

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

60078

August 17, 1965

Mr. Louis Hennes
8738 N. Harding Ave.
Skokie, Illinois 60077

Dear Mr. Hennes:

Thank you for taking the time to express your views on the activities of the North Shore Summer Project and the problems which have prompted its activities.

While these problems are so complex that they cannot be adequately discussed in a letter, I would like to call several points to your attention:

- (1) In the Commission's meetings with NSSP representatives, the latter acknowledged the right of a home-owner to sell his home to a buyer of his choice. As long as it is a legal right, it will be supported by the Commission.
- (2) The Commission has no intention of fostering or condoning the creation of a Negro ghetto in Skokie.
- (3) The Commission believes, as most Americans do, that every human being, regardless of color, has a right to be judged as an individual on his own merits and behavior, and should not be stereotyped; and that everyone has an equal right to seek housing consistent with his socio-economic status, whether such housing is urban or suburban.

Our Commission has given and is continuing to give considerable attention to the formulation of policies in this difficult area, and has consulted the most knowledgeable authorities available in seeking solutions in the best long-range interests of our community. In the last analysis, however, any workable solution must depend on the understanding of citizens like yourself. We ask your continuing thoughtful cooperation in solving our common problems.

Very truly yours,

Herman S. Bloch, Chairman,
Skokie Human Relations Commission

cc: Dr. Mundy, Mr. Perille, Mr. Marsh

*Forward to
Alvin Bloch*

August 14, 1965

Skokie Human Relations Commission
Skokie Village Hall
5127 Oakton
Skokie, Ill.

Gentlemen:

I am a working man who must spend most of my time at my place of employment, and have little time to participate in "demonstrations" or political activities. Therefore, I am writing this letter as a means of expressing my opinions regarding the North Shore Summer Project, and sincerely hope that as a resident of Skokie, my statements will receive your consideration. I wish to state that although my home is not presently for sale, I will positively not consider its sale to a Negro buyer at any time. I also respectfully request that you oppose the activities of the NSSP and similar organizations for the following reasons:

First and foremost, when a man has worked hard all his life so that he could afford to buy a home, he should have the unquestioned right to dispose of his property to whomever and whenever he chooses. It is unthinkable that he should be subjected to harassment for resisting any attempts to abridge this right. The Illinois State Legislature has justified and vindicated the home owners' rights by voting down a proposed open occupancy bill.

My neighbors and I do not want our community to degenerate into another infamous Fillmore District. Wherever Negroes move in large numbers, the neighborhood rapidly deteriorates into a crime-ridden slum with conditions resembling those of Fillmore. This does not happen only in isolated instances. This pattern of deterioration has been repeated throughout innumerable neighborhoods both in Chicago and the rest of the country. The old Douglas Park District in Chicago is a prime example. Landlords, real estate agencies, or society cannot be held responsible for the conditions which Negroes themselves create.

I do not want my children to associate with Negroes, not merely because of racial reasons, but because a disproportionate number of Negro youths (as compared with the total population) have a callous and criminal attitude towards law and order and other people's property. This attitude is also engendered and encouraged by the conduct of their parents. Although recent events in many large cities have amply substantiated the truth of my statements, the Negro potential for crime and violence is nothing new. The general public is just becoming aware of this trend, but it was my unfortunate experience to become acquainted with these criminal tendencies as long as 30 years ago when I attended Chicago public schools located in a predominantly Negro neighborhood.

Do not think that because I survived my youth in a Negro neighborhood, then other White children could do so also. The fact is that I am lucky to be alive today. I may say without exaggeration or trying to be facetious that I received my combat training long before my military service, and I still bear scars on my body from the knife wounds I received to prove it. I am certain that this is not the kind of life you would want for your children. Neither did I buy a home in Skokie so that I or my children could repeat the bitter experiences of my youth in Chicago. The three 'Rs' with which I want my children to become familiar are "Reading, 'Riting, and 'Rithmetic," not Razors, Rape, and Robbery. I assume that this is also true of most other law-abiding citizens with children.

