

**"HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT, AND THE
EXPANDING MIDDLE CLASS"**

Remarks by

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Before the

**WORKSHOP IN HUMAN RELATIONS
MARCH 3, 1971
SKOKIE HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**

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VILLAGE OF SKOKIE

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

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With every passing day suburban communities ringing America's major cities experience increased pressures for involvement in big city problem solving. The time is long past when a suburb can realistically think of itself as a rural community. The financial and social costs of maintaining the myth of suburban independence from central city problems will prove disastrous for everyone. Concerned particularly with the changing nature of race relations and its effects on the north shore suburbs of Chicago, the Skokie Human Relations Commission designed and conducted a "Workshop in Human Relations for area businessmen and real estate brokers. Response to the program and the exciting small group discussions following talks by Dr. Paul Mundy of Loyola University and John McKnight of Northwestern University's Center for Urban Affairs, indicate to the Commission that continued efforts in this field are worthwhile.

This seminar was one of a series of human relations sessions initiated by the Commission, to develop creative perspectives toward the issues of racism; to sharpen the sensibilities of individuals to conditions which create and perpetuate social injustices and human relations tensions; and to stimulate responsible actions at the local level to meet the various challenges to good human relations.

Let me take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks for their cooperation and support to the Skokie Chamber of Commerce and the Evanston-North Shore Board of Realtors, and to Dr. Frederick Erickson of the University of Illinois and Neil King of King Realtors for their assistance as sensibility group leaders.

Harold Goldmeier
Executive Director

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Remarks by Dr. Paul Mundy
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Before I have anything very specific to say it would be well to identify for you several publications and source materials that will prove of possible help if you are not already familiar with them.

First of all, I would suggest that you should all be familiar with the publications of the Chicago Community Inventory, which, since the 1930's, subsequent to each decennial census, has been issuing a rather detailed report. This, for example, is the 1960 volume. The one for the 1970 census should be available some time during 1972. This was issued in 1963 for the 1960 census. It is titled Local Community Fact Book, Chicago Metropolitan Area 1960. And there is in each of these an historical recapitulation for two previous censuses as well as for the current one, with detailed information on Chicago, the metropolitan area and the local communities within Chicago. For the first time, the 1960 Fact Book covers communities in the metropolitan area having populations in excess of 25,000 (like Skokie) in some considerable detail. Both brief historical sketches of the 75 local communities in Chicago as well as relevant socioeconomic and census data are included. Most of you, I suppose, are familiar with the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission at 400 West Madison Street in Chicago. For those of you who are not, I would suggest that you keep in touch with this organization with respect to the kinds of materials that they will be issuing in a relatively short period of time dealing with the 1970 data. These publications issued in the past

are illustrative of this. They are the NIPC Planning Papers - this is No. 10, Population, Employment, and Land Use Forecasts for Counties and Townships in Northeastern Illinois 1968. This publication, after the 1960 census, is A Social Geography of Metropolitan Chicago and the Suburban Fact Book, Revised (with new tables and 1960-61 data). The 1970 census materials are being published as well. On a much broader basis, publications from the Advisory Commission on Inter-Governmental Relations based in Washington, D.C. deal with a variety of issues that are of inherent importance to you. This one, for example, issued just a few years ago is titled Metropolitan Social and Economic Disparities, Implications for Inter-Governmental Relations in Central Cities and Suburbs. The Commission publishes an annual report issued in January each year and specialized studies from time to time. I hope that some of you are also aware of the existence and the importance of the documents that are coming out from the Committee for Economic Development. This monograph, The Economic Future of City and Suburb, is but one illustration of the very relevant kinds of materials that are being issued by that particular organization, located at 477 Madison Avenue in New York City.

It seems to me that the whole problem of the deepening kind of crisis which characterizes metropolitan America today was perhaps first best expressed some years ago by the late Professor Morton Grodzins, who died tragically young. He had taught at the University of Chicago and the University of Pittsburgh. In the 1950's he wrote a monograph titled "The Metropolitan Area as a Racial Problem." He treated the data on the black racial concentration in central cities and the increasing imbalance in terms of race and socioeconomic characteristics.

