

CONFLICT AND CHANGE IN NEGRO-WHITE  
RELATIONS IN GREAT FALLS

Thesis for the Degree of Ph. D.  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Henry Holstege, Jr.

1966

**This is to certify that the**  
**thesis entitled**  
**CONFLICT AND CHANGE IN NEGRO-WHITE**  
**RELATIONS IN GREAT FALLS**

**presented by**  
**Henry Holstede, Jr.**

**has been accepted towards fulfillment**  
**of the requirements for**  
**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY** degree in SOCIOLOGY

  
Major professor

**Date** June 23, 1966

## ABSTRACT

### CONFLICT AND CHANGE IN NEGRO-WHITE RELATIONS IN GREAT FALLS

by Henry Holstege, Jr.

This study has been an attempt to understand the social dynamics involved in the change of interracial behavior. The theoretical model used was that of a conflict perspective. This was done within the context of a medium-size midwestern American city in the years 1961-1964. An attempt was made to understand why changes in interracial behavior took place specifically in the areas of housing, employment, and education; with a special emphasis on housing because the active civil rights organizations during this time span considered that the most serious problem area.

Data were obtained by using three methodological procedures. First, participant observation was used as the writer was an active participant in the four active civil rights organizations. Secondly seventy members of the civil rights organizations were interviewed by the author. Thirdly, the writer made an exhaustive examination of all documentary materials such as minutes of the four civil rights organizations, the research published by these organizations, and the reports of their activities as published in the mass media.

The purpose of this study was not to study the race relations of a specific community per se, but to try to arrive at generalizations about the social dynamics of interracial behavior and specifically how that behavior is changed. It was hoped that this would add to the accumulation of knowledge about interracial behavior, because there is a serious hiatus in the literature about how changes in interracial behavior are effectuated. A survey of the literature indicates that a great deal of research has been done on existing attitudes of Negroes and whites toward each other, the causes of prejudice, and other social psychological phenomena, but little research has been done on the social structural and power aspects of interracial behavior. A survey of various theoretical models indicates that a conflict model of society might explain the changes in interracial behavior that have occurred in the last several decades in the United States. However, not much of this type of research has been done and almost all of the research that has been done occurred in the southern part of the United States or in our large northern urban complexes. There was a lacuna therefore in that a comparative analysis of different types of cities in different parts of the United States had not been done. It was hoped therefore that this study would help eliminate the existing hiatus by emphasizing the social dynamics in regard to how change in interracial behavior takes place, and by adding a dimension



that was ignored, the medium-size midwestern American city.

The research in this study gives support to the hypothesis that change in interracial behavior is the result of conflict or the threat of conflict. A corollary to this that the dynamic agents in changing the pattern of race relations are Negro protest leaders and white defenders of the status quo had to be qualified. This study indicated that many of the protest leaders were white. The corollary that the biracial human relations team approach by itself does not bring about change found support in this study. There also was support in this study for the corollary that different civil rights organizations working in different ways for the same objective may be one of the most effective city-wide strategies if at least one of the organizations either precipitates or threatens conflict. In almost every issue area examined CORE and the NAACP supplied the pressure while the Urban League and the Human Relations Commission acted as mediating influences.

It was also hypothesized in this study that there is no monolithic decision-making process within the Negro community. The results of this study indicate that Negro leaders and organizations act with unity and decisiveness when the issue is clearly one of discrimination. However, outside of the area of clearly discriminatory practices there was no indication of a monolithic decision-making process. There is a great deal of support in this study for the corollary that within and between civil rights organizations there

is disagreement among the members over welfare (material benefits) and status (equality of opportunity) goals. The civil rights organizations had, over time, a stable core of members that gave them their status or welfare emphasis. However, within each organization there were dissidents who strongly disagreed with the major emphasis, and if anything the disagreements within the organizations over welfare and status goals were more intense than that between the organizations. Part of this disagreement was the result of a failure of the civil rights groups to specify what their ultimate goal was for a multiple racial society. In fact none of the groups had a clearly delineated goal in regard to an assimilationist, pluralist, or melting-pot theory of society.

CONFLICT AND CHANGE IN NEGRO-WHITE  
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By

Henry Holstege, Jr.

A THESIS

Submitted to  
Michigan State University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Sociology

1966

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author owes a debt of gratitude to many persons. To Dr. Charles R. Hoffer, who as administrator, was always gracious in the giving of his time to aid a neophyte graduate student, and who through the graduate school years has always given encouragement. To Dr. J. Allen Beegle for his patience, kindness, and intellectual stimulation in aiding the author in writing his thesis for the M.A. degree. To Dr. Donald H. Bouma, the author owes a special debt of thanks. It was because of Dr. Bouma's stimulating classes and insightful analysis of American society that the author was led into the discipline of sociology. It was through his interest and aid that the author continued his graduate training.

The author is most indebted to Dr. James McKee. It was through his lectures and personal conferences that the author developed an abiding interest in minority relations, social power, and the interaction of conflicting groups in society. Without his insightful and critical, yet always patient direction, the author could hardly have completed this thesis.

Only others with a family going through the graduate school process can understand the contribution made by one's wife and children. To my wife Lois I owe an eternal debt of gratitude for her patience, encouragement, and humor through many years of having to raise five children mainly by herself; while her husband was busy either preparing for classes or writing his dissertation. My children, Holly, Lori, Marc,

Todd, and Chris will in time know the nature of my obligation to them.

To all of the above I hope that their faith in me will not prove to be misplaced.



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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The study of race relations in the United States has been a subject of interest and research among social scientists for many years. Unfortunately, for an adequate understanding of race relations, this interest and research has been concentrated primarily in either descriptive studies of various communities, or in attitude scaling and the study of personality factors related to prejudice. There have been very few studies that have attempted an analysis of the social dynamics that tend to either perpetuate or change the existing pattern of behavior. This is not meant to denigrate either the descriptive monographs of southern or northern communities or the important work done by psychologists or social psychologists on the personality dynamics involved in prejudice. These studies, however important they are, do not make up for a lack of research on the social dynamics in the perpetuation or change of interracial behavior.

A review of recent textbooks and readers<sup>1</sup> on racial

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<sup>1</sup>See, e.g., Peter I. Rose, They and We (New York: Random House, 1964); George Simpson and J. Milton Yinger, Racial and Cultural Minorities (New York: Harper, Rev. Ed., 1958); Milton L. Barron, (ed.), American Minorities: A Textbook of Readings in Inter-Group Relations, (New York: Knopf Co., 1957); Arnold M. Rose (ed.), Race Prejudice and Discrimination (New York: Knopf Co., 1951); Edgar T. Thompson and Everett C. Hughes, Race: Individual and

and ethnic relations indicates chapters devoted to a discussion of prejudice and its manifold causes, discussions on the "practice" of discrimination, and summaries of studies of the reaction to discrimination on the part of minority groups. But very little space is given to a discussion of social organization and leadership as it tends to perpetuate or change the existing situation. The textbooks are only indicative of the research studies that have been done, and there has been little research on the impact of organizations and social structure on the pattern of interracial behavior.

The Research Bulletin on Intergroup Relations, issued yearly by the professional associations interested in minority relations, with the cooperation of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, lists few researches dealing with the specific problem of structural factors and how they impinge on either maintenance or change in the existing patterns of interracial behavior. Every issue of the Bulletin, however, lists numerous studies on the dynamics of prejudice.<sup>2</sup>

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Collective Behavior, (Glencoe; Free Press, 1958); Gordon W. Allport, The Nature of Prejudice (Cambridge: Addison-Wesley Co., 1954); Also see the numerous monographs written on the personality development of Negro youth. Allison Davis and John Dollard, Children of Bondage (Washington D.C.: American Council on Education, 1940); Franklin E. Frazier, Negro Youth at the Crossways (Washington D.C.: American Council on Education, 1940); Charles S. Johnson, Growing Up in the Black Belt (Washington D.C.: American Council on Education, 1941); J. Howell Atwood, et. al., This Be Their Destiny (Washington D.C.: American Council on Education, 1941).

<sup>2</sup>See, for the last several years, Research Bulletin on

Herbert Blumer made a similar point when he stated that most of the research on race relations is inventory knowledge which consists primarily of "accounts of various minority-groups, characterizations of discriminatory relationships, and reports on the distribution of attitudes."<sup>3</sup> Blumer goes on to state that the roots of race relations have been assumed to be prejudiced attitudes of individuals, and that therefore studies of change have largely concentrated on the variables related to change in individual attitudes. This Blumer refers to as the "prejudice-discrimination axis" in research. Blumer then asserts that:

It rests on a belief that the nature of the relations between racial groups results from the feeling and attitudes which these groups have toward each other. These feelings and attitudes are the chief objects to be studied in endeavoring to understand race relations.<sup>4</sup>

Killian in commenting on Blumer's statement writes that:

There have been exceptions to these dominant trends, in a small number of 'action research studies' and in studies of the effect of institutional sanction on attitudes and behavior in race relations. Even these studies have assumed that institutional policy was largely, if not entirely, a creature of the white dominant groups, and that changes would be initiated by white leaders.

In short, the minority, and particularly the Negro minority, has not been thought of as a really dynamic element in race relations, which does not simply

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Intergroup Relations, Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, 1964-1963-1962-1961.

<sup>3</sup>Herbert Blumer, "Research on Race Relations," International Social Science Bulletin, 10 (1958) p. 431.

<sup>4</sup>Herbert Blumer, "Research on Race Relations," op. cit., p. 420.

adjust to a situation over which it has little control but challenges the situation and initiates change.<sup>5</sup>

Killian goes on to write:

The finding that, in one way or another, nearly every Negro resents segregation and finds it a psychological handicap does not explain why in many communities the visible face of race relations remains unchanged, while in others the vigor of the Negro protest has led to open conflict and sometimes to the abandonment of long-standing patterns of social relations. Recent studies of white attitudes towards desegregation, such as those done by Tumin and by Killian and Haer, show only a small minority of whites at the extreme end of the 'resistance scale'; there appears to be no correlation between the distribution of individual attitudes and the adamantness of community resistance to change.

What is called for in the present situation is an approach which emphasizes collective behavior, not individual attitudes. The case being analyzed is a powerful, aggressive social movement in conflict with a determined resistance movement, not the adjustment of a minority group to the restriction imposed by a dominant group. In particular, organization and leadership should be of central importance.<sup>6</sup>

It seems therefore that social scientists have neglected important sociological factors, such as social power and the dynamics of intergroup interaction, in their analysis of race relations. It is the contention of Killian, Blumer, and others that an analysis of attitudes alone is not adequate to explain the varying social patterns that exist in different cities, nor is it adequate to explain

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<sup>5</sup>Lewis M. Killian, "Leadership in the Desegregation Crisis: An Institutional Analysis," In Muzafer Sherif (ed.), Intergroup Relations and Leadership, (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1962) p. 144.

<sup>6</sup>Killian, "Leadership in the Desegregation Crisis: An Institutional Analysis," op. cit., pp. 144-145.

the varying social patterns that exist in different cities, nor is it adequate to explain change in interracial behavior. Hence there seems to be a gap in social science research as to how social change in interracial behavior takes place.

It will be the purpose of this study to explore some aspects of this lacuna in social science research, that is, the social dynamics involved in the change of interracial behavior. The concern will not be with grand theories of social change. Such broad concepts of change as contained in the cyclical, social evolution, consumation (future golden age), cultural acceleration, and cultural lag theories fall at an entirely different level of abstraction.<sup>7</sup> The emphasis will not be on social change per se, but will be a concern with the how and why of changing patterns of interracial behavior in the United States today. Specifically it will be a concern with the strategies used by organizations active in changing interracial behavior.

Killian does, however, point out that the question of social change in interracial behavior has always been related to the general perspective that one has on social change. It is his position that in mid-century America, sociologists tended to view interracial behavior from the perspective of an equilibrium model, the belief in the intrinsic harmony of social systems and the natural reasonableness of the individual. Killian writes that it is not:

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<sup>7</sup>Alvin L. Bertrand, "The Stress-Strain Element of Social Systems: A Micro Theory of Conflict and Change," Social Forces, 42, Oct. 1963.



...that the existence of social conflict and individual maladjustment has not been recognized. But these have been regarded as abnormal, transient and theoretically corrigible states. 'Adjustment,' including good mental health and the absence of prejudice, has been regarded as not only attainable but also as a normal condition for the individual.<sup>8</sup>

Many other authors have stated the same charge against American sociologists. Wilbert E. Moore writes that:

The fact that sociologists have directed their attention primarily to the orderly characteristics of social systems has had the unnecessary but real consequence of distracting their interest from intrinsic sources of change.<sup>9</sup>

Moore goes on to write that:

Social systems do indeed exhibit persistent patterns and complementary functions. Specialization, for example, including some way of exchanging goods or services among the specialized producers. An equilibrium model is perfectly appropriate for the kind of generalized variables (specialization, coordination, exchange) that we have just made. It would be impossible from such a model to predict an initial change in any of the variables. If such a change were observed, or imagined for purposes of theoretical analysis, the model would predict only such other complementary changes as would restore the equilibrium.<sup>10</sup>

Moore then adds that the equilibrium model, by itself, is inadequate to explain changes:

Were we to take seriously the 'perfectly integrated' equilibrated model of social systems, any change would be either trivial or tragic: trivial because it would be quickly suppressed and rectified or tragic because

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<sup>8</sup>Lewis M. Killian and Charles Grigg, Racial Crisis in America, (Englewood: Prentice-Hall, 1964) p. 15.

<sup>9</sup>Wilbert E. Moore, Social Change (Englewood: Prentice-Hall, 1963) p. 9.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

every characteristic of the system would be altered by any enduring change within it.<sup>11</sup>

Dahrendorf, writing in the American Journal of Sociology, makes a somewhat similar point, that an equilibrium model by itself cannot adequately explain change. He states that:

As far as I can see, we need for the explanation of sociological problems both the equilibrium and the conflict models of society; and it may well be that, in a philosophical sense, society has two faces of equal reality: one of stability, harmony, and consensus and one of change, conflict, and constraint.<sup>12</sup>

Horowitz dealing with the same problem, writing in Social Forces, asserts that,

To place conflict outside the framework of social structure, or to go beyond that and see conflict as necessarily destructive of the social organism, is to place a definite premium on equilibrium. It strongly implies that a society can be changed only by apocalyptic or spontaneous methods. The identification of consensus with social structure reinforces the stereotyped view that change does not emanate from the Establishment and, keeping within the boundaries it informally sets, is deviant in relation to a social order as such.<sup>13</sup>

This type of change has long been associated by some sociologists with structural-functional analysis, because they believed an emphasis on the system as an equilibrated model could not adequately handle the concept of change.

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<sup>11</sup>Moore, Social Change, op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>12</sup>Ralf Dahrendorf, "Out of Utopia: Toward a Reorientation of Sociological Analysis," American Journal of Sociology, 64, Sept. 1958, p. 127.

<sup>13</sup>Louis P. Horowitz, "Consensus, Conflict and Cooperation: A Sociological Inventory," Social Forces, 41, Dec. 1962, p. 180.

Eisenstadt in discussing this charge writes that,

Claims have long been made that 'structural-functional' analysis with its stress on systems, equilibrium, common values and boundary-maintenance, not only neglects problems of change, but is analytically incapable of dealing with them. In response, many sociologists have recently asserted that not only is there no necessary contradiction between structural analysis and the analysis of change, but that on the contrary the two are basically compatible.<sup>14</sup>

Charles and Zona Loomis, writing in regard to charges that Parsons cannot adequately handle the problem of change because of his structural-functional emphasis, state that,

Parsons has been criticized by a number of sociologists for alleged failure to develop a theory of change and for the use of concepts in his basic system of analysis which in their opinion inhibit the development of such a theory. The focus of these criticisms is for the most part directed at Parsons' assumption of predictable regularities of interaction in groups by means of a construct called the social system which in the critics' opinion possesses change resistant properties. They point for example, to the fundamental paradigm of social interaction which includes the assumption 'that stably established interaction process...as, one in equilibrium, tends to continue unchanged.'<sup>15</sup>

The Loomises, however, go on to add that,

...such criticisms in the opinion of the present authors seem exaggerated, especially as assessments are made of Parsons' publications from 1960 on.<sup>16</sup>

Bertrand in writing on this particular aspect of the problem believes, in referring to the work of Charles

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<sup>14</sup>S. N. Eisenstadt, "Institutionalization and Change," American Sociological Review, 29, April, 1964, p. 235.

<sup>15</sup>Charles P. and Zona K. Loomis, Modern Social Theories (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1961) p. 597.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 598.

Loomis, that social change should be seen as one of the master processes of the system.

Social change is conceived as a master process found in all social systems and...should...be added to the list of six master processes compiled by Loomis...Put another way, social systems are seen as being made up of parts or elements, one of which is stress-strain. The system cannot be complete without this element because all systems have contradictory needs which arise from role conflict within the system.<sup>17</sup>

Killian recently has pointed out that an emphasis on conflict was, especially in Europe, a dominant theme in sociology. He emphasizes that the early American sociologists, Lester F. Ward and Albion W. Small were influenced by the two European writers Ludwig Gumplowicz and Gustav Ratzenhofer to view conflict as a primary pattern of human interaction. Killian states that,

Their theories were optimistic in the sense that both felt that conflict led to integration on higher levels. But they viewed conflict as a central social process which was functional, not merely dysfunctional, normal not pathological.<sup>18</sup>

Killian goes on to say<sup>19</sup> that McKee, in criticizing Dean and Rosen's Manual of Intergroup Relations<sup>20</sup>, in essence is criticizing the optimistic, ameliorative theme of

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<sup>17</sup>Alvin L. Bertrand, Social Forces, op. cit., p. 8.

<sup>18</sup>Lewis M. Killian and Charles Grigg, Racial Crisis in America, op. cit., p. 18.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>20</sup>John P. Dean and Alex Rosen, A Manual of Intergroup Relations, (Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1955).



modern sociology. McKee although not referring to the recent writings critical of "consensus theory" argues that the strategy suggested in the "Manual" rests on the assumption that, "The climate of opinion in America is favorable to desirable changes in intergroup relations." McKee's position is that the Manual of Intergroup Relations contains a general conservative bias by virtue of its "basic ideological orientation; to operate within and not outside of, independent of, or as a challenge to the existing power structure."<sup>21</sup> McKee goes on to write that, "The conservative nature of Dean and Rosen's action program is further suggested by the strategic avoidance of conflict with the power structure." The point here is that if one disagrees with the existing power structure, and its support of the status quo, that conflict would then be unavoidable. Hence if one has made a value commitment to operate within the existing power structure, one is at least implicitly accepting, as Killian stated, an "optimistic, ameliorative" stance.

It will be the purpose of this study to explore some of the questions raised above as they specifically apply to race relations. It will be an attempt to discover some of the aspects of the social dynamics of change, the role that consensus and conflict play in the social structure of racial behavior in the United States. This is a concern

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<sup>21</sup>James McKee, "Community Power and Strategies in Race Relations: Some Critical Observations," Social Problems, Winter, 1958-59, pp. 195-203.

then not with grand theories of social change, nor with social change per se, but as stated above, a concern with strategy, the how and why of social change in interracial behavior.

### Consensus and Conflict

There is not only a lacuna in social science research in regard to the social dynamics of change in interracial behavior but there is specifically a hiatus in the literature as to the role that civil rights organizations play in effectuating social change. Specifically this study will attempt to answer the question of the part that civil rights groups in a medium size midwestern American city play in the process of social change in interracial behavior, and their use of consensus and conflict in bringing about that change. By consensus will be meant, as Horowitz explicated it,<sup>22</sup> that there is internal agreement among members of the social system, i.e., in terms of shared perspectives, agreement on the rules of association and action, a common set of norms and values, etc. Consensus, Horowitz points out, also refers to the content and form of behavior. Lastly Horowitz writes that consensus does not tolerate differences. In regard to interracial behavior and social change, consensus will mean, for purposes of this study,

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<sup>22</sup>Louis P. Horowitz, "Consensus, Conflict and Cooperation: A sociology Inventory," op. cit., p. 187.

that the members of the community agree on the goals that should be achieved in interracial behavior, agree as to how these goals should be obtained, agree on the actual techniques to be used, and agree that no other techniques for effectuating change will be deemed permissible. Change, then, would take place because the participants, agreeing on the goals to be obtained, participate together in using the agreed upon means, effectively blocking off the impact of all others not associated with their goals and/or means.

Horowitz does not give an explicit definition of conflict, but Killian does. Killian defines conflict as:

...any form of interaction in which the parties attempt to achieve their objectives by demonstrating that they possess superior power. It might be described simply as 'a relationship in which somebody has to lose.'<sup>23</sup>

This means, writes Killian, that submission,<sup>24</sup> not consensus, is the pay-off.<sup>25</sup> Conflict in this context then implies something broader than merely "violence" or "force".

Dahrendorf also emphasizes that conflict means more than just force or violence,

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<sup>23</sup>Lewis M. Killian and Charles Grigg, Racial Crisis in America, op. cit., p. 134.

<sup>24</sup>By submission Killian means that one of the participants, person or group, in a conflict situation accedes or yields to the desires of its opponents in regard to the issues at hand, not because of agreement with the opponent, but because of a refusal or inability to continue the conflict.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 134.



To be sure, we do not have to assume that conflict is always violent and uncontrolled. There is probably a continuum from civil war to parliamentary debate, from strikes and lockout to joint consultation.<sup>26</sup>

In regard, then, to interracial behavior and social change, conflict is meant, for purposes of this study, that the members of the community make changes because other members of the community, or external factors to the community, have through a conflict situation induced them, by what-ever means, to submit to the proposed changes.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this paper will be to pursue some of the leads indicated by Killian, Grigg, Dahrendorf, and Horowitz (see above) as to how social change takes place. Following the leads of these authors this paper will use a conflict model of society as an heuristic tool to better understand how change in interracial behavior occurs. Conflict will be seen as a necessary element in the power struggle of various groups in the community to bring about change in interracial behavior. Therefore the emphasis will be on such sociological factors as social power and intergroup interaction, grossly neglected thus far in the sociological literature on race relations, rather than on such social psychological characteristics as attitude and personality formation. Hopefully this paper can thereby

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<sup>26</sup>Ralf Dahrendorf, "Out of Utopia: Toward a Reorientation of Sociological Analysis," op. cit., p. 127.

make a contribution to the debate going on between functionalists and conflict theorists, by indicating through a careful and detailed analysis of part of the civil rights movement how interracial behavior is changed. The research will focus specifically on the activities of civil rights organizations in a medium size midwestern American city, and their attempts to bring about changes in the existing pattern of racial relations in that city.

### Review of Literature on Social Change in Interracial Behavior and Statement of Hypotheses

Numerous investigators of the current pattern of interracial behavior in the United States have asserted that it is only through conflict that the pattern of racial behavior is changed.

Perhaps the most vocal in this assertion, outside of those who espouse a Marxist interpretation, are Lewis Killian and Charles Grigg. They write in their book, Racial Crisis in America, that after viewing the last one hundred years of emancipation from slavery, that in the future the Negro, if he really wants to be free, will have to demand his independence from segregation. In regard to the immediate future they write that:

...the preceding analysis suggests that this era will be one in which neither personal goodwill nor mutual understanding, but impersonal power, will be the most significant factor in race relations.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>Lewis M. Killian and Charles Grigg, Racial Crisis in America, op. cit., p. 8.

They go on to assert that,

...the strategic use of power by Negroes themselves is most effective in producing change, not the cooperative efforts of white and Negro leaders who, through communication, have discovered a common ground for action.<sup>28</sup>

After making an intensive survey of changing patterns of interracial behavior in the South they state that:

Americans, white and black, may have to endure an ordeal of hatred and conflict before they ever learn to live with each other in peace.<sup>29</sup>

They state further that whites:

...will not voluntarily sacrifice their status advantage. They will give it up only when confronted with power that threatens other values.<sup>30</sup>

Their conclusion is that:

...communication and negotiation between white and Negro leaders can be effective only if the relationship is recognized as a conflict relationship. The communicators are antagonists not partners...Appeals to the moral sensibilities of the white community through demonstrations are not likely to be effective unless used in combination with these other sources of power. Demands on the white community, unsupported by power, result only in the display of force to show the superior power of the white community, whether under the guise of law or not.<sup>31</sup>

Other social scientists also observing race relations in the South have come to a similar conclusion. M. Elaine

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>29</sup>Lewis M. Killian and Charles Grigg, Racial Crisis in America, op. cit., p. 128.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 132.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 135.

Burgess in her book, Negro Leadership in a Southern City,<sup>32</sup> points out that in Southern City the only time that the Bi-racial Commission on Race Relations made any significant contribution was when the Merchant's Association turned to the Commission for help. The Merchant's Association, however, went to the Commission only because of threatened conflict on the part of students. It is quite clear that without the threat of conflict, the Commission would not have been able to mediate the dispute, and get the Merchant's Association to agree to accept changes in interracial behavior. Burgess points out that this was the only accomplishment of the Commission.

Seemingly, from the report of Burgess, one would have to conclude that social change in Southern City in race relations took place only when the white power structure was forced either by conflict or threat of conflict to change. In fact a reading of the Burgess monograph gives the impression that the city government was rather ineffective in making decisions, and that the "power play" was occurring outside of the arena of the formal structure of city government.

Daniel C. Thompson in his analysis of race relations in New Orleans,<sup>33</sup> comes to the same conclusion as Killian

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<sup>32</sup>M. Elaine Burgess, Negro Leadership in a Southern City (Chapel Hill: U. of North Carolina Press, 1962).

<sup>33</sup>Daniel Thompson, The Negro Leadership Class (Englewood: Spectrum Books, 1963).

and Burgess. In a detailed analysis of Negro leadership over a twenty year period, 1940-1960, Thompson shows the transition taking place from the accommodating "Uncle Tom" type of leader of the past to the militant "race man" of today. He points out that most white leaders not only do not want changes to take place but even deny that Negroes want changes to take place. Thompson writes,

Perhaps the most characteristic technique used by white 'men of power' in New Orleans when faced with social issues and tensions is that they simply tend to ignore or deny the existence of them...Like most southern officials and leaders, they are eager to establish the thesis that Negroes are satisfied with existing patterns of racial segregation; that racial problems are more imagined than real; and that all apparent manifestations of dissatisfaction on the part of local Negroes are due to meddling 'outsiders,' 'nigger lovers,' the NAACP, Jews, 'rabble rousers,' the United States Supreme Court, or 'Communists'.<sup>34</sup>

It becomes clear in reading Thompson's work that it is only through conflict that the white leaders are willing to acknowledge even the existence of a problem, and that without conflict there would be little possibility of any significant change in race relations taking place. In fact the report of Thompson leads one to expect that if change is to take place it will be due to that end of the continuum of conflict that Dahrendorf refers to as "violent and uncontrolled."<sup>35</sup>

Other observers in the North have come to a similar

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>35</sup>Ralf Dahrendorf, "Out of Utopia: Toward a Reorientation of Sociological Analysis," op. cit., p. 127.

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conclusion about their section of the country. James Wilson in his book, Negro Politics,<sup>36</sup> in examining the role of Negro leaders in effectuating change in racial patterns in northern cities writes that,

Most thoughtful Negroes in the North long ago rejected the notion that the white man will gradually concede to them rights they demand without effort on their part.<sup>37</sup>

Dennis Clark, examining the civil rights movement, especially as it pertains to our larger cities, states that,

Important though the civil rights movement has been, the fear of violence and disorder is probably the major reason why one city after another has established a commission to deal professionally with intergroup problems.<sup>38</sup>

Marrow, in writing about his tenure as chairman of the Committee of Intergroup Relations in New York, states that social change took place under pressure. In regard to school desegregation he writes that:

So far, in New York's experimental desegregation, the idea of persuasion has played almost no part. Aside from several high-ranking members of the Board of Superintendents, there was actually resistance to changes that would upset the traditional practices of the school system. It took public criticism and threat of boycott by Negro groups to spur the Board to action.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>James Q. Wilson, Negro Politics, (Glencoe: Free Press, 1960).

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>38</sup>Dennis Clark, The Ghetto Game (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1962), p. 151.

<sup>39</sup>Alfred J. Marrow, Changing Patterns of Prejudice, (New York: Chilton Co., 1962), p. 165.

Seemingly, then, there is some empirical grounds for hypothesizing that social change in race relations is a product primarily of a conflict situation and is not the product of men reaching consensus that change must take place because they agree as to what the goals of society should be. The writings discussed above on the impact of conflict have been either on the South or on our larger northern cities. Whether or not the social dynamics are the same in a northern city of medium size is something that this thesis will attempt to determine. Hence hypothesis one.

Hypothesis I. Social change in interracial behavior in the United States does not take place without conflict or the threat of conflict.

### Corollaries

If conflict is to be the dynamic agent in changing the pattern of interracial behavior one would expect that it would be the Negro who would initiate the change and the white person who would attempt to maintain the status quo. The reasons for this are quite obvious. It is the white person who attains benefits from the existing system and the Negro who suffers the consequences of a segregated and semi-segregated world.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>There is a wealth of material pointing out the benefits whites receive. See, e.g., Gunnar Myrdal, An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy (New York:



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In the past it was not the Negro protest leader that seemingly led the Negro community, but the person who could work with the white power structure, and who was not trying to change the existing social order. This type of leader saw his task as attempting to obtain from the white power structure as much as possible for the Negro community by playing the role that the superordinate white element demanded. Those leaders were what Myrdal referred to as "accommodating leaders,"<sup>41</sup> or what some Negroes today pejoratively refer to as "Uncle Tom". They were not, however, dynamic agents in a process of a social change, but directly or indirectly helped to maintain the existing order.

Specific studies seem to indicate that the "accommodating leader" is a diminishing phenomenon, and that the person

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Harper, 1944) pp. 84-88; Oliver Cromwell Cox, Caste, Class and Race: A Study in Social Dynamics (New York: Doubleday Co., 1948) pp. 321-352; George E. Simpson and J. Milton Yinger, Racial and Cultural Minorities, pp. 122-124; Ruth Benedict, Race: Science and Politics (New York: Modern Age Books, 1940) pp. 232-238; T. W. Adorno, et. al., The Authoritarian Personality (New York: Harper, 1950); John Dollard, Caste and Class in a Southern Town (New York: Doubleday (3rd ed.), 1957).

There is also a wealth of material pointing out the consequences to Negroes. See, e.g., Frazier, Negro Youth at the Crossways, op. cit.; St. Clair Drake and Horace R. Cayton, Black Metropolis (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1945); Johnson, Growing Up in the Black Belt, op. cit.; Allison Davis, Deep South, op. cit.; Abram Kardiner and Lionel Ovesey, The March of Oppression (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1951).

<sup>41</sup>Gunnar Myrdal, An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy, op. cit., pp. 720-733.

who is accepted by the Negro community today in a leadership role must be militant in attempting to change the existing order.

Lewis Killian and Smith in their observations of a Southern community concluded that:

The new leaders are becoming permanent leaders not because of the attractiveness of their personalities or their skill at organizing, but rather because they adhere vigorously to the form of militant leadership which is becoming the trend for Negroes throughout the U.S.<sup>42</sup>

Louis Lomax writing in Harper's magazine about the type of Negro leader found in the civil rights movement states that:

This revolt, swelling under the ground for the past two decades, means the end of the traditional leadership class.<sup>43</sup>

Thompson writing on New Orleans points out that the communication between the white and Negro communities has ceased because the Negro "Uncle Tom" is rejected by the Negro community but accepted by the white community, while the Negro militant is accepted by the Negro community, but rejected in the white community. Thompson writes that:

...whites who occupy top power positions in New Orleans are pledged, or assumed to be pledged, to the preservation of a biracial social system that, according to its inherent nature, relegates all Negroes

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<sup>42</sup>Lewis Killian and C. V. Smith, "Negro Protest Leaders in a Southern Community," Social Forces, 38, 1960, pp. 253-257.

<sup>43</sup>Lewis Lomax, "The Negro Revolt Against 'the Negro Leaders'", Harper's Magazine, June, 1960, pp. 41-48.

to an inferior social status. This means that Negroes who seek to achieve racial equality are automatically resisted by white men of power.<sup>44</sup>

Burgess in her study of Crescent City comes to a similar conclusion. Burgess states that the older leaders either lost their positions of influence, were in the process of losing it, or were becoming more militant to retain their position.<sup>45</sup>

Killian and Grigg conclude in their book that,

The 'new' leaders are becoming permanent leaders not because of the attractiveness of their personalities or their skill at organizing, but rather because they adhere vigorously to the form of militant leadership which is becoming the trend for Negroes throughout the U.S. This new leadership is not of the accommodating type. It seeks gains for the Negro community through formal demands and requests, boycotts, law suits, and voting. The protest leaders are not concerned with whether or not the whites high in the powerstructure know, like, or want to deal with them.<sup>46</sup>

Hence, in regard to social change in race relations, seemingly the change that is taking place is not the result of ideological consensus or convincing argumentation but results from a conflict negotiation cycle. Part of the purpose of this study will examine to what extent, if any, this holds true in a medium-sized midwestern community. Hence corollary one.

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<sup>44</sup>Thompson, The Negro Leadership Class, op. cit., p. 24.

<sup>45</sup>Burgess, Negro Leadership in a Southern City, op. cit.

<sup>46</sup>Killian and Grigg, Racial Crisis in America, op. cit. p. 88.

behavior. These writings will be discussed in detail in proceeding chapters. They deal with a question that is of vital relevance in this study, the role of such groups as CORE, the Urban League, the NAACP, and biracial teams in bringing about social change in interracial behavior and what effect they have on each other. Hence corollary three.

Corollary III. Different civil rights organizations, working in different ways for the same objective, may be one of the most effective city-wide strategies if at least one of the organizations either precipitates or threatens conflict.

It was stated in the hypothesis and corollaries above that change in interracial behavior is the result of conflict between the defenders of the status quo and those who would change the status quo. It was stated that part of this conflict would be between the white defenders of the status quo and Negroes who would attempt to change the existing pattern of racial behavior. Hence in part this is a struggle of the white community vis-a-vis the Negro community.

Numerous studies have indicated that the general community power structure does not tend to take on a monolithic configuration. Whether the power configuration is broken up into issue areas, bifurcated between economic and

Corollary I. The dynamic agents in changing the pattern of race relations are Negro protest leaders and white defenders of the status quo.

If, as the hypothesis asserts, social change in race relations is the result of conflict or the threat of conflict, then one could not expect interracial behavior to be changed simply by a "team approach" of Negroes and whites sitting down together to discuss interracial behavior. The reason is that the emphasis in the "team approach" is upon the obtaining of consensus through discussion as to what should be done. However, if the hypothesis is correct, and if corollary one is correct, then the discussion by itself would be insufficient to change the existing pattern of behavior. It, "the team", could, however, function as a channel of communication between the Negro and white communities. That is, the white power structure might be willing to listen to the demands of the Negro community, through a biracial committee set up to air the complaints of the Negro community, if there is sufficient "pressure" on the white community for it to do so.

There is some empirical basis for this assertion. Killian and Grigg in a study of the fifty-five southern communities that have biracial committees found that one of the most important stimuli for the creation of the biracial committee was the fear of public disorder due to demonstrations and other forms of protest.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>Killian and Grigg, Racial Crisis in America, op. cit.

Killian and Grigg, however, see the biracial committee as being used to maintain the status quo and acting only when pressured to do so. In an analysis of a biracial committee of a small town in the South they write that,

...in the absence of issues raised through the application of power, the Committee not only failed to act, but ceased to meet.<sup>48</sup>

Furthermore Killian and Grigg conclude, from their analysis of southern communities, that biracial committees tend more to inhibit change than to produce change. They believe this because:

...Negro leaders, with the exception of a few of the most militant, do not desire racial conflict, nor are they unwilling to accept an atmosphere of harmony in the community as a goal. Their willingness to support and serve on a biracial committee reflects the hope that change may come about in the community without the ordeal of nonviolent resistance and demonstrations, with all the risks that they entail. Hence, the preservation of racial peace becomes the superordinate goal for which both white and Negro members of the biracial committee can work. But this creates a serious dilemma for the Negro leader, particularly the militant leader who, if forced to, would choose progress over peace. The dilemma arises from the fact that peace does not serve as an effective superordinate goal unless there is some threat to this peace. The Negro leader cannot simultaneously serve as a guardian of the peace of the community and at the same time threaten this peace by invoking the power of the Negro community.<sup>49</sup>

Killian and Grigg, however, write from a specifically southern perspective. Other authors writing with a broader perspective see the biracial team approach as more conducive to producing change than do Killian and Grigg.

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<sup>48</sup>Ibid., p. 75.

<sup>49</sup>Killian and Grigg, op. cit., p. 77-78.

Marrow, from his perspective as chairman of the New York City Commission on Intergroup Relations for five years, sees the biracial team as being an important factor in planning change, he writes that:

The idea of an agency of this kind is based on the concept of purposeful change. I think of it as a peculiarly American concept because it is founded on the American belief that what man has made man can change. The fact that personality is not immutably fixed, that feelings can change and attitudes can shift under the influence of an altered environment and that these changes can be relatively predicted--all this has been demonstrated in experimental real-life situations.<sup>50</sup>

The role that the biracial team plays in social change in race relations is seemingly not clear. There is no evidence from the literature that it is a major source of change, neither is there any evidence that it is not important in changing the existing pattern of race relations. This study should enable us to gain a little clearer perspective as to the function of the biracial team. Therefore corollary two.

Corollary II. The Biracial Human Relations Team approach by itself produces only a superficial type of communication. However, as a channel of communication between the Negro protest leaders and the white defenders of the status quo, it becomes an important agent of social change.

By a Biracial Human Relations Team approach is meant a committee of official, or quasi-official status, that has

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<sup>50</sup>Marrow, Changing Patterns of Prejudice, op. cit., p. 11.



been set up to consist of members of both races to discuss, and to seek through discussion, a "solution" to interracial friction.

If the biracial human relations team approach is to be effective as a means of communication between the white and the Negro communities there must be some reason for the communication to take place. Following from the hypothesis above it could be deduced that this communication takes place when the power structure is threatened by conflict. If it is the threat of conflict that induces the white power structure to communicate to would be changers of the status quo through a biracial team there must, then, be someone either threatening or engaging in conflict. One would then have to conclude that one or more of the civil rights organizations must be "conflict oriented" organizations before social change will take place in interracial behavior, or that some other group in the city is either engaging in or threatening conflict in race relations.

Seemingly, the dispute over the exact functioning of a "biracial team approach" to changing racial patterns of behavior, revolves to a certain extent around the activities of other civil rights organizations in the community. Even Killian and Grigg who are extremely critical of the "bi-racial team approach," assert that if other groups in the community exert pressure, then the "biracial team" might be able to recommend changes in the existing pattern of behavior. They state that,

A survey of biracial committees in cities throughout the South indicates that the sense of emergency created throughout the region by the wave of sit-ins was the most important stimulus to the formation of such committees.<sup>51</sup>

Dean and Rosen state explicitly that they believe one of the most effective means of obtaining change in interracial behavior is by having the various civil rights organizations function in different ways. They write:

The organization with few sanctions on its militancy may use the more controversial methods of publicity and mass demonstrations. The more moderate organizations might restrict themselves to negotiations. Actually, different organizations working in different ways for the same objective may be one of the most effective city-wide strategies. The 'needling' of violators by the more militant organizations may make it possible for the negotiators to accomplish an objective that otherwise would have been difficult.<sup>52</sup>

Or, to put it another way, it seems that the basic strategy of successful negotiations is the use of "leverage." "Leverage" to the extent of indicating to the defenders of the status quo that there will be "unpleasant consequences" if they do not act to change the status quo. or as Dean and Rosen state in regard to the term "leverage,"

By this we mean the ability to show reluctant gatekeepers that the consequences of not changing their intergroup practices are less desirable than the consequences of changing them.<sup>53</sup>

A multiplicity of recent writings on the various civil rights organizations discuss the role that these organizations are playing in changing the pattern of interracial

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<sup>51</sup>Lewis Killian and Charles Grigg, Racial Crisis in America, op. cit., p. 75.

<sup>52</sup>Dean and Rosen, A Manual of Intergroup Relations, op. cit., p. 156.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., p. 157.

behavior. These writings will be discussed in detail in proceeding chapters. They deal with a question that is of vital relevance in this study, the role of such groups as CORE, the Urban League, the NAACP, and biracial teams in bringing about social change in interracial behavior and what effect they have on each other. Hence corollary three.