Thank you for reading my letter.

Yours truly,

Louis Hennes

Louis Hennes
8738 N. Harding Ave.
Skokie, Ill. 60077

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

December 2, 1965

Mr. Louis Hennes
8738 N. Harding Ave.
Skokie, Illinois 60077

Dear Mr. Hennes:

Your letter of November 27th shows a number of misconceptions regarding the intentions of the Commission and the proposals I presented to the Village Board on November 22nd.

Certainly, the Commission does not propose to "bulldoze, intimidate, threaten or high-pressure" anyone into selling his home to a Negro or anyone else; nor does it expect "a written explanation," either to the real estate broker or the HRC, from any homeowner who chooses to sell on a restricted basis. It requests only a copy of the written instructions regarding the sale which the owner sends to his agent. The Commission's report very carefully points out the right of a homeowner to sell to a buyer of his choice, and the Commission's intention to respect that right.

We believe that no matter what the HRC does or does not do, Negroes will from time to time move into Skokie and the other suburbs of Chicago. We are convinced that our program offers reasonable assurance that their movement into the suburbs will follow a pattern which will leave the character of our suburban communities -- which you so aptly describe as "clean, quiet, crime-free and desirable" -- largely unchanged; and it is our purpose to educate the community to these desirable consequences of equal housing opportunity, as well as the undesirable consequences of restricted housing, which leads to the residential pattern of Chicago and other northern cities.

I have attempted to clarify briefly some of the misunderstandings evident in your letter. Rather than engage in detailed and protracted written discussion, however, I would like to invite you to attend the next Commission meeting, where you may, if you wish, present your views to the whole Commission and in turn hear a fuller explanation of our views. Our meeting will be held in Village Hall on December 16th at 8 P.M., in the Conference Room on the second floor. I look forward to meeting you then.

Very truly yours,

Wm. J. Block, Chairman

November 27, 1965

Mr. Herman S. Bloch, Chairman
Skokie Human Relations Commission
5127 Oakton Street
Skokie, Ill.

Dear Sir:

Last August, I wrote to you concerning my reasons for opposing open occupancy. My reasons were based on my experiences as a former resident of a predominantly Negro neighborhood. Your reply of Aug. 17, 1965, advocated equal housing rights and expressed lofty but unrealistic ideals in connection with these rights. The ideals which you advocated completely ignored and side-stepped the sad and unpleasant facts of Negro occupancy which I outlined in my letter. It seems to be a common and rather well-known fact that those who have never lived amongst Negroes and who do not intend to, are always in favor of open occupancy (for other people's communities, that is). I assume that you have not had much experience or close association with Negroes in general, or enjoyed the benefits of a Fillmore District upbringing such as mine. That is the only reason I can think of for your strong support of open occupancy at the Skokie Village Board meetings. ←

Judging from your explanation of HRC policies at the Village Board meetings, homeowners are to be bulldozed into selling to Negroes whether it is their desire or not. If the homeowner refuses to sell to a Negro, he must give a written explanation both to the realtor and to the HRC. Although you stated that the village would uphold the legal rights of the homeowner, it can be assumed that the HRC would then apply pressure on the "guilty" homeowner to force him to change his mind. Please be advised that my home is not for sale now or at any future time to Negroes. If I should decide to sell, it will be to whomever I choose, and I am not legally required to give the HRC any reasons or explanations for my choice. ✓ ←

I have moved three times to avoid living in the type of environment which Negroes as a class usually engender. Skokie was my last move; I am tired of running and am not going to run again. I will not be bulldozed, intimidated, threatened, or high-pressured into selling my home to a Negro regardless of any actions by the HRC or other do-gooders who speak but who know not whereof they speak.