He predicted what is clearly apparent now--that a crisis of monumental proportions was impending.

Let me identify two brief quotations in terms of how he put the issue: "Almost nothing is being done today to meet what is likely to be the nation's most pressing social problem tomorrow. The problem can be simply stated in all its bleakness. Many central cities of the great metropolitan area of the United States are becoming lower-class, largely Negro, slums." And at the very conclusion of this monograph, he asserted, "Despite difficulties and despite the uncertainty of success, all efforts are justified. The stakes are high: the preservation and further development of many facets of American life for whites and Negroes alike. By building nondiscriminatory housing markets in both city and suburbs, income and social attributes instead of race can be maximized as criteria for residential location. By rebuilding large areas of central cities, white populations can be induced to return to these cities. By combating restrictions against Negro occupancy of suburbs a flow of non-whites can be started in that direction. By attracting Negroes to jobs in smaller cities outside the South, where they are not under-represented, some of the present and potential city-suburban imbalance may be controlled. By encouraging through community resources the controlled migration of Negroes into all areas of city and suburbs, a significant redistribution of Negroes and whites can take place. All these measures minimize the dangerous operation of the 'tipping point' psychology. Here, as elsewhere, nothing succeeds like success and demonstration that such a program produces results in one metropolitan area of the nation will be

important to all others. The only way to avoid the chasm of racialism is to bridge it."

I think some of us would have some misgivings about the term "controlled migration." But none of us would have misgivings about the ultimate desirability of achieving a general implementation of human freedom which consists essentially of the right to exercise those options that are appropriate in any decent and civilized community.

As a consequence of these steps having been taken we are beginning to get the first glimmerings of the kinds of intensification of this problem from the first releases of data on the 1970 census. What they indicate in brief, over-all perspective is that the out-migration of whites from central cities to the suburbs has, if anything, accelerated in volume if not in percentage terms in the last ten years as compared with the previous decade. In the Chicago area for instance, between 1950 and 1960, the city of Chicago lost 400,000 whites. The out-migration was substantially higher than this. It was 600,000. But that loss was masked by the fact that there were 200,000 excess white births over deaths in the city of Chicago in that decade. So, when one talks about net figures, one fails to take into account the total volume of the outward migration. In that same decade, about 35,000 blacks moved out to the suburbs. The percentage increase in the black population in the six counties of Northeastern Illinois was 1/10 of 1 per cent in ten years! The percentage of blacks in the suburban ring around Chicago rose from 2.8 per cent to 2.9 per cent. If blacks were distributed in proportion to total numbers in the Chicago metropolitan area there would be 14

or 15 per cent black residents in the suburban ring. Blacks constituted 1/7 of the total metropolitan population in 1960 but they constituted 1/4 of the population of Chicago, and 1/33 of the population of the suburban ring!

In the past decade, between 1960 and 1970, the net decline of whites from central city has increased (from 400,000 in the previous decade) to 505,000. And the out-migration of blacks increased from some 35,000 (1950-60) to 48,000 in that decade producing a percentage rise in the black population in the suburban ring of from 2.9 per cent to something less than 3.5 per cent.

As one looks at these data one increasingly comprehends the kind of declining proportion of whites in central city and the declining vitality of those who are there; for in the 1960 census the median age of white females as compared to black females showed a difference of 11 years (approximately 25 years as the median age for blacks and 36 years for whites). What this signifies in terms of national trends and national averages is suggested by the fact that the median age for marriage for all women in the U.S. is slightly in excess of 20 years. (One-half of America's women are married by the time they are 20 1/2 years of age.) They bear their last child when they are 28. This means that for increasingly large numbers of them they re-enter the job market at the age of 34 when their youngest child enters school. Thus, Chicago's white women at a median age of 36 would have substantially completed child-bearing, would be less vital, and with less potential for significantly altering these distributions. As of the 1960 census, 31 per cent of the white population of Chicago was made up of persons under 20

years of age. And this also shows the direction of the demographic transitions that are taking place. It should be understood that when one looks at median levels of income in the city of Chicago, the average black family received about 62 per cent of the income earned by a white family. And, at least between the years of 1960 and 1966, the relative economic positions of these two groups, white and black, declined for blacks. Their percentage income dropped by 1 per cent as a proportion of the income of whites. What the data will show for 1970 is still uncertain. But I think we can be fairly confident that it has not risen above two-thirds of the average white income. And very frequently that black family income is based upon the greater likelihood of two workers contributing to it, husband and wife, than is to be found in the white family comparably measured in the census materials.

