groups. The most common complaint at these

meetings was that as a result of the building project "disorderly people" would be introduced into the community.[27] A speaker at one meeting summed up clearly the anxiety of the Poles:

> The neighbourhood is a new one and the residents of the neighbourhood are primarily workers who laboured hard for the money they invested in their homes. The movement of Negroes into this neighbourhood would lower the value of the possessions of these poor workers after which will come impoverishment.[28]

The deprivation of the depression clearly echoes in that speech.

The February 21 meeting of the Henryk Sienkiewicz Society, Group 2049 of the Polish National Alliance, highlighted sharply the tie between job anxiety and the status and housing fears of the Polish American community. The agenda of this crowded meeting contained two main items for discussion: how to obtain more government assistance to aid the many unemployed in the Polish community, and the issue of Blacks moving into the Fenelon-Nevada (Sojourner Truth) housing project. The assembly passed resolutions petitioning their elected representatives for redress in both cases.[29]

The most thorough analysis of the Sojourner Truth affair was made in a series of secret memoranda by the U.S. government Office of Facts and Figures (OFF). The study was done in order to assess the impact of racial tension on war production. The first report completed on March 5, 1942 concluded that

> The conflict dramatizes all of the insecurity and displaced aggression of the immigrant in northern cities. . . . The conflict could better be called a Polish-Negro conflict . . . than a Black-White conflict.[30]

The first report was followed by a memorandum from Rensis Likert, head of the Surveys Division of OFF, to R. Keith Kane, head of the OFF Bureau of Intelligence. Likert's analysis which underlined clearly the tie between jobs and the housing struggle, is worth quoting at length:

> In Detroit, the Poles are the biggest cultural minority and the Negroes the second. . . . During the past depression and to a certain extent even during the lush pre-war boom, and now again . . . there have never been enough jobs to go around.
>
> The immigrant class is a working class. The Negro class is a working class. Due to a competitive set up they both compete with each other for jobs. Due to the many things both groups have suffered, both tend to look for substitute targets for their aggression and feelings of resentment against injustice and oppression, because they are afraid to make a direct attack upon the authors of their misery, or because they haven't the education or the patience under strain to sit down and figure out by social analysis why their living standards are low and why they must compete against each other for jobs.

> Under such a condition one always wonders why he does not get a job when someone else does and begins to devise rationalizations why he should have a job and the other fellow not.
>
> The important facts in this case are that immigrants say white men should have jobs before Negroes and Negroes say that people who have been in this country the longest should have jobs first.[31]

The Sojourner Truth riot was one of the first and in many ways the prototype of the postwar confrontations over housing that masked accumulated anger over an incessant job rivalry in a condition of always looming unemployment. It was also the product of aggression born of long years of contempt and discrimination by the dominant groups in the United States. The Poles and Blacks living in the same areas and working at the same jobs found each other the handiest and safest targets for venting frustration.

Notes

1. Victor Greene, *For God and Country* (Madison, Wis.: State Historical Society, 1975). See also his article "Slavic American Nationalism, 1870-1919" in Anna Cienciala (ed.), *American Contributions to the Seventh International Congress of Slavists* III: *History* (The Hague: Mouton, 1973), pp. 197-215.
2. Peter Friedlander, *The Emergence of a UAW Local 1936-1939* (Pittsburgh: Univ. of Pittsburgh, 1975). Stanisław Nowak, "Udział Polaków w Organizowaniu Związku Zawodowego Robotników Automobilowych w USA," [The Place of Poles in the Organization of the United Automobile Workers Union in the USA"], *Problemy Polonii Zagranicznej* [Problems of Poles Abroad] 6-8 (1971), pp. 165-89.
3. T. Radzialowski with D. Binkowski, "Polish Americans in Detroit Politics" in A. Pienkos (ed.), *Ethnic Politics in Urban America* (Chicago: Polish American Historical Assn., 1978), pp. 40-65.
4. Ibid.
5. T. Radzialowski, "View from a Polish Ghetto," *Ethnicity* I, no. 2 (1974), pp. 125-50.
6. Robert Shogan and Tom Craig, *The Detroit Race Riot* (Philadelphia: Chelton, 1964), p. 19.
7. Sojourner Truth Citizen's Committee, "To Loyal and Patriotic Polish Americans Living near Sojourner Truth Homes," copy of leaflet in Reference File "Housing" in Albert J. Zak Memorial Library, Hamtramck, Michigan.
8. City of Detroit, *Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare for Calendar Year 1922*. On file Burton Collection, Detroit Public Library.
9. Helen Wendell, "Conditions in Hamtramck," *Pipps Weekly* 2, no. 23 (September 24, 1921), pp. 10-11.

