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The US Department of Labor Conducts a Post-Rebellion Study, Titled—The Detroit Riot of 1967: A Psychological, Social, and Economic Profile of 500 Arrestees

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Paul David Adkins

*The US Department of Labor Conducts a Post-Rebellion Study, Titled—
The Detroit Riot of 1967: A Psychological, Social, and Economic Profile
of 500 Arrestees*

Denise Levertov recalled an experiment the Pentagon conducted in 1957. Scientists locked pigs in cages and wrapped them in aluminum, then detonated a 37 kiloton device 690 feet above the animals to see what it would do to them.

She wrote, *It hurts to burn*, she wrote. She wrote, *even a match can make you scream.*

And so, the men in suits and ties from Department of Labor query the people in cages:

Kind of work you do. *Blue collar, 62%*

Favorite Negro leader. *Martin Luther King, 36.4%*

Riots are a good thing. *Affirmative, 17.1%*

What caused this trouble. *Police action, 46%*

Most inmates are eager
to answer.

73% *Earned \$150 or less per week*

48% *Previously arrested*

8.2% *No education beyond 8th grade*

21.4% *Unemployed*

Some are headed to jail for years.
Most are eager to answer.

Some flames go unextinguished:
fire in cages, fire in cities.

The men beyond the glass walls nod,
grind their pencils to nubs.