I consider your quote "those who do nothing are inviting shame as well as violence," is very significant, and is in fact the keynote of the entire open occupancy program. Since I and other homeowners have done nothing to be ashamed of, I must assume that you are suggesting the possibility of violence by Negroes if your recommendations are not followed. Let me assure you that I (and probably many others) are well prepared for such an eventuality. One Fillmore District in my life was more than enough and I will do whatever I have to do to protect my personal safety and that of my family. May I also advise you that I am not alone in this decision; neither am I a crank or fanatic. There are many other residents of Skokie who share my sentiments, and misleading statements by the NSSP last summer definitely did not represent their opinions.

In conclusion, I believe that Skokie is a clean, quiet, crime-free, and desirable community in which to reside. I wish it to remain so, and I believe that this is also your wish. Therefore, I respectfully request that you consider the statements included in this and in my previous letter with a view towards modifying your open occupancy policies.

Yours truly,

Louis Hennes

Louis Hennes
8738 N. Harding Ave.
Skokie, Ill. 60077

MEMO FROM THE DESK OF MAYOR SMITH

TO: Dr. Herman Bloch

DATE: 5/12/66

I would appreciate your answering this letter and send me a copy. Thank you.

Am also enclosing your proper appointment card as Chairman of the Human Relations Commission. (instead of Co-Chairman)



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

VILLAGE OF SKOKIE
5127 OAKTON STREET
SKOKIE, ILLINOIS 60078

ALBERT J. SMITH
MAYOR

May 12, 1966

Mr. Louis Hennes
8738 No. Harding
Skokie, Illinois

Dear Mr. Hennes:

Received your letter dated May 6 and have referred same to our Dr. Herman Bloch, Chairman of the Human Relations Commission for comment.

Sincerely,

Albert J. Smith

AJS:mc

cc: Dr. Herman Bloch

May 6, 1966

Mayor Albert J. Smith
Skokie Village Hall
5127 Oakton
Skokie, Ill.

Dear Sir:

According to the Life Newspaper, one of the accomplishments which you claimed for your first year in office was establishment of a human relations commission. The main activity of this commission seems to be the promotion of an open housing policy in Skokie. However, according to a 1966 National Issues Poll which I have received from Cong. Donald Rumsfeld, the residents of the 13th District are opposed to open housing by a ratio of 2 to 1. Therefore, it is obvious that the human relations commission is acting against the wishes of a majority of Skokie residents.

I and many others do not consider the establishment of a human relations commission to promote open housing as an accomplishment. I voted for you during the last election, but you may be assured that I and my family, and friends, will remember who not to vote for at the next election.

Yours truly,

Louis Hennes

Louis Hennes
8738 N. Harding
Skokie, Ill. 60076

LIFE 12/16/65

to the editor

Reader disputes NSSP claim

TO THE EDITOR:

"To whom it may concern: Public statements made by Wm. Moyer of the N.S.S.P. do not necessarily reflect my opinions or those of my neighbors. L. HENNESS."

I placed the above ad in the Chicago Tribune. The ad was paid for by myself and 50 other Skokie homeowners whose opinions on open occupancy I solicited. If I had the time, I probably could have found many more homeowners who oppose open occupancy; however, I am a man who must work to support his family, not a paid agitator and troublemaker such as the NSSP representatives.

The point I wish to make is that the 50 homeowners who helped pay for the ad were not part of the "majority" which the NSSP falsely claimed were in favor of open occupancy. According to your own report (Dec. 2 issue, Section I, page 3), the NSSP interviewed only 2,000 homeowners in the entire North Shore, but the population of Skokie alone is over 59,000. Neither were the 2,000 homeowners who were interviewed broken down into categories of those who were in favor and those who were opposed to open occupancy. Do you consider this a fair cross-section of majority opinion?

If you really believe that a majority of Skokie residents are in favor of open housing or realty sales on a non-re-

stricted basis, then why doesn't your newspaper suggest that a public referendum be held on this matter? I am sure you won't because you know that the facts differ considerably from the misleading NSSP-sponsored propaganda which you would have your readers believe.