Corollary III. Different civil rights organizations, working in different ways for the same objective, may be one of the most effective city-wide strategies if at least one of the organizations either precipitates or threatens conflict.

It was stated in the hypothesis and corollaries above that change in interracial behavior is the result of conflict between the defenders of the status quo and those who would change the status quo. It was stated that part of this conflict would be between the white defenders of the status quo and Negroes who would attempt to change the existing pattern of racial behavior. Hence in part this is a struggle of the white community vis-a-vis the Negro community. ✓

Numerous studies have indicated that the general community power structure does not tend to take on a monolithic configuration. Whether the power configuration is broken up into issue areas, bifurcated between economic and

political dominants, or both, the power configuration seemingly is not a simple unitary structure.<sup>54</sup>

The purpose of this study is certainly not to examine the community power structure per se. But in an analysis of change in racial behavior the configuration of the general community power structure must be at least considered, and the decision-making process of the Negro community must be examined. The proliferation of studies indicating the division of decision-making into issue areas in the general community was just mentioned. There is less evidence indicating the configuration of the decision-making process in the Negro community. Hunter pointed out in his study of Regional City that the power structure of the Negro community is similar to the power structure of the larger community.

...it may be said that the pattern of power leadership within the Negro community follows rather closely the pattern of the larger community.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup>Robert A. Dahl, Who Governs? (New Haven, Yale U. Press, 1961); Robert A. Dahl, "Equality and Power in American Society," in Power and Democracy in America, ed. William V. D'Antonio and Howard J. Ehrlich (Notre Dame: U. of Notre Dame Press, 1961); Nelson W. Polsby, "The Sociology of Community Forces," Social Forces, XXXVII, March, 1959, 232-236; Donald A. Clelland and William H. Form, "Economic Dominants and Community Power A Comparative Analysis," A.J.S., LXIX, March 1964; James B. McKee, "Status and Power in the Industrial Community A Comment on Drucker's Thesis," A.J.S., Jan. 1953, p. 369; and many others.

<sup>55</sup>Floyd Hunter, Community Power Structure, (Chapel Hill: U. of North Carolina Press, 1953;, p. 114.

There is also evidence indicating that in the process of rapid social change taking place in the American community today that conflict is developing among the Negro decision-makers as to what goals should be emphasized, what means should be utilized, and what the ultimate goal of the civil rights movement should be.<sup>56</sup>

Clark points out that,

Every city has what it believes to be Negro leaders. This is particularly true today, when sweeping changes are taking place in the leadership elements of the Negro population in this country. The old minister-turned-political-leader is now accompanied by a covey of new types. As the great national issue of race relations takes a new form in the urban areas, Negro leadership is being revitalized and transformed as if in preparation for an historic final struggle.<sup>57</sup>

Part of this study will deal then with the question of the configuration of the Negro decision-making process as exemplified by the civil rights organizations. An attempt will be made to determine whether or not in the process of attempting to obtain social change the Negro community presents a united front in regard to the amount, type, and direction of social change. Therefore hypothesis two.

Hypothesis II. In this struggle for social change in inter-racial behavior there is no monolithic decision-making process within the Negro community.

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<sup>56</sup>Illustrative of this is the New York situation where many different organizations present the authorities with a bewildering array of proposed solutions. Time, July 31, 1964, pp. 10-18.

<sup>57</sup>Dennis Clark, The Ghetto Game, op. cit., p. 232.

One would expect that if a "culturally deprived" minority is struggling to obtain equal rights in society with a "culturally privileged" majority, that the members of the minority would not only be interested in obtaining those rights, but also the material benefits that those rights enable one to acquire. This could mean that at any given moment in time some members of the minority community would be interested primarily in the rights, some primarily in the material benefits. For example, some members of the minority might, through one means or another, have obtained the material benefits of the society but not the "rights" enjoyed by the majority. Hence they would be vitally interested in obtaining the "rights" enjoyed by the majority. Others in the minority groups might have neither the rights nor the material benefits of society. While they might very well be interested in obtaining "rights" equal to those held by the majority, they might be even more interested in obtaining the material benefits of that society. At this point then a clash could develop as to which goal should be emphasized, the "rights" or the "material benefits".

James Wilson refers to this distinction as the dispute over status, the goal of eliminating segregation, and welfare, the goal of obtaining tangible improvements.<sup>58</sup> McKee makes the point that this exemplifies the disagreement between

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<sup>58</sup>Wilson, Negro Politics, op. cit., p. 185.

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the Urban League and the NAACP.<sup>59</sup> This is a disagreement as to whether one should put opposition to segregation, and the pursuit of integration, before measures for the tangible improvement of the lot of the Negro. It is a dispute over broad social perspectives. The ideology of the NAACP centers around the removal of barriers so that the Negro can compete equally with whites. It is an emphasis on the lack of opportunity that keeps the Negro in a position of inferiority and inequality. The contrasting ideology of the Urban League is that the cultural deprivation of the Negro cannot be eliminated simply by removing barriers to equality, but that the Negro needs tangible material benefits which will eventually prepare him to compete equally with whites. The ideology of the Urban League stresses that the Negro is not yet qualified for opportunities that exist. The essential problem then becomes one of how to upgrade the Negro, to instill greater motivation, to change his attitudes and values.

The corollary as stated below goes further and emphasizes that this dispute is an important intra as well as inter-organizational dispute; and as a result there is an important split in the leadership in the Negro community. Hence corollary one.

Corollary I. Within and between civil rights organizations there is a disagreement among the members over welfare and status goals.

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<sup>59</sup>McKee, Negro Leadership in Great Falls, Institute for Community Development, Great Lakes State U., 1962, p. 17.



Summary

The review of the literature of change in interracial behavior gives some empirical basis for considering the importance of social conflict as a factor in bringing about new patterns of interaction between Negroes and whites. A review of the theoretically oriented literature also indicates a strong concern among some contemporary theorists with the importance of utilizing a conflict model of society to explain social change, as they consider the "equilibrium model," or the "functional emphasis," to be deficient because of its inability to handle within the functional paradigm the concept of change. It was hypothesized, therefore, that social change in interracial behavior does not take place without conflict or the threat of conflict. Several corollaries were deduced from this to the effect that the dynamic agent in changing the pattern of race relations are Negro protest leaders and white defenders of the status quo, and that the Biracial Human Relations Team approach by itself produces only a superficial type of communication between the races. It was further stated that different civil rights organizations, working in different ways for the same objective, may be one of the most effective city-wide strategies if at least one of the organizations either precipitates or threatens conflict. It was also stated that Negro leaders, in order to maintain their position, must indicate to the Negro community that they have not "sold out" to the white defenders of the status quo.

A situation would therefore develop in which a power struggle between elements in the white and Negro communities would take place. A review of the literature quite clearly indicates that the community is not like a bureaucracy in which the power is clearly delineated along hierarchical lines with a centralized command. There is an extensive literature indicating this to be true of the white community but there is much less empirical evidence for this in the Negro community, although the literature that does exist would tend to confirm this. It was hypothesized therefore that in this struggle for social change in interracial behavior there is no monolithic decision-making process within the Negro community. It was deduced from this as a corollary that there is disagreement within the Negro community over welfare (the need for material necessities) and status (the need for prestige gratification) goals.

The empirical focus of the study is to be upon the attempt of civil rights organizations within a medium size midwestern American city to bring about change in the pattern of interracial behavior.

### Summary Outlined

1. Social change in interracial behavior in the United States does not take place without conflict or the threat of conflict.

- A. The dynamic agents in changing the pattern of race relations are Negro protest leaders and white defenders of the status quo.

- B. The Biracial Human Relations Team approach by itself produces only a superficial type of communication. However, as a channel of communication between the Negro protest leaders and the white defenders of the status quo it becomes an important agent of the social change.

By a Biracial Human Relations Team Approach is meant a committee of official, or quasi-official status, that has been set up to consist of members of both races to discuss, and to seek through discussion, a "solution" to interracial friction.

- C. Different civil rights organizations, working in different ways for the same objective, may be one of the most effective city-wide strategies if at least one of the organizations either precipitates or threatens conflict.

2. In this struggle for social change in interracial behavior there is no monolithic decision-making process within the Negro community.

- A. Within and between civil rights organizations there is a disagreement among the members over welfare and status goals.

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## CHAPTER II

### RESEARCH DESIGN

#### Research Design

The research problem was approached through a careful detailed analysis of the attempts made in Great Falls to erase the existing inequities between the white and Negro communities, and the concomitant attempt to bring about a racially integrated community. The emphasis was upon the activities of the civil rights organizations attempting to make these changes. There was in Great Falls at the time of this study four civil rights groups active in trying to bring about change; the Great Falls Human Relations Commission, the Urban League, the NAACP, and the Congress of Racial Equality.

Three methodological techniques were used. The first was participant observation. The term "participant observation" covers several kinds of research activity as Becker, Geer, Gold, and Morris and Charlotte Schwartz have pointed out.<sup>1</sup> It is used in this study as Gold uses the term "complete participant":

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<sup>1</sup>Becker, Howard S. and Blache Geer, "Participant Observation The Analysis of Qualitative Field Data," in Human Organization Research, (ed.) R. N. Adams and J. J. Preiss, (Homewood, Ill.; Dorsey Press, Inc., 1960) pp. 267-289; Raymond L. Gold, "Roles in Sociological Field Observations," Social Forces, March, 1958, Vol. 36, No. 3, pp. 217-222; Morris S. and Charlotte Schwartz, "Problems in Participant Observation," Am. Journal of Soc., Jan. 1955, Vol. LX, no. 4, pp. 343-352.

The true identity and purpose of the complete participant in field research are not known to those whom he observes. He interacts with them as naturally as possible in whatever areas of their living interest him and are accessible to him as situations in which he can play, or learn to play, requisite day-to-day roles successfully.<sup>2</sup>

Morris and Charlotte Schwartz refer to this type of participant as an "active participant":

As an ideal type, the 'active' participant observer maximizes his participation with the observed in order to gather data and attempts to integrate his role with other roles in the social situation. His activity is accepted, both by himself and by the observed, as part of his role. His intention is to experience the life of the observed so that he can better observe and understand it. In some situations his behavior is similar to that of the observed; in other situations he plays complementary roles. He attempts to share the life of the observed on a simply human level as well as on a planned role level and uses both these modes of participation for research purposes. That is, while participating and identifying with the observed, he looks upon his relations with them as data and also as clues for uncovering further data. As this continues, he becomes more a part of, and more comfortable in, the social field. He attempts to strike that balance between active participation in the lives of the subjects and observation of their behavior which will be most productive of valid data.<sup>3</sup>

This type of active participation and the practical and technical problems involved have been thoroughly discussed in social science literature.<sup>4</sup> The problem of

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<sup>2</sup>Gold, op. cit., p. 219.

<sup>3</sup>Morris and Charlotte Schwartz, op. cit., p. 349.

<sup>4</sup>See especially the following: Florence R. Kluckhohn, "The Participant Observer Technique in Small Communities," Am. Journal of Soc., XLVI, Nov. 1940, pp. 331-343; William F. Whyte, Street Corner Society, (Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1943), Preface, pp. v-x; William F. Whyte, "observational Field-Work Methods" in Research Methods in the Social Sciences, (ed.) Marie Jahoda, Morton Deutsch, and

of maintaining an objective stance and being involved in an ongoing program is a particularly pressing problem. That particular problem was especially important in this research because the writer was not only one of the participants, but one of the major decision-makers, and as a result could not take a neutral stance in relation to the alternatives that concerned the civil rights organizations. Arthur Vidich has, however, pointed out that the idea that a participant observer can or should be neutral is an untenable position. He writes:

Complete and total neutrality is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to assume even where research considerations seem to demand it. By virtue of his research, no matter how transitory and irrespective of the exact dimensions of his marginal position, the investigator must react to the actions of his respondents. Neutrality even to the point of total silence is a form of reaction and not only will be considered as such by all parties to the conflict but also implies a specific attitude toward the issue--being above it, outside it, more important than it, not interested in it. Whatever meanings respondents attach to neutrality will, henceforth, be used as a further basis for response. This is true even when respondents demand an opinion or approval in structured interview situations. Failure to make a commitment can create resentment, hostility, and antagonism just as easily as taking a stand. In both cases, but each in its own way, relationships will be altered and, hence, data will be affected.<sup>5</sup>

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Stuart W. Cook (New York: Dryden Press, 1951) pp. 393-514; Marie Jahoda, et. al., Research Methods in the Social Sciences, "Data Collection: Observational Methods," op. cit., Chapter V, Vol. I; Benjamin D. Paul, "Interview Techniques and Field Relations," in Anthropology Today: An Encyclopedic Inventory, (ed.) A. L. Kroeder (Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1953) pp. 430-451.

<sup>5</sup>Arthur J. Vidich, "Participant Observation and the Collection and Interpretation of Data," The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. LX, No. 4, January 1955, p. 358.

As participant observer the writer was a member of all four civil rights organizations. He was appointed to the Human Relations Commission by the Mayor in 1960. He became a member of the Executive Committee of the Human Relations Commission and Chairman of the Housing Committee in 1962. In that capacity he was involved in all of the decision-making processes of the Commission. The writer represented the Commission as Chairman of the Housing Committee at numerous public meetings, panel discussions, and before the mass media. He was able to watch the Commission maneuver, and often extremely successfully, for the support of community influentials in the business, political, and religious arenas. Because he was involved in the decision making-process within the Commission itself, the writer was able to observe on an on-going basis the reaction of the representatives of practically every segment of the community.

The writer was also a member of the Urban League and appointed to the Board of Directors in 1962. He was a member of the Housing Committee and of the Research Committee. As in the Human Relations Commission, so in the Urban League, the writer was able to observe the Urban League vie for the support of community influentials in the business, political, and religious arenas. He was also able to observe the internal struggle of the Board as it attempted to define its role in the "civil rights struggle" during a period when the national director, Whitney Young, was attempting to redefine, change, and add new life to the local chapters of the League.



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The writer was one of the original members of the local chapter of CORE. He was involved in its beginning, its attempt to recruit members, its decisions in regard to "walk-ins", picketings, its internal squabbles, and its attempt to redefine its role when most of the original members of the local chapter, either formally or informally, resigned. The chapter eventually went into a period, up to the present time, when it was in a stage of "limbo," or non-activity.

The writer also was a member of the NAACP. However, he was not a member of the Executive Board or any of its committees. He went to and voted at some of the public meetings, knew its president, and one of the past presidents rather well, and had extensive talks with both. He knew many of the Executive Board members well and he had numerous formal and informal discussions with them at social gatherings, at meetings of other organizations that they were mutual members of, and in simple friendly visits in his house, their house, or in houses of mutual friends.

Hence, in regard to the various civil rights organizations, the writer was actively involved as participant in the decision-making process of these organizations. He observed their internal manipulations and their attempt to change the existing pattern or racial behavior in the community.

The writer was also a member of the Great Falls community as he had resided there for five years prior to the

study, and of course during the time of the study. He was a member of the Christian Reformed Church, a Dutch-American, and therefore a member of the dominant ethnic and religious group present in the city. He was a member of the Sociology Department of the largest four year college in the Metropolitan Area, which also was the dominant college of the religious and ethnic group to which he belonged. Hence the writer had access to the Negro community by virtue of his membership in numerous civil rights organizations, and had entree to the white community because of his ethnicity, religious affiliation, and position on the college faculty.

A second methodological technique was the use of the interview. The writer interviewed the members of the Human Relations Commission, the members of the Urban League Board of Directors, the Executive Board members of the NAACP, and all of the members of CORE. All the members of CORE were interviewed since it did not utilize an executive committee to make decisions because of its small size. CORE chapters are often purposely kept small because they are supposed to be self-disciplined action groups. In keeping with that, the Great Falls chapter never had more than twenty members. This added up to a total of over seventy members of various civil groups that had to be interviewed. The interviews were conducted with the aid of an interview guide which was structured so as to elicit responses as to the respondent's perception of the role of the civil rights

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organizations in bringing about change, and the respondent's perception of how change could best be brought about in Great Falls.<sup>6</sup>

The interviews varied considerably in length, from one hour to more than four hours. None of the interviews lasted less than an hour. Some of the respondents were very perceptive and knowledgeable while others had only a vague notion as to the social dynamics involved in the civil rights arena. This is a situation that any interviewer can expect, as Whyte writes:

Every experienced field worker recognizes that informants are not of equal value to the research. There are some individuals who, no matter how skilled the interviewer, do not notice what is going on around them or perhaps have difficulty in expressing themselves. The best informants are those who are in a position to have observed significant events and who are quite perceptive and reflective about them.<sup>7</sup>

The purpose of the interviews was to tap the respondents knowledge of what had occurred in Great Falls in the civil rights arena and as to how the respondent had participated in that arena to bring about change in interracial behavior. Hence, the purpose of the interviewing was not primarily to gather data that could be statistically manipulated, but was to gain insight and depth for the observer as participant. There was a danger that some of the respondents might qualify their answers because they knew the interviewer, as they had worked with him in various civil rights

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<sup>6</sup>See Appendix A.

<sup>7</sup>William Foote Whyte, "Interviewing in Field Research," in Human Organization on Research, (eds.) R. N. Adams and J. J. Preiss, op. cit., p. 358.

organizations or knew of some of the activity that he was involved in. The interviewer tried to compensate for this by keeping the interview as non-threatening, friendly, and informal as possible. This is a problem that Williams addressed himself to in his book Strangers Next Door, when he wrote that:

If a respondent is so easily swayed in an interview situation, which is permissive, friendly, relatively non-threatening, and temporary, he probably will be similarly susceptible to the more powerful social pressures often encountered in ordinary daily life.<sup>8</sup>

A third methodological technique was the use and examination of documentary materials. These included the minutes of all four civil rights organizations, the research published by these organizations, the reports of the activities of city officials, church-groups, civic organizations, etc. in the Great Falls Press, the Great Falls Times, the Great Falls Herald<sup>9</sup> and other mass media. The history of the civil rights organizations was also carefully examined through the use of documentary materials such as those mentioned above, minutes, research reports, and a perusal of the reports found in the mass media.

Since the study was concerned with the analysis of social change in interracial behavior as reflected in the functioning of the civil rights organization and their impact upon community decision-making, it was not considered

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<sup>8</sup>Robin M. Williams, Jr., Strangers Next Door (Englewood, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1964) p. 15.

<sup>9</sup>The Great Falls Herald ceased publishing in 1960.

fruitful to draw a probability sample of either the white or Negro populations. What was desired was a careful analysis of all those primarily involved in attempting to change the existing pattern of racial behavior, specifically in the areas of housing, education and employment opportunities from 1960 to the Fall of 1964.

We agree with Killian when he wrote that,

...sociologists will fail miserably in their tasks of describing stimulus conditions in their broadest aspect if they limit themselves to the techniques of the small group laboratory experiment and the time-consuming and often irrelevant attitude survey.<sup>10</sup> Not only will they have failed to pay their debts to the society which supports them, but they will have failed to provide the social psychologist with the knowledge from the sociological level which he requires for the design of meaningful experiments on his own level.<sup>11</sup>

In commenting on this statement of Killian, S. Stanfeld Sargent writes:

At the outset I commend Dr. Killian for his forthright support of institutional analysis rather than attitude study in handling a crisis produced by social change. I should like to comment, however, that the method chosen depends primarily on the question asked. For example, attitude studies have played and still play the major role in answering the question how people feel about discrimination and segregation, when that is the burning question.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>The writer assumes here that Killian is not attacking attitude surveys per se, as they play an obviously important part in social science research, e.g. the work of Paul F. Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson and Hazel Gaudet, The People's Choice (New York: Harper, 1948). The writer assumes the statement refers to studies which attempt to answer the questions of social dynamics only through the use of an emphasis on attitudinal surveys. It is not a question of either-or but of when and where.

<sup>11</sup>Killian, "Leadership in the Desegregation Crisis: An Institutional Analysis," op. cit., p. 168.

<sup>12</sup>Sargent in Sherif, Intergroup Relations and Leadership, (New York: John Wiley, 1962), p. 167.

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This writer agrees with Sargent but, as he pointed out in chapter one, there are numerous studies involving attitude surveys of "how people feel about discrimination and segregation"<sup>13</sup> but very few detailed analyses of the social dynamics of change in behavior. Hence the emphasis in this study on participation, interviewing, and documentary examination is not a "back-handed" slap at the "pre-coded questionnaire" but is an attempt to use a methodology suited to answer a specific question, or as Dollard stated:

In gathering data method must conform to material and not vice versa.<sup>14</sup>

Raymond Mack states it a little stronger when he writes that,

We should be devoting more of our professional energies to observing human groups and figuring out what they are doing, and less in mailing pre-coded questionnaires to individuals and asking them to account for the deviousness and subtlety of human social organization and its intended and unintended consequences. The analysis of power, stratification, and conflict has formed the core of the discipline of sociology; continuing and more intensive attention to power, stratification, and conflict will surely advance the science and our ability to make use of it.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>For a recent detailed study of the United States population see Harris and Brink, op. cit. In fact the popular mass media run numerous similar studies. See Look, June 22, 1965, Newsweek, July 29, 1963, etc.

<sup>14</sup>John Dollard, Caste and Class in a Southern Town, op. cit., p. 17.

<sup>15</sup>Raymond Mack, "Components of Social Conflict," in Social Problems, Summer 1965, Vol. 13, No. 1, p. 396.

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It was in that context then that a detailed analysis of the race relations of a midwestern medium size American city was made.

Therefore the major sources of data are three; observations of the author as he participated in the civil rights organizations and attempts within the community to change the existing pattern of interracial behavior, formal interviews with most of the members of the four major civil rights organizations, and an examination of documents (minutes, pamphlets, etc.) of the civil rights organizations and published accounts of the mass media of the activities within the Great Falls community to change the pattern of interracial behavior. Quotations from documents or the mass media will be cited. Data from the formal interviews will be appropriately labeled. Personal observations referred to from public and private meetings, formal and informal discussions and conversations should be understood to come from the author's notes.

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## CHAPTER III

### THE COMMUNITY SETTING

Great Falls is the second largest city in Great Lakes State, outranked only by a larger city in the eastern part of the state. It had a 1960 population of 177,313, and is the center of a Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area of 363,187 population. It is the largest city in western Great Lakes State lying along the Great Falls River about twenty-five miles from Lake Michigan, and is a secondary shopping area for most of the western part of the state. It is also the communications center for that part of the state as it has two television stations, seven radio stations, a daily newspaper, and a weekly Negro newspaper.

The city has been characterized by a pattern of slow growth. The 1960 population was 177,313, compared with 176,000 in 1950, 165,000 in 1940 and 168,000 in 1930.<sup>1</sup> The city however, has been characterized by a very rapid growth of the non-white population.

Table I indicates that from 1950 to 1960 the non-white population grew from 6,937 to 14,778, or from 3.9 percent of the population to 8.3 percent of the population, an increase of 113 percent. A study of the school population

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<sup>1</sup>This was before annexation. After annexation in 1960 the population increased to 202,379.

seemingly indicates that this high migration of non-whites into the city is continuing or possibly even increasing.<sup>2</sup>

Table I. Great Falls non-white population

Great Falls Year	Non-white Number	Population Percentage of City
1900	604	.7
1910	665	.6
1920	1,090	.8
1930	2,956	1.8
1940	2,725	1.7
1950	6,912	3.9
1960	14,778	8.3

While the non-white population is migrating into the city at a very rapid rate the white population is migrating out of the city at a very rapid rate. In Great Falls, between 1950 and 1960, births exceeded deaths by 34,546. Yet the net population increase from 1950 to 1960 was 798. This can only lead to the conclusion that whites were migrating out of the city at a much more rapid rate than white in-migration. This is supported not only by the birth and death rate differentials, but also by statistics indicating that while the city (Great Falls) only had an increase in population of 798, in the decade 1950-1960, the suburban area had a net increase of 57,492.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Hazel Billerton, Increase in White and Non-White School Enrollment (Great Falls Urban League Publication) 1963.

<sup>3</sup>Rodger R. Rice, Unpublished M.A. Thesis, An Analysis of Invasion-Succession and Areal Differentiation as Ecological Processes Operative in the Development of Ecological Variation Within a Negro Community, Mich. State University, 1962.

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## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NON-WHITE COMMUNITY

Housing

Nearly all non-whites in Great Falls are located in a ghetto in the center of the city. This ghetto area traditionally ran from Fuller Avenue on the east, south to Franklin Street, west on Franklin to Union Avenue, south on Union to Hall Street, west on Hall to Grand River, north along the river to Wealthy Street, and east on Wealthy to Fuller. By 1964 this circumscribed area<sup>4</sup> had expanded in every direction; however, it was an expansion that occurred in areas contiguous to the ghetto. It was, then, not a breaking up of the ghetto, but simply an expansion of it. It is significant that the professional civil rights workers know of only five instances of Negroes, from 1960 to the summer of 1964, moving to areas other than those contiguous to the ghetto.<sup>5</sup>

Although tightly constricted to a ghetto area the Negroes in Great Falls did have a higher percentage of home ownership than the national average for Negroes, although considerably lower than the average of white Great Falls citizens.

It should be noted, however, that the percentage of Negro home ownership in Great Falls declined in the decade

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<sup>4</sup>See Map 1.

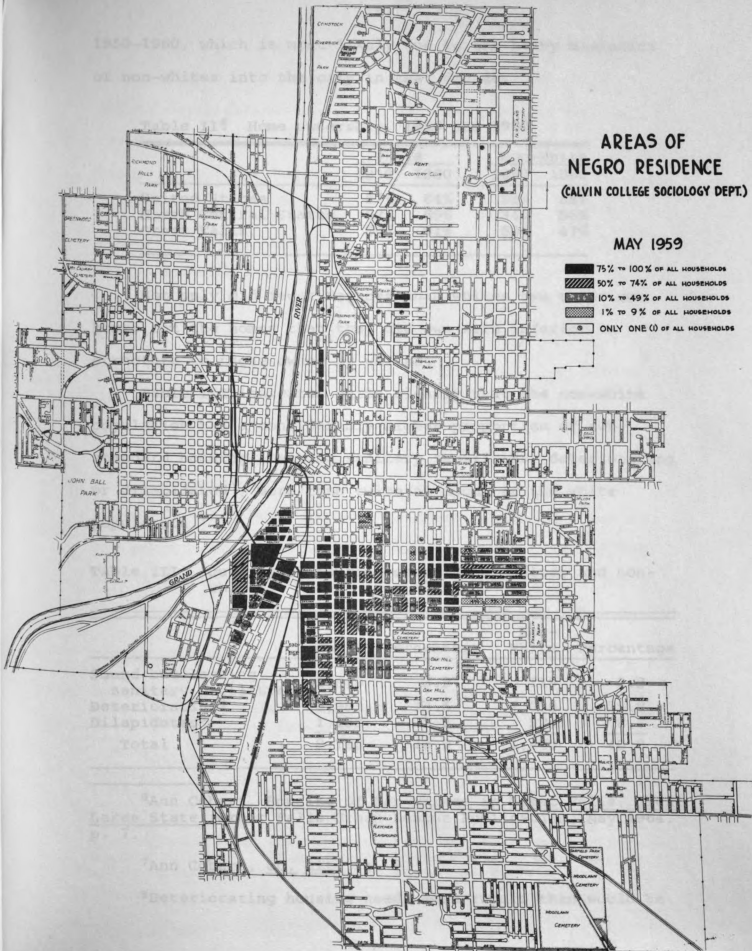
<sup>5</sup>Statement of Calvin Alford, director of the Great Falls Human Relations Commission, and Mark Paul, director of the Great Falls Urban League.



# AREAS OF NEGRO RESIDENCE (CALVIN COLLEGE SOCIOLOGY DEPT.)

MAY 1959

- 75% to 100% of all households
- 50% to 74% of all households
- 10% to 49% of all households
- 1% to 9% of all households
- ONLY ONE (1) of all households



1950-1960, which is most likely due to the heavy migration of non-whites into the city in that decade.

Table II<sup>6</sup> Home ownership, 1950 and 1960

	White		Non-White	
	1950	1960	1950	1960
United States	57%	64%	35%	38%
North Central States	62%	69%	34%	36%
Great Falls	60%	61%	50%	47%

Not only did fewer Negroes than whites own their own homes but the homes that they did own were inferior in structure to those owned by whites.

Table III indicates quite clearly that the non-white population had a considerably higher proportion of sub-standard housing (lacking sanitary facilities, deteriorating or dilapidated), more than twice as much, as the white population.<sup>7</sup>

Table III. Quality of housing occupied by whites and non-whites

	White		Non-White	
	Percentage		Percentage	
Sound but lacking sanitary facilities	1,669	3.2	119	3.2
Deteriorating <sup>8</sup>	6,983	13.5	1,050	28.2
Dilapidated <sup>9</sup>	1,138	2.2	324	8.7
Total	9,790	18.9	1,493	40.0

<sup>6</sup>Ann Cobart, Housing of Non-whites in Great Falls, Great Lakes State (Great Falls Urban League Publication) May 1964, p. 7.

<sup>7</sup>Ann Cobart, op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>8</sup>Deteriorating housing needs more repair than would be

The tables indicate what became a serious issue of social change in Great Falls, and that was that the civil rights organizations claimed that the non-white population was denied access to good housing in other areas of the city. Specifically, the desired changes urged by the civil rights organizations were for Negroes to have access, if they were financially qualified, to housing anywhere in the city. Secondly, it was urged that better quality housing be provided through some sort of government subsidized housing, e.g. public housing, for Negroes who were not qualified financially to obtain decent, safe, and sanitary housing.

### Income

There was great disparity, see Table IV, in family income in Great Falls between white and non-white families. The proportion of white families with income under \$3,000 was less than half the proportion of non-white families. At the higher end of the income bracket, \$8,000 and over,

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provided in the course of regular maintenance. It has one or more defects of an intermediate nature that must be corrected if the unit is to continue to provide safe and adequate shelter. (U.S. Census of Population and Housing: 1960) Great Falls, Great Lakes State, p. 6.

<sup>9</sup>Dilapidated housing does not provide safe and adequate shelter. It has one or more critical defects, or has a combination of intermediate defects in sufficient number to require extensive repair or rebuilding, or is of inadequate original construction. Critical defects result from continued neglect or lack of repair or indicate serious damage to the structure. (U.S. Census of Population and Housing: 1960) Great Falls, Great Lakes State, p. 6.



three times as many white families proportionally were in this upper income bracket.

Table IV. Gross family income: Great Falls 1960<sup>10</sup>

	White	Percentage	Non-white	Percentage
Under \$3,000	5,828	14.2	1,085	34.6
\$3,000-4,999	7,475	18.2	957	30.4
\$5,000-7,999	15,465	37.7	822	26.2
\$8,000 and up	12,170	29.7	267	8.5

There was in Great Falls in 1960 a much higher proportion of non-white women in the labor force than white women. Fifty percent of all non-white women over the age of 14 years were either at work or looking for work. This is in comparison to 38.8% of white women of this age in the labor force at this time.<sup>11</sup>

The non-white population, see Table V, also had a much lower proportion of persons in the skilled and semi-skilled jobs and a much higher proportion of the population in the unskilled categories than the white population.

### Education

The greatest differences in educational levels between white and non-white, see Table VI, in Great Falls were at the two extremes; those with very little or no schooling, and those with four years of college or more. There were

<sup>10</sup>Ann Cobart, op. cit., p. 5.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., pp. 5-6.

Table V. Job categories, 1960: Great Falls<sup>12</sup>

	White Percentage	Non-White Percentage
Skilled jobs		
Professional and Technical	12.0	4.0
Managers and Proprietors	12.3	1.4
Clerical	17.3	4.9
Semi-skilled jobs		
Sales	10.0	.9
Craftsman	13.6	7.6
Operatives	21.0	25.4
Unskilled jobs		
Private Household	1.8	8.9
Service	8.2	29.0
Laborers	3.5	10.8

Table VI. Years of school completed, white and non-white adults (over 25 years) Great Falls, 1960<sup>13</sup>

	White	Percentage	Non- White	Percentage
No Schooling	1,423	1.6	190	2.8
1-4 years	2,834	3.0	658	9.8
5-7 years	9,873	10.5	1,396	20.7
8 years	18,344	19.8	1,149	17.0
4 years high school	43,365	46.8	2,821	41.8
4 years college or more	16,477	17.7	537	7.8

<sup>12</sup>The Great Lakes State Employment Security Commission, The Negro in Great Lakes State's Labor Force, Great Lakes State, p. 1.

<sup>13</sup>Ann Cobart, op. cit., p. 7.

close to three times as many functional illiterates (4 years of schooling or less) among the non-white than among the white population. At the other extreme the white population had double the proportion of persons that had four or more years of college.

Not only was there a higher percentage of non-white functional illiterates but the non-white population had a much higher rate of school "drop outs". The Great Falls Human Relations Commission estimates that a half to sixty percent of the non-whites do not graduate from high school in comparison to only ten percent of the white school age population.<sup>14</sup>

Lastly, the education that the Great Falls white and non-white children receive is racially segregated education. There are six elementary schools in the city that have an average enrollment of 75% or more non-whites, with four of these schools in the 90% plus range. There are, on the other hand, 29 elementary schools that do not have any non-white students. There were in 1963 only 18 non-white children in the entire city who did not attend what were designated as culturally disadvantaged schools. A principals' study report on the culturally disadvantaged schools in Great Falls characterized them in the following way,

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<sup>14</sup>Statistics on file at Great Falls Human Relations Commission. See also Hazel Billerton, Four Studies of Great Falls Public Schools, (Great Falls Urban League Publication) 1964.





Schools...are usually over-crowded and understaffed to adequately meet their needs. Children are beset by behavior and learning problems, most of which stem from sources outside the school. Attitudes and behavior acceptable in the daily home life of these children are unacceptable in a school geared to a middle class society. In a sense, therefore, the children are expected to live two lives. And who can do that easily and comfortably?

Children who fight from babyhood on for a share of whatever is available continue to fight in school. Perhaps this accounts in part for taking other kid's candy, mittens, or money. Maybe it's the reason there's so much shoving and pushing and hitting to get a particular thing in the classroom or a coveted place in line. It could well be why there are so many fights which children new to the school must endure until leadership is established. But why do so many children fight if one bumps them accidentally? Do they just enjoy the excitement of a fight and therefore urge others to fight, even shoving them into each other? Why is there so much name calling? Is it because the children have such a poor self-image? Do they really hate themselves? Children who grow up accustomed to the constant use of foul language and the sight of adult sexual behavior bring their perverted moral values to school much to the horror and dismay of many teachers who have been brought up with vastly different values. Even when she understands the reasons, the teacher is at a loss in dealing with the problem. How does she protect the child who has not been exposed to these sights and sounds? What does she do for the child who sees nothing wrong in what he has said or done. Many teachers cannot accept emotionally what they know intellectually, and as a result they are extremely frustrated.

Boys and girls who spend every moment at home in noise and confusion soon learn either to out-shout the others in order to be heard or blot out the noise completely by not listening at all. Children bring these same habits to school and one finds some who never seem to hear what the teacher says and others who talk out loud constantly.

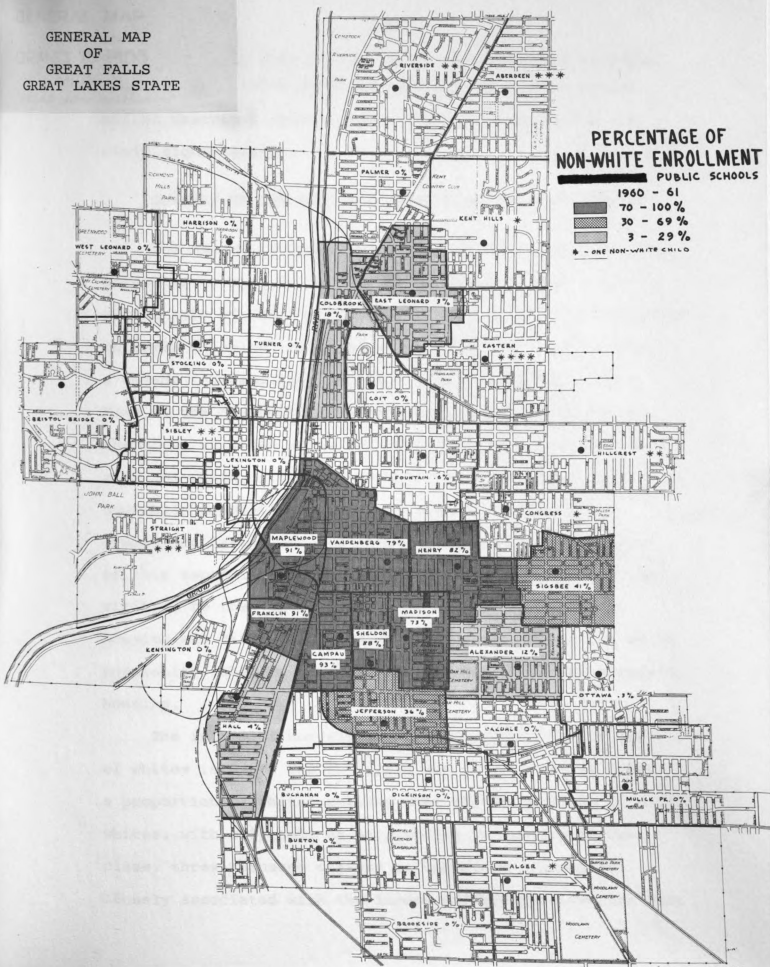
...no one has bothered to help him learn or establish desirable working habits. He has never had anyone read to him, talk with him, or take him to places of interest. His world is tiny and very limited. It is small wonder, then, that many of these children remain academically retarded for years.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, Report of the Study Group on Education of Culturally Disadvantaged Children, (Great Falls Board of Education, 1963).

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This fact, that all but 18 of the non-white children attended culturally disadvantaged schools with a social milieu described above, became a point of issue for the civil rights groups.

#### SUMMARY OF THE NON-WHITE POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

The non-white population in Great Falls has grown considerably in size in the last two decades. From a point at the turn of the century when decade increase was measured in terms of units less than one percent, to a point where a decade increase has been more than one hundred percent. Most of the non-white residents settled in the center of the city, in areas which for many years had been traditionally non-white. This ghetto area, because of the rapid non-white population growth, expanded into contiguous areas, but hardly any non-whites purchased homes outside of this expanding ghetto area. Not only were Negroes constricted to the "inner city," but the quality of their housing was distinctly inferior to the housing of the white population, there was double the proportion of sub-standard housing.

The income of non-whites was considerably below that of whites in Great Falls. There was three times as great a proportion of whites earning over \$8,000 annually as non-whites, with only half as many whites in the low income class, three thousand dollars or under, as non-whites. Closely associated with the income differential was the fact

that there were many fewer non-whites proportionally employed in skilled job categories than whites, and many more proportionally employed in the unskilled categories.

Educationally the non-white population had, proportionally, close to three times as many functional illiterates, six times as many "drop outs" and about half as many persons with four years of college or more. Because of housing segregation almost all of the non-white children attend de facto segregated schools.

#### POLITICS AND ETHNICITY

The white element of the city is almost all native born, less than 10 percent of the population is foreign born.<sup>16</sup> More than 35 percent of the population is estimated to be of Dutch stock,<sup>17</sup> the predominant nationality group, which has been in the community for over one hundred years. The second largest ethnic group is the Polish who came to the community about 1880. This has led to no little divisiveness in the community. Both groups tend to send their children to non-public schools; the Dutch have developed an extensive private parentally controlled Christian school system and the Polish and other Catholics send their children

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<sup>16</sup>Source: U.S. Bureau of Census 1960.