10. Ibid.
11. City of Detroit, *Annual Reports of the Departments of Public Welfare, 1922, 1926, 1927, 1929.* On file Burton Collection, Detroit Public Library.
12. City of Detroit, *Annual Reports of the Department of Public Welfare 1929,* pp. 14-18. The 1929 report is the only report to make this breakdown. The department published no further reports until it issued a summary in 1937.
13. Ibid.
14. Caroline Bird, *The Invisible Scar* (New York: David McKay, 1966), p. 33. Workers Education Local 189, *Union Town* (Detroit: Labor History Task Force, 1980), pp. 4-5.
15. *Union Town,* p. 5.
16. R. Conot, *American Odyssey* (New York: Quadrangle, 1974), p. 285.
17. Field notes, interview with Stephen Morawski, Hamtramck, Michigan, August 8, 1980. Field notes, interview with Genevieve O. Radzialowski, Hamtramck, Michigan, August 9, 1980.
18. "Housing, Hamtramck" Reference File, Albert J. Zak Memorial Library, Hamtramck, Michigan.
19. Sixteenth Census of the United States (1940). U.S. Department of Commerce, *Housing Bulletin for Michigan. Hamtramck Block Statistics.* Prepared under supervision of Leon E. Truesdell (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Gov't Printing Office, 1942), pp. 5-8.
20. City of Detroit, City Plan Commission, *Master Plan Reports: The People of Detroit* (Detroit, 1946), pp. 33-34.
21. *Union Town,* pp. 20-21.
22. B. J. Widick, *Detroit: City of Race and Class Violence* (Chicago: Quadrangle, 1972), pp. 30-31.
23. J. Parot sees the housing struggle (like the job competition) in Chicago developing somewhat earlier. He dates the beginning of the attempt by Poles and other ethnics to "hold the line" to the aftermath of the race riot of 1919. J. Parot, "Ethnic versus Black Metropolis: The Origins of Polish-Black Housing Tensions in Chicago," *Polish American Studies* 29, nos. 1-2 (Spring-Autumn 1972), pp. 5-33.
24. Earl Brown, *Lessons from Detroit,* Public Affairs Pamphlet No. 87 (New York: Public Affairs Co., 1944), p. 4.
25. Alfred McClung Lee and Norman Humphrey, *Race Riot* (New York: Octagon Books, 1968), pp. 31-32.
26. On unemployment and the Dingell Bill see, for example, *Dziennik Polski* [Polish Daily News] (Detroit), 5 February 1942.
27. See the report of the meeting of the Pulaski Democratic Club in *Dziennik Polski,* 5 February 1942.
28. See "Kom. Obywateli Przeciw Przeznaniu Mieszkan przy Fenelon Murzynom," ["Meeting of the Citizens Committee Against the Assigning of the Fenelon Ave. Homes to Negroes"] *Dziennik Polski,* 21 February 1942.

29. *Dziennik Polski,* 21 February 1942.
30. The reports were never released. They were leaked to a New York newspaper during the 1943 Detroit race riot and published as an exposé of government inaction in the face of what it knew for over a year to be a volatile situation. See *P.M.,* (New York), 27 June 1943.
31. Ibid.