Louis Henness,
Skokie

DONALD RUMSFELD
REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS
13TH DISTRICT, ILLINOIS

COMMITTEES AND SUBCOMMITTEES:
SCIENCE AND ASTRONAUTICS
MANNED SPACE FLIGHT
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
FOREIGN OPERATIONS AND
GOVERNMENT INFORMATION
LEGAL AND MONETARY AFFAIRS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.
April, 1966

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
ROOM 241, CANNON BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515
CODE 202, 225-3711

13TH DISTRICT, ILLINOIS
TOWNSHIPS OF:
BARRINGTON NILES
ELK GROVE NORTHFIELD
EVANSTON PALATINE
HANOVER SCHAUMBURG
NEW TRIER WHEELING
CHICAGO, 50TH WARD

Dear Friends:

The response to the annual National Issues Poll was excellent again this year. To date, we have received over 25,000 completed questionnaires. There were a number who included additional comments and letters with the returns, and, although it is not possible to acknowledge each comment individually, I have read them with great interest. Thank you for taking the time to complete and return the 1966 Poll.

There were several recurring comments on the returned questionnaires with regard to the Poll, and I thought it might be of interest to briefly outline the mechanics of such a mailing.

As those who have visited my Washington office know, I have a staff of ten--the maximum number under the law--working long days to keep up with the tremendous workload generated by a large and interested District such as ours, and to provide the high level of service and assistance which is our goal. Apart from the questionnaire, an average of 700 letters a week leave my Washington office. We receive hundreds of visitors annually, respond to requests for a whole spectrum of information and assistance, issue periodic newsletters, press releases, and radio tapes. The legislative duties on bills, reports and committee work take a major portion of our time. Work on projects such as questionnaires must be done in addition to other office activity.

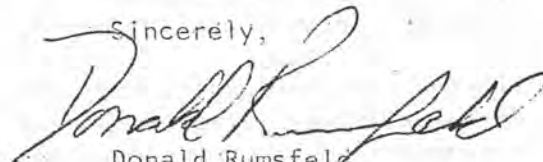
The questionnaire is drafted soon after the Session convenes. Every effort is made to word the questions objectively. Each Post Office in our District is contacted to secure an up-to-date list of route numbers and residential deliveries from that office within the boundaries of the 13th District. Tags and labels must be made for each Post Office, and each route within that Post Office. The envelopes are counted, bagged, and tagged, so that the local Post Office can simply hand to the postman on a given route, "x" number of envelopes addressed to POSTAL PATRON LOCAL -- one for each delivery. In the 13th District, this amounts to 160,000.

Returns are delivered by the mailbag--mixed with regular mail. My staff sorts and opens the mail, sets aside those questionnaires with requests, comments, and letters, and addresses return envelopes to the 25 thousand who request copies of the tabulation. If the questionnaires are sealed or stapled, it takes hours longer to open them. The cost of such an undertaking is also a problem, and to send two to each family, as some have suggested, would be prohibitive.

For representative government to work effectively, there must be a continuous two-way flow of information between Washington, D. C. and the District. Toward this end, the poll is well worth the time, effort, and cost if it is informative, stimulates discussion and thought, points out topics where a lack of information exists, and encourages comment and communication from residents of our 13th District. Certainly, the response this year indicates that the poll has served its purpose.

I appreciate your completing the poll and always welcome your individual letters and notes. I hope you will keep this avenue of communication open. I look forward to hearing from you throughout the year on matters of mutual concern and interest.