<sup>17</sup>Donald H. Bouma, "A Social Profile of Great Falls," Nuda Veritas, Feb. 26, 1957.

to parochial schools. As a result more than 35 percent of the community's children are educated in private or parochial schools which have tended to emphasize their ethnic distinctiveness.<sup>18</sup>

There has been constant bickering between these two ethnic groups, a struggle that has "spilled over" into the political arena. Great Falls has a city manager form of government with the Mayor elected at large and Commissioners elected from wards, all on a nonpartisan ballot.<sup>19</sup> There are three wards in the city, with the Polish being politically powerful in the first ward, the Dutch in the third ward, and with neither controlling the second ward. There has been in recent years a continuing political struggle between the lower income, west of the river first ward and other parts of the city over the way the manager system has operated. In general the Democratic party, Polish Catholic, and labor groups have opposed Republican, Dutch Reformed, "good government," and business elements in this political struggle.<sup>20</sup>

The city still bears scars of a political feud of over a decade ago when primarily third ward interests formed a

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<sup>18</sup>Donald H. Bouma, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Michigan State University, 1952, p. 46.

<sup>19</sup>In Great Falls the Councilmen are called Commissioners, but this should not be confused with the "Commission" form of government.

<sup>20</sup>Charles Press, When One-Third of a City Moves to the Suburbs, Institute for Community Development and Services, Michigan State University, 1959, p. 14.

Citizen's Action committee which unseated the incumbent administration in a campaign based on charges of inefficiency and suspicion of corruption.<sup>21</sup> Citizen's Action has been disbanded; however, some of the persons involved in it are still politically active. The factional fight in part is based on a difference in philosophies about city government. The Citizen's Action group had emphasized efficiency and "clean" government in its appeal to the voters, while the opposition faction placed heavy emphasis on representativeness in terms reminiscent of the slogans of Jacksonian Democracy.<sup>22</sup> Intertwined in this continuing power struggle are the Dutch and Polish ethnic groups. Both groups always have members on the City Commission, with at least one person of Polish extraction from the 1st ward and at least one person of Dutch background from the 3rd ward. During most of the period of this study there were three persons of Dutch Reformed background and two of Polish background on the City Commission.

In this political struggle the Negro voter has not been an important element, a point emphasized by McKee in his study of Great Falls Negro leadership.

The Negro community in Great Falls has not, in the past, been a major factor in the political life of the total community. It has not had the numbers sufficient

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<sup>21</sup>Ekdal Buys, "A City Manager's Dilemma," Unpublished Senior Thesis, Hope College, Michigan, 1962.

<sup>22</sup>Charles Press, op. cit., p. 15.



to constitute a major voting group, it has not had cohesive organization and effective political leadership, many Negroes have not been registered voters, and it has had no significant ties to the dominant political party of the community, the Republican.<sup>23</sup>

Several individual Negroes, however, have been successful in political activity. Mark Paul, executive director of the Urban League, has been elected to the Board of Education, and Donald R. Steel, a Negro attorney, has been elected a judge in municipal court. Both men, however, have exceptional ability and their election as such gives no indication of Negro voting power.

The city is strongly Republican, having voted Democratic only twice, in the 1930's, and in the past presidential election. Organized labor is not a powerful influence in the city, and the area has long been known by union officials as the "graveyard" of union organizers.<sup>24</sup>

Negroes, then, have been faced in Great Falls with a situation in which they find themselves the victims of a society in which they receive obviously unequal benefits in the areas of education, employment, income, and housing. The Negro wants the existing inequities removed and attempts to do so without a powerful political base from which to work. The problem examined in this thesis revolves around that question, the question of how to bring about social

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<sup>23</sup>McKee, Negro Leadership in Great Falls, op. cit. p. 11.

<sup>24</sup>Bouma, An Analysis of the Social Power Position of the Real Estate Board in Great Falls, Great Lakes State, op. cit., p. 34.

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change so that the existing inequities will be removed. Should one attempt to appeal to the white community through logical argumentation and rhetoric, hoping to arrive at a consensus that change should take place; or should one attempt to remove the existing inequities through a struggle of power engaging in or threatening conflict? Or should the existing inequities be removed by the use of both approaches using the one or the other at what would be considered an opportune time?

## CHAPTER IV

### THE CIVIL RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS

This chapter will consist of a detailed description of the civil rights organizations that were active in Great Falls during the time span covered by this study. This description will consist of a discussion of the internal structure of these organizations, and the relationship of these organizations to the broader community. Chapters four and five will be primarily descriptive, acting as the data and background material for the analysis which will follow in Chapter Six.

### THE HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Numerous cities in the United States today have established some type of government staffed agency to cope with the problems of intergroup relations.<sup>1</sup> The Great Falls City Commission took its first step toward municipal involvement on November 17, 1952 when it passed by unanimous vote the following resolution:

That the Mayor be instructed to appoint a Committee not to exceed seven members to study and outline a possible program of human relations, and that said Committee be instructed to seek the counsel of the City

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<sup>1</sup>George Schermer, Guidelines: A Manual for BiRacial Committees, Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, 1964. Schermer lists over 50 cities with paid staff, pp. 52-55.

Attorney regarding the legal scope of such a program.<sup>2</sup>

Mayor Saul S. Blatz informed the City Commission on March 23, 1953 that he had appointed seven persons to the committee.<sup>3</sup> Mr. Harold Keller was named Chairman of the committee. Mr. Keller was an extremely active member of the Great Falls community. Now deceased he was at that time Director of Industrial Relations at British Bench Co. One of the above members of the committee stated that Mr. Keller at the beginning of the study did not think that a Human Relations Commission was necessary in Great Falls. This Study Committee member stated that,

I was one of seven on the Study Committee. We met every week for a year. Five of us knew what we wanted, and that was to have a Human Relations Commission as a part of city government. But Mutter and Keller had the typical attitude of big businessmen. They brought up the familiar objections to a race relations group. But the most amazing thing was the transformation of these two men. They were big enough and had enough strength of character to become two of our most ardent advocates.<sup>4</sup>

Seemingly then part of the function of the Study Committee was an educational one. It was not established just to give legitimacy to an already determined policy. If not the "City Fathers", at least several of the Study

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<sup>2</sup>City of Great Falls, Proceedings of the City Commission, May 4, 1952 through April 27, 1953, p. 513.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 787

<sup>4</sup>Stated in personal interview in the Summer of 1964.

Committee members had to be educated to the fact that there was indeed a problem.

The Study Committee uncovered a variety of discriminatory practices in the areas of employment, housing, education and recreation. Representatives of twenty civic, welfare, and other groups in the Great Falls area made statements before the Study Committee,<sup>5</sup> indicating that there was a clear cut pattern of discrimination in Great Falls. As a result, the Study Committee recommended in 1954 to the City Commission that the city establish a Human Relations Commission. The Study Committee emphasized that the program of such an agency should be one of education, research, conciliation, coordination of the activities of various community groups working to overcome prejudice, and the establishment of better understanding among different races, religions and nationalities.<sup>6</sup>

The Study Committee strongly emphasized the potential educational function of a Human Relations Commission. The report especially stated that ideally a program of education would reveal not only the nature of prejudice and the consequences of discrimination, but also the advantages of tolerance, mutual understanding, and equal opportunity.

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<sup>5</sup>Samuel Bainerd, The City of Great Falls Human Relations Commission, Unpublished Internship Report, U. of Pittsburg, 1961, p. 6.

<sup>6</sup>Human Relations Study Committee, Human Relations Study Committee Report, Unpublished, 1954.

The report also stated that the myths by which discriminatory practices are justified should be exposed.<sup>7</sup>

Conciliation was also seen as a most important function in combating discrimination and promoting good will. Complaints of discriminatory practices could be verified by the Human Relations Commission, and conferences held with those concerned in an effort to conciliate the differences and secure a fair adjustment.<sup>8</sup>

The Study Committee also felt that a municipal Human Relations Commission would be in a most strategic position not only to enlist the help of citizens' groups, but especially to work with other government agencies, to advise them in programs affecting the welfare of minority groups and intergroup harmony.<sup>9</sup>

The emphasis of the report, then, was on the educational, conciliatory, and advisory capacity that a municipal human relations commission should have. As will be pointed out below the Study Committee did not foresee adequately the fact that many people did not want to be educated, many groups did not want to be conciliated, and some government agencies did not want advice. The Study Committee did not recommend that special legislation be passed in the area of "civil rights," other than that a Commission be established

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

that would have the power to conciliate, advise, and attempt to educate the populace. Implicit, though, in the Study Committee Report was the notion that a municipal commission would be able to operate and function in an official governmental capacity to educate the public, conciliate in disputes, and coordinate the efforts of other agencies. It would, it was thought, be able to bring considerably more pressure to bear on behalf of minority groups on those people and community institutions which figure heavily in the patterns of discriminatory activity in the city, than could a non-governmental agency. It is this notion of official capacity, that only a municipal agency could wield, which appeared throughout the Study Committee Report as the prime need for municipal involvement as opposed to solely private endeavors.<sup>10</sup>

That particular aspect, "official capacity," was seen correctly by the Study Committee members, at least to the extent that it was mentioned over and over again by persons active in the civil rights movement. A Chairman of one of the Urban League committees stated that,

The Human Relations Commission has the 'gimmick' that when a person speaks in the name of the Commission he is supposedly speaking in the name of city government and hence in the name of the community. When the Executive Director speaks he speaks as an officially concerned part of the community to promote interracial understanding. What lies beneath his

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<sup>10</sup>Samuel Bainerd, op. cit., p. 9.



speaking is the collective good will and legal rights of the community.<sup>11</sup>

A long time officer in the NAACP stated that,

Frankly, the official status that it has gives it a kind of role that a non-governmental agency does not have. Even the powers that limit it (the enabling ordinance) give it the official status that makes it more effective.<sup>12</sup>

A past president of the Urban League remarked,

Its access to the political structure makes it important. Appointment to the Commission is important because it has community status. It is clothed with official city status that commands respect on the part of the people. Because of this people would not expect it to be an "axe to grind" type of committee, or a committee to be used by self-seeking leaders. Because of its official status it gets publicity and has access to the power structure.<sup>13</sup>

In July of 1954, the Chairman of the Study Committee submitted the Study Report to the City Commission. Eight months later, in April, 1955, the City Commission unanimously approved the Human Relations Ordinance which established the Human Relations Commission.<sup>14</sup>

The Ordinance provided for the appointment of members to the Human Relations Commission by the Mayor with the approval of the City Commission. The Human Relations Commission, the ordinance stated, should consist of fifteen members to serve without compensation and should be representative of management and labor, the Protestant, Catholic,

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<sup>11</sup>Personal interview, Summer of 1964.

<sup>12</sup>Personal interview, Summer of 1964.

<sup>13</sup>Personal interview, Summer of 1964.

<sup>14</sup>The Great Falls Human Relations Commission has printed copies available.

and Jewish faith, of the white and colored races, and other groups in the community. The ordinance also provided for expansion of the Human Relations Commission to twenty-one members. The Human Relations Commission at the time of this study consisted of twenty-one members.<sup>15</sup>

The duties of the Human Relations Commission, according to the enabling ordinance, were to be as a staff unit to other city departments, a research agency, an investigatory body, an information and educational department about intergroup relations, and a public and private social agency coordinator in the area of human relations.<sup>16</sup>

The ordinance provided for the position of Executive Director and Assistant Executive Director to carry on the administrative function of the Commission.

The ordinance also made it unlawful for the city or any of its contractors to discriminate in hiring, or in conditions of employment against any one person or group because of race, color, religion or national origin. This provision has since been preempted by a State Fair Employment Practices Law.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>On May 22, 1958 (Opinion No. 2880), the State Attorney General of Great Lakes State ruled Act 251 (FEPC) supercedes all local ordinances dealing with discrimination in employment and pre-empted this field.

The ordinance emphasized those aspects that had been emphasized by the Study Committee, an emphasis that put the responsibility of the Human Relations Commission primarily in the areas of education, conciliation, and advice. This emphasis was eventually to be considered inadequate by many Commission members who wanted the responsibility of the Commission broadened to include legislation against discrimination, especially in the area of housing.

#### Internal Organization

The Human Relations Commission was organized internally in a system of committees, each dealing with one of the major problem areas of intergroup relations. At the time of this study it had four functioning committees. At one time the Commission had a fifth committee dealing with employment opportunities. It, however, ceased to function when the State FEPC representatives began to pre-empt the field. The four functioning committees were the Education and Recreation Committee, the Housing, Health, and Welfare Committee, the Legal and Civil Rights Committee, and the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee consisted of the Chairman of the three preceding committees, the Chairman of the Commission, the Vice Chairman of the Commission and two other members of the Commission. The Executive Committee met infrequently and then usually only if there were a crisis that had to be settled before a regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission, e.g., during the summer

months of 1964 when the Commission did not meet in regular session.

### Membership Composition

The membership of the Human Relations Commission reflects a broad spectrum of community groups called for in the Study Committee Report. Every major racial, ethnic and religious group in the city is represented. The various economic and political factions of the city are also represented. As Bainerd stated in his report,

If one looks at the image too long it becomes difficult to tell if the members are there by virtue of their skin color and religious affiliation or because of their economic position or political bias.<sup>18</sup>

Bainerd meant by this that some of the Commission members could have been appointed for several reasons. Several Commission members might have been appointed because they represented a particular ethnic group, a religious group, an economic group, or a political faction. Hence when one begins to question why a particular person was on the Commission it, as Bainerd stated, "becomes difficult to tell."

The Commission had and has members who wield considerable power in various segments of the community. As a result the Executive Director has entree to practically any segment of the community, and through the Commission members could effect communication with almost any group in the city.

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<sup>18</sup>Bainerd, op. cit., p. 18.

Schermer is probably right when he writes that,

A committee of prominent, respected and wise people, representative of the various groups in the community, can decide what to communicate and how to communicate; but their mere presence and participation on a committee does little to influence the behavior of what is presumed to be their following.<sup>19</sup>

It does not follow from this though that it is not important to have the various representatives of the community on the Commission. Although they cannot dictate to members of the groups that they represent how they should act, they can interpret to other Commission members how their group might react to certain policy decisions. This is a point that Killian and Grigg saw as being important in their studies.<sup>20</sup> A point that Schermer also concedes as he writes that,

The larger the board the more representative it can be and, therefore, the more sensitive to the many interests and viewpoints of the various segments of the population.<sup>21</sup>

The experience in Great Falls seems to be, as will be developed below, that a Commission of twenty-one members is not necessarily too large at all if the members are put on action committees, and are willing to work at the committee level.

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<sup>19</sup>Schermer, op. cit., p. 23.

<sup>20</sup>Killian and Grigg, op. cit., p. 53

<sup>21</sup>Schermer, op. cit., p. 23.

Bainerd who was acting Executive Director of the Commission for nine months wrote in his Internship Report that,

...I found this heterogeneity of membership to be of considerable utility. It afforded the Commission and myself expertise in the various areas and patterns of discrimination within the community (which was something I did not have). Also it provided entree into the various groups of the community, because the Commission members were, for the most part, leaders or vocal members of these groups. Thus, I was able to act with more confidence in dealing with individuals of minority groups or minority group organizations.<sup>22</sup>

Bainerd for example gained information about the Mexican-American element in Great Falls, and the difficulties they faced, from the President of the Great Falls Mexican-American Society who was a member of the Commission. Through the association with Negro members of the Commission he was able to receive information about what was occurring in the Negro community. He acquired from the Dutch-Reformed members of the Commission a perspective on the dominant ethnic group in the city, and invitations to speak at their church and school association meetings. Bainerd had the same experience in regard to other elements in the community. Hence it was this diversity, brought about in part by the large size of the Commission, that enabled him to gain a clearer perspective of the community, and to gain access to the various elements.

There was during the time of this study very little bickering on the Commission. Personality clashes were kept

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<sup>22</sup>Bainerd, op. cit., p. 19.

to a minimum. The very real and intense clashes that did develop tended to be over issues and not over personalities. Political party or religious affiliation did not constitute foci of disagreement, neither did racial background. Some of the most militant and conservative Commission members could be found in both racial groups. There was a split on the Commission as to the means that should be used to accomplish the goals of the Commission. There was, however, consensus as to the ultimate goal, a completely open society where race, religion, or ethnic background were not used as criteria to prejudge the worth of an individual. There were members who could be classified as militant in approach and others as conservative, with most being fairly characterized as moderate.<sup>23</sup> This meant that not infrequently there would be a debate in Committee, or in Commission meetings, between

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<sup>23</sup>By militant is meant here a person who was more concerned with direct governmental action in the form of laws and investigations than in an educational emphasis, more concerned with making progress in equality of opportunity than in reducing racial tension, and was a person who wanted immediate action to make immediate changes in the pattern of interracial interaction.

By conservative is meant here a person who was more concerned with reducing the racial tension than in making progress, and who thought that real progress would have to come over a fairly long period of time as attitudes and values would be changed by the educational emphasis of the Commission.

By moderate is meant a person who falls between these two positions. He was willing to use government action to bring about equality of opportunity but wanted to make certain that every other approach had first been considered. He was as concerned with reducing racial tension as in making progress in equality of opportunity and became upset if he was forced to choose between the two. He was eager for change to take place but did not have the feeling of immediacy of the militant or the patience of the conservative.

conservatives and militants to gain the support of the moderates for their particular proposal. Most Commission members however, saw this as part of their d'entre and as a result the debates did not usually lead to accrimonious feelings and the Commission remained a reasonably harmonious group.

#### The Executive Director

The enabling legislation allowed the Human Relations Commission to have an Executive Director and an Assistant Executive Director. However, for most of its existence the Human Relations Commission had only an Executive Director, and had several Executive Directors for relatively brief periods.

The first Executive Director was appointed on January 3, 1956. The minutes indicate that a great deal of time was spent in organizational activity. A great deal of time was also spent in determining the proper role of a municipal Human Relations Commission. Seemingly, then, the activities of the Human Relations Commission during the tenure of the first Director were primarily in the area of role definition and organizational procedures.

Six months after the first Executive Director resigned on December 31, 1957, a second Executive Director was appointed. The second Executive Director was an attorney who had worked with the Chicago Commission on Human Relations. He, as was the first Executive Director, was white. He was



of Spanish descent, spoke Spanish fluently, and therefore was able to gain a rapport with the Mexican-American community that was lost when he resigned. In fact he was the only Executive Director that this writer could determine who worked to any extent with any minority group other than Negroes. During this Director's tenure the city faced a serious financial crisis and therefore the City Manager asked the Human Relations Commission to allow the Executive Director, because he was an attorney, to work on a half-time basis in the Police Court with half his salary to be paid for from the City Attorney's budget. The Commission reluctantly agreed upon the assurance that the situation would be only temporary. It soon became apparent, however, that most of the Director's time would be spent in Police Court with little time or energy left for the Human Relations Commission. As a result the Commission began to drift, little was accomplished, and the Commission members were getting discouraged. Finally the Director announced that he had accepted an offer to become full time Assistant City Attorney. The City Manager then informed the Human Relations Commission on January 25, 1961 that he had assigned a graduate student, Samuel Bainerd, from the University of Pittsburg, who was working on an internship requirement for his Master of Public Administration degree, to serve as Acting Director until a new full time professional could be acquired.

Bainerd served as Acting Executive Director until July of 1961 when Calvin Alford was appointed as Executive Director. At Alford's appointment the entire direction of the Human Relations Commission began to change. Alford was primarily interested in action oriented programs, and was very articulate, personable, and adept in interpersonal relations. Alford was the first Negro to serve as an Executive Director of the Grand Rapids Human Relations Commission. It became apparent from the numerous interviews that many Negroes identified with Alford and looked on him with a feeling of pride. He functioned extremely well in an integrated setting, exuded self confidence, had access to the centers of power, and therefore many Negroes looked on him as a "good representative" of their community. In all of the interviews there was no outright criticism of Alford in general, and very little in regard to particulars.

The closest to any criticism that developed over Alford was from a very active participant in CORE who stated that,

My personal feeling is that there have been occasions when the present director has attempted to manipulate to his own advantage some of the organizations and individuals in the community.<sup>24</sup>

The reference here was to an instance when Alford tried to prevent CORE from picketing a state convention of the State Association of Realtors. Alford attempted to halt the picketing because he thought it would interfere with

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<sup>24</sup>Personal interview, Summer of 1964.

negotiations that were going on in Great Falls at that time between the Human Relations Commission and the Great Falls Board of Realtors. He tried to manipulate CORE by calling individual members to have them halt the picketing. Alford himself now admits he made a tactical error at the time and would not now make such an attempt. Hence the above criticism is hardly a harsh rebuke, especially as the critic goes on to say that, "He (Alford) is nevertheless an active, intelligent director, who has had a measure of success in his work."<sup>25</sup>

This positive image in the Negro community enabled Alford to communicate with the Negro community in a manner that his predecessors were never able to do. On the other hand, Alford also had good rapport with the white community. Alford was enough of a professional that he understood his role well, and could keep himself under emotional control so that he was neither easily angered (outwardly) or flustered. As a result he presented an image to the white community of an extremely capable, reasonable, and dedicated civil rights worker. Although well accepted in the white community he had not done this at the cost of being labeled an "Uncle Tom" in the Negro community. He had been able to walk the "tight rope", managed by very few, and appeared as an aggressive worker for equal opportunity in the Negro

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<sup>25</sup>Personal interview, Summer of 1964.

community, and a reasonable civil rights spokesman in the white community. The reason for this probably was because it was an accurate description of reality. Alford was aggressive in pushing for equality of opportunity, and was at the same time capable of debating in a dispassionate manner the merits of any particular proposal with any type of group.<sup>26</sup> The point will be made later that some of the other organizations, specifically CORE and the NAACP, were undoubtedly hindered in their programs because they had no professional to present an image in public, and as a result their public relations were not as an effective a part of their program as it was in the Human Relations Commission and the Urban League.

Because Alford was articulate, and presented a good public image, he was in much demand as a speaker.<sup>27</sup> The more Alford appeared in public in both the Negro and white communities, the more often persons began to stop or call the Human Relations Commission office.<sup>28</sup> Because he was

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<sup>26</sup>The writer always found Alford on the committee level to push for a strong position on civil rights, and yet never saw him get emotional in more than twenty public appearances that he observed, some under extremely trying circumstances.

<sup>27</sup>The Human Relations Commission staff made over one hundred appearances in the 1963-1964 year before a total audience of close to 10,000 people. See Annual Report, 1963-64, Human Relations Commission, Great Falls.

<sup>28</sup>Since Alford took over as Executive Director there has been a constant increase in the number of contacts by the Executive Director. See Human Relations Commission, Annual Reports, since 1961.

an activist he began to push the committees to formulate goals and devise means to achieve them. It soon became apparent that a once floundering agency had more work than just the Executive Director could handle. The Human Relations Commission then requested a budget allocation to hire an Assistant Executive Director. In June of 1964 a young former worker in the Southern Regional Conference was hired as Assistant Director. He will hardly be mentioned in this study because at the time of the interviews few persons had met him, and he was not present in the community when most of the activity discussed in this study was occurring.

#### The Human Relations Commission and Governmental Structure

It was pointed out in Chapter Two that although the governing body of Great Falls is referred to as the City Commission and the Mayor is elected at large, the form of municipal government is actually of the Council-Manager type. The organizational chart of the city government indicates a proliferation of boards, commissions and authorities; the City Manager, however, is, as chief administrative officer of the city, responsible for the maintenance and coordination of the various activities of these citizens' groups. This also meant that if one commission had criticisms to make of another commission, board, or authority, they were, at least implicitly, criticizing the City Manager because all the boards, commissions, and authorities were

administratively responsible to him. This led to no little friction between the Human Relations Commission and the City Manager, as the Human Relations Commission tried to fulfill its mandate to give advice to other city agencies, especially in regard to the City Planning Director and the Director of Urban Renewal. The problem was that the Executive Director of the Human Relations Commission was a member of the City Manager's administrative family, but at the same time was governed by the Human Relations Commission's policies, which were not always in accord with those of the City Manager or the City Commission.<sup>29</sup> If therefore the Human Relations Commission developed policies that were at variance with those of the City Planning Commission the City Manager then had two Executive Directors, the City Planning Director and the Human Relations Director, with opposed policies. This could only lead to friction within the administrative family, as it did. It then became a power struggle between two Commissions and/or Directors, a situation that hardly induced a feeling of well-being in the City Manager. As Bainard indicated in his report,

My first impression was that some department heads feared the Commission. I think this was due to rather vague notions of the Commission's aims, particularly in regard to recruitment of non-white workers. This fear becomes more credible considering some of the prominent civic leaders on the Commission who would be in a position to bring influence to bear if such were actually their aim. Also I detected some resentment

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<sup>29</sup>This will be dealt with in some detail in Chapter Five.

which appeared to stem from the Commission's seemingly proprietary interest in the affairs of other departments.<sup>30</sup>

This was a point emphasized by a long time member of the Human Relations Commission, and a person active in many community functions, who was rather upset by the Housing Committee's attempt to review the work of the Urban Renewal Director, when he stated:

I don't see why we get so 'hopped up' about Urban Renewal. This constant review we are so concerned about makes the city not get anything done. I don't blame the City Manager for getting angry. I wouldn't tolerate all that sniping between departments.<sup>31</sup>

There was at the beginning of the Human Relations Commission's activities very little contact between the Human Relations Commission and the City Commission. Samuel Bainerd, working as an administrative assistant to the City Manager, worked temporarily as Acting Executive Director of the Human Relations Commission and wrote that,

...the present Council is aware of the Commission only at budget time and whenever the Mayor submits an appointment to the Commission to them for their consideration. The Council's knowledge of the Commission's role is probably as limited as other people in the community who are involved in public affairs. The past Executive Directors of the Commission were often wont to handle the inquiries and problems of individuals, particularly Negroes and Mexican-Americans, on a case work basis and this type of activity tended to stamp the Commission as a social work agency. As one of those municipal agencies which must justify its existence in annual budget hearings or in inter-departmental conferences, the Commission is often defended on the premise

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<sup>30</sup>Bainerd, op. cit., p. 25

<sup>31</sup>Personal interview, Summer of 1964.





that since its beginning Great Falls has not been afflicted with any of the ugly racial disturbances that have often plagued Big City or other urban areas within the State...

Other than this aspect I do not believe that the Commission makes too much political sense to members of the City Council...<sup>32</sup>

Bainerd was stating implicitly, if not explicitly, that the City Commission was not too concerned about whether or not the Human Relations Commission was eliminating discriminatory practices, but that it was concerned that the Human Relations Commission keep tension down in the city. There is no evidence of any kind that this writer could discover, that would indicate that the City Commissioners were concerned about discriminatory practices in the city, other than when they were forced to deal with crisis situations that were forced on them, and then they were usually much more concerned with reducing tensions rather than eliminating discriminatory practices, as will be discussed below.

Bainerd in fact reports that during a budget hearing a Commissioner stated that rather than granting the Commission another financial allocation they should abolish it, because deep down that's what they really would like to do.<sup>33</sup>

This fact was not lost on the Human Relations Commission members. One of the Commission members who had been

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<sup>32</sup>Bainerd, op. cit., p. 32

<sup>33</sup>Bainerd, ibid., p. 27.

with the Commission from its inception stated that,

I think we could have closer relations with the City Commission. We should have periodic lunches with them. We should have closer communication with them. Its hard to give them in an annual report the real impact of what we are doing...I'm thinking that in addition to that to have the Commissioners discuss the problems with us once or twice a year. We have never had a single member of the City Commission at our meetings.<sup>34</sup>

After racial crises became a serious national pattern in 1962 and 1963 this perspective of the City Commissioner, as will be indicated in later chapters, quickly changed to one of vital interest in Human Relations Commission activities.

#### THE URBAN LEAGUE

There are in the United States today more professionally staffed Urban Leagues than there are professionally staffed municipal human relations agencies. It was pointed out previously that Schermer puts the number of cities which have human relations agencies with paid staff at slightly more than fifty, while Whitney Young, National Executive Director of the Urban League, puts the number of professionally staffed Urban Leagues at seventy. Young writes that:

Today, the League has branches in seventy strategically located cities across the nation, working to improve the educational, employment, housing, and health and welfare services of nearly 80 per cent of all Negro Americans living in cities of over 100,000 population. The programs of the local branches are co-ordinated and

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<sup>34</sup>Personal interview, Summer of 1964.

supervised by five regional offices. A paid staff of more than 600 carry out the day-to-day activities backed up by more than 6,000 volunteers, who serve as board and committee members.<sup>35</sup>

The Urban League first came into existence on the national scene in 1910 when it was organized as a social work agency to help Negroes adjust to urban living conditions.<sup>36</sup> It is this social work emphasis that makes it a distinct group in the area of inter-group relations, and which has caused a great deal of misunderstanding of the League's activities. Young writes that:

One of the major problems of public interpretation and public relations which have plagued the Urban League throughout its history is the fact that the organization is not a 'civil rights agency', as the term is usually defined by the general public, both white and Negro.<sup>37</sup>

In fact not only does this cause problems of public interpretation but, as will be pointed out below, in Great Falls it also caused problems of interpretation on the Urban League Board of Directors.

It was the social work emphasis that brought about the establishment of the Urban League in Great Falls. During the early 1940's the termination of a W.P.A. recreational

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<sup>35</sup>Whitney M. Young, Jr., "The Urban League and Its Strategy," in The Annals, January 1965, Vol. 357, p. 103.

<sup>36</sup>Whitney M. Young, Jr., "Civil Rights Action and the Urban League," in Rose, Arnold M., Assuring Freedom to the Free, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1964).

<sup>37</sup>Young, in Rose, op. cit., p. 210.

project in the Southeast section of Great Falls, which was heavily populated by Negroes, brought about the realization of a need for a permanent program of this type. Through the efforts of Bishop P. Moreshitte of the Episcopal Diocese, and a large financial gift to the Diocese by Miss Mable Brown, a permanent educational and recreational program was established under the direction of a biracial, non-partisan, non-sectarian governing board. This board was incorporated as the Brown Community Association in January, 1943 and was the forerunner of the Great Falls Urban League. The Brown Community Association began its recreational work in a building located at 554 Henry St., and continued to operate a recreational program in this locality until 1947. In 1947 the Board of Directors of the Brown Community Association voted to enlarge the services of the agency and to affiliate with the National Urban League and to enlarge the services of the agency to include a full Urban League program, with emphasis on employment.<sup>38</sup>

Group work (recreation), one of the major purposes of the Brown Community Association, was discontinued in May, 1950, at which time the recreational needs of the area served were referred to the YMCA, YWCA, and the Department

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<sup>38</sup>See, Great Falls and Kear County Health and Recreation Self Evaluation Project, "The Great Falls Urban League and Brown Community Association," Vol. 1, 1954-1955; Great Falls Urban League, Urban League History, pamphlet, undated; What...? Why...?, pamphlet, undated.

of Public Recreation. Program emphasis at this point was directed toward Negro citizens in job development, health and welfare, education and youth incentive, and housing.<sup>39</sup>

### Internal Structure of the Urban League

The Urban League is controlled by a Board of Directors composed of 30 persons with the Chairman of the Women's Guild serving in an ex officio position. Recommendations for persons to serve on the Board of Directors are made by a Nominating Committee. As will be pointed out below nomination is tantamount to being elected to the Board. Although space is provided for "write-ins," seldom does anyone ever receive enough votes this way to be elected. As a result the Board is a self-perpetuating entity controlled by the Executive Director, and by several Board members who have been on and off the Board since its beginning in 1947. The Urban League stated in its report of "self-evaluation" in 1954 that "a double slate is proposed by the Nominating Committee for the election of members to the Board by the entire membership."<sup>40</sup> The minutes indicate otherwise, and the "self-evaluation" report is simply a misrepresentation of how the Board operates.<sup>41</sup> Members serve a three year term,

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<sup>39</sup>Great Falls and Kear County Health, Welfare and Recreation Self Evaluation Project, Unpaged, op. cit.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

<sup>41</sup>The minutes indicate that usually as many persons are nominated as there are positions to be filled. Hence the Urban League Board members have a choice of voting for those nominated, not voting, or "writing-in" a name.

Those having served two consecutive three year terms are required to retire for one year, after which time, they are again eligible for election. They are usually then nominated again and serve another two three year terms. There are no qualification with reference to sex, religion, age, occupation, experience, or residence. The Executive Secretary was effective at getting on the Board citizens that can either be of assistance by having access to the white or Negro power structure, have some technical skill, or are put on because they are extremely articulate cynics in the Negro community, and are put on the Board of Directors so that they must become defenders of it.

On the Board of Directors are persons who are well known members of the power structure of the white community and have access to the centers of decision-making in the economic, political, and religious spheres. There also are on the Board of Directors Negro members who have access to the various organizations in the Negro community including the NAACP, CORE and various religious organizations.

One also finds on the Board of Directors persons with advanced degrees and/or skill in research, law, medicine, race relations, etc. These persons are then assigned to relevant committees such as research, education, welfare, personnel, etc. Hence the Executive Secretary has a constant source of expertise to which he can refer, and to which he can assign some of his most pressing problems.

One also finds on the Board of Directors Negro cynics who have been extremely critical of the Board of the Urban League and of other civil rights organizations but who have been co-opted into accepting a position on the Board of Directors of the Urban League. At Board meetings they are constantly outvoted but have an opportunity to speak out. If they do not speak, as often happened because they knew they held a minority point of view, they can hardly criticize the Board for the action it took. Hence in a way they end up being silenced by being a part of the Board.

There are some exceptions to the above, consisting of several white middle class women who, although neither knowledgeable nor having power, are put on because of a sentimental concern about the plight of the Negro. They can, however, communicate this concern to other middle class women through teas, speeches, etc. and thereby gain support for the Urban League. As an illustration the writer had an interview with one of these white middle class women that went as follows:

Question-- "What means does the Urban League use to achieve its goals?"

Answer-- Big question. (She obviously was having a difficult time trying to say what techniques the Urban League uses. Finally after an embarrassing three minute pause consisting of ohs, and ah's inserted between the writer's probes she continued) Mr. Paul tries hard on his job and all that. Whether the Urban League in other ways could work toward more equality I don't know. Ideal setting would be to have the churches bring about integration.

She then went off on a very long tangent about her work in other organizations. The writer then again repeated the question and she replied.

Apart from these means (which she had not discussed) Rick Jones (Assistant Secretary) works with young people, but just with Negro young people not with whites.

When asked about the NAACP she said she did not know about them. When asked if she had any idea of what they were trying to do she replied,

I don't know. In Great Falls I don't know much about their activities. I know Mr. Alford, but he is in the Human Relations Commission, which is the same sort of thing.<sup>42</sup>

Therefore these four types of members--power figures, technicians, co-opted cynics, and sentimentalists--all had a function in fulfilling the goals of the Urban League. The power figures aided the Executive Secretary in gaining access to the decision making centers, the technicians provided expertise, the co-opted cynics were stilled, and the sentimentalists helped obtain support through their teas and speech making activities.

There was a great deal of overlap between the white participation on the Board of Directors of the Urban League and the Human Relations Commission. In regard to Negro participation there was also a great deal of overlap between the Urban League and the Human Relations Commission. One of the Human Relations Commission Negro members had been an Urban League president, and another Negro member had

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<sup>42</sup>Personal interview, Summer, 1964.



a husband who had been Urban League president, while she had been president of the Women's Guild. As a result there was usually effective communication between the two groups.

Not only was there overlap in membership, but as indicated by respondents in interviews, there was tremendous overlap in perspective. Most of the members of both the Urban League and the Human Relations Commission see the techniques of both groups as being similar,<sup>43</sup> with some seeing the primary distinction as that between an official governmental agency and a volunteer agency. Many, however, including a professional on the staff of the Urban League, stated that they had difficulty in seeing any difference between the two at all.

The Urban League had, during the time of this study, six standing committess; job development (employment), health and welfare, education and youth incentives, housing, research, and personnel. It is expected that Board members will serve on at least one of these committees. In fact some of the standing committees have more non-board members on them than Board members.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>The majority of members of both groups stated that the technique used by these two groups consisted primarily of mediation, negotiation, persuasion, and education. Personal interviews, summer, 1964.

<sup>44</sup>Urban League committee minutes, 1962-1964.

The Urban League also sponsored a Women's Guild. The Women's Guild was organized in 1947 and, although supposedly a committee of the Urban League, elected its own officers. It had a membership of 60 members and had the broad mandate of cooperating with and assisting the League in improving interracial and intercultural relations; it was broken down into seven committees to fulfill this mandate. Several of the persons interviewed referred to the Women's Guild as the Negro Junior League, and stated that the Negro participants were chosen cautiously, and considered it an honor to be a member.

Several other interviewees, however, stated that the major purpose of the Guild was to educate the white members and give them some insight into the Negro community by associating with middle class Negro women. Some of the interviewees were extremely critical of the Guild, claiming that the white members were so paternalistic and condescending that it made them, literally, physically ill. One high NAACP official stated that,

Those white women are so paternalistic that the Negro women say that you can expect to be petted on the head. They are horribly condescending and you are always talked down to.<sup>45</sup>

Another person stated that,

The Women's Guild is the Negro Junior League. They are careful in choosing Negroes to join and the more socially perceptive suffer horribly from condescending, paternalistic white women. But I think it is effective in educating many middle class white women to the fact

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<sup>45</sup>Personal interview, Summer, 1964.

that there are middle class Negro women with the same value perspective that they have. Its a task that just has to be done. I know many Negro women don't like it but they feel its a duty they have to perform.<sup>46</sup>

The Women's Guild through its Program and Promotion Committee established the Urbanites. Its members are between the ages of 20 and 40 inclusive. It was established because the Women's Guild wanted to encourage the association of young peoples of various cultural and racial backgrounds so that interracial understanding would develop. It was also hoped that these young people would also aid the Urban League with its program.<sup>47</sup>

The Urban League has a staff of two professional workers and two secretaries. According to the Urban League constitution the Executive Secretary must be a Negro with a Master's degree from an accredited college or university in the field of sociology or social work, with at least five years experience in the field of social work. The present Executive Secretary, Mark Paul, is a 51 year old Negro with a Master's degree in sociology from Fisk University. He has been the only Executive Secretary the Great Falls League has had. He took over his position in Great Falls when the Brown Community Association became affiliated with the Urban League. Before coming to Great Falls, Paul was associated with the Milwaukee Urban League, Paul is similar to Alford in many ways. He is articulate, although he does not have the mastery of the English language that Alford

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<sup>46</sup>Personal interview, Summer, 1964.

<sup>47</sup>Great Falls and Kear County Health...Evaluation Project, op. cit..

has, is self-confident, and can keep himself under emotional control. Like Alford he is a professional who can keep his anger from showing. Most of the interviewees were complimentary in regard to Paul's success in opening jobs for the Negro community.

There were a few critics of Paul's role in acquiring job openings but in every instance, as will be indicated below, they were persons in the NAACP who had neither a clear conception of the Great Falls community, Paul's role in it, or a knowledge of the Urban League and what its function was supposed to be.

Paul's image, as reflected in these interviews, was a positive one, even among NAACP members. He was generally credited with doing a good or excellent job. Very few negative comments were made against Paul, and when they were they were generally blanket indictments of the Urban League, and by implication, Paul. There was a small percentage of NAACP members who simply rejected the Urban League because of its basic philosophy. This will be discussed below in regard to the schism that existed in the past between the Urban League and the NAACP.

Not only was Paul accepted in the Negro community, as indicated in these interviews, but he was also accepted by the white community. Paul was the first Negro in Great Falls elected to the Board of Education. Paul was elected to the Board of Education in 1962. In a city where only 8% of the population was Negro, his election obviously was

primarily the result of acceptance by the white voters.

The Urban League constitution also provided for a Director of Community Service and lists as qualifications a Bachelor's degree in social work or social service, and at least two years experience. The then current Director of Community Services, Rick Jones, was a 40 year old Negro originally from Wiley, Texas who had a Masters degree in Counseling and Guidance. Jones, before coming to Great Falls, had worked as a bank teller. Although Jones' title was Director of Community Services he had achieved his major success in the area of youth incentive, in aiding and motivating college-bound youth, and in advising middle-class, or middle-class oriented, Negro youth. Jones was severely criticized by some of the interviewees with not being able to communicate to the lower class Negro youth. Others criticized him for not developing a neighborhood block organization and of not communicating effectively with the impoverished Negro recently moved from the South. Whether these criticisms of Jones are fair or not is a moot point. It is a fact that Jones had not been successful at creating block organizations or in reaching the rural, backward, lower class Negro migrant. This criticism, however, is one that can be, and was, made about the Urban League in general, and not just Jones. Numerous interviewees, including many Board members, stated that the Urban League was not doing an adequate job in reaching the socially disadvantaged and/or the recent rural background migrant from the South.

