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Guide to the Michigan Governor's Committee to Investigate the Detroit Race Riot Records 1943



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Descriptive Summary

Identifier	ICU.SPCL.MGCIDRR
Title	Michigan Governor's Committee to Investigate the Detroit Race Riot. Records
Date	1943
Size	0.5 linear feet (1 box)
Repository	Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library 1100 East 57th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.
Abstract	The Detroit riot of June 21 and 22, 1943 was one of the most violent racial upheavals to occur in the United States. The clash between white and African American residents, the worst since the Chicago riots of 1919, was finally quelled with the help of federal troops, but left 34 dead and 670 injured. Consists of a report prepared by a committee directed by Michigan governor, Harry F. Kelly, to investigate the riot that took place in Detroit on June 21, 1943. Committee members included Herbert J. Rushton, William E. Dowling, Oscar Olander, and John H. Witherspoon.

Acknowledgments

Information on Use

Access

No restrictions.

Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Michigan Governor's Committee to Investigate the Detroit Race Riot. Records, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Historical Note

The Detroit riot of June 21 and 22, 1943 was one of the most violent racial upheavals to occur in the United States. The clash between white and African American residents, the worst since the Chicago riots of 1919, was finally quelled with the help of federal troops, but it left 34 dead and 670 injured.

A committee composed of Herbert J. Rushton, the State's Attorney General, William E. Dowling, Wayne County Prosecuting Attorney, Oscar C. Olander, the State Police Commissioner, and John H. Witherspoon, the Commissioner of the Detroit Police Force

was charged by the Governor of Michigan, Harry F. Kelly, to investigate the circumstances of the rioting, including the possibility of enemy agitation and subversion. The committee concluded, however, that the rioting was a "spontaneous uprising resulting from long-neglected and side-tracked social problems" which could only be solved by "determined, straight-forward, sociological methods."

Scope Note

Consists of a report prepared by a committee directed by Michigan governor, Harry F. Kelly, to investigate the riot that took place in Detroit on June 21, 1943. Committee members included Herbert J. Rushton, William E. Dowling, Oscar C. Olander, and John H. Witherspoon.

The committee report, about 300 pages long, contains a 17 page mimeographed narrative of the riot. This narrative and the committee's subsequent findings are based upon police and hospital statistics concerning the dead and the injured, weapons confiscated, arrests, individuals tried or awaiting trial, looting and other property destruction. Photocopies of police and hospital reports, of weapon displays and police precinct maps constitute the exhibits which accompany the report. A detailed index to these exhibits can be found in Folder 3.

Related Resources

The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/select.html>

Subject Headings

- Dowling, William E.
- Kelly, Harry F.
- Olander, Oscar Gustav, 1899-
- Rushton, Herbert J.
- Witherspoon, John H.
- Detroit (Mich.) -- History.
- Detroit (Mich.) -- Race relations.
- Riots -- Michigan -- Detroit.

INVENTORY

Box 1

Folder 1

Title page, Forward

Box 1

Folder 2

Riot Narrative, June 20, June 21

Box 1

Folder 3

Riot Exhibits 1-32, Index

Box 1

Folder 4

Riot Exhibits 1-4, violent incidents on street cars, October 4, 1942-January 29, 1943; precinct maps of riot areas

Box 1

Folder 5

Riot Exhibits 5-9, violent incidents on street cars, January 2, 1943-June 20, 1943; Belle Isle disturbance, report

Box 1

Folder 6

Riot Exhibits 10-14, Detroit police, duty strength; Presidential proclamation, June 21, 1943; situation in Detroit prior to use of Federal troops, police report; arrests, arranged by precincts, by race

Box 1

Folder 7

Riot Exhibits 15-16, arrests, male juveniles, June 21-June 25, by race; arrests, investigation arrests, arranged by precinct, race, age

Box 1

Folder 8

Riot Exhibit 17, misdemeanor and felony arrests, riot, arranged by precinct

Box 1

Folder 9

Riot Exhibit 17, misdemeanor and felony arrests, pending, arranged by precinct

Box 1

Folder 10

Riot Exhibit 18, dead and injured, hospital admittances

Box 1

Folder 11

Riot Exhibit 19, dead and injured, overall statistics; deaths, synopses of incidents

Box 1

Folder 12

Riot Exhibit 19, dead and injured, police officers

Box 1

Folder 13

Riot Exhibit 19, dead and injured, June 20, 8,30 PM-June 21, 8,15 AM

Box 1

Folder 14

Riot Exhibit 19, dead and injured, June 21, 8,15 AM-June 21, 3,50 PM

Box 1

Folder 15

Riot Exhibit 19, dead and injured, June 21, 3,55 PM-June 21, 8,45 PM

Box 1

Folder 16

Riot Exhibit 19, dead and injured, June 21, 8,45 PM-June 23, 5,09 PM

Box 1

Folder 17

Riot Exhibits 20-21, property destruction, autos, buildings

Box 1

Folder 18

Riot Exhibit 22, looting

Box 1

Folder 19

Riot Exhibits 23-24, confiscated weapons, lists, photos; arrests, analysis summary

Box 1

Folder 20

Riot Exhibit 25, Riot offenses, analysis and summary

Box 1

Folder 21

Riot Exhibit 26-27, Riot arrests, investigation arrests, court cases

Box 1

Folder 22

Riot Exhibit 28-29, Riot arrests, investigation arrests, arranged by age and race

Box 1

Folder 23

Background of riot, report of the Committee

Box 1

Folder 24

Background of riot, racial discrimination, photocopies of newspaper editorials, magazine articles, miscellaneous documents

Box 1

Folder 25

Background of riot, narcotics, lists of drug stores looted