Sincerely,


Donald Rumsfeld,
Representative in Congress

RESULTS OF 1966 NATIONAL ISSUES POLL

	<u>%</u> <u>YES</u>	<u>%</u> <u>NO</u>	<u>% NO</u> <u>ANSWER</u>
1. <u>FOREIGN AFFAIRS</u> - Do you favor:			
a. U. S. aid to assist foreign nations in controlling rapidly growing populations?.....	<u>72.6</u>	<u>24.7</u>	<u>2.7</u>
b. U. S. trade in food with Communist nations?.....	<u>38.8</u>	<u>58.0</u>	<u>3.2</u>
c. U. S. trade in industrial goods with Communist nations?.....	<u>20.7</u>	<u>75.8</u>	<u>3.5</u>
d. A greater role for Congress in matters affecting foreign policy and national security?.....	<u>78.5</u>	<u>17.8</u>	<u>3.7</u>
2. <u>VIET NAM</u> - Do you favor:			
a. Spending an additional \$12.8 billion this year on the war in Viet Nam?.....	<u>54.9</u>	<u>36.2</u>	<u>8.9</u>
b. Withdrawal of U. S. troops from Viet Nam?.....	<u>17.5</u>	<u>76.4</u>	<u>6.1</u>
c. Bombing North Viet Nam's industrial centers and harbors?.....	<u>68.1</u>	<u>24.7</u>	<u>7.2</u>
d. Requesting U.N. mediation of Viet Nam war?.....	<u>65.5</u>	<u>28.6</u>	<u>5.9</u>
e. Terminating U. S. foreign aid to nations which trade with the Communist North Vietnamese?.....	<u>81.0</u>	<u>15.1</u>	<u>3.9</u>
3. Do you feel that Postal Service has improved in the last 5 years?.....	<u>33.0</u>	<u>60.3</u>	<u>6.7</u>
4. <u>DOMESTIC</u> - Do you favor:			
a. Creation of a Federal Cabinet-rank Department of Transportation?.....	<u>43.0</u>	<u>48.5</u>	<u>8.5</u>
b. Legislation to require sellers to give accurate estimates of total interest charges to purchasers (Truth-in-Lending)?.....	<u>91.0</u>	<u>7.2</u>	<u>1.8</u>
c. A Constitutional amendment to set aside the Supreme Court decision curbing prayer and Bible reading in public schools?.....	<u>57.7</u>	<u>39.5</u>	<u>2.8</u>
d. Legislation regulating packaging and labeling of consumer goods (Truth-in-Packaging)?.....	<u>87.5</u>	<u>10.5</u>	<u>2.0</u>
e. Continuation of the Federal Government's 'war on poverty'?.....	<u>34.9</u>	<u>60.4</u>	<u>4.7</u>
5. <u>CIVIL RIGHTS</u> - Do you favor:			
a. President Johnson's proposal to prevent discrimination in the sale or rental of private housing?.....	<u>31.5</u>	<u>64.0</u>	<u>4.5</u>
b. Federal enforcement of non-discriminatory jury selections?.....	<u>63.4</u>	<u>32.2</u>	<u>4.4</u>
c. Federal protection of civil rights workers?.....	<u>45.8</u>	<u>49.2</u>	<u>5.0</u>
6. Do you favor a greater Federal effort on problems of air and water pollution?.....	<u>88.0</u>	<u>10.1</u>	<u>1.9</u>
7. <u>LABOR</u> - Do you favor:			
a. Increasing the minimum wage from \$1.25 to \$1.50 per hour?.....	<u>45.8</u>	<u>50.3</u>	<u>3.9</u>
b. Establishing Federal standards and regulations for unemployment compensation?.....	<u>45.3</u>	<u>48.9</u>	<u>5.8</u>
c. Legislation to deal with strikes which threaten irreparable damage to the national interest?.....	<u>88.3</u>	<u>9.7</u>	<u>2.0</u>
8. Do you favor the Dirksen Constitutional amendment to set aside the Supreme Court decision requiring that all State legislative districts be apportioned on the basis of population only?.....	<u>58.1</u>	<u>34.8</u>	<u>7.1</u>
9. <u>TAXES</u> - Do you favor:			
a. President Johnson's proposal to raise excise taxes on telephone service and automobiles by \$4.8 billion in 1967?.....	<u>23.7</u>	<u>73.1</u>	<u>3.2</u>
b. Limited tax credits for expenses of higher education?.....	<u>78.4</u>	<u>19.2</u>	<u>2.4</u>
c. Tax credits for firms sponsoring job training programs for unskilled and unemployed workers (Human Investment Act)?.....	<u>72.3</u>	<u>24.7</u>	<u>3.0</u>
d. Tax deductions for limited contributions to political campaigns?.....	<u>36.0</u>	<u>60.8</u>	<u>3.2</u>

May 15, 1966

Mr. Louis Hennes
8738 N. Harding
Skokie, Illinois 60076

Dear Mr. Hennes:

Mayor Smith has referred your letter of May 6th to me for reply.