One Urban League Board member stated,

The Urban League has not fulfilled its purpose. It has woefully failed to be just what it was set up to do. It has success in improving race relations among middle-class people. The tea and crumpets set. All the people on the Board are middle class and don't understand the mass problem. It has fostered middle class harmony. Paul has tried to work on the economic front and on that he has done an excellent job. Dick, however, has too many irons in the fire. He has forgotten his major tasks. He got involved in guidance and the Family Life Council and therefore the block program failed for lack of his leadership.<sup>48</sup>

Another Urban League Board member stated,

The Urban League consists of the saved talking to the saved...I'd like to see the Urban League go into the ghetto area with money and staff and set up a center. The Urban League staff should get out of the downtown area and should start doing some block to block work with kids.<sup>49</sup>

There seemed to be a feeling of frustration among many Board members. They felt that the Executive Secretary was performing his job not only adequately but well, and yet they also felt that the League was not communicating at the grass roots level where it was so desperately needed.

If, as the history of the Urban League would seem to indicate, the task of the Urban League was to communicate effectively with that segment of the Negro community that needs the services of a social work oriented agency, in adjusting to the complex world of our large urban complexes,

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<sup>48</sup>Personal interview, Summer, 1964.

<sup>49</sup>Personal interview, Summer, 1964.

then in Great Falls, outside of the areas of job placement, the Urban League was not fulfilling its mandate.

It was not that the Urban League Board did not have a concern for the plight of the indigent Negro. It did have, and as subsequent chapters will show it clashed constantly with the NAACP over providing more material resources to the Negro in the ghetto area. But the point here is that there seemingly was very little communication between the Urban League and the impoverished segment of the Negro community, that very task for which it supposedly was established.

#### THE NAACP

There are in the United States today more NAACP chapters than Urban League and Human Relations Commission agencies combined. There are over 1500 local branches with over half a million members scattered throughout the United States.<sup>50</sup> Branches range in size from a handful to more than 10,000 in a few cases.<sup>51</sup> The local branches usually do not have a professional executive director as does the Urban League and many human relations agencies.

The NAACP was the official name given to a civil rights group that had been called the National Negro Committee, which had its first meeting in 1909. In 1910 a new name was

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<sup>50</sup>Langston Hughes, Fight for Freedom, (New York: W. W. Norton Co., 1962) p. 12 and John A. Morsell, "The NAACP and Its Strategy," The Annals, Jan. 1965, p. 98.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid.

chosen, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the organization was incorporated, and its purposes officially recorded:

To promote equality of rights and eradicate caste or race prejudice among the citizens; to secure for them impartial suffrage; and to increase their opportunities for securing justice in the courts, education for their children, employment according to their ability, and complete equality before the law.<sup>52</sup>

This was just stating in little more polished terms what one of the founders, and long term editor of the NAACP magazine, The Crisis, W. E. B. DuBois, had stated earlier in the resolutions of the Niagara Movement,

We shall not be satisfied to take one jot or tittle less than our full manhood rights. We claim for ourselves every right that belongs to a free-born American: political, civil, and social; and until we get these rights, we shall never cease to protest and assail the ears of America.<sup>53</sup>

It is this emphasis on "rights" here and now that has characterized the Great Falls NAACP since its inception. The Great Falls chapter of the NAACP was founded in 1916 by a local Negro printer named George M. Smith.<sup>54</sup> It brought its first court case in 1919-1920 when Negro delegates were refused service at the Livingston Hotel in Great Falls. As a result of this court case hotel accommodations were

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<sup>52</sup>Hughes, Fight for Freedom, op. cit., p. 23.

<sup>53</sup>W. E. B. DuBois as quoted by Frazier in Black Bourgeoisie, op. cit., p. 90.

<sup>54</sup>W. W. Plunger and Mark Paul, statements on file with the Great Falls Historical Society.



opened for Negroes in Great Falls. The Great Falls chapter filed another court case in 1928-1929 over segregated seating in the Heath Theater. This case was handled by attorney Boyd Fatter, who later became the President of the local NAACP.<sup>55</sup> During the post-war (W.W. II) years the local branch carried several cases to the County Prosecutor that resulted in the end of segregation and discrimination in several taverns and restaurants along Division Ave. in Great Falls.<sup>56</sup>

It was this emphasis on legal redress which participants in the local civil rights groups saw as the clearly defined mandate of the NAACP.<sup>57</sup>

This was also the often stated purpose of the NAACP president, W. W. Plunger, who emphasized again and again in speeches before audiences that the NAACP is not a human relations agency, does not care how many people get angry at what it does, because its primary purpose is to bring about those rights that Negroes have by virtue of being citizens of this country. We will, he maintained, obtain our rights by using the full power of the courts and legislative processes of this land, whether you like it or not.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup>Ibid.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid.

<sup>57</sup>More than half of all the interviewees when asked about the techniques used by the NAACP referred to legal redress as its method of operation.

<sup>58</sup>This type of statement was reiterated at numerous panel discussions, and speeches attended by the writer.

The local NAACP followed closely the Constitution and By-laws for Branches published by the national headquarters in New York. The local chapter had a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Assistant Secretary. The real power in the Great Falls branch lies in the Executive Board which varied in number from 25 to 35 members.<sup>59</sup> It was the Executive Board which was supposed to make policy recommendations to the membership. The Executive Board was elected at the organizational meeting of the Branch by all members of the local NAACP who were present. The branch meetings are, however, very poorly attended, and the writer was at one branch election where there were less than 30 members present. Unless there was a well publicized program, featuring a special attraction, the branch meetings were very poorly attended. There was no indication at all that the Great Falls Branch had a "grass-roots" following that participated in its activities, and was sufficiently interested to attend branch meetings that just consisted of discussions of local problems. It was when "out-of-town" speakers were brought in from, e.g. Birmingham, Alabama, or a debate on national civil rights policy between local congressional aspirants occurred, that the meetings were fairly well attended.<sup>60</sup> Although the local branch had

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<sup>59</sup>There were often fewer members present at general NAACP meetings than there were Executive Board members.

<sup>60</sup>Observation from attendance at NAACP meetings.

somewhere around 1,000 members the writer never saw more than 30 members attend a branch meeting that was just devoted to a discussion of "civil rights" in Great Falls. Hence the Executive Board could be and was primarily self-perpetuating, although its selections were certainly more democratic than that of the Urban League. As was stated previously Urban League members were presented with a list of nominations selected by the Urban League Nominating Committee, and although there was room for write-ins no names were listed in opposition to those nominated. Hence invariably the Nominating Committee's selections were always elected. In the NAACP there was opportunity for nominations from the floor, the president then usually asked for a hand vote, and since there were usually few people present the hands could be easily and quickly counted.

The Great Falls branch had established the standing committees as specified by the national headquarters. It had a Church Work, Community Coordination, Education, Finance, Freedom Fund, Housing, Labor and Industry, Legal Redress, Membership, Political Action, Press and Publicity, and Youth Work Committees. These committees, however, very seldom gave a report to the membership present at branch meetings. The President might make a brief comment about one or the other of the Committee's work, but only if there was a very special issue involved would there be a full report to the membership.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>61</sup>Observation from attendance at NAACP meetings.

Most of these committees did not give specific monthly reports even at the Executive Board meetings, but tended to report only when pressured to do so by the Executive Board. Most of the attention of the Executive Board was devoted to problems as they arose in the community. There was very little long range planning.<sup>62</sup>

The local NAACP also had a Women's Auxiliary which was open to all women desiring membership, and who paid their membership dues. The main function of the Great Falls Women's Auxiliary was to raise money for the Freedom Fund, which it did by holding an Annual Cotton Ball.

The local image of the NAACP was that depicted by its President, Dr. W. W. Plunger. Dr. Plunger was a close friend of attorney Boyd Fatter who died during the course of this study. Attorney Fatter was President of the local NAACP in the 1950's. During that time the NAACP reached its peak membership of close to 3,000. As McKee stated in his study of Negro Leadership in Great Falls,

The Negro leadership is almost unanimous in crediting the high point of NAACP membership to Mr. Boyd Fatter who served as president and gave forceful, vigorous leadership to the organization during this period. All Negro leaders readily acknowledge that the NAACP has not found another person with the capacity for leadership once displayed by Mr. Fatter.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>62</sup>Minutes of the NAACP Executive Board, 1962-1964.

<sup>63</sup>McKee, Negro Leadership in Great Falls, Institute for Community Development, Great Lakes State University, 1962, p. 17.

Mr. Fatter was opposed to the Urban League coming to Great Falls and he was partly responsible for the antagonism that developed, and to a certain extent that still exists, between the NAACP and Urban League. Fatter saw the Urban League as being too moderate in approach and too willing to sell its basic rights for a mess of segregated schools and recreational centers. This antagonism existed primarily in the late 1940's and 1950's. McKee stated that,

Specifically, they criticized the selection of the site for an elementary school, the locating of a community center, and the operation of a scholarship program for Negro youth, as all examples of segregation.<sup>64</sup>

McKee then goes on to write that,

In short, the NAACP leadership argued primarily for status goals, and criticized the Urban League as an organization that put welfare goals before status.<sup>65</sup>

Mr. Fatter seemingly eschewed any welfare goals if it in any way involved what he considered a "segregated aspect". He saw the Urban League in terms of an organization that would quite willingly accept benefits, (e.g. a new school or playground) in the ghetto area, and therefore be de facto segregated. He therefore fought even the idea of the Urban League coming to Great Falls and fought it after it was established.

Dr. Plunger was a close personal friend of Fatter and some considered Plunger to be his (Fatter's) protege.

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<sup>64</sup>McKee, Negro Leadership in Great Falls, op. cit., p. 17.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid.

Plunger was considered by many to be the NAACP. When one would ask the respondents their opinion of the NAACP they often replied in terms of Plunger's personality.<sup>66</sup>

### CORE

CORE first came into existence on the national scene in 1942 in Chicago, and in 1943 it staged its first sit-in demonstration in a restaurant in the Chicago Loop.<sup>67</sup> It was established specifically to "erase the color line through direct, non-violent action."<sup>68</sup> Local CORE groups are supposed to function through action projects.

It was this "action" emphasis that precipitated the initial contact with the national CORE office by Great Falls citizens. The initial contact with national CORE was made by Mrs. Henry (Mary) Martin and her brother Charles Maibattle who, in a letter dated November 16, 1961, wrote in part that,

We are writing you from that All-American City, Great Falls, Great Lakes State, which we know is so all-un-American in certain respects. One principal factor is restricted housing--the old prescribed ghetto! Negroes are confined in a ghetto which is increasing in population by leaps and bounds, with the resultant

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<sup>66</sup>This will be dealt with in more detail in later chapters.

<sup>67</sup>Rich, Marvin, "The Congress of Racial Equality and Its Strategy," The Annals, Jan. 1965, pp. 113-114; Lerone Bennett, Jr., Before the Mayflower: A History of the Negro in America, 1619-1962 (Chicago: Johnson Publishing Co., 1962)

<sup>68</sup>This is CORE, op. cit.

increase in overcrowding, crime, and delinquency... It has been fostered by the practices of the Great Falls Real Estate Board, and those of the local banks, building and loan companies and mortgage companies. We feel that, since Great Falls has been designated an "All-American City" (U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 1961) to expose the local housing situation in all its viciousness would be an effective effort to eradicate the problem...

We feel that stand-ins<sup>69</sup> at new housing developments--when they 'open-house'--would be a dramatic way to point up and publicize the injustices being practiced in the field of housing! We would appreciate any suggestions or aid in getting started this fight for freedom. We have taken part in numerous 'meetings' about housing in the last ten years, and we feel that we've had too much 'lip-service,' the time has come for action.<sup>70</sup>

This letter was written to the national CORE office at a time when there was very little action taking place to resolve the problem of segregated housing in Great Falls. In Chapter Two it was pointed out that Great Falls in regard to housing was an extremely rigidly segregated city. Mrs. Martin was simply the agent acting in behalf of some frustrated, perturbed, and action oriented citizens, as the following account will indicate.

Mrs. Martin and Mr. Maibattle received a reply from the national CORE office dated December 6, 1961 from Gordon R. Carey stating in part that,

We believe that there must be others in Great Falls who believe in action now<sup>71</sup> against jim crow housing

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<sup>69</sup>Underlining is Mrs. Martins and Mr. Maibattle's.

<sup>70</sup>From the files of the Great Falls CORE chapter.

<sup>71</sup>Emphasis Mr. Carey's.

and an ever increasing ghetto. We would like to work with you in eliminating the evils of segregation found in your city. I believe that the best step to take now would be to organize an effective inter-racial CORE group which would be prepared to take action and expose the true nature of your 'All-American City.'

I hope that you will want to help us organize a unit of CORE. I am enclosing a copy of This is Core as well as an organizational manual. After reading this over please get in touch with me again and we can start plans immediately. Our field staff would of course be available to assist you. I am sure that we can also supply contacts in addition to the ones that you will have.<sup>72</sup>

Mrs. Martin and Mr. Maibattle proceeded to hold a meeting the next month of several interested citizens to form a CORE chapter in Great Falls. The inter-racial meeting was held in January of 1962, in the home of Henry and Mary Martin. Nine persons were present including the hosts. The small group decided to form a CORE chapter and elected Charles Maibattle Chairman and Mary Martin Vice-chairman. Dr. W. W. Plunger, president of the local NAACP, was elected Treasurer. Mrs. Hazel Billerton, former Vice-President of the State NAACP and active in the local NAACP, was elected Publicity Chairman. Mrs. Beatrice Tarton was elected Secretary. Also present was a member of the Human Relations Commission, a Roman Catholic priest, and a member of the Ambassadors Club, a predominantly Negro organization conservative in philosophy.<sup>73</sup> Much will be

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<sup>72</sup>From the Files of the Great Falls CORE chapter.

<sup>73</sup>Meaning, in this context, that they were much more interested in welfare than in status goals.



made of the point just hinted at above, and that is that many of the members of CORE owed allegiance to, or had connections with, other civil rights organization. At this first meeting, in fact, Dr. Plunger argued that a CORE chapter was not needed because the NAACP could do whatever the persons thought that CORE might be able to do. He thought a CORE chapter would simply duplicate the work of the NAACP. Others present, however, argued that the NAACP was not a primarily action-oriented organization and had not been successful in the past in "direct-action" programs. It was argued, especially by Mary Martin and Charles Maibattle, that Great Falls needed a small group of highly disciplined, dedicated people, who would be willing and able to demonstrate frequently, and if need be, at short notice. Plunger then acceded to join the group although with reservations about its necessity and then, as stated above, he was elected Treasurer.<sup>74</sup>

The early activity of CORE was oriented around organizational activity, and no action-oriented programs were instituted in the first six months of the local chapter's existence. To publicize its existence and to attract new members and financial support it sponsored a public meeting on April 13, 1961 which had James Farmer, the National Executive Director of CORE, speak on the purpose of CORE.

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<sup>74</sup>From notes taken at the meeting.

Although Farmer attracted a rather large audience, several hundred persons, there was no overwhelming rush on the part of citizens to join the local chapter. The persons that did join were in the most part brought in not by the publicity, but by personal contact with the other CORE members. CORE's action oriented program will be reported in detail in the following chapters on how change was effected.

### Internal Organization

CORE in Great Falls, in contrast to the Urban League and the NAACP, did not operate on the basis of a Board of Directors or an Executive Committee, neither did it set up standing committees in the areas of housing, education, etc. The CORE chapter remained small so that the actual membership made the policy decisions at the monthly meetings. The Great Falls chapter had four offices, a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, a Secretary and a Treasurer.<sup>75</sup> CORE meetings were not open to the public and hence only CORE members or invited guests were present at the meetings.<sup>76</sup>

The Great Falls CORE chapter consisted of Active members, probate members, and friends of CORE. To become an

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<sup>75</sup>The Great Falls CORE constitution did not make provision for a Publicity Chairman. At the original meeting however Hazel Billerton was elected Publicity Chairman. When the constitution was accepted the office was discontinued.

<sup>76</sup>The preceding and following discussion on organization is from the Great Falls CORE Constitution and By-Laws.

Active member of CORE a person had to (1) have been a probate member for 10 weeks, (2) be sponsored by a member and be interviewed and instructed by the membership committee, (3) agree to abide by the constitution and the CORE Rules for Action, (4) must be accepted by two-thirds vote, taken by secret ballot, of the members present and voting. Most members of the Great Falls Chapter of CORE were active members who acquired membership at the time the local constitution and by-laws were put into effect.

A probate member was a person seeking full membership but who had not as yet completed his ten weeks waiting period. At the time interval of this study very few persons were admitted through this probationary period. The Great Falls CORE chapter never had a problem of numerous individuals seeking membership.

A friend of CORE was considered to be any person who participated in demonstrations, gave financial assistance, and who attended meetings but who for some reason did not want formal membership. One person retained this status because he was afraid that his job with the federal government would be jeopardized if he became a formal member of CORE.

Only the Active members of CORE had the right to vote for officers, to vote on policy matters, to vote on the acceptance of new members, and to vote on amendments to the constitution. This did not preclude "friends of CORE" from participating in the discussions.

CORE did not remain a viable organization for a long period of time. It sponsored some action projects (see Chapter V) that met with a measure of success. It gained a certain amount of publicity when a former member threw Molotov Cocktails through the windows of real estate brokers (see Chapter V). It began to disintegrate in the Fall of 1962 when personality clashes and tension over direct action programs created a great deal of stress. CORE members had voted to picket the state convention of Realtors which was to be held in Great Falls. However, when the time came to picket there were few persons available to make the signs<sup>77</sup> --and fewer still to do the picketing. The President of CORE was a fairly well known Negro minister who belonged to numerous community organizations. On the day of the picketing he could not be located, although several CORE members insisted that he was home but that he refused to answer the telephone. Several other members of CORE stated that their jobs precluded their participating in the picketing. The impression of the writer was that these were the rationalizations of middle class Negroes and whites who were too embarrassed to be seen on a picket line in downtown Great Falls. They had voted in favor of the picketing because all voting on issues in CORE meetings was by voice vote, and hence there was tremendous group pressure to get

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<sup>77</sup>The writer wrote the slogans for the signs and helped in painting them. Less than half of the members appeared to aid in making the signs.

one to vote in favor of action projects.

It must be remembered here that the ostensible reason for CORE's existence was to have in the community an action-oriented organization. The members joined CORE because of their belief that members of other organizations were doing a lot of talking but little in the way of direct action, and hence were not making significant accomplishments in areas such as housing. Therefore at CORE meetings members who wanted to debate at length the advisability of a project did not do so for fear that other members of the organization would sneer at either their timidity or verbosity.

At the first CORE meeting after the picketing several members vilified the President and others who had not participated, using such epithets as coward, "yellow-belly," "two-faced operator," etc. A shouting match then ensued.<sup>78</sup> The President resigned and several other members never again came to any further meetings, and CORE as an organization was finished. CORE was kept before the community, however, by the Martin family. It was Mrs. Martin and her brother, Charles Maibattle, who had originally organized CORE. Charles was the first President but had to resign because his work conflicted with CORE meetings, and a clergyman (see above) was then elected President. After the debacle referred to above the Martins and the Maibattles would issue statements to the mass media in the name of CORE, and as a result received a great deal of publicity, even though the organization in reality no longer existed. Even

<sup>78</sup>Note from CORE meeting.

though for all practical purposes CORE was defunct as an organized group it still participated, through the Martin and Maibattle families, in civil rights conferences in the name of CORE, as will be pointed out in subsequent chapters.

### Summary

Quite clearly these four civil rights organizations presented different images to the public. In reference to the distinction made earlier between status and welfare goals there was a discernable difference in emphasis by these groups. The Urban League took a position that strongly emphasized welfare goals. Its founding emphasis as a social work agency still had important ramifications as many Board members, and members of other civil rights organizations referred to the Urban League's primary function as that of aiding the impoverished segment of the Negro community. The NAACP and CORE presented an image in public which emphasized a strong status concern. This was an emphasis on equal rights now, a concern for the attainment of equal opportunities immediately. The Human Relations Commission's public image was not as neatly and easily delineated as those of the other groups. It was pointed out that even on the Human Relations Commission there was a disagreement as to what emphasis the Commission should have. Hence the public image of the Commission was more ambiguous than that of the other organizations.

## CHAPTER V

### CONFLICT AND CHANGE IN INTERGROUP RELATIONS

This chapter will discuss the attempts made by the various civil rights organizations to bring about change in interracial behavior. It will trace the important changes in interracial behavior that were made in the two year span from 1962 to 1964.

Prior to 1962 the interracial problem in Great Falls that was not being resolved at all was the problem of segregated housing. In some of the other problem areas, such as de facto school segregation, the hiring of Negro school teachers, the placement of white and Negro teachers, there had been an official attempt to resolve these problems by the School Board. Not that the situation was being resolved to satisfy all the civil rights organizations--it was not. But there was some official cognizance taken of the problem by persons in positions of authority who could act on the problem. In regard to employment Great Lakes State had, prior to 1962, passed a rather strong FEPC law, which applied to all employers of eight or more employees. Those who were discriminated against in employment in Great Falls could file a complaint at the local Human Relations Commission, and there would be a thorough investigation of their charges. Hence, prior to 1962, in the areas of education and employment there was official action taking place, there was a serious dialogue going on, but this was not true in housing.

Two years later, however, by 1964 the situation had so changed that the emphases by civil rights organizations in the area of housing were quite different from what they had been in 1962.

1) The civil rights organizations no longer emphasized the opening up of housing opportunities but their emphasis was on an attempt to get Negroes to move out of the ghetto, to take advantage of the opportunities that were now available. By 1964 leaders of all the civil rights organizations were stating publicly that the most pressing problem in eliminating the ghetto was not in obtaining housing opportunities outside of the ghetto, but of taking advantage of opportunities which were now available.

2) Prior to 1962 the civil rights organizations considered the Great Falls Real Estate Board to be the most important factor in maintaining a segregated pattern of housing in Great Falls. By 1964 the Great Falls Real Estate Board was rarely even being mentioned in regard to solving the problem of segregated housing.

3) Prior to 1962 most public speakers on housing opportunities in Great Falls for non-whites emphasized the need for "open-occupancy." By 1964 most public speakers on housing opportunities conceded the availability of housing throughout the city to non-whites, and began to emphasize the need of public housing for those non-whites who could not afford to move to adequate housing outside of the ghetto.



4) Prior to 1962 most members of the Human Relations Commission did not believe in the possibility of getting any kind of "open-occupancy housing ordinance" passed by the City Commission. By 1964 the "housing ordinance" was an accomplished fact passed with hardly a dissenting voice being raised publicly in the entire city.

5) Prior to 1962 public housing was considered anathema by City Commissioners, but by 1964 they were discussing what kind of "public housing" the city should have. In 1962 the city planner said that he was unalterably opposed to "public housing" of any kind, because of the old cliché that "you can take the people out of the slum but you can't take the slum out of the people" and he stated that therefore "public housing" always degenerates into a slum. By 1964 he had a formal proposal for "public housing" as part of the city's Urban Renewal project.

6) In 1962 the City Planner stated that residential renewal was too costly and did not interest him. At that time he had just planned, and was directing, a massive renewal of the downtown business district, but by 1964 he had planned a residential renewal project in the heart of the ghetto.

The changes that took place in the area of housing opportunities for non-whites from 1962 to 1964 were of such a nature that numerous persons active in the civil rights movement, stated in 1964, that two years earlier they could

not have believed that these changes could have occurred. Similar changes, however, were occurring in some of the other areas, e.g. education and employment. These changes were not as noticeable, however, because the "base" from which these changes took place was, as stated above, different. In education and employment there had been action taking place involving persons in positions of authority. But this was not true in housing, and hence any official concern by persons in positions of authority in regard to housing would be a change that was more noticeable. Important changes, however, did take place in the area of education and employment between 1962 and 1964. Prior to 1962 the civil rights leaders had to be the initiators of change in the areas of education and employment, that is, prior to 1962 they (the civil rights workers) had to prod the educators and employers to make changes. By 1964 the educators were asking the civil rights organizations formally for suggestions as to how to solve the problems of de facto segregation, teacher placement, etc. By 1964 the Great Falls Urban League had more positions available for non-whites than there were non-whites available to fill those positions.<sup>1</sup>

Not only were there important changes taking place in regard to housing, education, and employment but the perspective of the City Commissioners had changed tremendously.

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<sup>1</sup>The Urban League Executive Secretary claimed publicly numerous times that he could place any Negro who had a skill, and also stated that there were not enough young Negro girls to fill the available secretarial and clerical jobs available.

It was pointed out in Chapter Three that the City Commissioners had, prior to 1962, really wanted to eliminate the Human Relations Commission, or at least they saw it as an unnecessary burden on the depleted city treasury. The city administration had put the then Executive Director on a part time basis and the Human Relations Commission was almost defunct as an organization. By 1964 not only was there a full time Executive Director, but the City Manager had increased his pay several times to retain him, and the City Commissioners had provided the necessary funds for the hiring of a full time assistant to the Executive Director. Not only had they increased the financial resources of the Human Relations Commission but they were asking the Executive Director and the Chairman of the Human Relations Commission<sup>2</sup> what they (the Executive Director and the Chairman) wanted them to do in the area of civil rights. Hence, from a situation where, prior to 1962, the City Commissioners only grudgingly supported the Human Relations Commission, a change occurred in which the City Commissioners saw the Human Relations Commission as one of its more valuable resources.

Thus, changes in race relations took place in Great Falls from 1962 to 1964 that were unprecedented and unexpected by many of those involved in civil rights activity.

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<sup>2</sup>Both the Chairman and the Executive Director of the Human Relations Commission had stated to the writer in private conversation that they had been asked by Commissioners what they should be doing in the area of civil rights.

It is the purpose of this thesis to examine the "why" and the "how" of those changes. The hypothesis is that social change in race relations does not take place without conflict or the threat of conflict. The emphasis in this chapter will be on the activities of the various civil rights organizations, and interested citizens, their attempt to change the existing pattern of interracial behavior, and their use of different strategies to bring about those desired changes.

#### THE HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION AND THE GREAT FALLS REAL ESTATE BOARD

Prior to 1962 the Human Relations Commission had attempted numerous times to set up an effective channel of communication with the Great Falls Real Estate Board and had never been successful in doing so. Members of the other civil rights organizations had charged the Real Estate Board with perpetuating segregated housing patterns. The emphasis in Great Falls was particularly on the Real Estate Board because of its control of sales and because of its position of power in the community.

The Great Falls Real Estate Board controls sales through the use of a multiple-listing system. Because this multiple-listing system is important in understanding the Board's operations, and has been charged with aiding the Board's control over its members,<sup>3</sup> and has been charged with aiding

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<sup>3</sup>Donald Bouma, "An Analysis of the Social Power Position of the Real Estate Board in Great Falls, Great Lakes State," Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Michigan State Univ., 1952, p. 95-98.

discriminatory practices<sup>4</sup> it will be briefly discussed below.<sup>5</sup>

The multiple-listing system was inaugurated by the Great Falls Real Estate Board on January 1, 1924. It is a procedure whereby the property listings of every Realtor becomes the property of the Board. For example, if a property owner lists his property for sale with Realtor A, the Realtor must file this listing with the Board office. The office sends out a daily bulletin to all members including new listings, changes of price, withdrawals of listings, and other pertinent information. Any member may then sell the listed property. In effect, this provides a common "stock" of saleable properties which every member may use. The system covers all of Great Falls and the area within ten miles of the city limits. In the latter part of 1948, the Board also adopted the photo-listing system whereby each listing sent out to members is accompanied by a photograph of the property.

If a property is sold while listed with the Board, a sales tax is paid to the Board. The fee is 2-1/2 percent of the broker's commission if listed and sold in the same real estate office, or 3 percent when listed by one office and sold by another. On inter-office sales, the balance of the commission (beyond the 3 percent) was divided two-thirds to the selling realtor and one-third to the listing realtor.

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<sup>4</sup>Lawrence Gubow, Corporation and Securities Commission Report on Discriminatory Practices in Great Falls, 1960, Unpub.

<sup>5</sup>The following will be a paraphrase of Bouma's description of how the system works. Bouma, op. cit., pp. 95-100.

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Membership in the Board is individual and non-transferable, and all members of the Board automatically participate in the multiple-listing system. Because of this multiple-listing service the members of the civil rights organizations claimed that the Board held tight control of the housing market. Negroes claimed time and again that when they would go to a realtor's office that the realtor would show them only the pictures of houses for sale within the ghetto, and not those pictures of houses for sale outside of the ghetto.<sup>6</sup> When a Negro would ask to see a house outside of the ghetto he would be told that the owner would not sell to colored. There is some evidence to indicate that this charge that the owner would not sell to Negroes was not always true, as several Negroes went to the homeowners without the salesman and found that the owners had never said that they would not sell to colored.<sup>7</sup> As a result many Negroes believed that there was a conscious, planned attempt on the part of realtors to keep them confined to the ghetto area, a belief that the writer found to be held by practically every member of civil rights organizations that he talked to about the problem. In addition sellers would have printed on the picture of their house in the multiple-listing service the statement that the

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<sup>6</sup>Lawrence Gubow, op. cit.

<sup>7</sup>Lawrence Gubow, ibid.

"Owner Reserves the Right to Approve the Buyer". This was taken by Negroes to simply be a euphemism that the owner would not sell to non-whites. Because of these factors civil rights leaders saw in the multiple-listing service a specialized technique being used by the Board to maintain the ghetto.

It was not only the multiple-listing service, however, that put a special stigma on the Real Estate Board, but also the belief that the Real Estate Board had unusual power in the city. The belief was, though, that part of this power was the result of the multiple-listing service. Bouma quotes one of the pamphlets of the Board to the effect that,

Not until 1924 when multiple-listing was adopted did the Board show strength...Cohesion of membership and financial position make its responsibility in the community a force and influence. Any civic project of merit finds the moral and financial support of the Board behind it. The Board started as a trade organization for its own benefit and has grown in vision and outlook to a quasi-public institution in influence.<sup>8</sup>

Bouma in his detailed study of the social power of the Great Falls Real Estate Board came to the conclusion that it was a focus of power.<sup>9</sup>

Although, as stated above, the Great Falls Real Estate Board was seen as being crucial to any solution to the

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<sup>8</sup>Bouma, op. cit., p. 98.

<sup>9</sup>Bouma, ibid., pp. 103-104.



problem of the ghetto, and the obtaining of open occupancy, the members of the Board, prior to 1962, denied any need for their involvement in a solution to these problems. The members insisted in their public stance that their function in the community was that of a purely business organization and that the problems resulting from segregated housing were societal problems, created by society, and that the solution to those problems were not their concern as real estate agents.

Dr. Richard Strand, a realtor and member of the Real Estate Board, stated this very cogently on November 11, 1959 at an adult education luncheon series in a debate with the Chairman of the Housing Committee.

The question put very simply is this--that the colored people believe that they should have the freedom of choice to live where they choose and the owners in the community feel that they have the freedom of choice as to who their neighbors should be. Are these now in conflict? That is the issue, and in this connection I would like to make a defense--not a defense--but I would like to speak about the effects against the Real Estate Board in this connection. I am a member of the Great Falls Real Estate Board, a past Director, and I make no apology for the fact because I think it is a great institution. It is pure and simple a business organization. It is organized to facilitate the real estate business. It sets standards and practices and operates according to a code of ethics for the protection of the public. Members sell, appraise, manage and finance real estate. It is a business. Real estate owners are customers, present or potential, and they are the boss. For the purpose of business the customer is always right. Believe me; if the customer decides that integration is good and desirable there is no realtor that would not be there the first thing in the morning to make a deal --he is there for commissions. But if the customers are opposed to so-called invasion, the realtor's future is at stake in terms of livelihood rather than in professed or at least spoken ideals.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, Democracy in Great Falls--Do We Practice

Strand went on to say:

So what we are dealing with, ladies and gentlemen, primarily is a social prejudice, and the only way you can handle a social prejudice is through your social and educational institutions. We don't want it by legislation and we don't like it by business dictates. It has to be done by people and that is the only way that it can be.<sup>11</sup>

Strand then finished by saying that,

...it (the Real Estate Board) is a business organization not a social or educational institution--they are the guardians of the prejudices. In other words we are dealing with people who own homes--they are our customers--they are our bosses, what they want we have to try to take care of.<sup>12</sup>

Strand was presenting the public image that the Real Estate Board at that time was defending, that they were just businessmen seeking a profit, and that if their customers wanted to discriminate it was not their responsibility to try to change the attitude of these people.

Strand's public position in regard to the Real Estate Board was that its function as a business organization was to make a profit, and it was not its function to try to effectuate a change in interracial behavior. His plea also quite clearly is that they should not be the scapegoat for creating the ghetto, that the ghetto is created by the

What We Preach? Mimeographed by Fountain Street Church, 1959, p. 10.

<sup>11</sup>Strand, op. cit., p. 10

<sup>12</sup>Strand, op. cit., p. 12.

prejudicial attitudes of the people who are selling their homes. Hence the public image presented to the community at this adult educational luncheon series (which was well attended, extensively reported, and the discussions typed out and distributed) was that the Real Estate Board would not make any effort as an organization to change the existing situation.

The definition of the situation held though by many persons active in civil rights activity was that some realtors were not just being passive but that they were being active in maintaining the segregated pattern of housing.

The civil rights leaders defined the situation quite differently from the public stance taken by the Real Estate Board as they maintained that realtors would refuse to show Negroes houses outside of the ghetto, would "forget" appointments made with potential Negro buyers, would advise sellers to maintain a high price to discourage the potential Negro purchaser, would charge unduly high closing costs to the potential Negro buyer, and would lie to the Negro about available housing.

The situation in Great Falls in the late 1950's, then, was a situation where the Real Estate Board, publicly at least, did not believe that they had anything to negotiate with members of the various civil rights organizations, while members of the non-white community believed that

members of the Real Estate Board were responsible for the development and maintenance of the ghetto.

This was further emphasized in the early 1960's when the Great Lakes State held a public hearing in Great Falls under the auspices of Lawrence Gubow, Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission of Great Lakes State. The purpose was to determine whether or not there was a pattern of discrimination existing in the city of Great Falls. The testimony indicated that a ghetto did exist in Great Falls, that many Negroes had been discriminated against by real estate agents, that Negroes were finding it exceedingly difficult to purchase housing outside of the ghetto, and that the Real Estate Board, according to sworn testimony from its attorney, had no plans for trying, as an organization, to resolve the problem. In fact the testimony of their attorney was in substance similar to the position taken by Strand.<sup>13</sup>

#### THE IMPACT OF CORE ON HOUSING NEGOTIATIONS

It was at this point, in a spirit of frustration, that Charles Maibattle and Mrs. Henry Martin wrote to CORE asking for help in starting a CORE chapter to rid Great Falls, the "All-American" city, of its segregated housing pattern. As they stated in their letter,<sup>14</sup> they were tired of "talk,

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<sup>13</sup>Gubow, op. cit.

<sup>14</sup>Chapter IV, p. 35.

talk, talk" and wanted some action. Things had at this time reached an impasse and there was a great deal of "talk, talk, talk," but not between the civil rights groups and the Real Estate Board but at the Real Estate Board. There was no effective communication occurring, as explained above. The Real Estate Board members stoutly insisted in their public stance that it was a business organization, that it was performing its function not only adequately but admirably in the community, and that they had no intention of attempting to change the status quo. It is quite clear from the statements of Strand and their attorney that they publicly defined their role in regard to race relations to be that of a passive agent not trying to change the status quo.

CORE was ostensibly organized to change the status quo through some type of direct action technique. The major emphasis would be on changing the pattern of housing segregation in the city.

The first meeting of CORE was on January 9. The purpose was purely organizational, and although only nine persons appeared, they were persons who were quite active in community affairs and some who were rather well known. They were referred to on January 11 by the Big City Daily as a "Blue Ribbon" group of Great Falls citizens. Whatever connotation "Blue Ribbon" might carry, at the least to most persons it probably connotes that the citizens in the group are not from the "bohemian" or "esoteric" section of society

as CORE members are often accused of being.<sup>15</sup> Five of the original members were professionals, and four more professionals joined the group at a later date.

The major emphasis in the early meetings of the CORE group was to publicize the local chapter, to get it known in the community, and to emphasize its direct action technique. It decided that a public appearance by the national director, James Farmer, would obtain maximum publicity because at that time Farmer was involved in the Freedom Rides into the South. Farmer consented to come, and did receive maximum publicity. A picture appeared in the Great Falls Press with Farmer and two local CORE members, and Farmer was quoted as saying that,

There is much evidence that residential segregation in the north is on the increase rather than the decrease... The Great Falls group is concerned about the housing problem here.

Our objective is not merely to provide more housing but to provide integrated housing; an open city and an open society.<sup>16</sup>

Farmer then discussed the difference between the Black Muslim movement and CORE and stated that,

Their objectives are different from ours. They are aiming at separation, which to us is just another

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<sup>15</sup>This is not to put a moral connotation on the terms "bohemian" or "esoteric". The point here is only to point out that these citizens were probably acceptable in terms of the community's values.

<sup>16</sup>The Great Falls Press, April 13, 1962. In the following pages the publicity given civil rights activity by the Great Falls Press will be emphasized to indicate how the issues were presented to the public. The mass media will also be extensively quoted to indicate how they were used by the warring factions as an attempt to exert pressure on each other.

form of segregation.

Theirs is a movement of despair. They represent the view that America will not and cannot implement its democratic ideals. Ours is a movement of hope that America can live up to its credo. Unless the purpose of integration is speeded up, we can expect the Muslims to grow. They thrive on the failure to achieve integration.<sup>17</sup>

Farmer also mentioned the Freedom Rides, the violence against the Freedom Riders that resulted, and emphasized that CORE is "dedicated to the principle of non-violent direct action in the field of race relations"<sup>18</sup>

Farmer also appeared that night on the local TV station, WOOD, with the same emphasis, that the housing situation in the north is reaching explosive proportions, and that CORE is dedicated to eliminate the ghetto through its technique of non-violence.

Farmer gave the appearance on TV of a man who was confident of his own ability and of the ability of the local CORE chapter to act, not just to talk. His entire emphasis was on the apparent need for something to be done, and on CORE's emphasis in "acting" to see to it that something is done.

Following Farmer's appearance the local CORE chapter held several meetings of an exploratory nature--exploratory to the extent that the members were attempting to chart their future course. The meetings produced a great deal of

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<sup>17</sup>The Great Falls Press, April 13, 1962

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

debate about what type of direct action the local chapter should engage in. The debates about direct action, almost without exception centered around housing opportunities. It was finally decided that the CORE chapter would sponsor an "Open-House-Look-In". The local real estate agents had the habit of sponsoring an "Open House" for potential buyers on week ends. By "Open House" they meant that a particular house that was for sale would be open for inspection by potential buyers at any time during specified hours. To facilitate this they would advertise the "Open House" in the newspaper and put up red-lettered signs on a white background pointing to the house that potential buyers could go through and view. A real estate agent or two would be on the premises to answer question. The proposed "Open-House-Look-In" would consist of a large number of Negroes converging at different times on a particular "Open House". The hope was that this would indicate to real estate agents that Negroes were going to aggressively seek housing outside of the ghetto, and that if they did not want to sell to Negroes they would have to spend several hours telling Negro after Negro that the house was not available for them. This would also put Negroes outside of the ghetto area into an all white neighborhood quite visibly looking over a house that was for sale, hence precluding a real estate agent suggesting that the Negro meet him after dark to somewhat surreptitiously look at a house. Since the "Open House" technique was used frequently by many different realtors it was



hoped that this "Open-House-Look-In" technique would put some pressure on the Board to meet with CORE representatives, or hold a public meeting about the problem of open occupancy. At this time the Real Estate Board was quite adamantly opposed to any public meeting to discuss the question of open-occupancy because of their claims (see above) that they had nothing to negotiate about, and that the problem had to be solved through the use of educational and other institutions. CORE proceeded with its plans and, working through several churches, it sponsored in the early part of the summer of 1962 several "Open-House-Look-Ins".

The hoped for public meeting with the Real Estate Board did not materialize from the "Open-House-Look-Ins", and neither did any effective communication take place between CORE representatives and representatives of the Real Estate Board.