We can turn now to some of the larger perspectives across the nation, enabling us to see in rather general terms the significance of some of the trend in metropolitan America. I shall be excerpting from the publication titled Changes in Urban America, contrasting central cities and their suburbs, issued in 1969 by the Department of Labor. Let me indicate to you some of the highlights of that particular report. A very substantial number of suburbs have a population in excess of 50,000 persons, although they are defined as suburbs: Skokie, Oak Park, Evanston, Arlington Heights, would be typical of this kind of fiction that the self-defined suburban "community/village" is the reality described in the word "suburb." The suburbs are not so much a return to rurality as some people mistakenly assume, though they may be searching for that. Suburbs

represent a kind of achieved urbanization, in the sense that much higher proportions of the population moving into the suburbs or living in the suburbs have those indicators representative of urbanization--higher education, occupancy, and income.

The largest commuter groups to the core city in the metropolitan area are not drawn from the suburban population. For commuters who board a bus, streetcar, or climb in their cars to go to work, the largest group is not suburb-to-city commuting as we sometimes assume. The largest commuter group lives in the central city. Some 45 per cent of all of those who commute to work in the central city, come from the central city itself. The commuting from one suburb to another for employment is greater in the metropolitan areas than from the suburbs to the central city. The percentage of those who commute from one suburb to another is 30 per cent of the total commuter group. The percentage commuting from suburb to city is 16 per cent. And the percentage commuting from central city to suburb, the reverse flow, is 9 per cent. So that when you look at it as a total group of commuters, the most mobil group (to get to work) is made up of central city commuters, 45 per cent commuting to work in the city itself and 9 per cent out to the suburbs - 54 per cent - and this is some approximate representation of the kind of distribution of population that we have--55 per cent in the central city, 45 per cent in the suburbs, as of the 1960 census.

In the 1960 census, 57 per cent of the population of the total metropolitan area lived in Chicago and 43 per cent in the outer ring, the rest of Cook County, and the other five counties of Northeastern Illinois. Yet, 75 per cent of the job opportunities were in the

suburbs. The suburbs had 43 per cent of the population, but 25 per cent of the job opportunities. (In the intervening years, the suburban population has come to outrun central city population in metropolitan area.) But the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission has estimated that in 1980 when it expects that 60 per cent of the total metropolitan population will be living in the suburbs, 60 per cent of the job opportunities will still be lodged in the central city. This indicates that 3 out of 5 jobs will still be lodged in the central city, although 3 out of 5 people will be living in the suburbs.

These jobs are undergoing a kind of transformation. Manufacturing has increasingly been suburbanized. The highly specialized professional concentrations continue to be in the central business area particularly concentrated around the Loop. That central core of the land area of the city of Chicago from Roosevelt Road on the south, to the Drake Hotel on Oak Street on the north, and west to the Chicago River represent about 1/3000 of the land area of Chicago, but it holds over 10 per cent of the assessed valuation of the entire city. It is a "white man's island" and, in employment, increasingly a "white man's island." Still, the majority of jobs inside and outside the central city require no more than a high school education.