It is apparent that neither our correspondence of last August and December, nor the extensive discussions which the Commission held with you on December 16th last year, have changed your mind regarding our program of equal housing opportunity. We are still convinced that this program is for the best long-range interests of Skokie and its residents, for the reasons which we previously explained to you and which are set forth in our pamphlet, "Your Home and Skokie's Future."

It is, of course, your privilege to disagree. I do not think, however, that your views are those of most Skokians. Our Commission comprises a broad cross-section of people of varied backgrounds, education, occupation, politics, religions, and economic strata - yet, having spent months studying this problem, we are all agreed on the desirability of our program.

You cite Cong. Rumsfeld's survey as indicating that "the residents of the 13th District are opposed to open housing by a ratio of 2 to 1. Therefore, it is obvious that the human relations commission is acting against the wishes of a majority of Skokie residents." I do not draw the same conclusions from Cong. Rumsfeld's survey. In the first place, he sent out 160,000 questionnaires, and got about 25,000 replies - only about 15%, probably from those who felt most strongly about the issues involved. Secondly, the population of Skokie is not typical of the entire 13th Congressional district. Finally, Cong. Rumsfeld did not ask an opinion on open housing; his question was "Do you favor Pres. Johnson's proposal to prevent discrimination in the sale or rental of private housing?" People who favor open housing, but are against Pres. Johnson's specific proposal for a variety of reasons (for example, intrusion of the Federal government into an area which should be state-controlled) would vote "No" on such a question.

But regardless of local opinion on this matter, I cannot support the view that any citizen's basic constitutional rights should be subject to local option - and I think that on further

thought you would agree with me. Today you may be one of a majority - tomorrow you may be one of a minority. Would you like your right to equal treatment under the law subject to local vote? That way is the direction of mob rule, not constitutional law.

One last point. Mayor Smith and the present trustees did not establish the Human Relations Commission, as your letter states. The Commission was created by a Village ordinance in June, 1961, several years before the present administration was elected. At the time the Commission approved its policy of equal housing opportunity, a majority of its members were "holdovers" appointed by the previous administration.

I hope that, as you continue to think and study further the whole subject of individual rights, you will come to the conclusion that the Commission's views are worthy of your support.

Very truly yours,

Herman S. Bloch, Chairman,
Skokie Human Relations Commission

cc: Mayor Smith

from left to right

Numbers-nerve

TO THE EDITOR:

I have recently received the results of 1966 National Issues Poll from Cong. Donald Rumsfeld. These results were compiled from over 25,000 completed questionnaires which were submitted to residents of the 13th District. One of the questions was "Do you favor President Johnson's proposal to prevent discrimination in the sale or rental of private housing?"

According to the poll, 31.5 per cent answered yes, and 64 per cent answered no, with 4.5 per cent not answering. This is a ratio of 2 to 1 in opposition to open housing. In view of these statistics, does your newspaper (and the NSSP) still have the nerve to

claim that a "majority" of North Shore residents are in favor of open housing, and that real estate agencies tell homeowners who to sell their property to?

May I also suggest that you read an article in the May 6 issue of Life magazine. It describes what happened to the town of New Rochelle and to its schools after Negroes moved in. From my own personal experiences, I know that New Rochelle was not the first to suffer, and if newspapers like yours have their way, Skokie would be next. I solemnly promise you that I and others who know the sad facts of Negro occupancy will do everything in our power to ensure that Skokie will not be next.

Louis Hennes
8738 N. Harding
Skokie

LIFE 5/19/66 3117

August 7, 1967

Mr. Louis Hennes
8738 Harding
Skokie, Illinois 60076

Dear Mr. Hennes:

Mr. Walter Keir, Acting Village Manager, has forwarded to me a copy of your letter of July 19 in which you protest "the unfair and arbitrary manner in which the Skokie Human Relations Commission silenced any opposition to a proposed open housing law during its meeting on July 18."

