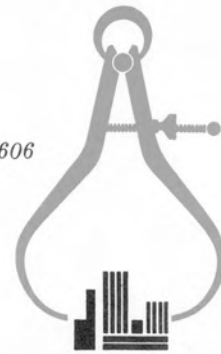


222 West Adams Street/Chicago, Illinois 60606

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Institute of Urban Life

research in urban problems



April 4, 1966

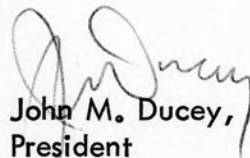
Mr. D. P. Perille
5306 George Street
Skokie, Illinois

Dear Mr. Perille:

The effectiveness of the program of the Skokie Human Relations Commission has impressed me as of considerably greater importance to our metropolitan area, than all of the speeches people keep making about our problems.

In spite of this, I am enclosing a copy of the talk which you requested, and hope that you will find some interest in it.

Yours very truly,


John M. Ducey,
President

JMD:el

Don Miller

*Reprod.
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The City: Enemy of the Suburb

An address by
John McMullen Ducey
President, Institute of Urban Life

given before the

Chicago Chapter, Public Relations Society of America
March 15, 1966

Looking out of the window of the plane approaching O'Hare International Airport, a resident of the Chicago area can usually pick out a few landmarks -- the Loop area, the Old Orchard or Oakbrook shopping centers, the expressway network. In most cases, he cannot identify the boundaries of the city of Chicago.

If he is a politician or a geographer, he may know that Harlem Avenue is the western boundary of the City, between North and Diversey Avenues. But from the sky, there is no visible marking in the middle of Harlem Avenue to identify it as a significant dividing line. Although it cannot be seen from the plane, and may be hard for the average citizen to identify even at ground level, the boundary exists, and its existence will become of increasing moment to the future tenor of both city and suburban life.

The physical expansion of the dynamic urban area we call Chicago has been much greater than the expansion of the legal entity known as the City; when we need a technical name to make it clear we are referring to the dynamic entity, we call it the Chicago metropolitan area. In contrast to the immense spread of the metropolitan area in recent years, the boundaries of the City have been pushed outward only slightly. The City of Chicago expanded its boundaries, in the decade between 1890 and 1900, to include an additional 21 square miles. In the following 30 years it added only 16 square miles, and in the last 35 years only fourteen, about half of which is represented by O'Hare International Airport.

While the City's horizontal growth was slowing down, certain other changes were taking place with an important bearing on our future. The housing boom of the 1950's was largely a boom in the construction of single-family homes, and most of these homes were built in the suburbs. Of the 440,000 housing units we added to our supply in the metropolitan area during that decade, more than eighty per cent were single-family homes ---358,000 of them. Some of these were erected in Beverly Hills, Sauganash and other

outlying parts of Chicago, but three-fourths of them were built beyond the city limits.

The relative scarcity and high price of lots suitable for single-family homes in the city, is only a partial explanation for the preponderance of suburban building. The outward movement of home buyers also reflects, in my opinion, a deep-seated and not always vocal antipathy towards the city on the part of many home-seekers. They move outward because they regard the city as their enemy, something from which they seek refuge and sanctuary.

The research organization with which I am affiliated, the Institute of Urban Life, recently completed a study of the rapid urbanization of an unincorporated area which had occasioned serious problems for our client, a Board of Education in the northwestern suburban area. On the occasion of the presentation of our final report, one of the Board members, a lady, voiced a serious concern about activities in one of the apartment developments within the boundaries of this School District, which in her words was "practically turning into a red light district." When pressed for an explanation of the reasons for her concern, her answer was "But that's the sort of thing we moved out here to get away from."

Her words, although not phrased in scientific terminology, were accurate. Great numbers of the ex-Chicagoans who live in the suburbs did move to get away from the "evils of the city." Each adult might identify those evils differently ---- dense concentrations of population, parking difficulties, the spread of Negro occupancy, Democratic monopoly of political power, crime, high taxes, or something else. Their specific reasons for enmity against the city might very well rest on an incorrect factual base, but it is there none the less.

Up until now, this enmity has been a one-sided thing. The city does not intentionally drive them out; on the contrary, Mayor Daley's administration has undertaken many housing and urban renewal programs to improve its residential areas so as to discourage this outward movement, and if possible lure back the suburbanites. As yet, there is no detectable current of anti-suburb feeling among city residents. To the suburbanite, the city is an enemy, but the city doesn't hate back.

This one-sided hate affair cannot long endure. Unless some leadership develops capable of muting suburban contempt for the city, we can expect Chicagoans to start fearing the suburbs, and eventually regarding them as a natural enemy.

One of the factors which will contribute to this development is the changed makeup of the General Assembly, whose members will be elected from Districts with boundaries revised in accordance with the "one man, one vote" edict of the Supreme Court. Chicago has been accustomed to frustration in obtaining passage of legislation it needed by the

Republican majorities in the State Senate. In the past, because most of these Republican votes came from Senators elected by rural and small-town constituencies, Chicagoans could blame their lack of success in Springfield on the stupidity, venality or partisanship of legislators from thinly-populated downstate areas. The redistribution of seats in the General Assembly will result in a diminution of power of those legislators, and an increment in the power of legislators from the suburban areas. When Chicago's future proposals for new sources of municipal revenue, or credit reform are turned down by the General Assembly, the villains will be identified no longer as rural legislators, but as suburbanites.

