

Compton was the American dream. Sunny California with a palm tree in the front yard, the camper, the boat. Temptingly close to the Los Angeles ghetto in the 50's and 60's, it became "The Black American Dream." Open housing paved the way as middle-class blacks flooded into the city. Whites don't buy houses in Compton anymore. Now with 74% of the population, black power is the fact of life. From banks to bowling alleys. But the dream that many blacks thought they were buying has turned sour. Though the mayor and four out of five city councilmen are black, they have been unable to solve the problems of crime and growing welfare which is slowing turning suburban Compton into an extension of the black inner city. Crime is now as high as the ghetto. 47 homicides last year gave Compton one of the highest per capita rates in the country. Juvenile gang activity, muggings, small robberies make some blacks want to leave