There is no greater myth than the assumption that the suburbs are populated by highly educated people and that the jobs in the suburbs demand and have highly educated people filling them. There is no more extensively believed myth than the notion that the U.S. is characterized by a highly educated people. For if one looks at the data on education, despite the fact that we have democratized college education vastly more than any other nation, the statistics

on higher education are remarkably surprising. It is important to understand that although we have added significantly to the proportion of college age students in college over the last two generations, we still lag educationally. In 1900, 4 per cent of those of eligible age were in college, one in 25 persons. In the depression decade of the 1930's (and I was in college in the latter part of that decade), 12 per cent of my peers were in college: one in every eight persons of my age. What that means is any time you look at a man today who is 45 or 50 years of age, or over, you are looking at someone who in 7 out of 8 cases does not have a college degree and who is occupying a position in which he may very well be the "last of the Mohicans." For, in terms of current standards, he is defined as holding a position that must now be held by a college-educated man.

As a personnel manager of a large oil company told me of going about the country to check on the qualifications of geologists, petroleum chemists, and so forth, he said, "I go back to my hotel room in the evening after being on the campus and in the loneliness there I can smile as I think back over the day because I have said to some of these bright-eyed young men who tell me they have a 2.7 average, 'Is that on a 3 point scale or a 4 point scale?' I smile because I did not finish high school and I understand very well that no one else will ever fill my position who is not a high school graduate."

I am not at all suggesting that a college education conveys wisdom. I know that this is not so. I teach college students every day and relatively few are alert and fewer are wise. But I think if nothing more, college gives one some sense of ambiguity in the world, some sense of complexity and some tolerance for these things.

One is not likely to assume that there are simple solutions to complex problems. I don't know what your experiences have been, but I have found that those who propose simple solutions characteristically are prone to simple-mindedness that they exhibit with a remarkable kind of consistency.

If you think I exaggerate the problem, I would only note for you that as of 1969 for the white population 25 years of age and over, 45.1 per cent of the whites had less than a high school education. For the black population, 69.9 per cent had less than a high school education. And in both instances, I read into those statistics something of a concern. For to begin to grapple with the issues and the difficulties of today's world, higher education and a more demanding kind of education seem increasingly to be needed.

The diversity of city and suburbs is also seriously in error. For the stereotype holds that cities are simply populated by the poor, most of whom are on welfare. The fact on a national basis, however, is that cities have about the same national proportions of the poor as non-cities, about 20-25 per cent. The poverty is more intensive in the city, more a consequence of suffering because of the differential in living costs, but in absolute terms of income it tends to be no different as compared with the rest of the country. One-half of the poor live outside metropolitan areas altogether.

It is additionally assumed that AFDC recipients, Aid to Families with Dependent Children recipients range from 1 in 100 people in Houston to 8 1/2 people per 100 in Baltimore; 7 1/2 per 100 in New York; 3 in 100 in Washington D.C., which is the city with the highest concentration of blacks in the country. It is also believed

that unemployment is the single most important corollary of poverty. But for the largest 20 cities from this report, Changes in Urban America, "The unemployed are much less numerous than the employed poor. Those who work all year at low pay and often have few prospects of promotion, many more families are poor than have unemployed workers."

It is additionally assumed that in large cities of 250,000 and over crimes known to the police and reported represent disproportionately high numbers of crimes against persons. The fact of the matter is that of such crimes reported in 1967, crimes against the person were 6/10 of 1 per cent of all crimes, about 1 in 200. In all cities regardless of size, serious crimes against the person like murder, manslaughter, rape, robbery, assault, were 3/10 of 1 per cent of all crimes, or 1 in 400.

Turning specifically to Chicago, I think the implications of the future in terms of these indicators cannot be prophesied, although prophecy seems to be the secret temptation--and sometimes sin--of social scientists. The Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission suggested that if the rates of change for white children under 18 years of age between 1950-1960 in Chicago were to persist till 1980 that in 1980, 94 per cent of all white children under 18 years of age would be living in the suburbs and 6 per cent would be in the central city. Those rates of change have not held to quite the same degree as between 1950 and 1960, but if the school crisis continues to worsen--and perhaps some of you have heard the report that 6,000 of the school teachers in New York City will be fired by next year, 1/10 of the teaching population in New York--the precipitous flight of whites to suburbs, very much linked with the quality or non-quality

of the schools, that out-migration will fulfill that bleak statistic of the racial separations of whites and blacks. I do not have to elaborate that in terms of the course of black separatism and black consolidation on the part of blacks themselves to resist the inclination, sometimes invitation, of whites now to come out of the suburbs. The great likelihood is that blacks will determine in increasing proportions in the city to remain and consolidate, however meaningless it becomes, the political base of power that their numbers assure. While the black middle class continues to expand, it seems less and less willing to move to the suburbs.