Your allegations are without foundation. The purpose of the meeting was to give residents and persons who do business in Skokie an opportunity to present their views on the subject of an anti-discrimination ordinance covering real estate brokers. All interested persons were invited to present their statements, the sole requirements (in addition to those mentioned above) being that a written copy of the statement be submitted to the Commission and that an advance reservation for time be made with the Commission secretary. These requirements were widely advertised in the local newspapers for several weeks prior to the meeting. No questioning or discussion from the floor was permitted at this meeting (in accordance with a decision of the Commission reached at its June meeting) to allow time for the orderly presentation of their views by those who had requested time.

No person who requested time to speak was denied it. Contrary to your statement that "only those who favored the proposed law were called and given an opportunity to speak," two of the speakers opposed the proposal. Had more speakers of like views requested time, it would certainly have been given them. In point of fact, the views of several persons who reserved time were unknown to us prior to their presentations.

There were and could be no "stacked deck" arrangements, since we of course had no way of knowing how many of each view would request speaking time. If the tenor of the meeting did not represent a cross-section of village opinion, as you claim, it was because people failed to avail themselves of the opportunity to speak. Incidentally, the speaker who asked the Commission "not to rely on a consensus" was not "imported" (as you state), but was a Skokie resident, as were all but one of the speakers (Mr. Ed Holmgren, Executive Director of the Leadership Council).

The proposed ordinance will be further discussed at the next Commission meeting August 24, 8P.M.) and opportunity will be afforded at this meeting for both visitors and Commission members to express their views; however, because this is a regular Commission meeting at which our normal business will be conducted, visitors' statements will be confined to three minutes each. You are welcome to attend and to state your views if you wish to do so.

Very truly yours,

Herman S. Bloch, Chairman,
Skokie Human Relations Commission

cc: Mr. Walter Keir

✓

July 19, 1967

RECEIVED

JUL 21 1967

Mr. Gordon Thorn, Village Manager
Skokie Village Hall
5127 Oakton, Skokie, Ill.

VILLAGE OF SKOKIE

Dear Sir:

I wish to protest the unfair and arbitrary manner in which the Skokie Human Relations Commission silenced any opposition to a proposed open housing law during its meeting on July 18. This meeting was held for the purpose of discussing the proposed law and (ostensibly) to give all interested persons a chance to be heard. These persons were notified prior to the meeting to phone the Commission secretary so as to have their names placed on the list of speakers. However, when the meeting was held, only those who favored the proposed law were called and given an opportunity to speak; no comment or rebuttal by the audience was permitted. Although Chairman Bloch stated that speeches were to be limited to ten minutes, these speakers absorbed most of the available time by the length of their speeches. It seems rather obvious that the entire meeting was planned and pre-arranged in advance to produce the desired effect which was apparent support for an open housing law in Skokie. Those persons who intended to oppose such a law at the meeting had no chance against a "stacked deck."

Since most of the speakers at the meeting were officials of civil rights or human relations organizations with a political axe to grind, I repudiate their statements as not being representative of a true cross-section of majority opinion. Neither did I vote for or elect these people to represent me, and they have no right to speak for me or other Skokie homeowners before the Village Council. They represent only the arbitrary and dictatorial SHRC by whom they were foisted on the people of Skokie.

During all the one-sided speeches, many references were made to the rights of the Negro. I wish to point out that civil rights are not strictly a Negro monopoly; other people, including homeowners, also have some rights. Even the homeowner whom the SHRC would call "prejudiced" also has a right to his opinion. None of the rights of the homeowner is more obvious than the right to fully and unconditionally own, sell, or rent the property which he has bought and maintained by the sweat of his brow. I sincerely believe that a majority of Skokie homeowners would not support any law which abridged or curtailed that right. One of the imported speakers at the meeting asked the SHRC not to rely on a consensus of opinion, but to show "leadership," meaning that the proposed law should be arbitrarily jammed down the throats of homeowners whether they liked it or not and with no chance to express any opposition. Such an action would be typical of a dictatorship, but not of a democratic government, and would be an absolutely unfair and blatant infringement on my rights. It would certainly be much ^{more} democratic to give all Skokie homeowners a chance to be represented on the question of open housing by means of a public referendum. Such a referendum would definitely be more fair and equitable than meetings arranged in advance by the SHRC so as to produce a pre-determined result.