At the same time members of the other civil rights organizations were not having any more success in setting up channels of communication with the Real Estate Board. The NAACP and the Urban League housing committees were rather inactive and had no specific program that they were working on.<sup>19</sup> The emphasis in both groups being primarily a discussion of complaints by individual Negroes. The Housing Committee of the Human Relations Commission had tried

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<sup>19</sup>Minutes of the NAACP and Urban League of 1962. The writer was in addition a member of the Housing Committee of the Urban League at this time.

previously to meet with representatives of the Real Estate Board without success, and the then Chairman of the Housing Committee, who was a Negro, resigned as Chairman and stated to the new Chairman in June, who was white, that now maybe the Real Estate Board would be more willing to meet.<sup>20</sup>

Racial tension existed throughout the nation in the summer of 1962 and was extensively reported in the news media. Up to this time, in Great Falls, outside of the activity of the newly organized CORE chapter there was little overt demonstration of impatience on the part of Negroes about the Great Falls housing situation. The Great Falls CORE chapter had changed that pattern slightly due to its "Open-House-Look-Ins". On the 27th of July, however, this pattern of not overtly demonstrating disaffection, changed when a Molotov Cocktail was thrown through the window of the Great Falls Real Estate Board office. The Molotov Cocktail failed to explode. The Great Falls press did not report the incident. Less than a week later, August 1, another Molotov Cocktail was thrown, this time through the office window of a realtor, doing \$700 damage to the office of Dutcher Realty Co. This time the Great Falls Press played the story up and had a picture on the front page of the damage done, with headlines under the picture stating,

"Bombs Office  
Vandal's Molotov Cocktail  
Starts \$700 Fire"<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>The writer was the new Housing Committee Chairman.

<sup>21</sup>The Great Falls Press, August 2, 1962.

The article stated that a similar bomb was thrown on July 27 into the window of the Great Falls Real Estate Board office but had failed to ignite. The story went on to say that the "Fire Department arson investigators were seeking someone with a grudge."<sup>22</sup>

Because of the publicity for the next two weeks the major topic of conversation at civil rights meetings was about the bombing, without anyone seeming to doubt that the Molotov Coctails were thrown because of alleged discriminatory practices on the part of realtors. The major part of the conversation tended to be about who the person might be, what organization he might belong to, and what his racial classification was. There also was a great deal of concern that this might, if the bombings continued, tremendously increase racial tension, because many persons in the community assumed the bomb thrower was a Negro, and that an emotionally unstable white element might try to retaliate.<sup>23</sup> At this time threatening letters were sent to four real estate firms advising them to stop discriminatory practices, and to meet with anyone of the local civil rights organizations to reach some degree of understanding.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>From personal observations at meetings of all four organizations attended by the writer.

<sup>24</sup>The Great Falls Press, August 22, 1962.

During this time the writer was constantly being told by realtors and acquaintances of realtors that nerves were pretty well frayed, that persons working in Realty offices were getting very "jumpy".

The bomber was, two weeks later, apprehended and on August 22, 1962 the Great Falls Press had as the feature, front page story, the capture of the bomber. The Great Falls Press had in large type the headline:

"Youth, 20, Admits Bombing  
Two Local Realty Offices"

The bomber was a twenty year old white youth, who was an immediate past member of the local CORE organization. His name was Harold S. Faber. The Great Falls Press story noted Faber's former membership in CORE.

Faber, a former member of the Congress of Racial Equality, a mixed racial group told Zemaitis and Rigney (two detectives) he threw the bomb to protest 'discrimination against Negroes by local Realtors'. He said he picked the offices at random.<sup>25</sup>

The Great Falls Press story went on to state that,

Faber questioned because of his former CORE membership, became a suspect when Zemaitis and Rigney found that, when he resigned he had said, 'Don't hold CORE responsible for my action from now on.' CORE is a nationwide organization which seeks to end discrimination by non-violent means.<sup>26</sup>

The story added that,

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

Questioning revealed no link between Faber's bombings and the local Negro Community.<sup>27</sup>

That real estate agents had been disturbed is obvious to anyone who talked to real estate agents at that time. Understandably, they had been living through a period of strain, not knowing where the bomber might strike next. As illustration, a close friend of the writer's had dinner at an expensive, well known Great Falls restaurant the night the bomber was caught, and saw one of the more affluent realtors at the restaurant with his family. The realtor had just completed a rather well advertised quarter-of-a-million dollar real estate transaction and the writer's friend asked him in jest if he and the family were out celebrating the completion of the real estate deal, to which the realtor replied, "No, no thats minor, thats minor, we're celebrating the capture of the bomber." Real estate agents in conversation stated that during the period the bomber was loose they did not like their employees sitting near a window, and that they were jumpy every time they heard a loud noise. The point here is not that real estate agents were approaching a nervous collapse, they were not; however, real estate agents had been put through an experience that they did not care to have repeated.

In the second week in September the local CORE chapter picketed a state convention of realtors at a local hotel.

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

It was a convention in which realtors restated their traditional stand on housing which the Great Falls Press reported in a full page eight column headline reading, "Realtors Restate Policy on Racial Housing Issue." In the body of the story the Press ran an account of the picketing by CORE,

During the afternoon convention sessions, several pickets, carrying signs with the name Congress of Racial Equality marched in front of the Pantland. Dr. W. W. Plunger said that the demonstration was 'against discrimination in housing in Great Falls, and in general all over the nation. Segregation in housing is the biggest problem we as Negro Americans face all over the nation'.<sup>28</sup>

#### NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION AND THE GREAT FALLS REAL ESTATE BOARD

During this time, the time of the bombings and the picketing of the state convention of realtors, the Human Relations Commission was attempting once again to set up a meeting with the Real Estate Board. Past efforts to arrange such a meeting had always been rejected by the Real Estate Board. The Real Estate Board during the period of the bombings claimed that they would not meet under pressure. Immediately after the bomber was caught, however, they reacted favorably to a suggestion for a luncheon meeting. The meeting was to be held without reporters being present and would consist of representatives from the Human Relations

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<sup>28</sup>The Great Falls Press, September 14, 1962.

Commission and from the Real Estate Board.

The Executive Director of the Human Relations Commission and the Chairman of the Housing Committee of the Human Relations Commission arrived at the luncheon before the Chairman of the Human Relations Commission. The Real Estate Board representatives were already there. The Executive Director of the Human Relations Commission was a Negro, and the Chairman of the Housing Committee was a sociology professor from one of the local colleges. The Chairman of the Human Relations Commission was a well known Great Falls businessman, industrial relations representative of a large manufacturing concern. It was obvious to the two Human Relations Commission representatives that the Real Estate Board representatives were tense and nervous and were not at all happy that the Human Relations Commission Chairman was not there. After awkward introductions and stiff handshakes they asked immediately if he (the Chairman) were coming. When told he was they seemed relieved. After a little strained conversation they again inquired if he were certain to be there, and when told he was, they lapsed into silence. The situation remained strained and even light conversation was difficult to maintain. It seemed quite obvious, that to the realtors the Negro Executive Director and the sociology professor were strange phenomena from a different type of social world.<sup>28</sup> The Human Relations

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<sup>28</sup>The type of behavior that Goffman writes about so lucidly. "Goffman believes...communicators also engage in a 'performance'--each transmits and receives clues about his





Commission Chairman finally arrived and the realtors greeted him effusively, and there was a visible release of tension. Here was a person that they could communicate with, a fellow business man and active participant in community affairs. He took charge of the meeting and indicated that the meeting was not requested to make charges or accusations against anyone, but was requested simply to talk together about mutual problems, and that they should understand that the Human Relations Commission existed to alleviate tension in the community, and that they too should feel free to use the services of the Human Relations Commission. The possibility of a meeting with the Real Estate Board and the entire Human Relations Commission in a formal session was discussed, and the Real Estate Board representatives agreed with the proviso that the meeting be private and that no reporters be allowed, and that a statement would be released about the meeting which would be agreeable to both the Real Estate Board and the Human Relations Commission. That was agreed

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definition of the situation, his view of himself, and his evaluation of the other. Mutual adjustment occurs. Perhaps most important, the actors enter into a silent compact to help each other save face. Each becomes involved in "face-work"--give-and-take actions that smooth over potentially embarrassing threats, lend mutual support, and make for coherent and consistent performances. Each person has a 'defensive orientation toward saving his own face and a protective orientation toward saving the other's face'. Edward E. Jones quoting in "Flattery will Get You Somewhere," in *Trans-Action* May/June 1965, Vol. 2, No. 4, p. 20. See Erving Goffman, The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life (Garden City, N. J.: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1959). See especially pp. 77-140.

upon, and the meeting was set for October 4. The Chairman of the Housing Committee reported on the private luncheon to the Human Relations Commission that afternoon, and the next day, the 28th of September, the Great Falls Press ran a three column headline reading,

"Plan Long-Sought Meet"

With a sub-headline reading,

"City Civil Rights Unit Plans Agenda for  
Minority-Housing Parley With Realtors"

with the substance of the report stating,

The committee and the real estate men will discuss present and future housing problems of minority groups and ways in which the Real Estate Board may help alleviate<sup>29</sup> the problems.

The Commission indicated a public meeting to air the problems fully will be held later if progress is made at next week's session.

The Rev. Paul Willum, a commission member, commented 'For the last 17 or 18 years to my knowledge we have been trying to meet with them (the real estate men). Now, at least we've got a meeting.'<sup>30</sup>

The statement of Rev. Willum was no exaggeration. The different civil rights organizations had been attempting for well over a decade to meet formally with representatives of the Real Estate Board. As stated above, all that had occurred thus far was for a representative or two of the Board to state that they were a business organization

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<sup>29</sup>Underlining is the writer's. This was a change from their former position. See above. This point will be emphasized below.

<sup>30</sup>The Great Falls Press, September 28, 1962.

interested in contracting real estate sales, and that the problem of segregation was not their concern, and hence they had nothing to meet about with members of civil rights organizations. Now by meeting formally with the Human Relations Commission they, at least tacitly, had changed their policy.

Before the meeting with the Real Estate Board the Human Relations Commission issued its annual report emphasizing the need to solve the housing problem. It was stated that the housing situation was the one that was producing undue tension in race relations in the Great Falls area, and that the problem would have to be solved soon, or there would be unfortunate consequences.<sup>31</sup> This was just one more little emphasis to all that had gone before indicating the necessity for the Real Estate Board to come to grips with the problem of segregated housing.

At the meeting, the emphasis on the part of the Human Relations Commission was on a factual analysis of the present situation of the housing opportunities for non-whites in Great Falls by the Executive Director, and an analysis of the probable growth of the non-white community by the Chairman of the Housing Committee. The Executive Director emphasized that the present situation led to tension, because there was an obvious ghetto in Great Falls creating high

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<sup>31</sup>The Great Falls Human Relations Commission, Annual Report 1961-62.

residential density, segregated schools, and isolation of the races from each other. The Chairman of the Housing Committee of the Human Relations Commission, using census statistics, projected the probable growth of the Negro community for the next decade, interpolating into the future a rapid expansion of the Negro population with the size probably doubling within ten years, and hence creating a tremendous demand on the part of Negroes for additional housing. The presentation of the Human Relations Commission was deliberately "low key", with no haranguing of the Real Estate Board occurring, but with the clear implication that the city had a problem that all citizens had better soon solve, or more problems of the type the city had just gone through would occur.<sup>32</sup> It was purposely "low key" because other groups had supplied pressure and were obviously quite willing to continue doing so.

The attorney for the Real Estate Board presented their perspective stating that the Real Estate Board should not be held responsible for the existence of the ghetto. He emphasized that many Negroes prefer to live with Negroes and, that they (realtors) saw nothing wrong in self segregation. He also pointed out that if Negroes wanted to move out of the ghetto, and if they thought that brokers were causing all of the problem, that they could purchase houses

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<sup>32</sup>Minutes, Human Relations Commission, October 4, 1962.

from private sellers. He emphasized that the Great Falls Press every night ran numerous advertisements by private home owners, and that Negroes therefore could not blame realtors for the development of the ghetto. Therefore, he concluded, the Real Estate Board was obviously not the cause of the problem of segregated housing.<sup>33</sup> After the meeting he stated to a reporter that,

Basically we pointed out there is no use saying the real estate brokers are the cause of all the problems.<sup>34</sup>

The Great Falls Press carried large headlines of the meeting the next day. The Great Falls Press used large type, having an entire full page eight column headline as the feature story on the local page. In the article it gave the presentation of both the Human Relations Commission and the Real Estate Board and stated that,

Mayor Davis declared...he was happy to see the interest of the real estate men in the problem. 'If they follow up,' he said, 'I think they can get the public behind them to help improve the situation.'<sup>35</sup>

The Great Falls Press also reported that the Real Estate Board had not agreed to a public meeting and that no date for another private meeting was set. This produced a great deal of dissatisfaction among members of other civil rights groups. The Chairman of the Housing Committee of

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<sup>33</sup>Minutes, Human Relations Commission, Oct. 4, 1962.

<sup>34</sup>The Great Falls Press, Oct. 5, 1962.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

of the Human Relations Commission was contacted repeatedly by members of both the NAACP and CORE protesting the refusal of the Real Estate Board to participate in a public meeting. The Chairman of the Housing Committee of the Human Relations Commission was also a member of CORE, and therefore there was effective communication taking place between the Human Relations Commission and CORE. Some of the members of CORE were officers of the local NAACP branch, and hence there was effective communication back to the NAACP branch. The Housing Committee Chairman of the Human Relations Commission informed these members that the Real Estate Board intimated that they would continue the discussions, and that they seemed amenable to a public meeting.

The Human Relations Commission had another meeting two weeks later, in which the Chairman of the Housing Committee reported that the Real Estate Board indicated its willingness to again meet with the Human Relations Commission, and also indicated its willingness to reach a formal Board decision as to what its role in the community should be in regard to segregated housing. This was again extensively reported in the mass media where the Chairman of the Housing Committee was quoted as saying that,

...the meeting will lay the groundwork for the first public meeting of the two groups.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>Big City Daily, October 26, 1962.

AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION AND  
THE GREAT FALLS REAL ESTATE BOARD

The Human Relations Commission and the Real Estate Board held its third private meeting on October 31 in which the Real Estate Board came to an agreement and made a commitment to help resolve the problem of segregated housing. They came to an almost complete reversal of their previous policy. Before the creation of CORE, before the bombings, before the picketing, they insisted that they had nothing to discuss with any civil rights organization and that the problem of segregated housing was not their problem to solve. Now they came to a reversal of that policy and signed an involved formal agreement with the Human Relations Commission.<sup>37</sup>

1) They agreed to prohibit block-busting on the part of any realtor, or salesman for any realtor. They agreed that the matter of race should not be brought up in trying to obtain sellers in any neighborhood.

2) They agreed that any person should receive the professional services of any realtor and that that service would not be denied on the basis of race, creed, or color. The point here being that a Negro would not be treated differently by the realtor as broker, that he would no longer be shown separate listings of houses found only in the ghetto.

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<sup>37</sup>The agreement is on file at the Great Falls Human Relations Commission. The following will be a paraphrase of that agreement.

This is the major point that the Human Relations Commission wanted, a commitment on the part of the Board that they would not discriminate as brokers.<sup>38</sup>

3) They also made the commitment that they would show a Negro any property which was for sale, unless the owner explicitly prohibited the showing of that property to Negroes. The Human Relations Commission had wanted a commitment in regard to this even though they were aware that the realtor(s) could lie, saying the owner would not allow a Negro to see the property even though he had not said so. The point here is that the Board, if it made the formal promise, would be in an embarrassing situation if the promise was not kept, and both the Board and the Human Relations Commission knew that the civil rights organizations would be watching how the agreement was being fulfilled.

4) The Real Estate Board also agreed that realtors would present to the owner of a listed property, regardless of the race, creed, or color of the potential purchaser, any bonafide reasonable offer to purchase it.

5) The Board also agreed to refuse to run through the multiple listing system any listings which contained a written provision restricting sale or rental on the basis of race, creed, or color and not to allow any advertisements which either restrict or encourage sales or rentals on the basis of race, creed or color.

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<sup>38</sup>Minutes, Human Relations Commission, 1961-62.



6) The Board also agreed to set up an educational program for its brokers or salesmen informing them of the agreements, and relating to them the problems of discrimination in housing.

7) The Real Estate Board also agreed at this meeting to hold a public meeting with the Human Relations Commission to present these agreements to the community. It was also agreed that the Real Estate Board at this public meeting would be present to answer any questions directed to them from the audience.<sup>39</sup>

The purpose of the Human Relations Commission in these discussions was to eliminate discriminatory practices of realtors as realtors. The problem of the individual home owner discriminating was not considered to be a problem that could be solved by the Real Estate Board. The belief was that the areas of agreement reached with the Real Estate Board, would effectively eliminate discrimination by realtors as realtors if they would live up to their agreements. If they would not live up to these indorsed agreements then they would have to accept the danger of public censure because the civil rights organizations would bring the realtor's behavior forcefully to the attention of the public by use of the mass media, and they would have to accept the concomitant bitterness and racial tension directed toward them that would obviously result.

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<sup>39</sup>Minutes, Human Relations Commission, Oct. 31, 1962.

The public meeting was held on December 10 in the chambers of the City Commission. The meeting was announced in advance through the mass media. The night of the meeting the chambers of the City Commission were filled, and persons were standing not only in the back of the room but also in the hallway outside of the chambers.<sup>40</sup>

The Chairman of the Human Relations Commission announced that the meeting was held to "improve minority housing conditions and to create a healthier interracial climate."<sup>41</sup>

The Human Relations Commission members presented a brief statement of the existing housing conditions of non-whites and the probable needs in the future. The Secretary of the Real Estate Board then discussed the areas in which agreement had been reached with the Human Relations Commission.<sup>42</sup>

The session then was opened up for written questions from the floor. The Chairman of the Human Relations Commission announced that all questions would be read and that there would be no attempt to evade any questions. He stated that the meeting was for the purpose of eliminating misunderstanding and that therefore he would accept any written

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<sup>40</sup>The Great Falls Press, Dec. 11, 1962 and the Big City Daily, Dec. 11, 1962.

<sup>41</sup>The Great Falls Press, Dec. 11, 1962.

<sup>42</sup>Minutes, Human Relations Commission, Dec. 10, 1962.

question. Almost the entire Board of Directors of the Real Estate Board appeared at the meeting<sup>43</sup> and sat in front of the auditorium along with their attorney, and members of the Housing Committee of the Human Relations Commission, and the Executive Director and the Chairman of the Human Relations Commission. The session lasted for three hours with about half of the questions being directed at the Real Estate Board, and about half at the Human Relations Commission representatives concerning the Negro crime rate, housing deterioration, etc.<sup>44</sup>

After this public meeting, the public presentation of the areas of agreement, the Real Estate Board ceased being the target of the civil rights organizations. In fact up to the time of the writing of this report, the writer could not find any evidence of any public attack on the Real Estate Board, by individual members of the various civil rights organizations or by the organizations as such. After this meeting the Human Relations Commission, through the mass media, requested time and time again that any persons being discriminated against by real estate agents report to the Human Relations Commission, with practically no response.<sup>45</sup> Hence the conclusion has to be that either the Real Estate

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<sup>43</sup>Which gives some indication of how seriously they considered this matter.

<sup>44</sup>Personal tabulation of the questions which the writer still has on file.

<sup>45</sup>Minutes of the Housing Committee indicate a major concern in 1963 of getting Negroes to report if discriminated against in housing opportunities.

Board members lived up to their agreement, or Negroes were being discriminated against but were not complaining, or that Negroes were not attempting to purchase housing outside of the ghetto area.

Whatever the reason might be, the agreement between the Human Relations Commission and the Real Estate Board did materially reduce tension between the non-white community and the Real Estate Board. Prior to this meeting, most of the time at a public meeting involving the question of housing for non-whites revolved around the practices of real estate agents, after this meeting very little attention was devoted to the practices of real estate agents.

As far as this writer can determine that agreement was the most far reaching that any Real Estate Board in the nation made with a local Human Relations Commission.<sup>46</sup> It was an agreement that few people previously had thought possible, because the Board in the past had indicated strongly that it perceived its function in the community to be that of a strictly business organization, and that the alleviation of discriminatory practices of any kind was not its concern.

The syllogism of the Real Estate Board prior to the Spring and Summer of 1962 was simple and straightforward. It was that organizations that exist for business reasons

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<sup>46</sup>See the journal, Trends in Housing, for the years prior to the agreement. Although the journal Trends in Housing acts as a national clearing house for information in the area of housing discrimination there was no report of a similar agreement.

have as their task the maximization of profits and are not to concern themselves with the education of the general public in regard to social issues not directly effecting their business, nor in attempting to change or alleviate existing social problems. The Real Estate Board was established purely for a business reason. Therefore, it could not actively participate in eliminating segregated housing. Regardless of how one might view this syllogism (the writer considers the major and minor premises to be fallacious) members of the Board professed to believe it and acted accordingly. In the Fall of 1962 when they acted differently and did make a change in their behavior, they did not refer implicitly or explicitly to a change in their basic premises, they simply stated that they would reach an agreement and then did so. As will be pointed out later, the evidence seems to be that it was a change that they considered to be expedient because of the "temper of the times". Expedient because they did not relish the thought of going through another period of stress and strain that they had just experienced, and the "temper of the times" seemed to indicate that that just might occur if they did not make some change in their policy.

#### FAIR HOUSING ORDINANCE

As soon as the agreement was reached with the Real Estate Board civil rights leaders began to talk about a

"Fair Housing Ordinance" for the city. As was stated above, after the public meeting of December 10, 1962, the emphasis on the Real Estate Board as the archvillain in the field of housing opportunities that had existed among Negroes and civil rights leaders declined. It was considered a battle that was won, but something still had to be done about the private property owner, at least the owner of multiple units, e.g. the developers, the apartment owners, the builders, and the other real estate entrepreneurs.

In April of 1963 the Chairman of the Housing Committee of the Human Relations Commission had appointed a sub-committee to prepare a report concerning the feasibility of a housing ordinance in regard to "open-occupancy" for the city of Great Falls. On May 17, 1963 this sub-committee gave a tentative report to the Housing Committee, which was not reported on at the regular meeting of the Human Relations Commission, as it was thought not wise to do so because the publicity that would result could have adverse results. However, the Chairman of the Human Relations Commission did meet with members of the Real Estate Board, telling them what was proposed and indicating that CORE and the NAACP members were very concerned that the city draft a "respectable" housing ordinance. The Human Relations Commission had a new Chairman at this time who was a highly respected attorney known for his conservative political philosophy, and legal representative for numerous business interests in labor bargaining disputes. He was a past president of

the Great Lakes State Junior Bar Association, the past president of the Great Lakes State Bar Association, active in National Bar Association activities, etc. As a result he had entree to the elite business circles of the community. In the summer of 1963, while the Commission did not meet in formal session, the Chairman of the Human Relations Commission had numerous luncheon meetings about the housing situation with City Commissioners, business leaders, and members of the Real Estate Board. At some of these luncheons CORE, the NAACP, the Urban League and Human Relations Commission members were present, all carrying the same message, that the City Commission had to act in the area of housing to reduce racial tension in the city.<sup>47</sup>

At this time nationally racial tension had exploded throughout the country. The Great Falls Press carried numerous front page headlines about demonstrations in the South, and stories about racial unrest in the North. The national TV news networks carried almost nightly reports from the South on demonstrations, and had "specials" of an hour or a half hour on problems of an interracial nature.

It was in this context that the Chairman of the Human Relations Commission was bringing the message to the white leaders of the community that something had to be done to avoid a racial clash in the city. It is interesting to note

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<sup>47</sup>From observations at some of the meetings and the result of conversation with the Human Relations Commission Chairman and Executive Director.

that at some of these meetings the Chairman of the Human Relations Commission had CORE representatives invited, even though it was defunct as a group at this time (see Chapter Four) due to the internal bickering. He, however, was not aware of this and still saw CORE as capable of leading demonstrations, a perspective emphasized by others in the community who were trying to bring maximum pressure to bear on the Chairman of the Human Relations Commission to act in bringing about a housing ordinance.<sup>48</sup>

That summer (1963) a rough draft of a housing ordinance was written by the Chairman of the Legal and Civil Rights Committee of the Human Relations Commission, with other civil rights groups being informed as to what was being proposed. The essence of the housing ordinance was that any person, firm, corporation, etc. owning three or more lots, houses, or apartment units could not discriminate in the sale, rental or lease of property.<sup>49</sup> There was no great emphasis by any civil rights organization for a stronger ordinance than this. In fact the President of the NAACP had stated to the writer several times that he would be opposed to an ordinance which would include a person's own home, as he thought every person should retain the right to do with his own house (rent, sell, etc.) whatever he

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<sup>48</sup>Notes from private conversations with members of all the civil rights organizations in the summer of 1963.

<sup>49</sup>Printed copies of the Housing Ordinance are available at the Great Falls Human Relations Commission office.



pleased. He saw this as a basic right. This was a perspective not held by others,<sup>50</sup> who would quite willingly have seen the ordinance extended to include the private home owner, but who for pragmatic reasons, the fear that it would cause the defeat of the ordinance, did not attempt to push to have the proposed housing ordinance extended.

In September the Chairman of the Human Relations Commission presented the proposed housing ordinance for the consideration of the Ordinance Committee of the City Commission at a luncheon. The Ordinance Committee members said that they would give it some consideration, and have the city attorney give his opinion of it. It was then returned to the Human Relations Commission with a suggestion that the enforcement provision be changed from the Human Relations Commission to the city attorney's office.

To decide whether or not this change should be accepted, a combined meeting of some of the members of the Human Relations Commission, CORE, the NAACP, and the Urban League met on December 10, 1963. The Chairman of the evening, an attorney, who was the Chairman of the Legal and Civil Rights Committee of the Human Relations Commission, stated at the beginning of the meeting that the Chairman of the Human Relations Committee, who was out of town, had told him that a public meeting about the proposed ordinance

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<sup>50</sup>In private conversation a majority of the Housing Committee members of the Human Relations Commission indicated no philosophical, or ideological opposition in extending the ordinance to the individual home owner.

did not have to be feared. Many of those present had previously expressed a fear that a public meeting proposed by the Ordinance Committee of the City Commission would produce a massive outpouring against the proposed ordinance. He stated that the Human Relations Commission Chairman had said that as of then, there were enough votes in the City Commission, to pass the Fair Housing Ordinance, and that the public meeting was just going to be window dressing to indicate to the public that there was a lot of support for the ordinance. He also stated that the City Commissioners had stated that the City Manager was opposed to it, but that they were going to vote for it anyway. He later in the evening asserted again that the Chairman of the Human Relations Commission had been meeting frequently with the City Commissioners, and that he was sure that they would vote in favor of the ordinance, and that the public meeting was just window dressing.<sup>51</sup>

At the meeting a majority of those present voted against any changes taking place in the original housing ordinance, with the tacit understanding being though, that even if enforcement was shifted to the City Attorney, that the civil rights groups would not oppose the ordinance at a public hearing.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>51</sup>Notes taken at the meeting, Dec. 10, 1962.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid.

As the time approached for the public hearing there was practically no public opposition to the ordinance, and civil rights leaders were puzzled. It seemed that the Real Estate Board was not going to lead opposition to the ordinance, as they issued no strong statements against it, purchased no advertisements opposing it, and seemed rather resigned to having it passed by the City Commission. No opposition of import developed prior to the public meeting, and civil rights leaders were wondering what would develop at the meeting because hardly anyone, and no organizations, had committed themselves up to the time of the public meeting. At the public meeting no one rose in opposition to the proposed ordinance. Not even the Real Estate Board had a representative present. The Real Estate Board did send a letter, which was read, stating their opposition on the basis of two factors. One factor was the belief that it was pre-empted by the new state constitution, and secondly they charged that it was discriminatory.<sup>53</sup>

This opposition was just perfunctory and was much less than had been anticipated. The rest of the evening was simply a ritual with one group after another stating their agreement of the proposed ordinance. There were so many groups wanting to speak in favor of the ordinance that they were limited to three minute presentations.

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<sup>53</sup>The Great Falls Press, Dec. 12, 1963.

The Great Falls Press the next day headlined on the front page that,

Rights Units  
Back City  
Home Law

and then stated in the substance of the report that,

More than 600 persons attending the two-hour session at the Civic Auditorium heard speakers representing more than two dozen local organizations register varying degrees of approval of a proposed ordinance under study by the City Commission.<sup>54</sup>

Shortly after this public meeting, however, the City Attorney ruled that the proposed Fair Housing Ordinance was superceded by the New Great Lakes State Civil Rights Commission which had a housing provision, and that therefore he was opposed to the housing ordinance. The civil rights organizations were unanimous in their disagreement, because the provisions of the new Great Lakes State Civil Rights Commission were not adequately delineated and therefore no one knew for certain what the powers of the Civil Rights Commission in regard to housing would be. CORE<sup>55</sup> issued a strong public statement condemning the City Attorney's ruling. The Great Falls Press reported that,

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<sup>54</sup>The Great Falls Press, Dec. 12, 1963.

<sup>55</sup>One must remember here that CORE was defunct as an organization. It is debatable whether CORE could have been able to get ten persons to participate in a demonstration. Nevertheless they were able to get their statements reported in the mass media and hence gave the impression to the community of being a much more powerful organization than they really were.

Mrs. Mary Martin, chairman of the Great Falls Chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality, said, 'We are appalled and somewhat angered...by the mysterious, belatedly revealed opinion of the Great Falls city attorney.'

She declared, 'The similarity of the city attorney's opinion to that of the Great Falls Real Estate Board is immediately obvious and is odious.'

She concluded, 'There appears a growing need for mass protest demonstrations to point up the local housing impasse, and to garner the public support necessary to effect passage of this needed legislation. We are also preparing a detailed, documented report on the local housing situation, including flouting of the expressed public support of this legislation, to be presented to the United States Civil Rights Commission requesting investigation.<sup>56</sup>

The City Attorney was adamant. In his judgement the Great Lakes State Civil Rights Commission had pre-empted the field. Therefore, the Chairman of the Human Relations Commission called a press conference for the same day in which CORE made their statement, consisting of himself, the Chairman of the Legal and Civil Rights Committee of the Human Relations Commission, and the Chairman of the Housing Committee of the Human Relations Commission, to present a unified front to the public that the Human Relations Commission was still in favor of the housing ordinance, even though the City Attorney had ruled against it. The Chairman of the Human Relations Commission and the Chairman of the Legal and Civil Rights Committee were both attorneys. Both were much older than the City Attorney and both had much more experience than the City Attorney. The Chairman of the Human Relations Commission especially was vehement

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<sup>56</sup>The Great Falls Press, Dec. 20, 1963.

in his view that the ruling of the City Attorney was wrong. He stated to the Chairman of the Housing Committee that he was going to have Chris Fuller (Co-chairman of the Great Lakes State Civil Rights Commission, former Chairman of the Republican Party in Great Lakes State, and former Federal District Judge) send a telegram to the Great Falls City Commission pointing out the advisability of passing the housing ordinance. The Chairman of the Housing Committee stated that he doubted that Fuller would be willing to do that. The Chairman of the Human Relations Commission stated that he and Fuller and Hirmstra (one of the City Commissioners) were classmates at Great Lakes State University, and that besides Fuller owed him something because he had tried to get him support for his judgeship. Hence he was going to call Fuller. He stated that he already had the telegram written that he wanted Fuller to send to the Great Falls City Commission. The Chairman of the Human Relations Commission also stated that before the ruling he had had six of the seven Commission votes in his "hip-pocket". He then stated that he and the Chairman of the Legal and Civil Rights Committee were going to have lunch that noon with the remaining Commissioner and try to convince her. The three chairmen then appeared before the reporters and issued a strong statement that in their opinion the ordinance should be passed over the objections of the City Attorney. The Great Falls Press headlined the story.

Want Housing Code  
Human Relations Leaders See  
Value in Local Ordinance

adding in the body of the story that,

Three spokesman for the Human Relations Commission issued a strong plea Friday for adoption of a Fair Housing Ordinance Monday.

Attorney Henry Conner...described the proposed code ...'a clear, concise and unassailable ordinance.'

Conner said it was unfortunate the City Attorney... issued an opinion concurring with the state attorney general at this late date. He said the opinion 'unsettled what everyone thought was settled and has upset local groups.'<sup>57</sup>

On December 23, 1963 the City Commission unanimously voted in favor of the Fair Housing Ordinance. Hence, the civil rights organizations were able to obtain with hardly any public opposition what two years previously they had thought would be impossible in the city of Great Falls. Two years previous to the passing of this ordinance the most tension in the area of civil rights was that of housing, primarily a concern with the ability of non-whites to purchase outside of the ghetto.<sup>58</sup> Two years prior to the passing of this ordinance there was considerable tension involving the non-white population and the Real Estate Board. The Real Estate Board had refused to take any responsibility for the development of the ghetto and refused to even meet with any civil rights organization to discuss the problem. Now in two years time the Real Estate Board had signed an

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<sup>57</sup>The Great Falls Press, Dec. 20, 1963.

<sup>58</sup>The concern for example that is found in civil rights groups in the north over police brutality was entirely lacking in Great Falls. Of all the civil rights workers interviewed none could cite an instance of police brutality and over 85% did not believe it to exist.

agreement that was perhaps the most sweeping of its kind in the nation, and the city had passed as strong a Fair Housing Ordinance as any city in the state, with only token opposition shown by the Real Estate Board. As will be pointed out below, the central thesis of this paper is that this change came about because of well publicized nationwide conflict in the area of race relations, and because of localized conflict of an intensity that shocked the city.

#### POLICIES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

During this period the other areas of concern, e.g. education and jobs, were somewhat dormant. The Board of Education was trying to resolve the problem of teacher placement, which was a concern of the NAACP and some persons on the Human Relations Commission. The Board of Education, though, was having difficulty getting Negro teachers to accept positions outside of the ghetto. The Board of Education was also trying to recruit more Negro teachers but was having a great deal of difficulty finding qualified applicants. The problem of defacto segregated schools during this two year period was discussed, but not publicly pushed, as the question of housing had been pushed. Part of the lack of "pushing" in this was probably due to the fact that the Executive Director of the Urban League, Mark Paul, was elected to the Board of Education in 1962. In the summer



of 1964, however, a great deal of agitation was occurring nationally and some pressure was being brought to bear on the Board of Education to act in the area of de facto school segregation. Mark Paul asked the Board of Education to hold a public meeting in regard to de facto school segregation, at which all interested organizations could appear to present their suggestions. The public meeting was held on September 8, 1964 and all the civil rights organizations sent representatives. It became clear, however, that there was not any strong backing for any "radical" change in present Board policy. The emphasis of all the civil rights organizations was for some type of open enrollment. None of the groups asked for "cross-city busing", just for the purpose of integrating the schools. The Board president stated in closing the meeting that,

We will admit we do not have all the answers. We can't hope to have them all at once. But we value your contribution to our thinking.<sup>59</sup>

It was quite apparent that none of the civil rights groups thought that they had "all the answers" either. Hence there was no concerted effort to change existing School Board policy.

#### EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

In the area of job opportunities much of any potential tension was reduced by the fact that Great Lakes State had

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<sup>59</sup>The Great Lakes Press, Sept. 16, 1964.

a strong FEPC law concerning all employers of eight or more employees, a law that had strong enforcement provisions. There was no strong agitation for a change in employment policy among civil rights groups about job opportunities as there had been over the question of housing. The Urban League saw as one of its primary tasks the acquisition of more jobs for Negroes and it was using an explicitly "conflict" approach. The Urban League Job Opportunities Committee had compiled a brochure listing the Negro crime rate, welfare rate, etc. The approach of the Committee Chairman was then to approach employers with this fact sheet and ask them if they wanted these conditions to continue. He then would emphasize the rate of growth of the Negro population and would conclude by saying that we have to do something. We have to get these people jobs to get them off of welfare, off the street, and reduce the crime rate. As he stated to the Research Committee of the Urban League, which compiled the data for him:

I want information that will scare the hell out of those guys.<sup>60</sup>

He got the information and he used it, and was successful at least to the extent that the Urban League had more job opportunities than persons available to fill those jobs.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup>Notes taken at a meeting of the Research Committee.

<sup>61</sup>This of course did not solve the problem of the unskilled, but that in itself is a problem larger than just the Urban League can handle.

There was so little agitation in the job area that when the NAACP in May of 1964 tried to picket General Motors, as part of a nationwide demonstration advocated by Herbert Hill, national employment director of the NAACP, it was a dismal failure.

The Great Falls Press reported,

Thirty-two children, teenagers and adults stepped Saturday morning through a skeleton Negro demonstration against General Motors here after the mass program failed to develop.

The program...all but collapsed from a lack of interest on the part of the city's Negro population.

Visibly upset by the failure of NAACP members and others to support the program, Dr. W. W. Plunger, local NAACP president commented bitterly, 'Apparently there's not much interest...'<sup>62</sup>

In the Summer of 1964 it became evident that the prediction of Conant in his book Slums and Suburbs<sup>63</sup> about the unemployed school drop-out being an explosive force in the community was all too true for Great Falls, as the Recreation Department was having an increasing number of complaints about gambling, and assaults taking place in the city's parks. The Human Relations Commission's Executive Director held several conferences with Negro adolescents and young adults who were causing much of the problem. They asserted that they had nothing to do and that they could not get jobs.

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<sup>62</sup>The Great Falls Press, May 2, 1964.

<sup>63</sup>James Conant, Slums and Suburbs, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961) p. 2, writes: "...I am convinced we are allowing social dynamite to accumulate in our large cities...In some slum neighborhoods I have no doubt that over a half of the boys between sixteen and twenty-one are out of school, and out of work. Leaving aside human tragedies, I submit that a continuation of this situation is a menace to the social and political health of the large cities."

Alford then went before the Great Falls Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and threatened that Great Falls was going to have violence and bloodshed if something was not done to obtain jobs for these young people. This was at the end of the "long hot summer" that had been predicted, when racial tension throughout the nation was exceedingly high.

On October 10, 1964 the Great Falls Press had a three column headline stating that,

C C Program Finds  
Jobs for Dropouts.

The content of the story said in part,

Nearly 100 jobs for school dropouts and 'putouts' resulted from a recent 'Help Wanted' appeal from the Greater Great Falls Chamber of Commerce.<sup>64</sup>

The article then went on to eulogize the Chamber of Commerce for its magnanimity. It did not, however, quote from the letter that the Chamber of Commerce sent to its members. The appeal to the members was a prediction of violence and bloodshed for Great Falls if something was not done immediately to get those "kids" off of the streets. It was an appeal based very explicitly on the threat of conflict. It had immediate results.

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<sup>64</sup>The Great Falls Press, Oct. 10, 1964.

## CHAPTER VI

### IDEOLOGY AND CONSENSUS ON INTERGROUP RELATIONS

The previous chapter gave a description of the attempt by civil rights organizations within the community to bring about change in interracial behavior. The purpose of this chapter will be to give a brief sketch of the interplay of forces within and between civil rights organizations. It will indicate the difficulty the civil rights groups had at times in obtaining consensus among themselves. Specific controversies that developed between and within the civil rights groups will be discussed to indicate the different ideological positions that different groups and individuals held.

### THE FILTER-SNEED HOUSING DEVELOPMENT CONTROVERSY

While there was a degree of consensus between and within the civil rights organizations in regard to the desirability of the agreement reached with the Real Estate Board, and the desirability of the housing ordinance, there was a great deal of disagreement between and within the civil rights organizations in regard to other projects.

In 1962 four local Negroes (all professional men) purchased a twenty acre tract of land from the city. The tract of land, referred to as Filter-Sneed, was a considerable distance from the ghetto, in the N.E. section of Great

Falls. The purpose of the purchase was to develop an area where Negroes could purchase quality housing. They planned to develop the area and sell houses and lots to qualified buyers regardless of race, color, creed, or national origin.

Immediately, some of the white residents in the area became apprehensive<sup>1</sup> and tried to get the development stopped. They appeared before the Housing Committee of the Human Relations Commission and asked that the Human Relations Commission investigate the proposed development, and halt the sale between the city and developers. They stated that it was financially unsound to build a housing sub-division there. They also stated that the residents of the area were very concerned that their property values would depreciate.<sup>2</sup>

Two sessions were also held by the Housing Committee with two City Commissioners in whose ward the project was to be built. The Commissioners were obviously under pressure from the white residents in their ward to stop the sale of the land to the Negro purchasers. The City Commissioners asked the Housing Committee to recommend that the sale be held up until there was a full investigation into

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<sup>1</sup>Residents of the area formed a neighborhood association, hired an attorney, and contacted their City Commissioners in an attempt to get the proposed housing development stopped.