If the suburban Senators kill an open occupancy law in the 1967 General Assembly, you can expect any further expansion of Negro areas within the City to be blamed on the suburbanites.

It is inevitable, of course, that such expansion will occur. Large portions of the city now occupied by white residents will become predominantly populated by Negroes. In 1963, a reputable research organization forecast that by 1975, non-white households within the City's boundaries would increase by 155,000, and that this increase would be almost exactly matched by a decrease in white households. While some individuals who found this forecast uncomfortable criticized it, nothing has happened since its publication to indicate that it is inaccurate.

Barring the unlikely circumstance of a large migration of Negroes into suburban communities, an increase of this magnitude is bound to result in mass racial changes in many neighborhoods. The increase, remember, is not 155,000 persons, but 155,000 households. This is equivalent to the total housing supply in the part of Chicago from its north limits down to Montrose Avenue, and from Lake Michigan west to Edens Expressway. By 1975, we will not have a Negro majority in the City Council, and a Negro Mayor is only a slight possibility; but the influence of the Negro electorate will inevitably increase.

With the kind of political system we have, this aggrandizement of strength of a racial group which has traditionally been confined to a ghetto and which encounters all sorts of insults and financial obstacles whenever it seeks room to expand, is bound to intensify the ill-will between city and suburb. There is in existence an organization, as yet not very potent, called "Save our Suburbs" which is anti-city, anti-Negro expansion, anti-metropolitan government, and which crystallizes the fear and enmity of the suburbanite for the city. It is a symptom, whose danger to our social fabric is more potential than actual. But it indicates that the day may be closer than we think when a counterforce, an organization whose title is a paraphrase of "To Hell with the Suburbs," may be formed by city residents.

One of the points of friction which such a group might seek to exacerbate is that the City of Chicago, by State law, is required to supply water to a number of its suburbs at a rate less than the cost of delivering the water to suburban mains. The suburbs typically sell this water to their own residents at considerably higher rates. One of these days Chicago is bound to ask the General Assembly to permit some revision of this neighborly arrangement. If the suburbanite members of the legislature prevent the adoption of a reasonable compromise, it is not inconceivable that Chicago will devise a supra-legal method of cutting off the suburbs' water.

This is merely one illustration of the type of unimportant quarrels among neighbors which can grow to formidable size, if the city ever begins to reciprocate the suburban enmity. I do not mean to imply that such a development constitutes a clear and present danger. Enmity, distrust and jealousy, however, are progressive in their nature, particularly when the group against which these emotions are directed lives on the other side of a political boundary. Like a snowball rolling downhill, they can be stopped with one finger when small, and become overpowering when they grow large.

The reason I have put this problem before your group today is that preventing the development of a house divided, a metropolitan community split by invisible political boundaries into "us" and "them," into the city dwellers and the suburbanites, the haves and the have nots, the whites and the nonwhites, can be cured only by a program of communications and public relations, the field in which you are the experts.

Can a metropolitan government eliminate this conflict? Perhaps so. The difficulty with this solution lies in the fact that we are not going to have metropolitan government in the Chicago area in the foreseeable future; it will come, if ever, as a sort of peace treaty after the war between city and suburbs has been joined. The Democratic party has a strong power base in the city, and the Republican party an equally strong base in the suburbs; both will throw roadblocks in the path of any attempt to create some sort of merger which would destroy those power bases. I subscribe to the view recently voiced by Dr. Gilbert Y. Steiner, that "Success in meeting the problems of the Chicago metropolitan area will not be achieved, even by men of good will, unless they turn from the rosy promise of one big government for all, to these unpleasant realities."

The metropolitan area is not without institutions with a vested interest in maintaining harmony between the central city and the suburbs. Most large employers, whether their place of business is inside or outside the city, draw their labor force from both sides of the boundary. The large banks, the major retailers and the metropolitan dailies have a stake in preserving comity. The list of the members of the Committee on Urban Progress, whose recent report recommended taking steps toward metropolitan government, included the Presidents of many of our largest financial institutions, public utilities, business corporations, and institutions of higher education.

The fact that such a Committee was called together at all, and could agree on a final report addressed to the need for change, is a remarkable tribute to the foresight of community leadership. The usefulness of such self-appointed groups, however, is inadequate to the problem which faces us. They are assembled, they prepare and issue a report, and then disband. There is no follow-through. In the absence of any responsibility for executing a program, they tend to take comfort in recommending solutions---such as the formation of a metropolitan government--which will never be adopted, because there is no organized force adequate to cope with the vested interests which will be organized against them.