Respectfully yours,

Louis Hennes

Louis Hennes
8738 N. Harding Ave.
Skokie, Ill. 60077



VILLAGE OF SKOKIE

5127 OAKTON STREET • SKOKIE, ILLINOIS 60076 • ORchard 3-0500

Office of Acting
Village Manager

PRESIDENT ALBERT J. SMITH
CLERK WILLIAM SIEGEL
VILLAGE MANAGER GORDON E. THORN
TRUSTEES JOHN T. BANGHART
WALTER B. FLINTRUP
BERNARD M. KAPLAN
ROBERT J. MORRIS
HERMAN SCHMIDT
CALVIN R. SUTKER

July 24, 1967

Mr. Louis Hennes
8738 Harding Avenue
Skokie, Illinois 60076

Dear Mr. Hennes:

Your letter of July 19th, in which you state your opposition to the manner in which the hearing on July 18th was conducted, has been forwarded to Chairman Bloch.

The hearing itself was handled and arranged by the Skokie Human Relations Commission and would not come under the purview of the Manager's office.

It is my understanding that another hearing on this matter will be held at a later date.

Sincerely,

Walter E. Keir
Acting
Village Manager

cc: Dr. Bloch ✓

August 9, 1967

Mr. Herman Bloch, Chairman
Skokie Human Relations Commission
5127 Oakton Street
Skokie, Illinois 60076

Dear Sir:

I have received your reply to my letter of July 19 which had been addressed originally to the Village Manager, but was then forwarded to you. I did not address my letter to you because it is my belief that the SHRC is determined to pass forced housing legislation regardless of the wishes or best interests of the majority of Skokie homeowners, and that any objections or opposition will be summarily overridden and receive no consideration. It is also my belief that the Skokie village government is dictated to by Chicago's Metropolitan Leadership Council which in turn takes orders from Martin Luther King under threat of riots if his demands are not complied with.

After careful consideration of statements in your reply, I must still maintain that speakers at the July 18th meeting were mostly selected by pre-arrangement so as to lend support to the Commission's proposed ordinance. In your reply, you stated that "the views of several persons who reserved time were unknown to us prior to their presentations." Since it was a requirement that all persons requesting time submit a copy of their speeches to the Commission in advance, I do not understand how these persons' views could have been unknown to the Commission prior to the meeting.

Most of the speakers were representatives of civil-rights, human relations, or open housing organizations. It is certainly obvious that the Commission must have known in advance what the views of these speakers would be. I am sure that these speakers did not find out about the meeting from "advertisements in the local newspapers." It is much more probable that they were all personally contacted and invited to speak by the Commission.

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In any case, it was impossible to hear the opinions of all Skokie homeowners regarding the proposed ordinance. Therefore, I repeat my statement that the only fair and democratic way for all Skokie residents to be represented is by means of a public referendum. Since most Skokie residents are homeowners who would be directly affected by the ordinance, it is even more important that they should have a voice in this matter. I realize, of course, that the homeowners of Skokie will never receive an opportunity to uphold their rights through a referendum because you are well aware of what the results would be, in spite of your propaganda to the contrary.

I also wish to inform you that in the event the ordinance is passed, a group of Skokie residents including myself will immediately file suit to challenge the ordinance in the courts. We will file suit as private citizens, not as real estate agencies, although it is probable that the latter will file their own suits.

Yours truly,

Louis Hennes

Louis Hennes
8738 N. Harding Ave.
Skokie, Illinois 60077