This is very likely the last election for many years to come in which a white man will be elected Mayor of Chicago. Blacks constituted 2 per cent of the Census population in Chicago in 1900, 4 per cent in 1920, 14 per cent in 1950, 24 per cent in 1960, and 32.6 per cent in 1970. This seems to represent some underrepresentation of blacks, particularly young black males. The figure is probably in excess of 35 per cent. Even though in 1979 black people will not constitute a majority of those eligible voting age, they did not constitute a majority in Gary, Indiana or in Cleveland, Ohio either when they elected black Mayors. And unless there would be a very strong division of black votes, the next Mayor of Chicago will most assuredly be black--at the latest, 1983.

A comment like this, curiously, in the minds of some persons, stirs up some concern and some fear. Will the incivility, the discrimination, and the harassment that whites have visited upon blacks over such a sustained period of time in the city of Chicago be reversed? I think that is unlikely, for the overwhelming majority

of blacks seem to respond to the pain they have known, not with a spirit of revenge, but with an even deeper commitment to justice and to fair treatment. But then, temptation is always present; this nobility need not persist; the black statesman need not be candidate or elected official. The black racist revenge-seeker may achieve the victory as against the statesman.

And so, as the Committee for Economic Development has indicated and suggested, there is increasing talk about "saving our suburbs" by drawing pie-shaped lines into the central city on a county-wide basis to dilute black voting strength and then to administer, still from a position of white institutional power, services to people within the black ghetto in manageable numbers and manageable units. Much of the demand for this kind of political realignment seems to be motivated by that racism which assumes that the way to deal with black people is to deal with them forever from a position of white majoritarian domination.

A recent article in the American Institute of Planners Journal, January, 1970, states the dilemma of cities and suburbs rather well: (by Paul and Linda Davidoff and Neil Newton Gold entitled "Suburban Action: Advocate Planning for an Open Society," pp. 12-21) "Present efforts to solve the urban crisis . . . (are) based on a false assumption that because the problems of race and poverty are found in the ghettos of urban America, the solution to these problems must also be found there. . . . The resources needed to solve the urban poverty program--land, money, and jobs--are presently in scarce supply in the inner cities. They exist in substantial supply in suburban areas but are not being utilized . . .

over the last two decades 80 per cent of the new jobs created in the nation's large metropolitan areas have been located in their suburban rings . . . in the nation's 20 largest urban areas 99 per cent of the vacant land lies outside of core cities . . . if present trends continue, 80 per cent of future urban employment growth in large metropolitan areas will take place in the suburbs . . . urban mass transit linkages are insufficient to overcome the barriers that separate the unemployed in central cities from suburban job areas. . . . Restrictive zoning and land use controls in suburban areas" (for example, minimum lot and house size requirements, restrictive sub-division regulations and unduly expensive building standards) "constitute the principal barrier preventing the development of job-linked moderate cost housing in the suburbs . . . less than 15 per cent of the household population in the United States can afford housing at \$30,000 . . . (one in seven persons can buy a home costing \$30,000 in terms of conventional definition of appropriate income with regard to total housing cost. In this instance, for the \$30,000 home one must have an annual income of \$12,000 a year) the potential of the suburbs for solving national problems has not yet been grasped by public and private agencies, nor by the majority of the public. . . .

"Each locality assumes that its behavior affects only its own residents. Each local government assumes the burden of protecting the rights and privileges of its own residents only. Unwritten local rules of debate preclude even the mention of the name of the central city in whose metropolitan hinterland the debate is taking place."