People like to live in suburbs--particularly families with children. They place a value on the identity which a residential area obtains from having a name of its own, and a government of its own. They like the idea that their neighbors are people like themselves, people with the same skin color, similar incomes, similar attitudes towards the importance of having good public schools, similar mores. These are normal human desires. It would be unwise, as well as impractical, to attempt to effect any radical change in them. Unfortunately, these normal and praiseworthy aspirations are the very basis for the development of the antipathy of the suburbanite towards the city and its residents.

The heart of the problem lies in the mechanics of how to develop a sense of community or brotherhood between the suburbanite and the city-dweller, particularly among those with differences in race and economic level. Some of the tutoring programs now in existence, through which suburban college students have been helping underprivileged city children with their studies, are a step in this direction. Some of our religious groups have been supporting the provision of legal services, usually the suburbanite lawyers, to poor people in the inner city. The Archdiocesan Parish Movement has had promising initial successes in setting up pairs of parishes, one from the impoverished inner city and the other from a well-off suburb, to tackle problems mutually agreed on. The primary value of all of these arises out of the person-to-person relationships which develop, the realization on the part of the suburbanite that the city dweller with a different skin color, a different culture and a different kind of neighborhood, is still a human being, a brother whose progress is important to us all.

These efforts are in the right direction, but they are pitifully small in scale. How do you get the Winnetka resident to rank the quality of Chicago public schooling as being of equal importance with the quality of schools in New Trier Township? How can we expect the citizen of Flossmoor to regard intelligent administration of public welfare as more crucial than the problem of storm drainage in his own neighborhood? Impossible, you say. I have seen public relations experts achieve things I would have thought impossible, and more than once. This is the reason I leave this problem with you.

April 1, 1966

Institute of Urban Life
740 North Rush Street
Chicago, Illinois

Attn: Mr. John M. Ducey
President

Gentlemen:

In a recent Chicago newspaper, I read a report concerning a speech that you gave before a luncheon meeting of the Public Relations Society of America concerning the possible development of City versus the Suburb hostility.

I am a member and co-chairman of the Skokie Human Relations Commission, an arm of the Village Government. We have been concerned in a general way in just the possibility you apparently are predicting.

In view with our interest in this problem, you might be interested in the attached booklet which the Commission recently published and is currently mailing out to every homeowner in the Village of Skokie. You will note that it touches on the same possibility of City - Suburb hostility and because of this I would be most interested in receiving a copy of your speech.

Would you please send it to my home address which is 5306 George Street, in Skokie, Illinois.

Thank you very much.

Cordially yours,

THE BASTIAN-BLESSING COMPANY

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Urban Expert Warns Of City-Suburb Hostility

By Lillian Calhoun

An increasing hostile relationship of city and suburb was forecast Tuesday by John M. Ducey, president of the Institute of Urban Life.

Ducey addressed a luncheon meeting of the Public Relations Society of America, at the Sheraton-Chicago Hotel.

The urban planner began his remarks with the statement that suburbanites have great contempt for the city and its "evils."

"Each adult might identify those evils differently—dense concentrations of population, parking difficulties, the spread of Negro occupancy, Democratic monopoly of political power, crime, high taxes, or something else," Ducey said. "Their specific reasons for enmity against the city might very well rest on an incorrect factual base, but it is there none the less."

City Attempts Reform

Ducey continued: "Up until now, this enmity has been a one-sided thing." He said May-

or Daley's administration had undertaken many housing and urban renewal programs to lure suburbanites back.

"As yet, there is no detectable current of anti-suburb feeling among city residents," the speaker said. "To the suburbanite, the city is an enemy, but the city doesn't hate back."

Ducey added: "This one-sided hate affair cannot long endure. Unless some leadership develops capable of muting suburban contempt for the city, we can expect Chicagoans to start fearing the suburbs, and eventually regarding them as a natural enemy."

He said the changed makeup of the General Assembly, with reapportionment, giving suburbs more of a legislative voice, would be a factor in the city's attitude toward its neighbors.

"When Chicago's future proposals for new sources of municipal revenue, or credit reform are turned down by the General Assembly, the vil-

lains will be identified no longer as rural legislators, but as suburbanites," Ducey said.

Example Given

Ducey predicted that "if the suburban senators kill an open occupancy law in the 1967 General Assembly, you can expect any further expansion of Negro areas within the City to be blamed on the suburbanites."

Ducey said that such expansion of Negro areas "is inevitable" and that a large migration of Negroes to the suburbs is "unlikely."

He said the consequent growing political strength of

Negroes is bound to intensify the ill-will between city and suburb.

A controversy over Chicago's low-cost supplying of water to suburbs was seen as one future development by Ducey if friction increases between city and suburb.

Then he added: "I do not mean to imply that such a development constitutes a clear and present danger. Enmity, distrust and jealousy, however, are progressive in their nature. . . ."

Calls For Action

He said he posed the problem because "preventing the

development of a house divided, a metropolitan community split by invisible political boundaries into 'us' and 'them,' into the city dwellers and the suburbanites, the haves and the have nots, the white and the nonwhites, can be cured only by a program of communications and public relations."

He added that metropolitan government, which might eliminate the conflict, is not likely soon. Both political parties "will throw roadblocks into the path of any attempt to create some sort of merger which would destroy their power bases," Ducey said.

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