<sup>2</sup>Minutes, Housing Committee of the Human Relations Commission, Dec. 10, 1962.

the financial feasibility of the development.<sup>3</sup>

The Housing Committee refused to try to delay the sale. The Housing Committee did, however, offer to try to stop panic in the area and to wage an educational campaign through the distribution of pamphlets and by holding public meetings.

Two weeks later the two Commissioners requested another meeting with the Housing Committee and the Chairman of the Human Relations Commission and again tried to delay the proposed housing development. One City Commissioner asked again that the Human Relations Commission conduct a thorough study of the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed sub-division because he had heard that the proposed project was financially unsound. The other City Commissioner proposed that the Negroes withdraw from the project and stated that the Board of Education would be willing to purchase the land for a new Junior High School. The Chairman of the Human Relations Commission stated that he was unequivocally opposed to both proposals and the other Human Relations Commission members who were present all agreed.<sup>4</sup>

The Human Relations Commission, however, was not enthused about the project because they were afraid that the

<sup>3</sup>Minutes, Human Relations Commission Housing Committee, Dec. 10, 1962. The City Commissioners themselves could have initiated such a study but did not want the stigma of doing so, hence their request that the Human Relations Commission recommend the study.

<sup>4</sup>Minutes, Human Relations Commission Housing Committee, Dec. 26, 1962.

way it was being developed would create a plush, middle-class Negro ghetto several miles from the ghetto which already existed in the center of the city.<sup>5</sup>

The primary concern of the Human Relations Commission was to insure that the project would be an integrated project and it held several meetings with the developers and their representatives. The developers indicated that they, too, would like to see that it would become an integrated project. They also indicated, however, that their primary concern was to provide quality housing for Negroes. They pointed out that they were tired of waiting for integrated housing to become available in the suburban areas of the city, and that therefore they were acting on their own. It became quite clear to the members of the Housing Committee of the Human Relations Commission that the developers were primarily interested in obtaining quality housing for Negroes, and only tangentially interested in creating integrated housing. The wife of one of the developers stated to the writer that,

I'm not too concerned with assimilation. Religious and ethnic groups should respect the other, recognize the differences, understand them. There should be mutual understanding, mutual respect, and mutual concern. There should be room for all of us. There is something to be desired from each ethnic group. Some part of all of this should be retained. I can see this mutual respect for different groups coming about sooner than total assimilation. This sounds like a more workable, feasible, logical plan.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Minutes, Human Relations Commission Housing Committee, November 15, 1962.

<sup>6</sup>Personal interview, Summer of 1964.



The President of the NAACP was extremely skeptical about the proposed development. He wrote a letter to the Great Falls Press stating that he was opposed to the project, as there was a danger that it would become a ghetto for the affluent Negro, because the developers were not making a strong effort to insure that it would be integrated. He stated that the NAACP was opposed to "plush ghettos" as well as "slum ghettos".<sup>7</sup> As a result of the publication of this letter there was a furor among members of the Executive Board of the NAACP who said that Plunger (the President) did not have permission of the Executive Board to publish that letter.

The Great Falls Press then ran a three column headline stating:

"NAACP Meets to Resolve  
Stand on Mixed Housing"

The article went on to state that,

Center of the apparent controversy is a recent statement issued by the group's executive committee expressing fear that the proposed development may become 'a plush extension of the ghetto'...the statement from the executive committee was issued by Plunger and its publication brought protests from the individual members who contend that it does not reflect the feeling of the majority of the membership.<sup>8</sup>

The Great Falls Press later issued a statement that the Executive Board agreed with the letter issued by its

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<sup>7</sup>The Great Falls Press, Jan. 3, 1963.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., Jan. 9, 1963.

President in regard to the Filter-Sneed development.<sup>9</sup> That agreement, however, was reached only at the price of alienating several members of the Executive Board. One member stated in bitterness that,

I was active in the NAACP as an Executive Board member until the President issued the statement in regard to the Filter-Sneed development. It was allegedly a Board Statement. It was poorly thought out. It was only the President's statement. As an Executive Board member I reaped the repercussions. I told him that if he didn't need my opinion before issuing a statement I disassociate myself from it. Others did too... He (the president) opposes to some degree any program that is in the segregated area. He already lives way outside of the ghetto area hence his kid is not affected by a denial of recreational facilities in the ghetto area. There aren't more facilities in the ghetto area...because of his criticism.<sup>10</sup>

The Human Relations Commission was also concerned, as stated above, that the proposed development might just become another ghetto and hence brought Morris Milgram, president of Modern Community Developers, Inc. a company specializing in developing integrated housing projects, into the city as a consultant.

Milgram was in the city for two days and discussed the proposed project with members of all the civil rights organizations. He ended his brief sojourn in the city by holding a public meeting on his last night in town, which was well publicized by the Great Falls Press and TV station WDDT,<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>The Great Falls Press, Jan. 11, 1963.

<sup>10</sup>Personal interview, Summer of 1964.

<sup>11</sup>The Great Falls Press, March 4 and 6, 1963, WDDT news program March 4, 1963.

in which he advised the use of a benign quota for the housing project, restricting Negroes to less than fifty percent of the houses. This he stated would assure whites that the project would remain an integrated one. He claimed that he had done this in numerous projects throughout the country and that it had worked for him.<sup>12</sup> This was not greeted with enthusiasm by those Negroes who were developing the land. They pointed out that this could result in a financial loss for their group if not enough whites purchased lots. They then stated that in that eventuality that they would not hesitate to sell the lots exclusively to Negroes to protect their investments.<sup>13</sup> That idea, as stated above, was repugnant to the NAACP and they had stated so publicly. The Human Relations Commission members had not tried to halt the project because their position was that anyone in the city had the right to buy land, if they were financially capable of doing so. They did not publicly support the project because they were afraid it would develop into another ghetto area. As a result they were publicly attacked by the attorney of the project purchasers who stated that the Human Relations Commission had failed in its responsibilities.<sup>14</sup> The Urban League did not publicly attack the project either. Its

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<sup>13</sup>Minutes, The Human Relations Commission, Jan. 15, 1963.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., Jan. 24, 1962.

members were ambivalent toward the project. They supported the right of the Negroes to purchase the land but they too were fearful it would not be an integrated project.<sup>15</sup>

#### THE PARKER AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLANS

Although there was, as indicated above, some dissension between and within the civil rights groups over the Filter-Sneed development there was much more dissension over a proposed plan by the City Planner to redevelop the Parker Area of the city. The Parker Area was a predominately Negro area bounded by Franklin Street on the north, Division Avenue on the east, Albany Street on the south, and Agnew Avenue on the west.

On March 8, 1963 the City Planner and the Urban Renewal Director met with the Housing Committee of the Human Relations Commission. The City Planner discussed the proposed Master Plan of the city with an emphasis on the redevelopment of the Parker Area. The Parker Area, as stated above, is in the midst of the ghetto and is occupied primarily by Negroes. The City Planner was strongly opposed by two members of the Housing Committee who stated that they would oppose the redevelopment of that area as they did not believe that it was an area that should be classified a residential, because it was bounded on the west by a large railroad complex, and on the east by a main thoroughfare

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<sup>15</sup>Minutes, Urban League Board of Directors, Jan. 10, 1963.

which is lined with taverns. The City Planner retorted that he planned to have the railroad complex eliminated from view by bordering the western side with trees and shrubs, and that the taverns on the main thoroughfare were to be eliminated through an Urban Renewal project. He also pointed out that the city had more than enough land for industrial and commercial purposes, and that therefore this land was not needed by industry or commerce. Furthermore he pointed out that within the Parker Area the Board of Education had built a large new elementary school which it would be foolish to abandon, which would have to be done, if the area were zoned industrial or commercial. Besides he pointed out, there was a park in the area, and that with adequate planning it could be made a viable residential area.<sup>16</sup>

The same two members of the Housing Committee also protested the fact that the Parker Area was to be the first residential Urban Renewal project in the city, and that therefore it would remain an all Negro area. They asked if there were not other areas outside of the ghetto that could be developed first, so that Urban Renewal would foster residential integration rather than foster the continuing residential segregation existing in the city. Their point was that if an area, or areas, outside of the Parker Area were first developed that Negroes under existing federal regulations<sup>17</sup> might have an opportunity to move into

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<sup>16</sup>Minutes, Human Relations Commission Housing Committee, March 8, 1963.

<sup>17</sup>Presidential Executive Order, Nov. 10, 1962.

the new housing provided in the redeveloped area. Hence Urban Renewal would foster integration. They also doubted that the Parker Area was the most deteriorated residential area of the city. The City Planner stated it was. It was the consensus of the Commission Members present at the meeting<sup>18</sup> that the City Planner was not interested in the problem of segregation-integration. His primary interest was the physical redevelopment of the city, and the city was in the midst of an extremely large downtown Urban Renewal project, which was receiving extensive publicity.<sup>19</sup> This downtown redevelopment was obviously his first concern. His attitude toward Commission members was extremely cavalier, condescending, and indicated his impatience with the consideration of the "human element" in planning.<sup>20</sup>

After the meeting the Chairman of the Housing Committee sent a letter, for the Housing Committee, to the City Planner stating that,

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<sup>18</sup>The writer was present at the meeting, and discussed the matter after the meeting with those who were present.

<sup>19</sup>The city had received its All-America award partly on the basis of this project.

<sup>20</sup>Minutes, Human Relations Commission Housing Committee, March 8, 1964. The writer at the time of the meeting perceived the City Planner as being cavalier and condescending in his presentation. This was confirmed by other committee members who after the meeting stated that they felt that the City Planner's presentation was insulting because of what they interpreted as his condescending and cavalier attitude. At a subsequent meeting the City Planner indicated that he was unalterably opposed to public housing. That he had seen it deteriorate back into slum housing and thought it a waste of money. He also said the renovation of the residential areas of Great Falls was too costly, and rather idealistic, and that it did not interest him.

We are hopeful that several public hearings might be scheduled in order to develop wide citizen interest and concern for improving the physical composition of the city. Several questions were raised, however, by members of the committee with respect to the redevelopment plan for the Parker Area.

1. The possible perpetuation of a segregated residential area will be greatly enhanced.

2. A vast relocation problem will be created because of the necessity of dislocating many non-white families. The restricted housing market will make relocation difficult.

3. The designation of this area for residential purposes rather than industrial use is also questioned.<sup>21</sup>

That same month, when the Housing Committee report of the meeting was given to the Human Relations Commission, the Great Falls Press ran a full page eight column headline about the meeting. The paper reported the Housing Committee Chairman stating that,

'...two members of his committee feared that only perpetuation of 'ghetto' conditions would result if the southeast area was made one of the first residential urban renewal programs...' and that '...committee questioned the City Planner on whether there were other areas of open land available for a housing program.'<sup>22</sup>

The paper then quoted one of the Housing Committee members as saying to the rest of the Commission that the views of these two members was an "obstructionist view." This statement brought lasting hard feelings between members of the Housing Committee.

The Big City Daily ran a large headline about the meeting that stated,

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<sup>21</sup>Letter dated March 19, 1963. Letter on file at Human Relations Commission.

<sup>22</sup>The Great Falls Press, March 23, 1963.

"Rights Group  
Opposes Big  
Renewal Plan"

and then stated in the content of the story the reservations some members of the Housing Committee had about the project.<sup>23</sup>

The Great Falls Press and the Big City Daily reports brought out into the open the disagreement on the Housing Committee, and on the Human Relations Commission.

The City Planner prior to his meeting with the Housing Committee of the Human Relations Commission had been meeting for several months with Urban League officials trying to convince them of the validity of his proposal. Members of other civil rights organizations saw this as an attempt by the City Planner to use the most conservatively oriented civil rights organization to gain support for his plans.<sup>24</sup> Members of the Housing Committee of the Human Relations Commission saw this as a personal affront. As an official city agency they thought he should have first discussed the matter with them.<sup>25</sup> Hence mutual suspicion began to develop between the City Planner and civil rights groups.

The Housing Committee of the Human Relations Commission then held a joint meeting with the members of the Housing Committee of the Urban League to discuss the proposed Parker

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<sup>23</sup>The Big City Daily, March 24, 1963.

<sup>24</sup>Notes from civil rights meetings.

<sup>25</sup>Discussions at Housing Committee meetings.



Area redevelopment plans. The two members of the Housing Committee of the Human Relations Commission opposed to the plan reiterated their opposition. The Urban League members stated that they had not made any commitments. It was then suggested that both committees refrain from making any recommendations until they had more information, and could receive recommendations from national authorities in the field of housing. This was agreed upon and the meeting was dismissed.

On April 2, 1963 the Housing Committee of the Human Relations Commission called a meeting of sixteen organizations that might have an interest in the civil rights aspects of the Parker Area. The City Planner and the Urban Renewal Director both appeared to present their proposal. The City Planner was under heavy attack most of the evening from proponents who made an emphasis on obtaining integrated housing through the use of urban renewal. He indicated his disdain for public housing and for any suggestion that would interfere with his Master Plan for the city. The Chairman of the Housing Committee of the Human Relations Commission indicated his disagreement with the City Planner's position on public housing. The same two members of the Housing Committee of the Human Relations Commission who had indicated their disagreement before again indicated their disagreement. The member of the Housing Committee of the Human Relations Commission who had referred to these two members as obstructionists again indicated his approval of the plan. He

indicated he was concerned about the inferior housing the people in the area were living in, and that he wanted them to have decent, safe, and sanitary housing now, and not have to wait until the problem of segregated housing was solved. He stated that he was as concerned as anyone about "open-occupancy" for the city but that that problem should not have to be solved before we could start eliminating our slums. These remarks brought forth, after the meeting, a considerable amount of disparaging remarks from the NAACP and CORE members present, who referred to him as well-meaning but naive, sincere but gullible, etc.

The NAACP leaders indicated a few days after the meeting that they could not support the proposed redevelopment in the Parker Area because it would tend to perpetuate a pattern of segregation. They accepted the position of the two Housing Committee members of the Human Relations Commission who considered that the area was not conducive to residential redevelopment, and that it would tend to perpetuate housing segregation.<sup>26</sup>

The Urban League Housing Committee meanwhile had voted in favor of the project and brought a favorable report to the Board of Directors. The favorable report was strongly attacked at the Board of Directors meeting by a Board member who also was a charter member of CORE, and who also was on the Executive Board of the NAACP, and who at this time

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<sup>26</sup>Minutes, NAACP Executive Board, April 1963.

constituted with his wife the essentially defunct CORE organization. He attacked the plan on the same grounds as the NAACP, that the area should not be redeveloped as residential and that the plan would tend to perpetuate the pattern of housing segregation. Also present as a Board member was the Chairman of the Housing Committee of the Human Relations Commission, who stated that he did not want to become involved in the debate because of his position on the Human Relations Commission, but that he wanted to clarify the City Planner's position in regard to the feasibility of redeveloping the area as residential. He then reiterated the City Planner's contention that by proper landscaping and the elimination of the taverns it would become a viable residential area. After more debate the Urban League Board of Directors voted in support of the proposed redevelopment.<sup>27</sup>

During the coffee hour after the meeting, the Board member who was also a member of CORE and the Executive Board of the NAACP, argued vociferously with other Board members, and accused some of the white Board members of not understanding Negroes, and of not understanding the current civil rights emphasis in the nation.<sup>28</sup> This charge effectively eliminated any further communication between those white Board members and him, to such an extent in fact

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<sup>27</sup>Minutes, Urban League Board of Directors, May 9, 1963.

<sup>28</sup>Notes taken at Urban League Board of Directors meeting May 9, 1963.

that some were so embittered over his charges that after the meeting they restricted their activities in the civil rights movement. One of the white members, a man who had been extremely active in the civil rights movement, and who had taken a lot of abuse because of his work, later stated to the writer that,

I'm utterly and completely frustrated with civil rights work. There is no grass-roots coordination. The NAACP is suspicious of the Urban League and the Urban League of CORE. Plunger (Pres. of the NAACP) doesn't talk to Paul (Ex. Secretary of the Urban League) and Paul doesn't talk with Martin (CORE member). The churches...aren't involved by the civil rights groups except when the civil rights groups want to 'use them', or use them as a scapegoat.<sup>29</sup>

It was becoming obvious to civil rights workers that there was increasing bitterness developing between and within the civil rights groups because of the Parker Area redevelopment plans.

The Housing Committee members of the Human Relations Commission at this time had not yet reached a decision, but had soon to do so. Before they reached a decision, however, the president of the PTA in the Parker area issued a strong statement in support of the redevelopment. Her statement said in part that,

...we want new homes and better housing right here in the Parker Area. We would like assistance given to those whose homes are in better condition, to make further improvements on them. We do not want to be relocated in a place of someone else's choosing. Our reasons are sound.

We have a lovely new school with a wonderful Principal and staff of teachers and we have a fine fellowship here

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<sup>29</sup>Personal interview, Summer 1964.

with them. There is an equipped playground, swimming pool and park here for everyone's use. These are all essential and necessary to any worthwhile community. We need new homes desperately...

I definitely upset a few of the participants at this meeting (referring here to the combined civil rights meeting on Parker Area of April 2, 1963) because I spoke out for our cause here. I am not ashamed, nor do I see any need to hide the fact that I want to remain in this area even after it is redeveloped. This can be made into just as fine a community as the best in our country. Too long, we have been judged by the homes in which we live. We have people living here who participate in Civic Affairs...Many of us want integration, but not at the expense of moving from here and buying another old house and beginning the same pattern all over again.

Since we have something on which to build, our lovely school, park, swimming pool, etc., plan the housing around this center of attraction and not only will it attract those in this area to live here but it will certainly get the attention of those in other areas...<sup>30</sup>

This statement received wide publicity and was sent to Robert Weaver in Washington by a regional official of FHA as an illustration of grass-roots indigenous leadership. It was also the deciding factor in the vote of the Housing Committee of the Human Relations Commission. The Housing Committee of the Human Relations Commission was split 2-2 in regard to the project, with the fifth person voting in favor of the project because of the impact of the PTA president's report. His rationale was that the area was obviously going to remain residential, that even if this area was redeveloped at a later date it still would be a segregated area, and that if the people in the area were as in favor of the project as indicated by the recently issued statement that it was time to go to work and renovate the area.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup>Mimeographed report of Mrs. Carrie Houser, President, Parker Park P.T.A., April 2, 1963.

<sup>31</sup>Minutes, Human Relations Commission Housing Committee, May 17, 1963.

On May 23, 1963 the Housing Committee Chairman gave a favorable report to the Human Relations Commission. The two members of the Housing Committee who had opposed the proposal asked for the favorable motion to be tabled on the basis of a need for more time to study the proposal. They stated that every Commission member before voting should read the recommendations of national experts in regard to the proposed urban renewal project. The Commission then voted in favor of tabling the motion until the next meeting of the Commission.<sup>32</sup>

The next day the Big City Daily ran a three column headline stating that,

"G F Racial Unit  
Delays Slum Action"

and the Great Falls Press carried the story under an eight column headline about the meeting.<sup>33</sup>

It was becoming known to informed citizens by this time, due to the amount of publicity, that there was a serious disagreement between two city agencies, the Human Relations Commission and the City Planning Commission. This situation highly irritated the City Manager who was caught in the squeeze. Housing Committee members had met with him previously in which he told them in no uncertain terms that he did not think that they were cooperating and that he did

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<sup>32</sup>Minutes, Human Relations Commission, May 23, 1963.

<sup>33</sup>The Big City Daily, May 24, 1963, The Great Falls Press, May 24, 1963.

not appreciate their interference.<sup>34</sup> He appeared two years later before the entire Human Relations Commission and indicated his dissatisfaction and stated then that,

...he did not want to see any impediments to the implementation and speedy progress of the Urban Renewal program.<sup>35</sup>

The amount of antagonism at this point within and between civil rights organizations was intense. Opponents to the plan were being vilified as "fanatics", "ranting maniacs", "trouble makers", "obstructionists", and as having a concern only with achieving integration, but as having no concern for those who really need help in getting the basic necessities of life. Those who favored the plan were considered "naive", sincere but "misguided", "black segregationists", and as having more concern with improving life within the ghetto than in eliminating the ghetto. At this time the Urban League had come out in favor of the plan,

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<sup>34</sup>Minutes, Human Relations Commission Housing Committee, May 18, 1962. The Housing Committee had met with the City Manager to give him a list of complaints which he considered to be interference. They complained that:

- a. The Urban Renewal Advisory Sub-Committee was not truly representative of the community.
- b. There was not adequate minority representative on the Urban Renewal Advisory Sub-Committee.
- c. The two members of the Housing Committee on the Sub-Committee were just observers and did not have a vote.
- d. The Housing Committee had not shared in site location but was presented with a fait accompli by the Urban Renewal Director although it was acting as his advisory committee on minority group problems.
- e. The Housing Committee had difficulty arranging conferences with the Urban Renewal Director and the City Planner.
- f. The Housing Committee had been improperly "used" in the recertification for the Workable Program.

<sup>35</sup>Minutes, Human Relations Commission, April 23, 1964.

the NAACP and CORE had opposed it, and the Human Relations Commission was caught in the "cross-fire". Although the other groups had come out in support of, or in opposition to, the project, they had not done so without creating bitterness within their organization. (See above.) Part of the difficulty here was that the goals of the various organizations were not clearly understood by the members. The vast majority of members of all the organizations would state vaguely, when asked what the goal of their organization was, that it was opposed to discrimination and was established so that every American would be judged on his personal merit.

#### GOAL CONFUSION AMONG CIVIL RIGHTS GROUPS

An observant participant in civil rights activity becomes aware that the members of the civil rights organizations bring with them their own social perspective forged in part from their accumulated life experiences, their own socioeconomic position in society, their religious orientation, their personality needs. There were, then, many different reasons why persons were active in the various civil rights organizations, and they themselves had difficulty articulating what the goals of the organizations explicitly were. When queried, most members would answer in terms of the broadest vague generalities, or in terms of a very specific goal<sup>36</sup> that

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<sup>36</sup>The specific terms "assimilation", "melting-pot", "cultural pluralism" were used by only three persons of all those interviewed.



was meaningful at that time. Very rarely would one hear an answer that indicated insight into the major goals as debated historically in America in regard to the ideas of "assimilation", the "melting pot", or "cultural pluralism". A finding that is similar to Milton Gordon's who interviewed the national leaders of intergroup agencies and writes,

In these interviews my principle objective was to find out how much thought and consideration had been given by these agencies to problems of social structure, theories and models of 'assimilation', 'integration', and 'group life', and long -range goals of social structure in the U.S. I discovered that the vast majority of these agencies (nearly three-fourths) had given little or no attention to these problems. That is, they have no clearly articulated set of principles and observations which; a) describes adequately the nature of group and communal life in America, b) sets up the desired or preferred (in terms of the group's own philosophy) structural goals with respect to communal life in this country, and in any kind of sociologically sophisticated fashion, and c) considers in depth and richness of articulation the implications of such a preferred theory of social structural goals for the various facets of their own program.<sup>37</sup>

This is no minor problem, because one would expect that a member of a civil rights organization would attempt to achieve that goal he desires in regard to a multi-racial American society, and that to a certain extent his "means", (method of operation) would be dictated by the goal that he wants to see achieved. This is also important because if members of the different civil rights organizations have clearly defined separate goals for a multi-racial American society, then obviously at some point in time the civil

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<sup>37</sup>Milton Gordon, Assimilation in American Life, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964) p. 10.

rights organizations are going to come into conflict with each other, or one or the other will have to change its goals. This would of course also be true of individuals. Different individuals holding different goals within the same civil rights organization will eventually come into conflict with each other, or one or both will have to modify their views. Not only is this true among members of the civil rights organizations but also true of the members of the general community, both Negro and white. Although most Negroes ostensibly are for an integrated society many Negroes who do live with and associate with whites are criticized for doing so. This was brought out rather forcefully at a public meeting sponsored by the Human Relations Commission, after the agreement with the Real Estate Board had been reached, and after the Housing Ordinance had been passed, and few Negroes had tried to move out of the ghetto area. The Chairman of the Housing Committee of the Human Relations Commission pleaded with those Negroes present to begin moving out of the ghetto area, and to take advantage of the opportunities that were now available, when the immediate past president of the NAACP stood up and stated,

I can tell you why more Negroes don't move out and that is because if they move out they are criticized by other Negroes for moving out. If you move out (he had done so) then you are told that you can't speak anymore for Negroes in the ghetto area because you don't live there. If you move out some say that you are disassociating yourself from the Negro community.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>Human Relations Commission public meeting, Patton Park Elementary School, April 29, 1965.

He had previously, in conversation with the writer, stated that he had been severely criticized for becoming a member of an all-white church. He had been accused then of dissociating himself from the Negro community, of being a "snob", and of just wanting to associate with "white folks". He stated that Negro ministers were especially angry with him and had told him so. One had stated, "If you 'fat cats' wouldn't move out we could afford bigger and nicer churches."

He was just articulating what many other Negroes complained about, and that was when they finally accomplished personally what they thought Negro Americans desired, an integrated society, they were severely criticized for doing so. A Negro pastor complained to the author that when he moved out of the ghetto and built a new house, in an all white area, he was severely criticized by many of his parishoners, and several families left his church.

A Negro educator who lived in the ghetto stated that he would not move out because if he did so he would lose effective communication with the Negro community because he would no longer be trusted, that they would think he no longer wanted to associate with them.

A very prominent Negro member of the Human Relations Commission who belonged to numerous, primarily white, organizations, and who had risen to state and national prominence in them, was severely criticized for associating primarily with white people. Although she had as "militant" an

attitude as any Negro in the city, and certainly more "militant" than any on the Human Relations Commission, she was constantly criticized as not being able to speak for the Negro because she "doesn't associate with us."<sup>39</sup>

In interviewing the active members of the civil rights organizations the interviewer found time and time again that the members, when asked what they considered the ideal pattern of interracial behavior to be, that they had to pause, and usually could not articulate an extended reply. An attorney and long time member of the Urban League Board of Directors paused for an extended period and finally stated,

Boy, that really is getting back to basics, you know I really haven't given that much thought.<sup>40</sup>

As a result of this inability to articulate the purpose of their organizations, when complex issues came up, consensus was difficult to obtain and members became very suspicious of each other.

It was in this type of social milieu then that the Human Relations Commission had to make a decision on the Parker Area. Before the meeting in which the decision had to be made the Executive Director had sent copies of opinions from national experts to all Commission members. At the meeting the Chairman of the Housing Committee recommended a favorable vote for the Parker Area redevelopment if three

<sup>39</sup>This was brought out by several persons during their interviews but it was also a common point of discussion whenever this person's name was mentioned in regard to her civil rights activities.

<sup>40</sup>Personal interview, Summer 1964.

requirements were met. First, that there be strict enforcement of building and occupancy codes in the area. Secondly, that all the resources of the city be used to see to it that relocation of any displaced persons would be on a non-discriminatory basis. Thirdly, that if research would indicate the necessity, because of a large number of low income people, that public housing would be considered for the city.<sup>41</sup> The Executive Director then warned that the planning department and City Commission "are waiting for an answer from this group."

The two members of the Housing Committee who had opposed the plan from the beginning then proposed that other areas be included in the plan and that the plan not just be limited to the Parker Area. A former Human Relations Commission Chairman described that proposal as too idealistic, and cautioned that "we must make a decision to start in one place." He then added that, "Instead of making the Commission a debating society, let's get started." The Commission then voted in favor of the redevelopment plans.

The proposed Parker Area redevelopment plans left lasting scars in the community. Two years later the plan was still being debated and argued, and if anything bitterness had increased.

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<sup>41</sup>Minutes, Human Relations Commission, June 27, 1963.

TRADITIONAL ANTAGONISMS WITHIN AND BETWEEN  
THE CIVIL RIGHTS GROUPS

The bitterness that had been created by the Parker Area redevelopment plan, and to a much lesser extent by the Filter-Sneed development, was certainly not new to Great Falls. It was the type of disagreement that had occurred frequently in the city. Numerous other projects had been proposed for the ghetto area which the NAACP had opposed because it would be essentially an all Negro project. The stand of the NAACP had been consistent over time, it opposed all projects that would not be integrated. The stand of the Urban League also had been consistent, it supported projects that would tend to alleviate the conditions found in the ghetto area even if it meant that the project would consist primarily of Negroes. The Human Relations Commission usually acted as a buffer between the two groups.<sup>42</sup> CORE was too recently an organized group to make its position known, but its action indicated a position similar to the NAACP. Although the various organizations had made consistent stands on the proposed projects this does not mean that it was a stand arrived at by consensus within the group. Within each group there was considerable disagreement over the position

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<sup>42</sup>It had not opposed the Filter-Sneed development as had the NAACP, however, it did not strongly endorse it either, and attempted to make certain that it would be an integrated project. It had supported the Parker Area redevelopment but then only with the caveates referred to above.

taken by the organization. Some of the members of the NAACP were especially angry over the adamant refusal of the President to take any compromising position. Plunger's stand, however, was consistent over time: he was opposed to any project that tended to be segregated. Either it would be an integrated project or he would oppose it. Plunger was well aware of the criticism this stand produced and stated in an interview that,

I have an Executive Board half of who never come to meetings, and others who wouldn't take a firm stand if their life depended on it.<sup>43</sup>

As a result Plunger was attacked by practically everyone but his own disciples in his own organization. As stated above, he was attacked even by some of his own Executive Board members. One Executive Board member stated in reference to the technique used by the local NAACP in regard to obtaining equal rights that,

The method is to be not tactful at all. The method is to make a lot of noise...<sup>44</sup>

Another Executive Board member stated that,

...in the Filter-Sneed area the NAACP leadership should have taken a more realistic stand. What Plunger said was detrimental to Filter-Sneed.<sup>45</sup>

Another Executive Board member was so embittered that he refused for a time to come to any more Executive Board meetings.

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<sup>43</sup>Personal interview, Summer 1964.

<sup>44</sup>Personal interview, Summer 1964.

<sup>45</sup>Personal interview, Summer 1964.

The few voices on the Executive Board who were critical were slight in comparison to the unanimous condemnation of the local NAACP by members of other civil rights groups. Interestingly almost everyone agreed that nationally the NAACP was doing a good job.<sup>46</sup> They also usually stated that Great Falls needed a local NAACP, but then they would vehemently denounce Plunger as being too aggressive, of not being tactful, of refusing to compromise, of being more interested in obtaining personal publicity etc. Plunger, however, on almost every stand publicly taken in Great Falls was taking a stand that was consistent with NAACP policy from its inception in 1910. Plunger was no more aggressive or less willing to compromise than the early DuBois or the later Wilkens. Plunger himself had insight into the problem when he told a college audience that the NAACP is not a human relations organization but is primarily a civil rights organization. His point was that it was not the purpose of the NAACP to reduce racial tensions as much as it was to obtain equal rights, and that it therefore could not bother about whether or not people liked the organization. Its purpose was to see to it that the rights were obtained. His conclusion was that the Urban League and more specifically the Human Relations Commission should be concerned with reducing tension through mediation, conciliation, education, etc. It was probably just that, his

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<sup>46</sup>Of all the persons interviewed no one attacked the national NAACP.



refusal to try to reduce tension by compromise, which angered so many people on the Human Relations Commission and on the Urban League Board of Directors.

Eight of the members of the Human Relations Commission explicitly condemned the local NAACP when asked to evaluate its effectiveness, while six defended it as being a competent, viable local organization. The rest were neither complimentary nor condemnatory. It should be added that these statistics are more meaningful when it is observed that of the six who defended the local NAACP chapter, four were present or past members of the Executive Board of the local chapter.

Some of the Human Relations Commission members were scathing in their condemnation. One member, a professional man and long time Human Relations Commission member, stated that he saw the NAACP as,

A disorganized group that has no leadership. I can't see that it has accomplished anything or championed anything worthwhile. They are semi-irresponsible. They have no influence that I can see on anybody. I think it tends to perpetuate segregation rather than break it down. It emphasizes the Negro as Negro and not as a citizen. Sort of a rallying point for the disgruntled. I can't see that it has taken any forceful steps to break down discrimination...I can't think of a single concrete program that it adopted and carried through.<sup>47</sup>

Another member stated that,

I don't know them except Plunger...He doesn't represent the colored people I know in the colored race. The colored people I know don't have much use for Plunger.

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<sup>47</sup>Personal interview, Summer 1964.

Certain groups want to perpetuate these practices for their own private gain. I don't like the NAACP.<sup>48</sup>

Sitting on the same Human Relations Commission with these two men were, as stated above, four present or past members of the Executive Board of the NAACP one who stated that,

The NAACP is in the forefront of the civil rights movement. They are in the vanguard and propose the most advanced solutions to the problems and work militantly through the use of public meetings and through letters to the press. I think that without their being the spearhead the program would be very much slower than it is. We need them here in Great Falls to be the spearhead.<sup>49</sup>

It was that contrasting type of thinking on the Human Relations Commission that created the furor over the Parker Area, and in the past over other issue areas. It was a contrasting emphasis that was also present on the Urban League Board of Directors, and also in CORE, as will be further explained in the next chapter.

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<sup>48</sup>Personal interview, Summer 1964.

<sup>49</sup>Personal interview, Summer 1964.

## CHAPTER VII

### ANALYSIS OF DATA

#### INTRODUCTION

The hypothesis of this study was that social change in interracial behavior in the United States does not take place without conflict or the threat of conflict and that if one is to understand the changing relationship occurring between the dominant white group and the Negro minority, one must understand the power struggle that is going on between the two groups. The members of the one group, the white, struggling to maintain their advantages, licit and illicit,<sup>1</sup> and members of the other, the Negro, striving to acquire what they consider rightfully belongs to them as citizens of the United States. For the Negro it was, in mid-century America, no longer a question of hoping to obtain changes by the gradual strain toward consistency of a self-modifying equilibrium system. There was little hope that simply an appeal to a consensus of values centered about the Judeo-Christian tradition would give them the gains they desired. As Ray Mack wrote,

...They found that American society refused to play by its own rules. We refused to pay off rewards to winners in the mobility sweepstakes if they were Negro. Moreover we meted out punishments to non-losers for being Negro, and, worst of all, punished rather than rewarded insistent competitors.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See Chapter I, p. 20.

<sup>2</sup>Ray Mack, "Components of Social Conflict," Social Problems, Summer 1965, page 396. The documentation for the

The Negro in mid-twentieth century America seemed to be rapidly moving away from an attempted accomodation with American society in terms dictated by the white majority. Thursday, December 1, 1955, probably marks the beginning of the era of direct action when Mrs. Rosa Parks of Montgomery refused to give her seat on a bus to a white person, and the Montgomery Boycott began, ending in the Negroes' right to a seat anywhere on the bus.<sup>3</sup> From this point on the American Negro took to the streets, the beaches, the parks, and began to sit-in, wade-in, kneel-in, and began an obvious power struggle with the existing power structure, both Negro and white.<sup>4</sup>

Some would point to the May 17, 1954, decision by the Supreme Court declaring segregated education unconstitutional

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statement by Mack is extremely long although he did not list it. See, e.g., Eli Ginzberg, The Negro Potential (New York: Columbia U. Press, 1956); R. M. MacIver, Discrimination and National Welfare (New York: Harper and Row, 1949); Gunnar Myrdal, An American Dilemma (New York: Harper and Row, 1949); C. Vann Woodward, The Strange Career of Jim Crow (Rev. Ed.) (N.Y.:Oxford Univ. Press, 1961); Wallace Mendelson, Discrimination (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1962); Charles S. Johnson, Patterns of Negro Segregation (N.Y.: Harper, 1943); Bertram W. Doyle, The Etiquette of Race Relations in the South, (Chicago:U. of Chicago Press, 1937); Allison Davis, et. al, Deep South (Chicago; U. of Chicago Press, 1941).

<sup>3</sup>Leonard Broom and Norval Glenn, Transformation of the Negro American (New York: Harper Row, 1965) p. 65.

<sup>4</sup>It was not just the white establishment that was being attacked but also elements of the Negro establishment, and hence the use of the epithat "Uncle Tom", and hence also a warning that the days of accommodation on terms dictated by the Southern oligarchy were over.

as the turning point in the Negro's attempt to obtain equal rights. This was a decision reached through the legal processes provided by society. It was a decision that did not require a resort to any direct action technique. It was also a decision, however, that was not being accepted in the South, a decision that the "white establishment", in the South ignored.<sup>5</sup> At this point it was the white person who broke the rules of society. As Mack has stated,

Contrary to what one might believe from reading many current editorials, it was whites, not Negroes, who initiated conflict. That is, it was whites who violated the rules of the competition for status and its rewards in the United States. As a result, American Negroes joined the conflict...<sup>6</sup>

In fact, extrapolating into the future the rate of school desegregation it would have taken well over a hundred years for the Deep South to desegregate its school system.<sup>7</sup> If one then would relate that pattern to the areas of employment, political rights, recreational opportunities, etc, the

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<sup>5</sup>At the time of Rosa Parks refusal to give her seat no schools had been desegregated in the Deep South and at the time of the massive demonstrations in 1962 and 1963 hardly any schools were desegregated in the Deep South. "In the eleven former Confederate states, a very small percentag of Negro pupils attended classes with whites in the fall of 1964--about 2.1 percent, or about 84,000 in a total of nearly 3 million Negro pupils in the public schools." Broom and Glenn, op. cit., p. 96.

<sup>6</sup>Mack, op. cit., p. 396.

<sup>7</sup>From Broom and Glenn, op. cit., "At the rate schools in the eleven Southern states were desegregated during the first decade after the decision, it would be more than 500 years before all Negro pupils would be attending desegregated schools." p. 98.

situation hardly is one that would have been resolved within the life time of a persons' grandchildren. This is not meant in anyway to denigrate the importance of the Supreme Court's decision of 1954, certainly one of the most important and historic ever made by the Supreme Court. It gave legitimacy to the Negro's hope for equality under the law. However, subsequent events proved that the decision and its concomitant ramifications had to be resolved by conflict through the use of power. By 1960 Negroes realized, if not always their leaders, that court decisions alone would not be adequate for them to obtain what they considered to be their rights. Numerous studies coming out of the Deep South indicated that it was only in a conflict situation that basic changes began to take place.<sup>8</sup>

Wilson and June Record write that:

...colored groups resorted to direct action only when judicial and political approaches ground to a halt before Southern recalcitrance. Negroes took to the streets when the white community defied the Supreme Court, just as did labor unions when the business community defied the National Relations Board. The sit-ins have antecedents in labor's sit-down strikes...and in feminist leaders chained to a pillar of the hall of justice.<sup>9</sup>

James Laue in examining the data in regard to race relations coming out of the South writes that,

The major generalization deriving from these data is that in virtually every case of desegregation in the

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<sup>8</sup>The studies of Burgess, Thompson, Killian, and Grigg were referred to above. With Killian and Grigg explicitly postulating a conflict model.

<sup>9</sup>Wilson Record and June Record, "Ideological Forces and the Negro Protest", The Annals, Vol. 357, Jan. 65, p. 95.

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United States, change has come only after the development of a crisis situation which demanded rapid resolution by a community's leadership structure.

This Crisis-Change model provides the framework for understanding...the desegregation process. A crisis arises whenever a significant number of elements in the social structure deviate from expected patterns enough to threaten the system in equilibrium.<sup>10</sup>

Not only in the South but also in the large cities in the North the same emphasis can be found. Change in interracial behavior has come about through the resolution of crisis situations brought about by conflict. Above, the works of Wilson, Marrow, and Clark were referred to in regard to Chicago and New York. Broom and Glenn illustrate the effectiveness of well planned and executed "conflict" by citing Philadelphia where,

...400 Negro ministers organized the 'Selective Patronage Movement' and through a series of successful boycotts forced firms to hire more Negroes. In the first year, the boycott was used against a dozen big companies including Sun Oil, Gulf Oil, Tasty Baking, and Pepsi-Cola--and each yielded...About 600 Negroes were added to the payrolls of these companies, mainly on white-collar jobs.<sup>11</sup>

### Hypothesis I

The question raised at the beginning of this study was whether or not the conflict model could be used as an heuristic device in understanding change in interracial behavior, and therefore it was hypothesized that change in interracial behavior in the United States does not take

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<sup>10</sup>James H. Laue, "The Changing Character of the Negro Protest", The Annals, Jan. 1965, p. 125. Underlining added by writer.

