

CENSUS '90



**Answer the Census
April 1, 1990**

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State governments also use census figures to dispense shares of revenue to local governments that have been collected through state-wide fuel, liquor, sales, and tobacco taxes.

Not only do the census counts translate into government dollars for every community, they also are used for planning and improving public facilities and programs. State and local government planners use census facts to establish long-range community plans, to develop capital improvement programs, to help locate new schools, to improve nutrition programs, to set up day-care centers and health clinics where they are most needed, to develop facilities for older people, and to provide better transportation.

"When our communities don't have the drug treatment centers, the senior citizen centers, highways, hospitals, schools, day care and other facilities, it's directly related to us not filling out that [census] questionnaire," Brewington said. "We've got to turn that around. It's paramount to our survival."

The more than 90 community-uplift organizations that comprise the mem-

bership of the national Assault On Illiteracy Program (AOIP) are concerned that African American citizens are under-represented in the U.S. House of Representatives and in state legislatures and receive less than their equitable share of federal funds.

Why Blacks Are Undercounted

DESPITE heroic outreach efforts by the Census Bureau, African Americans make up the largest number of undercounted Americans. According to Bureau estimates, 1.7 million Blacks (5.9 percent) of the total Black population were not counted in 1980. The overwhelming majority of this number (8.8 percent) were African American males. Twenty percent of all Black males between the ages of 40 and 49 were not counted.

Many of these uncounted Black males were fathers who were afraid that the information would be used against them in child support cases or in prosecution for illegal activities.

Others were concerned that census statistics would be used to interfere with welfare payments or to evict them from public housing.

Then too, many African Americans have an inherent fear of answering questions asked by strangers. The community-building organizations, professional educators and other volunteers who have joined together in AOIP to combat the "still rising functional illiteracy" rate (47%) among Black adults remind us that many African Americans do not fill out the forms because they can't read and understand them.

The Census Is Confidential

TITLE 13 of the U.S. Code prevents any agency—Immigration, the FBI, the IRS, the courts, the military, welfare agencies—from getting any specific information about you. While attempts have been made to get this information through the courts, the United States Supreme Court has ruled

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matic losses. Of the 23 congressional districts represented at present by Blacks, only five are projected to become population gainers.

The future of Black participation in the political arena depends upon Black participation in the 1990 census.

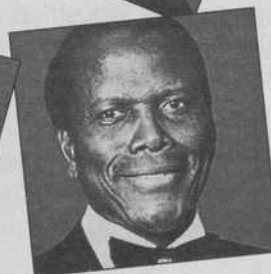
Beyond political representation, however, there is a great deal of federal and state money at stake in the final census numbers. Despite recent cutbacks, billions of federal dollars for a wide range of programs are redistributed to local governments based on population, age, income, and other census statistics.

TWENTY-SECOND ANNUAL

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