Remember Chicago? Chicago, that city that gives meaning to the existence of the suburb? For the social, economic, and historical fact is that every suburb location owes its existence to the prior fact and the continuing fact of the central city existence. That is to say, a suburb is in an essentially parasitic relationship to the central city. There would be no Lake Forest if there were not a Chicago. There would be no Grosse Point, Michigan if there were not a Detroit. There would be no Oyster Bay if there were not a New York City. There would be no Cambridge if there were not a Boston. Norton E. Long provides us with an appropriate closing quote. As professor of Political Science at Northwestern University, he wrote "Concern for the future of the city in its most serious aspect is concern for our capacity to provide meaningful roles for citizenship. The threat of the eroded central city and the crazy triviality of suburbia is a threat to destroy the potential of our maintaining and restructuring meaningful communities at the local level. What has been treated as a threat to our physical well-being is in reality a threat to our capacity to sustain an active local civic life. The lack of significant political structure in the metropolitan areas leads to an easy ethic of escapism. (Norton E. Long, "Citizenship or Consumership in Metropolitan Areas," in Scott Greer et al., The New Urbanization, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1968, pp. 372-373.)

I leave to your own judgment whether a rather troubling motif in the Chicago metropolitan area is or is not triviality, is or is not escapism. I do not know what meaning you derive from the news last week that over 900,000 Chicago metropolitan residents went to

McCormick Place to see the new cars, the way the chrome and tail lights, in all their vulgarity, will be arranged for the coming year. About 1 in every 7 persons in the metropolitan area crossed to the promised land to look at the new array of models and to stand in reverential silence, as they sit in such reverential silence in front of their T.V. screens. What we are concerned with is the need to try to meet that default of civic responsibility that involves the very continuation, the very survival, of this society. To say this, I think, is not overly dramatic; for if these festering conditions and problems continue, then we can with increasing concern realize the direction in which we are headed.

I conclude by taking a brief note from Paul Richard, author of The Scourge of Christ (1929): "When the rich assemble to concern themselves with the business of the poor, it is called charity. When the poor assemble to concern themselves with the business of the rich, it is called anarchy."

QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD

Question

Your figures on people going from one suburb to another to work - do you have any information on transportation? Are they all driving cars?

Answer

I don't have specific information on the kind of inter-suburban movement described. The overwhelming majority, perhaps 90 per cent, probably commute by private transportation. The declining base of public transportation for the last few years

assures me that my estimate is fairly accurate.

Question

Do you see the problem as basically black and white or do you have statistics on Spanish-speaking and poor and migrant whites?

Answer

Yes, the problem is basically black and white. What we call the non-white population is, in the city of Chicago, 96 per cent black. Two caveats are necessary there. One is it should be remembered that all persons of Mexican-American background since 1930 have been defined by the Census Bureau as white, arbitrarily placed in the "white" category. High proportions of Mexican-Americans are actually of mixed racial background. They are a mixture of Mongoloid, that is Indians, and Caucasoid background--that is, Spanish Caucasians and Indian Mongolians. Although high proportions of these are of this racial mixture, Mestizos, they are arbitrarily assigned to the white population.

Two-thirds to four-fifths of the so-called black population is also racially mixed, a mixture which took place without benefit of love, decency, marriage. White men during slavery did not object to race mixing; white men objected to quite different things-- marriage, love, decency. Any "black" person in America who looks at himself in the mirror usually sees that he is brown; that he carries within his genes the mark of some white man's immorality. And the irony is that that racially mixed population is arbitrarily assigned to the black population. You never look to logic in such racial phenomena; you look rather for the kind of implied absurdity that is there.

The proportions of "non-whites" in Chicago would be higher by 100,000 persons or more if Mexican-Americans were arbitrarily assigned to the non-white category. American Indians, who are Mongoloid (or yellow) by race, in Chicago constitute perhaps 16,000 to 20,000. Appalachians probably make up 70,000 to 100,000. These are small as compared with the black population, which is almost 1,200,000 in the city of Chicago.

We are, then, talking about factors other than race. But race has taken on such pathological meaning in our society that the tensions that would otherwise be present are exacerbated by the non-encounter, because people of different races are residentially segregated from one another, of black and white people who often only know each other only in terms of abstractions, antagonistic abstractions. This is the real danger.