<sup>11</sup>Broom and Glenn, op. cit., p. 69.



place without conflict or the threat of conflict. Studies from the South and from our large Northern cities, see Chapter One and immediately above, seem to confirm, or at least give support to this hypothesis. These studies, though, have left a hiatus in the literature as they are concerned either with the South or with large Northern cities. The specific attempt of this study was to determine the social dynamics of change in interracial behavior in a mid-western city of medium size, thereby adding another dimension to the already existing studies.

In attempting to determine these social dynamics the author used three techniques: participant observation, as he was a member of and participant in varying degrees in all of the civil rights organizations; interviews, on a focused open-ended basis with all of the participants in the civil rights organizations; and thirdly, a detailed and exhaustive examination of documentary materials.

It was pointed out in Chapter Five that important changes in the area of civil rights took place between 1961 and 1964 in Great Falls. Important changes in which many of the things desired by the civil rights groups were obtained, an agreement with the Real Estate Board, a Fair Housing Ordinance, more job opportunities, a public hearing by the Board of Education on de facto school segregation, and a social climate in which those in positions of authority were receptive to ideas in the area of civil rights. This change was of such dramatic impact that the City Commissioners

changed from a policy of viewing the Human Relations Commission as "deadwood", carried for the sake of form in which they reduced its financial support, to a situation in which they increased its financial support and asked "what do you want us to do?"

Why did this change occur? The writer indicated above (Chapter One) that change of a similar type occurred elsewhere in the nation because of crisis situations induced by conflict. The purpose of this study was to determine if change in interracial behavior in a medium-size mid-western American city was also the result of conflict. It was stated immediately above that important and drastic changes took place in Great Falls in the years under study. In Chapter Five the writer attempted chronologically to indicate the social dynamics present in the situations of change. It is our contention that the data in Chapter Five indicate that in every instance of change there was present the factor of conflict. Certainly the most dramatic instance of this is the change in perspective of the Great Falls Real Estate Board. Of all organizations with which the Human Relations Commission had to deal, the Real Estate Board was the most recalcitrant. They not only would not reach an agreement on a policy statement but would not even meet to discuss the problem. At that point three elements were added to the situation. First of all a local CORE group staged "look-ins", picketings, and TV appearances on which the Real Estate Board was vehemently attacked. Secondly a

"bomber" threw bombs through the windows of local Realtors. Thirdly the local Human Relations Commission began to publicize the problem of segregated housing and the explosive conditions thus produced, and its willingness to help mediate and resolve the problem. Within six months of these developments the local Real Estate Board signed one of the most far reaching agreements on housing in the nation. As was pointed out in Chapter Five, this agreement was reached and signed by Realtors even though they never at any time indicated any change in their basic perspective of what their role in the community should be. It was to all intents and purposes a "marriage of convenience." It served that purpose well. After signing the agreement all the pressure in regard to open occupancy was directed elsewhere and they have not been attacked publicly since, and they have probably gained more by it in psychological rewards of peace and security than civil rights groups have in actual housing gains.

This does not necessarily mean that the civil rights organizations won only a Pyrrhic victory. It probably does mean that the civil rights organizations overestimated the eagerness and willingness with which Negroes viewed the possibility of moving out of the ghetto. The civil rights organizations viewed the problem of the ghetto up to this time in a too simplistic perspective. Their emphasis was almost entirely on removing the barriers that the white community erected to retain Negroes in the ghetto. When the

barriers were partially removed, it became evident that Negroes were not waiting in line to move out. Hence one of the unforeseen consequences of the agreement between the Real Estate Board and the civil rights organizations was the discovery of the amount of apathy present in the Negro community in regard to housing opportunities. The point here is that the agreement seemingly was the result of a power struggle in which the Board of Realtors thought it had more to gain by signing than not signing, and hence did so, regardless of its ideological position.<sup>12</sup> It signed in effect (see Chapter Five) to avoid further conflict with the civil rights elements in the community.

In regard to the Fair Housing Ordinance there was extreme skepticism among members of the Housing Committee of the Human Relations Commission prior to 1962 that the city would ever pass such an ordinance. Other cities had had difficulties in getting such an ordinance passed and Great Falls was considered to be a very conservative community. Not only was there skepticism among Human Relations Commission members but, as reported in Chapter Five, members of other civil rights organizations expected a brutal political battle to develop over the proposed ordinance. However, not only was the ordinance passed unanimously, but there was

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<sup>12</sup>By stating this the author is not accepting the view that ideology is simply epiphenomena. It is more than that, and he agrees with Max Weber that at times it has causal significance. However, this does not obviate the fact that men act at times at variance with their professed ideology for personal (either psychological or material) gain, and that this was one of those times.

practically no organized opposition to the ordinance. Most observers expected the opposition to the proposed ordinance to be led by the Real Estate Board. But the Real Estate Board more or less stayed out of the dispute and simply sent a letter to the public meeting opposing the ordinance. It was really just token, pro forma opposition. They did not even send a representative to the public hearing. This is in marked contrast to the hearing of the Corporation and Securities Commission in 1960, when the Real Estate Board had its attorney testify at great length on the right of Realtors to sell to whomever they pleased, without any government restrictions in regard to race. At that time the Real Estate Board sponsored full page advertisements opposing Rule 9. Now, at the time of the public hearing on the Fair Housing Ordinance, there were no advertisements of any kind in opposition to the proposed Fair Housing Ordinance. The important variable that changed between 1960 and 1963 was the tremendously increased militancy of Negroes. Not only had the Real Estate Board experienced first hand that militancy, but the mass media in 1963 had one story after another about racial tension, violence, and crisis throughout the country. It should also be remembered that for the first time in years the Real Estate Board was no longer the target of civil rights groups, a situation that could quickly change if they exerted a lot of pressure to have the ordinance defeated. Hence, seemingly, the Real Estate Board, if not neutralized in the struggle over the

Fair Housing Ordinance, had its voice muted. This may also explain why other organizations and individuals did not come out publicly in opposition to the ordinance. Bouma in his study described the power of the Real Estate Board and how it was especially looked on to provide leadership in the area of real estate.<sup>13</sup> Traditionally it had tried to conserve what it considered to be real estate values and had done so effectively. It took the lead in opposing public housing in 1949, and had been successful in defeating it in a well financed and hard fought campaign. At that time it paid for numerous advertisements opposing public housing.<sup>14</sup> It had gone through the same procedure in regard to the Gubow<sup>15</sup> hearing on Rule 9. Hence one would have expected that in regard to the opposition to the Fair Housing Ordinance it again would lead the opposition. It did not, and at that point public opposition was effectively stilled. There is, as stated above, no evidence that its reluctance to oppose the ordinance was because of a change in value perspective or change in ideological orientation. On ideological grounds they still held to their old position, as their letter to the City Commission's Ordinance Committee indicated. Pragmatically, however, with an aroused militant minority watching their moves, their

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<sup>13</sup>See Chapter Five, pp. 120-126

<sup>14</sup>Donald Bouma, An Analysis of the Social Power Position of the Real Estate Board in Great Falls, Great Lakes State, unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Michigan State University, 1952.

<sup>15</sup>See Chapter Five, p. 126.

social situation was quite different from what it was when they opposed public housing and Rule 9. An important point here is that the changed social situation resulted in a different pattern of behavior on the part of the Real Estate Board. There was no simple relationship between ideology and the behavior. Intervening between the ideological commitment and the behavior was the pattern of social interaction in the community. A shift in power arrangements had taken place, and as a result the Real Estate Board changed its behavior, although its value commitment remained unchanged. This would tend to give support to those sociologists who assert that there is no simplistic relationship between prejudice and behavior, that prejudice does not necessarily lead to discrimination, nor the lack of prejudice to an absence of discrimination.

During this period of time the other issue areas in civil rights, employment and education, were somewhat dormant. As was explained in Chapter Five the primary consideration of the civil rights organizations, their major emphasis, and most of their work in regard to social change went into the area of housing considerations. It was the one crucially important area in which there had been no indications of amelioration occurring. This is not to mean the other areas were completely ignored. They were not. In the area of employment the major emphasis by the group

primarily concerned, the Urban League, was using an explicitly conflict approach (see Chapter Five) and it seemed to be obtaining results, as they had more jobs than qualified young adults. The problem of the unskilled unemployed young adult was partly solved by the Executive Director of the Human Relations Commission when he threatened, at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, that if these unemployed young adults were not kept off of the streets that crime would drastically increase. As an immediate result, 100 job openings were obtained.<sup>16</sup>

It must be remembered that while there was this specific pressure, in specific instances, at specific times, and in specific ways which seemed to precipitate change, there was also at this time the generally militant mood of Negroes throughout the country. Civil rights was a major theme of the mass media, appearing constantly on the front pages of the newspapers, in large time segments of TV news broadcasts, and cited constantly on the radio. If Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat to a white person because of the "zietgist", it should have been quite apparent to any white person in 1962 and 1963, that part of the "zietgist" was a national militancy on the part of Negroes that demanded action, not words. The time of "talk, talk, talk," as Mrs. Martin had stated, was past.

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<sup>16</sup>See Chapter Five, p. 165.



Conflict, of course, does not exist in a vacuum. It certainly is not unimportant how the moral guardians of the community view the participants in the conflict. This is not to say that how the moral guardians view the participants will in and of itself determine the outcome of the conflict. It is just to say that it is a variable that must be considered, because it does have an impact on the outcome of the conflict. Probably no one who is knowledgeable in the civil rights field would deny that the Civil Rights Act of 1964 would not have been passed without the massive civil rights demonstrations in the South. Yet most civil rights leaders also give credit to the religious institutions who lobbied diligently for the passing of the act. Up to the time of the passing of the act every major religious denomination, except the Southern Baptist, had declared segregation to be morally indefensible. Not that these pronouncements per se would have led to important changes in interracial behavior, the essence of this thesis is that they would not. The point seems to be, though, that it does aid a participant in a conflict situation to have the moral sentiments of the community on his side. In Great Falls at the time of the conflict over housing, time and again the religious leaders had stated vehemently and explicitly that segregated housing was immoral.

At the time of the controversy over Filter-Sneed and the Fair Housing Ordinance, the clergy came out with strong statements favoring an integrated community. In regard to

the Fair Housing Ordinance the clergy made positive pronouncements at the public hearing.

A local religious leader squared off against the National Association of Real Estate Boards...' Persons who advance and uphold the doctrine of absolute property rights, such as realtors, salesmen or property owners are in serious error', declared Msgr. Puller, one of three vicar generals of the Great Falls Catholic diocese.

He described the doctrine of absolute property rights 'a form of individual absolutism which can and does militate against the common welfare of a sound society.'<sup>17</sup>

Just before the public meeting on the Fair Housing Ordinance the Great Falls Ministerial Association issued a statement supporting the ordinance. On December 10, the Great Falls Press ran a three column headline stating that

"Ask Fair Code  
Ministers Urge City Lift  
Housing Barriers".

In the content of the story it stated that,

Support for a Fair Housing Ordinance in Great Falls was proposed Monday afternoon by the Great Falls Ministerial Association in a resolution addressed to the City Commission.

The 65 Protestant ministers asked the Commission to approve the proposed city ordinance because of what it called 'denial of the same freedom of occupancy afforded the majority in Great Falls. We believe the proposed ordinance to be one small, but important, step toward making justice a more visible reality in our community.'<sup>18</sup>

When the City Attorney ruled against the ordinance the Great Falls Ministerial Association again issued a statement,

Canon Peter Greateon of St. Paul's Cathedral, president of the Great Falls Ministerial Association stated,

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<sup>17</sup>The Great Falls Press, Dec. 12, 1962.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., Dec. 10, 1962.

'I think it would be a great shame if the City Commission made a decision on the basis of momentary confusion. The various groups, and minority groups in particular, would misunderstand completely the action of the City Commission if it votes against the proposed ordinance because of this last minute furor...its too late for that. The ordinance itself is the large cause,' he said, 'It's too bad it is being made somewhat of a political football. And it should be noted by the City Commissioners that this is exactly the way their present consternation is being interpreted.'

Commenting on the interest minority groups have in the code, he added, '...in view of the enthusiasm these people now have, to throw cold water on it now would make it hard to guarantee harmony.'<sup>19</sup>

The clergy had come out just as strong in their support of the Negro developers of the Filter-Sneed area. The religious editor of the Great Falls Press had as a feature story the attitude of the religious community toward the controversy. The content of the story stated that,

Strong words were said by the Rt. Rev. Mark Puller, pastor at St. John's Roman Catholic Cathedral and representative of the Most Rev. Rodger Cluck, bishop of Great Falls in presenting the church's position in minority rights.

He called it 'morally untenable' to deny equal opportunity for housing to anyone because of race, color, creed or national origin.

Anyone causing such a discrimination or cooperating in the act, is liable in the Divine Tribunal to something no less than sin', he said.

'The guilt for such crimes and immoralities as result from segregation and overcrowding, must be shared by the consciences of those who are responsible,' he concluded.

The Rt. Rev. Todd Benton, bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Great Lakes State,...implied that those who are worried over a drop in property values ought to be more concerned over moral obligations... 'Methodists have taken a stand through their General Conference that housing should be open in any area regardless of race or creed.' the Rev. Kenneth Avis, Great Falls district superintendent said. 'And certainly we stand behind Dr. Joe Frankfurter and his associates in this project,' he said.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>The Great Falls Press, Dec. 13, 1963.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., Jan. 12, 1963.

The moral guardians of the community gave more than just lip service to the cause of open occupancy. Hill St. Church in Great Falls gave \$500 to the Human Relations Commission to help defray the expense of obtaining the advice of Morris Milgram. A year later one of the local denominations (Congregational) gave financial support to the Negro developers of Filter-Sneed.<sup>21</sup>

It should also again be added that the denominational statements on a national level were strongly in support of integration policies. Again the point here is not that these statements in and of themselves would have caused important changes. There is no evidence that they would have caused important changes. Neither is there evidence that the numerous individual ministers and priests were reiterating these statements to their parishoners. It does mean, however, that those attempting to bring about change were advocating policies that received at least the public endorsement of the moral guardians of the community. If the public policies of the religious institutions were opposed to the proposed change, change probably would have been more difficult to obtain. An illustration of that situation is found in many Southern communities where the local white religious leaders give public legitimacy to the status quo, but where change is nevertheless occurring, but

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<sup>21</sup>The Great Falls Press, Dec. 11, 1963.

where the conflict is much more bitter and intense. By having the public pronouncements of the religious leaders favoring their goals, the factor of legitimacy was thus obtained by the civil rights organizations. Hence, any person opposing these goals was in effect opposing the position taken by his church.

### Corollary I

It was stated previously above that if conflict is to be the dynamic agent in changing the pattern of interracial behavior that one would expect that it would be the Negro who would initiate the change and the white person who would attempt to maintain the status quo, because the white person gains from the status quo but the Negro loses from the status quo.<sup>22</sup> Hence a corollary to the hypothesis was stated that the dynamic agents in changing the pattern of interracial behavior would be Negro protest leaders and white defenders of the status quo.

Studies by Killian, Smith, Lomax, Grigg, Burgess and Thompson<sup>23</sup> seemed to indicate that, in the South at least, this was the pattern of behavior. The militant Negro struggled against the entrenched white establishment to change the status quo. As was stated above, the white

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<sup>22</sup>See Chapter One.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

person gains by maintaining the existing pattern of inter-racial behavior, and hence rationalizes his position as being morally right and the advocates of change therefore being morally wrong. As Henderson, in referring to the Southern situation, stated,

John Dollard's notion of social 'gains' that obtain from the expression of the race relations structure in the South is appropriate here. The existence of vested interests seems to become legitimized in terms of the operation of the value-system itself. Values, at least in part, serve as effective justification of the inequality of the allocation and distribution of societal resources which stems from the realization of varied interests of the several groups that make up the society, whatever their nature.<sup>24</sup>

Killian, Smith, Lomax, Grigg, Burgess, and Thompson,<sup>25</sup> all claimed that militant Negroes were taking over leadership positions. Thompson added the point that in New Orleans this militant Negro was not communicating with the white community because whites were being led by intransigent segregationists who refused to talk to militant Negroes. They, the white segregationists, would be willing to talk to the "Uncle Tom" Negro, but the "Uncle Tom" Negro could not communicate back to the Negro community because he was rejected by the Negro community. Negroes would communicate with liberal whites but these liberal whites usually did not have access to the white power structure, and hence

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<sup>24</sup>Donald Henderson, "Minority Response and the Conflict Model," Phylon, First Quarter, 1964.

<sup>25</sup>See Chapter One.

that Negro-white-liberal communication was not very meaningful. Thompson, therefore, saw a future struggle for power between the militant Negro leaders and the intransigent white segregationists,<sup>26</sup> a position with which, implicitly or explicitly, the above-mentioned authors all agree. Therefore, the corollary that dynamic agents in the changing pattern of interracial behavior would be Negro party protest leaders and white defenders of the status quo has some empirical support. The corollary, however, would have to be qualified in regard to the Great Falls situation. It was true that during the time span studied it was the white who defended the status quo. All of the City Commissioners were white. All of the members of the Great Falls Real Estate Board were white. All of the members of the Great Falls Chamber of Commerce except one were white. Almost all of the people owning property outside of the ghetto were white. It was not, however, true that all, or even most, of those who wanted change were Negro protest leaders. The two Chairmen of the Human Relations Commission during the time span of this study were white. The chairmen of all of the committees of the Human Relations Commission were white,<sup>27</sup> including the Chairman of the Legal and Civil

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<sup>26</sup> Thompson, Negro Leadership Class (Englewood: Spectrum Books, 1963).

<sup>27</sup> This was unusual as Negroes had been committee chairmen previously, and were after the time span of this study. The time span studied included a period when some of the Negro members who had been considered for committee chairman were too busy to accept that position.

Rights Committee and the Chairman of the Housing Committee, whose committees brought the Fair Housing Ordinance before the Commission. The person who first suggested that a sub-committee be appointed to study the feasibility of a Fair Housing Ordinance was white. The Fair Housing Ordinance received the unanimous support of the Human Relations Commission, the majority of whose members were white (sixteen of the twenty-one members). The President of the Urban League was white, as were most of the Board members of the Urban League (sixteen of twenty-seven active Board members). Five of the fourteen active CORE members were white. The Executive Board of the NAACP was dominated by Negroes, and most of the officers were Negroes. Hence one could not say that the protest leaders were all Negroes. Neither could it be said of Great Falls, as Thompson said of New Orleans, that the white liberals who were active could not effectively communicate with the leadership of the white community. During the period that the civil rights groups were attempting to arrive at an agreement with the Real Estate Board, the Chairman of the Human Relations Commission was a white person active in community affairs.<sup>28</sup> One white member of the Housing Committee at that time was a well known stockbroker who held numerous high offices in one of the largest religious denominations of the city (the Reformed

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<sup>28</sup>The Chairman at that time was extremely active in United Community Services activities and was a member of the State FEPC.



Church) and at the time of the study was President of the Board of Trustees of a denominational college in Great Lakes State. Another white member of the Housing Committee was the wife of a judge of the U.S. District Court of Appeals. Another white member of the Housing Committee was a Monsignor in the Roman Catholic Church who spoke for the Bishop on racial matters.

When the attempt was made to get the city to pass the Fair Housing Ordinance the Chairman of the Human Relations Commission at that time was a well known lawyer, whose law firm specialized in labor law, who was attorney for the Employers Association, and who personally spent most of his time representing businesses at labor negotiations. He was Republican and conservative in political philosophy. The Chairman of the Urban League Housing Committee at this time was white, a Republican, and a professor of history at one of the local colleges.

There were, during this time, numerous members of the Human Relations Commission and of the Urban League who were active in almost every important segment of the white society, and both the Human Relations Commission and the Urban League unanimously voted in favor of the Fair Housing Ordinance.

One reason for this activity of political conservatives might be that both the Republican and Democratic political parties in the country supported the Fair Housing Ordinance and both had liberal policies on race relations.<sup>29</sup> Hence

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<sup>29</sup>Both political parties supported Rule 9, the Fair



one could be a conservative Republican and still be active in obtaining legislation of the Fair Housing Ordinance type. In fact one of the above mentioned persons spent a great deal of time over lunch intelligently and vehemently defending Goldwater and the conservative political element in Great Lakes State, and at the same time supporting the new Great Lakes State Civil Rights Commission and the Fair Housing Ordinance. This particular person gave as intelligent a defense of the conservative cause in regard to social welfare methods and fiscal policy this writer has ever heard in private conversation, and yet indicated his complete endorsement of obtaining, through the legislative processes, equal opportunities for Negroes. The point here being that this person would be obviously acceptable at the most conservative business circles, and yet was strongly in favor of the Fair Housing Ordinance. It would also seem to indicate that general and facile statements about a "conservative" or "liberal" ideological position are not warranted. They at least are not warranted to the extent of imputing a rigid, fixed and immutable stance to a person in the area of race relations just because he is labeled as politically "conservative" or "liberal". This liberal stance on race relations of politically conservative individuals who had access to the white power structure, differs strikingly

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Housing Ordinance, and could be counted to testify in favor of legislation strengthening civil rights.

from the situation in New Orleans as described by Thompson. It was pointed out in Chapter One (pp. 21-22) that Thompson stated that communication between the white and Negro communities had ceased because the Negro "Uncle Tom" was rejected by the Negro community, but accepted by the white community, while the Negro militant was accepted by the Negro community, but rejected in the white community. Thompson also pointed out that the whites in New Orleans who were in contact with the white power structure were conservative in regard to race relations, and communicate only with Negro "Uncle Toms", while the white liberals who were in contact with the Negro militants were not accepted by, nor could communicate with, the white power structure. Therefore Thompson stated communication between the white and Negro communities broke down. The typology that Thompson discussed is quite inadequate for Great Falls. It was simply not the case that the white person in contact with the Negro militant did not have access to the white power structure. The Chairman of the Human Relations Commission was a political conservative who had entree into the white power structure, and yet had constant contact with Negro militants. The writer was himself present at luncheons in which the leaders of CORE and the NAACP discussed their perspective with the members of the white power structure (The President of the Chamber of Commerce, the Executive Director of the Employers Association, Real Estate Board members, etc.) and the whites reciprocated in kind.

In Great Falls Negro militants could, and did, communicate with members of the white power structure. A white person's perspective on race relations was irrelevant as to whether or not he was accepted by the white power structure. Hence communication between the races in Great Falls was quite different from that found in New Orleans, and Thompson's typology quite useless in understanding the Great Falls situation.

There were structural factors in the community which also help explain some of this activity by white conservatives in attempting to change the status quo in interracial behavior. Great Falls in contrast to New Orleans had a Human Relations Commission set up for the specific purpose of facilitating debate between various elements of the community. At the very beginning in Great Falls politically conservative members of the Great Falls community were put on the Human Relations Study Committee. Politically conservative whites have been active on the Human Relations Commission ever since. The same situation existed in the Urban League. Therefore the Human Relations Commission and the Urban League could function as mediating agencies where militant Negroes and white opponents could get together and communicate with each other. This functioned at times as a educational experience for the white members of the Human Relations Commission and the Urban League as they learned of the problems and needs in the Negro community. Since membership in either organization carried

prestige in the community whites were willing to accept membership. In a sense by accepting membership on the Human Relations Commission or the Urban League they were almost thereby co-opted into accepting a more militant stance toward the status quo, as both of the organizations had an emphasis on equality of opportunity in all spheres of life. It is doubtful that as many politically conservative whites would have been involved in attempting to change the status quo if it were not for the existence of these two organizations.

It would be fair therefore to say that in Great Falls the status quo in race relations was defended by whites. One could not, however, say that it was only the militant Negro who was asking for change in the status quo. As indicated above many of the persons active in civil rights organizations and holding important positions in those organizations were whites, and some of these whites could not be classified as political liberals, in fact some were conservative in political ideology. Some of these conservatives undoubtedly served as a bridge between the militants asking for change and the whites resisting change. The Chairman of the Human Relations Commission at the time of the pressure for the Fair Housing Ordinance was in constant contact with both militants and resisters, and kept communication flowing between the two groups, and seemed especially effective in communicating to the resisters,<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>See Chapter Four.

that the time for change was now, or that there would be demonstrations. Whatever gains the white community might have received from segregation there seemed to be little willingness to maintain those advantages when confronted with the possibility of future bombings and continued bitterness.

### Corollary II

Another corollary was that if change is the result of conflict or the threat of conflict, then the Biracial Human Relations team approach by itself would produce only a superficial type of communication. As was stated in Chapter One if, as the hypothesis asserts, social change in race relations is the result of conflict or the threat of conflict, then one could not expect interracial behavior to be changed as the result only of Negroes and whites sitting down together to discuss interracial behavior. The reason is that the emphasis in the "team approach" would be on obtaining consensus through discussion as to what should be done. However, if the hypothesis is correct, and the evidence seems to indicate that it is, then the team approach by itself would be insufficient to change the existing pattern of behavior. The team could, however, function as a channel of communication between the Negro and white communities. That is, the white power structure would be willing to listen to the demands of the Negro community through a Biracial Committee set up to air the complaints

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of the Negro community if there were sufficient pressure on the white community for it to do so.

The work of Killian, Grigg, and Marrow seems to give empirical support to this position. Certainly the Great Falls experience is similar to the situation described by Killian and Grigg. Before the militancy of 1962 and 1963 the Human Relations Commission did little but sponsor educational seminars, public discussions, an occasional guest lecturer from somewhere in the nation, and platitudinous pronouncements.<sup>31</sup> But there was little evidence that any substantial changes in behavior was taking place. The Human Relations Commission before the period of militancy, lost two directors in a short span of time, had its appropriations reduced by half, and was directed for a time by a graduate student in public administration.<sup>32</sup> During this time the Executive Director did not meet with other Department Directors at briefings by the City Manager. During this time the Commission was more or less ignored by the mass media.

All this began to change at the time of the more militant stance taken by Negroes nationally through the freedom rides, sit-ins, etc. and locally this was the time of the bombings and the activities of CORE.

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<sup>31</sup>Minutes of Human Relations Commission, 1955-1961.

<sup>32</sup>See Chapter Four.

As was stated earlier, before the activity of CORE and the bombings the Human Relations Commission could not even get a meeting with representatives of the Real Estate Board, to say nothing of an agreement with them. Before the increased civil rights activity there was not anyone on the Human Relations Commission who even thought of the possibility of a Fair Housing Ordinance. Before the summer riots of 1964 there was not anyone who thought that the Chamber of Commerce would find a hundred jobs for unemployed youth.

There is not any evidence that the Human Relations Commission by itself could have effectuated the changes discussed above. There is not any evidence that anyone thought seriously of the Human Relations Commission until conflict produced various crisis situations. In fact, members of the Human Relations Commission themselves perceived their job as primarily one of negotiation, conciliation, arbitration, and persuasion.<sup>33</sup> Before the militancy of the 1960's, however, there did not seem to be many organizations or persons who wanted mediation in regard to the status quo, except Negroes who wanted more and better housing opportunities. After and during the period of militant Negro action, the Real Estate Board and the City Commission seemed quite amenable to discussing changes in regard to the status quo.

None of this is written to diminish the importance of

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<sup>33</sup>The majority of Human Relations Commission members interviewed perceived their job in these terms.

a Biracial Committee. When trouble did come to the community, the Commission served as a means of communication between the various factions. The Real Estate Board never did meet with any of the representatives of CORE or the NAACP. At the same time, the official policy of CORE members was that they did not care with whom the Real Estate Board members met, as long as meetings started which involved Real Estate Board members in changing real estate practices in the community.

It was emphasized in Chapter Five that the Human Relations Commission representatives in their first few meetings with the Real Estate Board representatives stressed that they were there to discuss mutual problems and were not there to launch a tirade against the Real Estate Board. At the same time the Human Relations Commission members emphasized that their perspective was that of equal opportunities for all citizens, and that the goal of "open occupancy" was not negotiable. It was also emphasized that the Human Relations Commission did not want the Real Estate Board to be the scapegoat for the entire problem of segregated housing, but that they should make some positive act to indicate their good intentions because of the explosive emotional climate of the times. The agreement then was reached with the Real Estate Board, but as indicated above it is doubtful if there would even have been a meeting without outside pressure being brought to bear on the Real Estate Board. The evidence

above indicates that by itself, without other types of pressure being brought to bear on organizations or individuals, the Biracial Committee team approach does not bring about significant change. This is a finding, as stated earlier, similar to that of Killian, Grigg and Marrow. Richard Robbins found a similar situation in Illinois. Robbins did a detailed analysis of the Biracial Committee approach in Illinois and concluded that:

One of the most important precipitates of group's rising curve of effectiveness appeared to be the emergence of a crisis. In a concrete situation demanding clear and specific responses from leaders and members, a group would coalesce, deal effectively with a racial situation, then recede once more to a latent state.<sup>34</sup>

The Great Falls experience seems to be that when conflict occurs or is threatened, and crisis thereby ensues, the Biracial Committee is important in establishing communication between participants in the crisis. It can also give some direction as to how the conflict can be resolved, and it can aid in bringing about a resolution of the conflict by putting pressure on the participants by use of the mass media. This does not mean that there will not be losers in the conflict--there will be. It does mean though that those who are going to lose can do so more gracefully through the negotiating activity of a Human Relations Commission than they could by a face-to-face confrontation with their antagonists.

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<sup>34</sup>Richard Robbins, "Local Voluntarism in Race Relations Strategy: The Illinois Experience with Community Human Relations Groups", in Gouldner and Miller, Applied Sociology, (New York: Free Press, 1965) p. 157.

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The evidence seems to be in Great Falls that the corollary is true that the Biracial Committee approach by itself produces only a superficial type of communication. However, as a channel of communication between the protest leaders and the white defenders of the status quo, it becomes an important agent of social change. This, of course, is no minor thing. As Schermer states in regard to Human Relations Commissions,

Next in importance to responsibility in government is communication among the responsible forces, institutions and civic leadership about race relations, and communication among and between many citizens of all racial, ethnic and religious groups. There is no substitute for this. If communication does not exist, no constructive programs are possible.<sup>35</sup>

As will be pointed out below, if the Biracial Committee is to aid in effectuating change partly by being a channel of communication between conflicting parties, then this is an aspect of the agency's tasks that requires constant and expert attention of the agency's staff.

### Corollary III

It has been stated that a Biracial Committee can best be utilized when it can be an aid in establishing communication between conflicting parties. If the Biracial Committee is to be effective as a means of communication between the white and the Negro communities, there must be some reason for the communication to take place. Following from

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<sup>35</sup>George Schermer, Guidelines: A Manual for Bi-Racial Committees, (New York: Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, 1964) p. 15.

the hypothesis above it could be deduced that this communication takes place when the power structure is threatened by conflict. If it is the threat of conflict that induces the white power structure to communicate to would be changers of the status quo through a biracial team, there must be some one either threatening or engaging in conflict. One would then conclude that one or more of the civil rights organizations must be conflict oriented before social change will take place in interracial behavior, or that some other group in the city is either engaging in or threatening conflict.

Hence a corollary was stated that different civil rights organizations working in different ways for the same objective may be one of the most effective city-wide strategies if at least one of the organizations either precipitates or threatens conflict.

It was stated earlier (Chapter One) that Killian and Grigg, who are extremely critical of the Biracial Committee approach, assert that in the South if other groups in the community exert pressure the Biracial Committee might then become a viable organization. It also was indicated (Chapter One) that Dean and Rosen after reviewing the literature state explicitly that they believe one of the most effective means of obtaining change in interracial behavior is by having the various civil rights organizations function in different ways.

In Great Falls there were four organizations that were active in civil rights activities, the Urban League, the NAACP, the Human Relations Commission, and CORE. The information in Chapter Three indicates that according to their own publications they all had slightly different functions:

1) The Urban League was established to be a social welfare organization which would aid the Negro in adjusting to urban living conditions, and which would aid the Negro in acquiring the skills which would enable him to compete in the technologically complex modern world. It was to aid the Negro youth in acquiring aspiration and motivation to acquire an education and/or the skills which would make him self supporting. It was concerned with the problems of discrimination to the extent of trying to resolve it through the processes of persuasion, negotiation, and education.

2) The NAACP was established to acquire for the Negro all those rights that are his as an American citizen. It traditionally had attempted to do this by appealing to the courts, and by getting the legislatures of the states and the federal government to pass laws guaranteeing certain minimum rights. In the last decade it has shown some willingness to use direct action as a means of obtaining these goals.

3) The Human Relations Commission was established in Great Falls by city ordinance as a city commission to educate



the public in regard to "good human relations", to do research in the area of "human relations", and to advise the City Commission and the various city agencies and departments about human relations problems. It was charged in the enabling legislation to use the above means and persuasion, negotiation, etc., to eliminate existing attitudes of prejudice and patterns of discrimination.

4) CORE was established specifically as a group which would attempt to eliminate patterns of discrimination by non-violent, direct action means.

As was indicated briefly above and in detail in Chapter Three, all of the groups have a different focus, a different emphasis. The corollary states that a Biracial Committee will probably be more effective if there is some other civil rights organization in the community engaging in or threatening conflict, and that therefore one of the most effective city-wide techniques would be for different civil rights organizations to work in different ways for the same objective.

It was indicated and emphasized previously that in Great Falls the Human Relations Commission seemed to become much more effective after CORE was established and began to use its direct action techniques. CORE was a small organization, few people knew who its members were, and many persons active in civil rights had only a vague notion as to what it was doing. However, it commanded respect by those

who were in positions of authority. The Executive Director and Chairman of the Human Relations Commission were always worried about the possibility of a CORE demonstration, which both conceived of as embarrassing for the city. Both had numerous times in private conversation with the writer indicated their concern and worry that demonstrations might occur in the city. They communicated this feeling to City Commissioners and Real Estate Board members. Hence, in discussions with the City Commission and Real Estate Board members there was always in the background the possibility that CORE might demonstrate. If CORE would demonstrate, the image of Great Falls as a conservative, middle-class, "nice-place-in-which-to-live" city would be damaged. Besides if CORE would demonstrate, passions might be inflamed and an unstable person might again throw bombs or perpetrate some other such type of incident. Hence the attitude of Human Relations Commission negotiators to Real Estate Board members and City Commissioners was that they had the moderate, reasonable Human Relations Commission people to talk with and that they had better make some progress so that those somewhat fanatical CORE and NAACP people would not cause a disturbance for the city.

Not only CORE but also the NAACP emphasized that it wanted rights for Negroes now and without compromise. Plunger the NAACP president could always be counted on at the slightest lag in negotiations, or indications of discriminatory practices, to make a public statement to the

mass media. His statements were usually well written, and indicated no willingness to negotiate over what he considered to be the Negroes inherent rights as American citizens. His effectiveness, however, and hence the effectiveness of the NAACP, was blunted by the fact that he could not get a large number of Negroes to engage in direct action. It was CORE, not the NAACP, that sponsored the "look-ins". It was CORE, and not the NAACP, that picketed the state convention of Real Estate Boards. The NAACP's effectiveness would have been greatly increased if Plunger could have depended upon a hundred demonstrators if he needed them. He could not, and finally admitted so in public.<sup>36</sup> Plunger's effectiveness was also blunted by his public image as being a tactless "fanatic" who was always complaining about Negro rights and never talked about Negro responsibility. As stated above (Chapter Six) this public image was to a certain extent, created by the mass media. Every time Plunger wanted to criticize someone, an agency or an organization, he received a lot of space in the Great Falls Press. But when he made a statement about Negro responsibility they buried the story on the inside pages.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>See Chapter Six. Certainly this was an error in tactics. Although the rumor was that Plunger could not get Negroes to demonstrate, for him to publicly admit so only confirmed what before had been a rumor.

<sup>37</sup>At the time of the riots in Harlem and Patterson, N.J., Plunger made a public statement to the Negro community about the futility of riots, and for everyone to remain calm. The Great Falls Press hardly gave it any space. In contrast to this whenever he had some criticism to make his statements were given prime space.

Even though the NAACP could not get many persons out to demonstrate, and even though its president was considered to be a constant and tactless complainer, it was feared. The Human Relations Commission had to negotiate with the knowledge that if it did not reach what the NAACP considered an adequate agreement, Plunger would state his objections loud and clear. Whether Plunger could command a demonstration or not, no one active in civil rights organizations was eager to be branded a dupe of the "white establishment". This might explain why Plunger was so intensely disliked; people knew if they compromised more than Plunger thought was necessary he would state so publicly.

If there is to be negotiation there must be something to negotiate about. There must also be some goad so that negotiations will begin. CORE and the NAACP supplied both of these. CORE and the NAACP pointed to the deficiencies in the structure of the community and said they wanted these deficiencies remedied now, and that if they were not, they would do something about it which would embarrass the community.

Chapter Five would seem to indicate that it was true in Great Falls that a Biracial Committee was more effective if there were other civil rights organizations threatening or engaging in conflict. It should be added, however, that in Great Falls during this period neither CORE nor the NAACP leaders were intransigent in their demands. They did not

demand an "unreasonable" agreement from the Real Estate Board,<sup>38</sup> nor a Fair Housing Ordinance that would have applied to the individual private home owner. Neither did CORE nor the NAACP demand that their opponents be publicly embarrassed or that they (CORE and the NAACP) had to do the negotiating. Their position was that they wanted the Real Estate Board to make changes, and to negotiate, but they did not care with whom the Real Estate Board negotiated as long as it did so.

There was also in Great Falls at this time very effective communication between the civil rights organizations. Hence the various organizations knew what the others were doing. It was pointed out in Chapter Six that many of the Human Relations Commission members were on the Board of Directors of the Urban League or on the Executive Board of the NAACP. The Chairman of the Housing Committee of the Human Relations Commission was a member of CORE and a member of the Board of Directors of the Urban League, and had contact with the NAACP president, who was also a member of CORE. There was, in fact, a pattern of overlapping of leadership which readily enhanced communication. In addition,

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<sup>38</sup>By unreasonable meaning here, demands that were quite obviously impossible at the time to achieve, and hence involving factors on which the Real Estate Board could not compromise, e.g. demanding that Realtors not act as brokers for any individual client who wanted to discriminate. The Real Estate Board could not compromise on this because they believed that all such individual clients would then list their houses with real estate agents who were not members of the Board. Hence, including these individual clients in the agreement would not in anyway decrease discriminatory practices, but just lose them (Realtors) business. The CORE and NAACP leaders understood this quite well, and therefore only

the Human Relations Commission held numerous joint conferences with all the civil rights organizations to keep them informed of developments and to ask their advice.

The Urban League stood somewhat to the side of these activities because it could not threaten any type of direct action, and because its dependency on United Community Services funds forced it to be somewhat circumspect in its pronouncements.<sup>39</sup> Its major goal, though, was not to engage in attempting to change the social structure through pressure of any kind, but on changing the self perceptions and abilities of Negroes. These are obviously interrelated factors but they are also obviously different. The problem in Great Falls was that the Urban League was criticized by many NAACP people for not being militant, and as a result many Urban League people were beginning to think primarily in terms of "integrating" the community and were beginning to ignore the social welfare role of the Urban League. Partly as a result of this the Urban League was not functioning at all down on the neighborhood level and had very little contact with the lower class Negro.<sup>40</sup>

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pressed for changes in areas in which they knew the Real Estate Board could compromise.

<sup>39</sup>This factor was mentioned numerous times during Urban League Board meetings and by several interviewees. Hence, the fear of losing United Community Services funds was an obvious brake on Urban League activities.

<sup>40</sup>There were other reasons for this. The Urban League staff was understaffed. It had not had an increase in staff size since its inception in 1949, although the Negro community more than doubled during that time.

This is a deficiency that many active in civil rights work have commented upon. The zeitgeist that King mentioned does not seem to include the fervor for social welfare planning as it does for civil rights activity.<sup>41</sup>

The evidence from the Great Falls experience would seem to be that the corollary is confirmed, that different civil rights organizations working in different ways for the same objectives may be one of the most effective city-wide strategies, if at least one of the organizations either precipitates or threatens conflict.

