

## Negroes Once Terrorized

# LEVITTOWN NOW HONORS COLORED SCHOOL TEACHER

LEVITTOWN, Pa.—Seven years ago, this post-war city of 60,000 was the scene of nine, wild nights of racial turmoil when its first



**HONORED BY WHITE COMMUNITY**—There are only a dozen or so Negro families among 60,000 residents of Levittown, Pa., scene of racial explosion in 1957, but Junior Chamber of Commerce named former Pitt football star Henry Ford, shown above with son Michael, city's Outstanding Young Man of 1964. (See story.)

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Thursday, February 4, 1965

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colored family moved in. Last week, the Levittown Junior Chamber of Commerce honored a Negro with its first Distinguished Service Award.

Henry Ford, 33, was chosen Outstanding Young Man of 1964 of this 15,500-home development for his "untiring efforts in working with the children" at a community social, recreation and cultural center. He has been director and program coordinator of the center since last spring.

A former football star at the University of Pittsburgh who played professionally in the National Football League, Mr. Ford received the award at the Jaycees' 11th annual dinner in nearby Morrisville.

Now a Junior High School mathematics teacher just across the Delaware River in New Jersey's capital city of Trenton, Mr. Ford and his wife, Rochelle, together with their two sons, Michael, 3, and Mark, 1, live in the \$12,150 ranch-type house that was pelted with rocks, eggs and garbage in August, 1957.

Interviewing the Fords in the spotless, attractively furnished living room of the home they have occupied for four years, New York Times correspondent William G. Weart said it was difficult to visualize the hatred and violence, fanned by prejudice, that had marked the arrival there of William E. Myers Jr., a Negro laboratory technician, seven years ago.

THE OUTBURST reached a peak on the ninth night, when a Bristol Township police sergeant was knocked unconscious by a thrown rock. State troopers dispersed the crowd with riot clubs and banned further gatherings near the residence in the Dogwood Hollow section. The Bucks County Court issued an injunction prohibiting seven Levittown residents from harassing the family.

One of the defendants was James E. Newell, chairman of a Levittown group that had been

formed to "restore our entire white community."

Mr. Myers, who returned to his home town of York, Pa., four years ago, predicted that the situation would quiet down. It did. There have been no further demonstrations, no mass exodus of whites and no drop in property values as some had feared.

Since then, too, Mr. Newell and others have changed their views. "Integration has worked out far better than we anticipated," he commented.

IN NOTING that he had donated a bicycle, which is to be awarded to the winner of a contest that Mr. Ford is planning at the Bristol Township Community Center, Mr. Newell said:

"Mr. Ford is a fine fellow and is doing a wonderful job for the children. If all the colored people, in fact, the people of every race, were of his caliber, they would be a credit to any community."

Today, more than a score of Negro families live in Levittown, which sprawls over three townships and the Borough of Tullytown. They are free to join in all community activity. Like their white neighbors, some do and some do not.

"The integration we have in Levittown has worked out just fine," declared John Shelby, president of the junior chamber. "There is no trouble at all. Everyone is getting along with everyone else."

While the Fords were being interviewed, their three white guests continued to enjoy a late evening snack in the kitchen. They were Lewis Wechsler, a neighbor who aided the Myerses in their initial trouble; Mrs. Ruth Laibstain and Mrs. Selma Bortner, two of the 16 volunteers who assist Mr. Ford at the center.

WITH THE FORDS, they were "trying to work out something that will get some much—"  
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