### Hypothesis II

It has been stated above that change in race relations is the result of a power struggle between whites who want to maintain the status quo, and Negroes and whites who want to change it. Evidence was quoted earlier indicating that the white power structure usually is not monolithic. The evidence seems to be that the white power structure is divided into issue areas, and in some instances is bifurcated between economic and political dominants.<sup>42</sup> But what of the Negro community? Can it present a united front in this

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<sup>41</sup>As Broom and Glenn, op. cit., p. 190 state: "...the more overt and flagrant forms of discrimination that are amenable to litigation, legislation, and direct action will soon be largely removed...The most constructive concentration of Negro efforts at this time would be upon self-improvement and upon gaining support for far-reaching programs of uplift. However, the Negro leadership may have difficulty in redirecting Negro efforts. Demonstrations are more exciting than efforts to eliminate the by products of discrimination, and uplift activities provide no outlet for hostility."

<sup>42</sup>See Chapter One.





struggle for change? There is only fragmentary evidence in the literature of the power structure of Negro communities.<sup>43</sup> What there is seems to indicate a structure similar to that of the white community, but the studies that exist are fragmentary and good community studies are lacking.

It was hypothesized in Chapter One that there is no monolithic decision-making process within the Negro community.

It was asserted that the power dynamics in the Negro community are of a similar type to that of the white community.

The data in Chapter Four would seem to contradict this and indicate instead that there is unanimity within the Negro community, and that there are specified individuals who make decisions that pertain to the Negro community. In regard to the question of the advisability of reaching an agreement with the Real Estate Board there was unanimity seemingly within the Negro community. Some of the organizational leaders within the Negro community might have been skeptical about the agreement, but none opposed it. Neither were there any voices heard in the Negro community outside of those who held positions of authority within the civil rights organizations. The four groups had a united front against the Real Estate Board. There was at no time any Negro voices heard in the mass media, or in communication to the Human Relations Commission, opposing the agreement. Hence the impression was that these four organizations could

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<sup>43</sup>See Chapter One.



speak for the Negro community. The impression was that the decisions for the Negro community could and were being made within these organizations.

The data in Chapter Five also indicate that the same four organizations could make decisions for the Negro community in regard to housing, for they collaborated in writing the Fair Housing Ordinance. Again there was no significant opposition to this ordinance within the Negro community that was reported in the mass media, or in communication to the Human Relations Commission. One Negro, a professional man, had indicated his opposition to the ordinance because in his opinion it was not strong enough. He had been invited to one of the combined meetings of the four civil rights groups because he was a well known Negro Republican and his opinion was sought. However, he did not receive any support for this position. Hence the data in Chapter Four indicate in regard to certain issues areas there was a monolithic decision-making process within the Negro community, centered in the four civil rights organizations.

What would add to this impression is the fact that the members of these four organizations had a great deal of contact with each other because, as noted above in Chapter Five, many had membership in two or more of these organizations. The President of the NAACP was an officer (treasurer) of CORE and a former member of the Urban League Board of Directors. The past chairman of the Housing Committee



of the Human Relations Commission was a past member of the Urban League Board of Directors and President of its Women's Auxiliary. A past president of the Urban League Board of Directors was a member of the Human Relations Commission and a member of the Executive Board of the NAACP. The Chairman of the Housing Committee of the Human Relations Commission was a member of the Urban League Board of Directors, and a charter member of CORE. Of the twenty active members of the Executive Board of the NAACP interviewed nine were present or past members of the Urban League Board of Directors, three were present or past members of the Human Relations Commission, and six were current members of CORE.

Of the fourteen members of CORE, four were current members of the Urban League Board of Directors and one was a past member. One was a current member of the Human Relations Commission, one a past member of the Human Relations Commission, and one the past Executive Director of the Human Relations Commission. Eight were present or past members of the Executive Board of the NAACP, including the current President of the NAACP, a past State Vice-President of the NAACP, and two current committee chairman of the NAACP.

Of the twenty-six active members of the Urban League Board of Directors that were interviewed, six were current or past members of the Executive Board of the NAACP. Four were members of CORE, including the President and Vice-president of CORE. Four were past or current members of the Human Relations Commission, including the current



Chairman of the Housing Committee, and the Chairman of the Education Committee.

Of the nineteen members of the Human Relations Commission who were interviewed four were current or past members of the Executive Board of the NAACP, six were current or past members of the Urban League Board of Directors, including two past presidents of the Urban League. One member of the Human Relations Commission was a member of CORE.

Certainly, all in all there was a great amount of organization interaction between civil rights group members. Hence Chapter Five in an examination of the activities of the four civil rights groups give an impression of a monolithic decision-making process of circulating elites.

The data in Chapter Six, however, give a quite different impression. The dispute over the Filter-Sneed project indicated a lack of consensus among civil rights leaders and new personalities were brought to public attention. The civil rights organizations disagreed as to the feasibility of the project, with the NAACP publicly opposing it and the other groups publicly hedging on either opposing or supporting the project. More importantly, the four Negro men who started the project were not active in any civil rights organization. They were tired of the civil rights organizations inability to provide a solution to the Negro middle class demand for housing and hence decided to provide a solution to that problem themselves. They did

<u>Human Relations Commission</u>	<u>NAACP</u>	<u>Urban League</u>	<u>CORE</u>
Black, M.	Battle, J.	Armtage, D.	Beaton, M.
Bought, E.	Black, M.	Battle, J.	Billerton, H.
Cavin, A.	Cool, E.	Beaton, M.	Edthraction, F.
Claymore, J.	Coalmut, L.	Berghof, S. (Mrs.)	Halstead, H.
Clintmore, L.	Gervais, B.	Cobart, A.	Joab, W.
Conner, H.	Gilver, L.	Dekiema, J.	Maibattle, C.
Dekiema, J.	Glut, L.	Frankfurter, F.	Martin, M.
Dekkenga, H.	Hutteron, V. P.	Gale, S.	Martin, H.
Dravinga, S.	Joab, W.	Greaton, P.	Meattena, G.
Glut, L.	Smith, Dr. H.	Hilton, L.	Plunger, Dr. W.
Hiltner, D.	Maibattle, C.	Halstead, H.	Tarton, B.
Hemelberg, A.	Martin, M.	Hutner, L.	Tarton, R.
Halstead, H.	Martin, H.	Joiner, D.	Tatton, R.
Hutner, L.	Moortin, O.	Smith, Dr. H.	Baker, L.
Keller, H.	Plunger, Dr. W.	Kintner, J.	
MacMitten, D.	Roberts, E.	MacMinster, J.	
Puller, M.	Sower, C.	Martin, H.	
Vernagas, M.	Tatton, R.	Moore, J.	
Willum, P.	Thornton, I.	Peters, M.	
	Williamson, L.	Pierson, J.	
		Piersma, W.	
		Ruiter, M.	
		Scooter, Dr. D.	
		Seers, L.	
		Tatton, R.	
		Wesley, Mrs. H.	
<u>Past Members of:</u>			
<u>H. R. C.</u>	<u>NAACP</u>	<u>Urban League</u>	
Cool, E.	Corbart, A.	Cool, E.	
Corbart, A.	MacMittin, D.	Hiltner, D.	
Billerton, H.	Billerton, H.	Claymore, J.	
		Plunger, Dr. W.	
		Black, M.	

Figure 1. Cross membership status in civil rights organizations.



	<u>Human Relations Commission</u>	<u>Urban League Board of Directors</u>	<u>NAACP Board of Directors</u>	<u>CORE</u>
Billerton, Hazel	Current		Past (State Vice- President) Current	Current
Black, Melvin	Current	Past (President)		
Cobart, Ann	Past	Current	Past	
Cool, Evelyn	Past	Past	Current	
Halstead, Harry	Current	Current		Current
Martin, Henry		Current	Current	Current
Plunger, Dr. Wallace		Past	Current (President)	Current (Treasurer)
Tatton, Rodger		Current	Current	Current (President)

Figure 2. Cross membership status in three civil rights organizations.

so over the opposition of the NAACP and caused a bitter fight within the NAACP Executive Board by doing so. (See Chapter Six).

A much more intense struggle, however, was that involving the proposed Parker Urban Redevelopment Area. It was pointed out in Chapter Six that not only was there no consensus about the project among civil rights groups but neither was there any consensus within the civil rights groups. CORE and the NAACP opposed the project while the Urban League and the Human Relations Commission favored the project, with all the organizations having extremely bitter feuds over the proposed project. More importantly, however, for this discussion, was the fact that a grass-roots organization headed by a local PTA president ignored all the existing civil rights organizations and demanded redevelopment of the area in communications to the City Planner and The City Commission. It was in fact the effort of this person, the local PTA president, that enabled the City Planner to receive a favorable vote on the project.<sup>44</sup> This led to much bitterness between the NAACP and the residents of the area. The residents of the area accused the President

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<sup>44</sup>The Housing Committee of the Human Relations Commission in voting on the project was split 2-2, and hence the Chairman of the Housing Committee had to vote to break the tie. He had earlier been opposed to the project but upon reading the letter of the PTA president, voted in favor of the project, believing that such local initiative should be rewarded. Hence he voted in favor of the project and gave a favorable report to the Commission and the project was accepted.

of the NAACP of not being able to speak for them because he lived in a white neighborhood. He accused them of not understanding all of what was involved in Urban Renewal and of not having incentives for moving into a white area. Hence the NAACP certainly was not making any decision for that area. There is not any evidence that any of the other civil rights organizations were either. The Human Relations Commission sponsored several public meetings in the area but they were primarily informational in content. CORE at this time was practically defunct because of internal dissension. The Urban League although in favor of the project, had no program to arouse public support, either of the people in the area or of the general community.

Hence, the evidence in Great Falls would seem to be that on projects that relate directly to discriminatory practices the Negro community can unite in its opposition to those practices and allow the civil rights groups to speak for the broader community in its opposition to those practices. However, when it comes to questions that are broader than just the question of discrimination, then the decision-making process has no unity. The question of Filter-Sneed and of the Parker Area was much broader than the question of discrimination. It involved questions about the ultimate type of solutions that were to be desired (e.g. assimilationist, pluralist, etc.) and on these questions there was no agreement. In fact, these types of questions often were not even thought out.

The data also indicate that ideological unity within the civil rights organizations seemed to go just so far and then sociological variables, e.g. social class, and occupation, begin to assert an impact. Every Negro taking a strong public stand against the Parker Redevelopment was middle class, and saw the redevelopment project in terms of abstract and general principles of integration. For these middle class Negroes Parker Redevelopment would not fulfill the goal of what they would loosely define as an integrated society. The strong support within the Parker Area for the redevelopment came from the lower class element where the emphasis was on the need of an immediate, particular, and concrete goal, that of adequate shelter. The lower class residents were much more concerned with having their basic needs met than in having some rather vaguely defined goal, integrated housing, achieved at some future date. There were very real and intense social class tensions within the Negro community over the question of Parker Redevelopment.

The data would also seem to indicate that the civil rights leaders were leaders without a following. The President of the NAACP admitted publicly that he could not get support for a demonstration. CORE was mostly bluff. It sponsored one very small demonstration. It talked loud, demanded to be heard, but never had its bluff called. If the much more well known NAACP could not get public support for a mass demonstration, one can doubt that CORE could.



CORE even had difficulties getting its own members to picket. It was pointed out in Chapter Four that when the time for picketing came most of the middle class members of CORE had other tasks that day that prevented them from picketing, and this led to the dissolution of CORE. Its supposed activists were not active at the crucial time their action was needed. CORE did sponsor a few "look-ins" with the aid of several Negro churches, and with repercussions from the Real Estate Board out of proportion to the project. However, after several "look-ins" the churches lost interest and CORE was without support. Data in Chapter Five and Six indicate that the white power structure perceived the NAACP and CORE as being much more powerful than they were, hence they were effective as leverage in getting the white community to act, but they were to a considerable extent bluff, a bluff that was never really called by the white community. Certainly the "bombings" aided this psychological climate. In regard to a following, the Urban League was criticized by its own members, and by members of all the other groups, for not being an effective grass-roots organization.<sup>45</sup>

The Human Relations Commission acted primarily at the decision-making level and had very little contact with the "grass-roots" Negro community. Hence there is some evidence to assert that the so-called leaders made decisions for a

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<sup>45</sup>See Chapter Six and the first part of this chapter.

following that was in part fictitious. It was a frequent statement among civil rights workers that if Great Falls ever had a riot in a lower class area, that there was not even one civil rights leader that one out of ten of the rioters would recognize on sight and be willing to listen to.<sup>46</sup>

The evidence therefore, indicates that there was not a monolithic decision-making process within the Negro community. Rather, the evidence is that there were issue-areas. On the question of opposition to discriminatory policies the civil rights leaders could speak for the Negro community, but when the questions became more involved than just the question of discriminatory practices then consensus no longer existed.

#### Corollary I

A corollary to the hypothesis that there would not be a monolithic decision-making process was that within and between civil rights organizations there would be disagreement among the members over welfare and status goals. It was stated earlier that one would expect that if a "culturally deprived" minority is struggling to obtain equal rights in society with the "culturally privileged" majority, that the members of the minority would not only be interested

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<sup>46</sup>The empirical veracity of the statement is difficult to obtain. The point though is that knowledgeable civil rights leaders did not believe that there was communication down to the mass of Negro citizens.

in obtaining those rights but also the benefits that those rights would enable one to obtain. This would mean that at any given moment in time some members of the minority community would be interested in the rights primarily and some primarily in the benefits. For example, some members of the minority might, through one means or another, have obtained the material benefits of the society, but not the "rights" enjoyed by the majority. Hence, they would be vitally interested in obtaining the "rights" enjoyed by the majority. Others in the minority groups might have neither the rights nor the material benefits of society. While they might very well be interested in "rights" equal to those held by the majority they might even be more interested in obtaining the material benefits of society. At this point, then, a clash would develop as to which goal should be emphasized, the "rights" or the "material benefits"?

Data in Chapter Six indicate quite clearly, as McKee also found,<sup>47</sup> a split between the Urban League and the NAACP over welfare and status goals. The NAACP did not want to see Urban Renewal take place in the Parker Area. They were adamantly opposed to the Parker Area because it would be a de facto segregated project.<sup>48</sup> No one denied

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<sup>47</sup>James B. McKee, "Negro Leadership in Great Falls," Institute for Community Development, Great Lakes State University, 1962, pp. 17-18.

<sup>48</sup>See Chapter Six.



the need of the area residents for better housing. The position of the NAACP was that other non-Negro areas should be renewed first so that Negroes could then move into renovated structures that would also be racially integrated structures. The fact that the residents of the Parker Area wanted to remain there did not impress NAACP officials at all. Mrs. Hoover (Chapter Six) had very clearly stated the perspective of the residents. They wanted better housing in that area and they did not want to move out. Hence their antagonism toward the NAACP. The members of the Urban League were in favor of the project because the need was apparent. The debate in the Urban League Board of Directors centered around that point. If there was a need, then Urban Renewal is needed, even if it would be de facto segregated. This was the position taken respectively by the Urban League and the NAACP over the years in Great Falls. In the early 1950's the Urban League supported the building of new elementary schools in the heart of the ghetto, in fact the Parker Area, because it was needed. The NAACP opposed the building of that particular school because it was in the ghetto area. The Urban League supported the creation of city parks where ever there was a need, while the NAACP had opposed the creation of any parks in the ghetto area.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>McKee, op. cit.,

Not only was there dissension between civil rights groups over status and welfare goals but in Great Falls there was intense and bitter feelin within the civil rights groups over status and welfare goals.

Bitterness developed within the Human Relations Commission over the question of Parker Area Renewal. Several of the Human Relations Commission members were adamantly opposed to the project because it would be de facto segregated. These members took the same position as the NAACP. Others on the Commission stated that the need was obvious and could not understand why anyone could be opposed to the project. The debate that became public between Monsignoir Puller and two Housing Committee members was over this very point. The Monsignoir considered them to be simply obstructionists to an obvious need, while they considered him a naive idealist (see Chapter Six) who did not understand all the implications involved. A very similar situation existed on the Urban League Board of Directors over the very same point. One of the Negro members accused some of the white members who favored the Parker Area renewal as not understanding the civil rights movement. They in turn accused him angrily of not being concerned for the needs of the lower class Negro. The NAACP Executive Board had the same type of internal tension. It was reported in Chapter Six how several members of the Executive Board were opposed to the policies of the President of the NAACP because of his uncompromising emphasis on "integration", even at



the cost of material benefits for Negroes. Hence in Great Falls it was true that particular civil rights organizations had a specific emphasis in regard to status or welfare goals, especially the Urban League and the NAACP, it was, however, also true that there was a great deal of tension within these organizations over these different goals. There was not in any of these organizations any unanimity in regard to status or welfare goals, although these organizations tended to have, over time, a preponderance of members who emphasized the one as against the other.

## CHAPTER VIII

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study has been an attempt to understand the social dynamics involved in the change of interracial behavior. The theoretical model used was that of a conflict perspective. This was done within the context of a medium-size mid-western American city in the years 1961-1964. An attempt was made to understand why changes in interracial behavior took place specifically in the areas of housing, employment, and education; with a special emphasis on housing because the active civil rights organizations during this time span considered that the most serious problem area.

Data were obtained by using three methodological procedures. First, participant observation was used; the writer was an active participant in the four active civil rights organizations. Secondly, seventy members of the civil rights organizations were interviewed by the author. Thirdly, the writer made an exhaustive examination of all documentary materials; such as minutes of the four civil rights organizations, the research published by these organizations, and the reports of their activities as published in the mass media.

The purpose of this study was not to study the race relations of a specific community per se, but to try to arrive at generalizations about the social dynamics of

interracial behavior, and how that behavior is changed. Specifically the purpose was to test hypotheses derived from a conflict model of society. The hypotheses stated that social change in interracial behavior does not take place without conflict or the threat of conflict, and that within this conflict for social change there is no monolithic decision-making process within the Negro community. It was hoped that this would add to the accumulation of knowledge about interracial behavior and social change because there is a serious hiatus in the literature about how changes in interracial behavior are effectuated. A survey of the literature indicates that a great deal of research has been done on existing attitudes of Negroes and whites toward each other, the causes of prejudice, and other social psychological phenomena, but little research has been done on the social structural and power aspects of interracial behavior. An analysis of various theoretical models indicates that a conflict model of society might explain the changes in interracial behavior that have occurred in the last several decades in the United States. However, not much of this type of research has been done and almost all of the research that has been done occurred in the southern part of the United States or in our large northern or eastern urban complexes. There was a lacuna therefore in that a comparative analysis of social change in interracial behavior in different types of cities in different parts of the United States had not been done.

It was hoped therefore that this study would help eliminate the existing hiatus, by emphasizing the social dynamics in regard to how change in interracial behavior takes place, and by adding a dimension that was ignored, the medium-size mid-western American city.

Certain restrictions were imposed on the data on the basis of the city and time span that was studied. Because the city was located in the North there was no attempt by civil rights groups to make changes in the existing political processes, e.g., the right to vote. Because the state, just previous to the study, had passed a rather strong FEPC law there was little attempt by the civil rights groups to bring about change in the area of employment. Because de facto school segregation was just beginning to be evident, due to the rapid Negro population growth in the last decade, the civil rights organizations had not as yet exerted much pressure to change the existing pattern of education.<sup>1</sup> The major emphasis of change that the civil rights organizations made was in regard to housing. It was virtually impossible for Negroes to obtain housing outside of a very rigidly defined ghetto area, and it was that aspect of interracial behavior that the civil rights groups attempted to change during the time span studied. Hence the emphasis on housing present in this study was imposed on the data.

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<sup>1</sup>An emphasis on de facto school segregation was just becoming evident at the close of this study, and will probably become a point of contention in the immediate future.

## Hypotheses

The first of the hypotheses that guided this study was that social change in interracial behavior in the United States is the result of conflict or the threat of conflict. Theoretical support for this position comes out of the tradition of Gumpłowicz, Ratzenhofer, Ward, Small, Park and exemplified in the work of Bernard, Dahrendorf, Killian, etc. Deduced from this were several corollaries. One corollary was that the dynamic agents in changing the pattern of race relations are Negro protest leaders and white defenders of the status quo. In any conflict situation there will of necessity be at least two agents. In regard to social change in racial behavior one would expect the white who gains from the status quo to defend it, and the Negro who loses to attempt to change the status quo.

Another corollary was that the biracial human relations team approach by itself does not bring about change. If conflict is necessary for change, then the biracial human relations team, which emphasizes consensus, would not in itself be adequate to bring about change.

A final corollary was that different civil rights organizations working in different ways for the same objective may be one of the most effective city-wide strategies if at least one of the organizations either precipitates or threatens conflict. If it is conflict that brings about change one could not expect that conflict to come from a biracial human relations team, but it could come from one





of the activist oriented civil rights organizations. This would enable those on the biracial team who want change to convince those on the team who do not want change that the proposed change would be less disruptive for them than continued conflict.

The other hypothesis in this study was that in this struggle for social change in racial behavior that there is no monolithic decision-making process within the Negro community.<sup>2</sup> Theoretical support for this position comes out of the work of Dahl, Polsby, Rossi, Form, McKee, etc.

A conflict perspective implicitly postulates a power struggle within society. In regard to this study the power structure of the Negro community becomes crucially important, because it would be expected that the Negro community would try to bring about changes in the status quo because they lose (socially, economically, politically) by the existing structure.

A corollary to this hypothesis was stated that within and between civil rights organizations there is a disagreement among the members over welfare and status goals. The present social structure denies high social status to some Negroes, adequate welfare to others, and both high social status and adequate welfare to still others. One would therefore expect that in the power struggle for change that Negroes would disagree as to the relative merit of achieving status or welfare goals.

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<sup>2</sup>See Chapter One, p. 30.

### Research Finding and Implications

The results of the research of this study would add evidence to those other studies which indicate that conflict is an essential ingredient of a change in interracial behavior. Killian, Griggs, Thompson, Burgess<sup>3</sup> and Cothran<sup>4</sup> have indicated that conflict was present in those instances of change in interracial behavior that they researched in the South, with the general orientation of these authors represented in the statement of Killian and Grigg that:

...this era will be one in which neither personal goodwill nor mutual understanding, but impersonal power will be the most significant factor in race relations.<sup>5</sup>

Wilson, Dennis Clark, Kenneth Clark, and Marrow<sup>6</sup> have indicated that in our large northern cities it is the fear of conflict, or conflict itself, that has induced change in interracial behavior. Kenneth Clark in his book Dark Ghetto writes that:

The problem of change in the ghetto is essentially, therefore, a problem of power--a confrontation and conflict between the power required for change and the power resistant to change.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>See Chapter One.

<sup>4</sup>See Chapter Eight.

<sup>5</sup>Lewis Killian and Charles Grigg, Racial Crisis in America (Englewood, N.J.: Spectrum Book, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964) p. 8.

<sup>6</sup>See Chapter One.

<sup>7</sup>Kenneth B. Clark, Dark Ghetto (New York: Harper and Row, 1965) p. 199.

Clark goes on to write that:

Certainly the Negro cannot hope to argue his case primarily in terms of ethical concerns, for these historically have had only sentimental and verbal significance in themselves. They have never been the chief source of power for that social change which involves significant alteration of status between privileged versus underprivileged groups.<sup>8</sup>

This study concentrated on a different type of community than those studied by the above authors, different in that it was not in the South and did not have a large population. The city studied was a medium-size mid-western American city. This is a type of city that was not systematically studied nor reported on in the literature of social change in interracial behavior. The findings, however, in regard to the major hypotheses were similar to those reported on from other types of cities. The evidence from this study, along with that from earlier studies, indicates that militancy and conflict as a dimension of the social change process transcends the community. Hence from the studies that have been done thus far community does not seem to be a variable in this social change process. Regardless of community size or location the social change process in regards to interracial behavior involves a strategic use of power by Negroes. Change of this type cannot be brought about simply through the cooperative efforts of white and Negro leaders communicating across a conference table. There is not any evidence that a "human relations

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 204.

approach" is by itself adequate to bring about meaningful change. This is a position cogently stated by Killian and Grigg when they wrote that:

Reliance on 'improving communication' through such a device as the biracial committee implies an ameliorative approach to race relations. To the extent that the committee is expected to bring about change, its function is to stimulate and guide social change through the collaboration of leaders of the white and Negro segments of the community. By the same token, even if it does not itself initiate programs of change, it is expected to forestall conflicts which may arise as the result of demands for change. Race relations are thereby to be taken out of the context of power and placed in the realm of peaceful cooperation. But it is in exactly this respect that such an approach is unrealistic.<sup>9</sup>

Therefore, the evidence is that regardless of the character of the community an appeal to the moral sensibilities of the white element in the community is not adequate to bring about change in interracial behavior. In the final analysis if there is going to be change, there will have to be a power struggle. No power struggle, no change.

Hence the research in this study gives support to the position that change in interracial behavior is the result of conflict or the threat of conflict. It has been pointed out that every instance of change in interracial behavior in the time span studied had been preceded by either conflict or the threat of conflict. In the particular city studied there was no evidence that simply an appeal to

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<sup>9</sup>Killian and Grigg, Racial Crisis in America, op. cit., p. 72.

Judeo-Christian morals would be sufficient to bring about change. The situation was similar to that described by Silberman when he stated that,

The tragedy of race relations in the United States is that there is no American Dilemma. White Americans are not torn and tortured by the conflict between their devotion to the American creed and their actual behavior. They are upset by the current state of race relations, to be sure. But what troubles them is not that justice being denied...but that their peace is being shattered and their business interrupted.<sup>10</sup>

This is not to say that there is a simple relationship between conflict and change. It is not being stated that conflict will in every instance lead to change. This study does, though, give some support to those who state that in contemporary America conflict or the threat of conflict is necessary to bring about change in interracial behavior. This does not say that conflict or the threat of conflict is sufficient to bring about change. As will be pointed out below, it probably is important what moderating influences are present in the community. Hence this study gives support to assertions like that of Dahrendorf when he writes,

Thus it is the task of sociology to derive conflicts from specific social structures and not to relegate these conflicts to psychological variables ('aggressiveness') or to descriptive-historical ones (the influx of Negroes into the United States) or to chance.<sup>11</sup>

The seeming confirmation of the hypothesis also lends support to those like Silberman who see continued immediate

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<sup>10</sup>Charles S. Silberman, Crisis in Black and White, (New York: Random House, 1964) p. 218.

<sup>11</sup>Rolf Dahrendorf, "Toward a Theory of Social Conflict", The Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vol. II, No. 2, 1958, p. 172.

racial conflict in American society.

The point is that changes of the sort Negroes now demand at the speed they insist upon, cannot be provided without considerable conflict: too many Americans will have to give up some privilege or advantage they now enjoy or surrender the comforting sense of their own superiority. There is nothing in American history, past or present, to suggest that Negroes can gain their rightful place in American society without direct confrontation. In Frederick Douglass' words, 'If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom, and yet deprecate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its waters.'<sup>12</sup>

The corollary that the dynamic agents in changing the pattern of race relations are Negro protest leaders and white defenders of the status quo has to be qualified. This study indicated that many of the protest leaders were white. The data show that the defenders of the status quo, almost without exception, were white and that in almost every important area of change some of the significant advocates of change were whites. This study in fact indicated that in some of the issue areas it was whites who initiated change, not Negroes, and that in every issue examined, whites were significantly involved in trying to change the status quo. It was stated in the body of this study that some of these whites involved with Negroes in trying to change the status quo were community influentials. Wilson writes that,

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<sup>12</sup>Silberman, op. cit., p. 218.

Most thoughtful Negroes in the North long ago rejected the notion that the white man will gradually concede to them rights they demand without effort on their part.<sup>13</sup>

The content of this study seems to support that position, however, the study also seems to indicate that in their effort to effect change Negroes can have important white allies. Many of these whites were not active in previous years in Great Falls to change interracial behavior. However, in the 1960's several important changes had taken place. Chapter Two indicates that the Negro population had grown tremendously in the last two decades. Two decades prior to this study the Negro population comprised a very insignificant percentage of the population, but by the 1960's the percentage of the population that was Negro was rapidly approaching 10 percent. There also was a changed moral climate in the community in regard to race relations. The churches previous to the 1960's made few pronouncements in the area of race relations. In the 1960's, however, as was reported in Chapter Six, the churches made numerous and strong statements about the justice of the Negro's request for an open and free society. There also was at this time a great deal of national publicity, through the various mass media, about the tension, strain, and social upheaval in other communities. These were the very things that many of the whites wished to avoid for

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<sup>13</sup>James Q. Wilson, Negro Politics, (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1960) p. 7.





Great Falls, by having changes in interracial behavior take place.

The corollary that the biracial human relations team approach by itself does not bring about change found support in this study. The Human Relations Commission had not been able to make any significant change in housing patterns prior to a situation of conflict which developed over the housing pattern. It was after several "bombings", picketings, and demonstrations occurred that the Human Relations Commission could begin meaningful negotiations. Prior to this emphasis on conflict by civil rights groups and interested individuals no progress was being made in the area of housing opportunities, and the Human Relations Commission could not even get the important defenders of the status quo to attend meetings. This pattern was true for all of the issue areas. There is not any evidence from this study that by itself the Human Relations Commission would have made significant gains in any of the important areas (employment, education, housing) of interracial behavior.

There was massive support in this study for the final corollary that different civil rights organizations working in different ways for the same objective may be one of the most effective city-wide strategies if at least one of the organizations either precipitates or threatens conflict. When conflict occurred the defenders of the status quo would go to the Human Relations Commission to try to negotiate a

settlement. However, prior to any conflict situation these defenders of the status quo indicated no interest in discussing the matter with the Human Relations Commission. It should be emphasized, however, that those groups that precipitated conflict indicated at all times that they would be quite willing to let others negotiate a settlement. It should be emphasized also that the biracial team (Human Relations Commission) attempted to play a mediating role. It attempted to avoid making the defenders of the status quo lose anymore face than necessary. It at all times indicated its unswerving goal to an open society, but avoided making any castigating public statements against the defenders of the status quo; it left that to other organizations such as CORE and the NAACP. Hence the defenders of the status quo did not have to go to those groups to negotiate a settlement. This was a situation similar to what Cothran found in the South.

Civil rights gains were most extensive in those instances where two or more tactics were combined. Negotiations in conjunction with mass demonstrations or threat of such increased negotiators' bargaining power. Negotiations from a position of power make bargaining possible.<sup>14</sup>

In almost every issue area examined, CORE, the NAACP, and individuals supplied the pressure while the Urban League and the Human Relations Commission acted as mediating

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<sup>14</sup>Tilman C. Cothran, "The Negro Protest Against Segregation in the South", The Annals, January 1965, Vol. 357, p. 68.

influences. The Urban League was hindered from being a pressure group by its dependency upon United Community Services for funds, and by its philosophy of self-improvement and uplift. Whatever other value might come from an association with United Community Services the association is at the least inimical to a conflict perspective. The Human Relations Commission was the agency which was being used as the negotiation center, and as a city agency could hardly itself promote conflict. It should also be added that there was very effective communication occurring between these groups. Members of each group knew what the other groups were doing, or planned to do, and there was a certain amount of collusion taking place between the groups. Hence although the different civil rights groups presented diverse faces to the community there was more unity in reality than diversity in appearance. Especially was this true when the question was simply one of discriminatory practices, e.g., segregated housing.

It was also hypothesized in this study that there is no monolithic decision-making process within the Negro community. The results of this study indicated that Negro leaders and organizations acted with unity and decisiveness when the issue was clearly one of discrimination. For example, they agreed that pressure had to be brought to bear to eliminate discriminatory practices by the Real Estate Board. Outside of these clearly discriminatory practices, however, there was no indication of a monolithic decision

making process. The Negro community was rent with dissension on numerous issues, and persons with no official status in civil rights organizations made decisions with tremendous implications for the entire civil rights movement. For example, four Negroes with no status in civil rights organizations started a large housing development for Negroes over the vehement opposition of the NAACP and CORE. A proposed Urban Renewal project in the heart of the ghetto split the Negro community in half, as the NAACP and CORE opposed it, and the Urban League and the Human Relations Commission supported it. Hence when the issue was not clearly one of discriminatory practices the Negro community was rent with dissension, and different persons came to the fore as spokesmen depending upon the issue area involved.

There was a great deal of support in this study for the corollary that within and between civil rights organizations there is disagreement among the members over welfare and status goals. The NAACP and CORE opposed Urban Renewal in the ghetto area because it would not promote integration (status) while the Urban League and the Human Relations Commission supported Urban Renewal in the ghetto area because it would provide better housing for people who desperately needed it (welfare). CORE and the NAACP were opposed to a housing development outside of the ghetto area promoted by four Negroes, because the NAACP and CORE thought it would be an all Negro development (status concern) while the Urban League and the Human Relations Commission did not



oppose it as such because they thought the housing was needed (welfare).

These emphases were also present within the different civil rights organizations. The civil rights organizations had, over time, a stable core of members that gave them their status or welfare emphasis. However within each organization there were dissidents who strongly disagreed with the major emphasis, and if anything the disagreement within the organizations over welfare and status goals were more intense than that between the organizations. Part of this disagreement was the result of a failure of the civil rights groups to specify clearly what their ultimate goal was for a multiple racial society. In fact none of the groups had a clearly delineated goal in regard to an assimilationist, pluralist, or melting-pot theory of society. The situation in Great Falls, as stated in Chapter Three, was similar to that found by Milton Gordon in his interviews with civil rights leaders when he found that the vast majority had not given any thought to the type of goal, assimilationist, pluralistic, or melting-pot that their organizations should strive to achieve. If there is not consensus as to the goal to be achieved by civil rights organizations, there is obviously not going to be any consensus over methods and techniques that are to be used by these organizations.

### Implications and Future Research Needs

It is becoming obvious to more and more intergroup relation experts that the race problem is going to be difficult, if not impossible, to resolve without some basic changes in American society dealing with the educational, governmental, and welfare spheres. It is at this point where some authors claim that techniques of the past such as direct action no longer will be applicable. Bennett writes that:

...some of the goals now being sought by Negroes are least applicable to those groups of Negroes most suited to protest action. Protest action involving such tactics as mass meetings, picketing, boycotts, and strikes rarely find enthusiastic participants among upper-income and higher-status individuals. Such strategies often require recruiting through intangible appeals to lower-income, lower-status groups that do not consider mass action beneath their dignity...Many of the goals being sought today, such as access to desirable housing or professional jobs do not involve rewards for groups not equipped, by income, training, or disposition, to avail themselves of such opportunities.<sup>15</sup>

Broom and Glenn carry the theme a little further in referring to the lower income Negro by stating that:

Their problems are largely economic, and they grow out of ignorance, etc...Neither direct action, anti-discrimination legislation, nor court rulings can help them much in the immediate future, even though these measures may bring long-range benefits to younger and future generations.<sup>16</sup>

Broom and Glenn then go on to state that:

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<sup>15</sup>Lerone Bennett, Jr., Before the Mayflower: A History of the Negro In America, 1619-1962. (Chicago: Johnson Publishing Co., 1962) p. 296.

<sup>16</sup> Leonard Broom and Norval Glenn, Transformation of the Negro American (New York: Harper Row, 1965) p. 184.



... a point of diminishing returns for civil rights activities may already have been reached in the North and West. Except in a few areas of the Deep South, the more overt and flagrant forms of discrimination that are amenable to litigation, legislation, and direct action will soon be largely removed...The most constructive concentration of Negro efforts at this time would be upon self-improvement and upon gaining government support for far reaching programs of uplift. However, the Negro leadership may have difficulty in redirecting Negro efforts. Demonstrations are more exciting than efforts to eliminate the byproducts of discrimination and uplift activities provide no outlet for hostility.<sup>17</sup>

These authors do not doubt the efficacy of conflict as a technique as used in the past by civil rights organizations. Their point is that direct action techniques might no longer be applicable because the more flagrant types of discriminatory practices are being eliminated. They seem to miss the point that other changes in society might be necessary before the racial problem can be resolved. A point made by McKee who wrote that:

It may very well be that the race issue cannot be solved apart from solutions to other problems: urban renewal and housing, and poverty and technological unemployment, for example. An ideology of integration, then, may need to be an intellectual assessment that starts with the fact that the vast majority of Negroes suffer from class position as well as racial status.<sup>18</sup>

The question then of course can be raised why the problems of class position cannot be effectively attacked by conflict as well as have been the problems of racial

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 190

<sup>18</sup>James McKee, "The Ideology of Moderation: Some Assumptions About Conflict in American Society", Unpublished Provost Lecture, Michigan State University, Feb. 26, 1964.

position. This does not itself necessarily mean an attack upon the social structure per se as postulated by Marx and his disciples. The integrationist movement was not, and is not yet today, an attack upon the American social structure per se. As Oppenheimer wrote in his careful analysis of the direct action technique in the South:

In particular it has been pointed out that the American Negro protest has been directed in the main not towards changing the basic values of American society, but only towards gaining access to that society, wanting 'in' on that society.<sup>19</sup>

The results of this study and others like it leads one to ask why the lower class slum dweller (white or Negro) does not start marching on city hall more than he has? What would be the result if he did in the same numbers as marched from Selma to Montgomery? The question of the efficacy of conflict as a source of change in racial behavior of course is only a particular question of the broader problem of the efficacy of conflict as a source of social change in general. The answer can only be derived from careful comparative analyses on a world wide basis.

If conflict is a source of social change it means that it can also be used by those who want a segregated society, and by those who do not want any change in the status of the lower class. A question that has not been clearly answered at all is at what point a "back-lash" will set in.

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<sup>19</sup>Marten Oppenheimer, "The Genesis of the Southern Negro Movement (Sit-in Movement): A Study in Contemporary Negro Protest," Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1963.

At what point will the majority find the demands of a minority expressed in a conflict way so overbearing that they will be willing to crush it with their superior power? Certainly the whites in the United States have superior power and can, if they are willing to pay the price, crush the Negro's aspiration for equality. One might say that the price in bloodshed and lowered world esteem would not be worth it. But the question can then just be stated in another way. How much would the Negro have to demand before the white majority would be willing to crush the aspirations of the Negro, and thereby pay the necessary price in bloodshed and lowered world esteem. Certainly there is a point where conflict by an aspiring minority will provoke superior power from the entrenched majority. There is hardly anything in the literature to indicate what that point is, certainly a fertile area for future research. C. Wright Mills points out that the Marxists have written a great deal about this but have done little research and have practically no empirical verification.<sup>20</sup>

America will probably be facing in the immediate future demands from an aspiring lower class (white and Negro) that will be using conflict as a tool to acquire their goals. The question then will be how much conflict will be demanded before changes satisfactory to the aspiring minority will

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<sup>20</sup>C. Wright Mills, The Marxists (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1962)

take place? Or will the superior power of the majority crush the ~~aspiration~~ aspiration of the minority? Recent research in the area of interracial behavior, like that above, would seem to indicate that conflict can produce sufficient changes, so that the minority is satisfied to remain within the existing social structure and not destroy it.

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APPENDIX A

## INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. What would you consider to be the ideal pattern of interracial behavior in Great Falls? Why?
2. What, in your opinion, is the goal of the Human Relations Commission?
3. What means (techniques) does the Human Relations Commission use to achieve these goals?
4. What is your evaluation of the Great Falls Human Relations Commission?
5. What, in your opinion, is the goal of the Urban League?
6. What means (techniques) does the Urban League use to achieve these goals?
7. What is your evaluation of the Great Falls Urban League?
8. What, in your opinion, is the goal of the Great Falls NAACP?
9. What means (techniques) does the NAACP use to achieve these goals?
10. What is your evaluation of the Great Falls NAACP?
11. What, in your opinion, is the goal of the Great Falls CORE?
12. What means (techniques) does CORE use to achieve these goals?
13. What is your evaluation of the Great Falls CORE chapter?
14. If you were to plan the over all strategy in Great Falls to obtain the goals that you desire in the field of interracial behavior, what would you propose?
15. How would you relate these proposals to the groups just discussed?
16. Specifically how would you try to obtain changes in interracial behavior in the area of education?
17. Specifically how would you try to obtain changes in interracial behavior in the area of employment?
18. Specifically how would you try to obtain changes in interracial behavior in the area of housing?

19. Specifically how would you try to obtain changes in interracial behavior in the area of police relations?
20. Do you believe that in the last decade there has been a change in the type of Negro leadership that we have in Great Falls?



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