

Akron Commission on Civil Disorders

AKRON, OHIO

April 16, 1969

Mr. John S. Ballard
Mayor, City of Akron
Municipal Building
Akron, Ohio

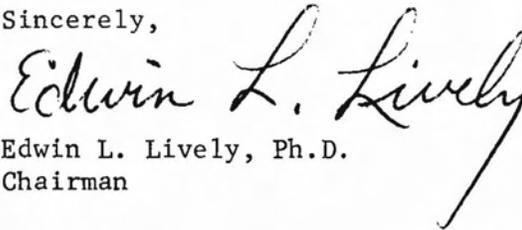
Dear Mayor Ballard:

On July 27, 1968, you requested that a citizens' commission provide you with an assessment of the causes of the civil disorder in Akron and with recommendations concerning steps that can and should be taken to reduce or eliminate the alienation and division which exists in the city.

The Akron Commission on Civil Disorders has completed that assignment, and I am hereby submitting its report.

In behalf of the Commission, may I respectfully request that the report be made available to the citizens of the community and that you, through your office, encourage all responsible persons to give serious consideration to ways and means of implementing the recommendations contained therein.

Sincerely,



Edwin L. Lively, Ph.D.
Chairman

ELL:mb1

Enclosure

JUL 17 1969

The
Report of The
AKRON COMMISSION ON CIVIL DISORDERS

Presented to John S. Ballard
Mayor of Akron
April, 1969

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AKRON, OHIO

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMISSION REPORT

To achieve the fullest benefit from reading and interpreting this report, it is essential that the distinction between prejudice and discrimination be recognized and understood. Prejudice refers to attitudes for or against someone or something which are based on emotions rather than facts. Probably all humans are prejudiced in some ways--in favor of their own children, strawberry ice cream, or the Cleveland Browns, and against flying, guitar music, or pepperoni pizza. Such prejudices are learned and can only be modified or "unlearned" by education about the facts of the matter, plus the willingness to relearn. Discrimination, on the other hand, refers to behavior in favor of or in opposition to someone or something. These behaviors may be intentional, such as refusing membership in a club to someone because of his race or religion, or they may be unintentional, such as giving one child a handful of candy with more pieces in it than that given another child. Discrimination may be the result of prejudice, and prejudice may develop from discrimination, but it is important to know they are not the same and do not have to occur together.

In the area of race relations they usually do occur together. Yet they can be dealt with separately. A study such as the one on which this report is based deals primarily with discrimination because it can be seen, reported on, and proved or disproved. Much racial discrimination is in violation of existing constitutions--Federal, state, club, or organization--and can be eliminated by adherence to the provisions of the documents. Many instances of accusations, complaints, and demands by black Americans are actually directed toward the obtaining of that which is already rightfully theirs by virtue of citizenship in a political unit. Such discrimination,

whether deliberate or not, is based on prejudices which should in no way limit the rights of citizens. Whether a person is liked or disliked should not determine his right to vote, or hold a job, or eat in a public place.

It is not possible to legislate against prejudice directly but it is possible to legislate against discrimination, to repeal discriminatory laws, and also to demand that laws be enforced in a nondiscriminatory manner. When discriminatory laws and practices have been in existence and enforced over a period of time, it is inevitable that they will help to perpetuate prejudice. It is equally true that the elimination of such discriminatory acts or actions may modify attitudes of a prejudicial nature. However, it is most important to understand that no human being should be subjected to intentional discrimination regardless of the prejudices that may exist. Until this last point is understood and accepted, the fulfillment of democracy cannot be expected in the United States.

One major reason for stressing the distinction between prejudice and discrimination is found in the change in the thinking of many blacks about race relations in recent years. It used to be argued that prejudice had to be eliminated before problems of race could be solved. Now more and more blacks and some whites are saying that the elimination of discrimination is necessary and any subsequent change in prejudice may be irrelevant. In other words, the black is insistent upon his rights whether he is liked or not. Obviously, if total integration is to occur, prejudice must go. But discrimination is legally, morally, politically, and socially intolerable and indefensible, and if it is eliminated, the black man can live his life in accordance with his abilities and desires

as every American should. Individual success would not be guaranteed but the opportunity to be successful would be, and therefore is demanded as a right rather than requested as a gift. This does not mean that the ends are such that they justify any means toward them but it does emphasize that black citizens are now aware of the legitimacy of the ends and their rights to seek them in an open system.

The report which follows is concerned almost exclusively with discrimination and its ramifications in the Akron area. No evidence was sought or obtained, other than incidentally, about discrimination in other areas. Prejudice can usually only be inferred from discrimination and cannot in itself serve as the basis for conclusions or recommendations. Therefore, those who read this report should be fully aware that it is a conscious attempt to analyze and make recommendations about the actions of people rather than their underlying attitudes and motivations.

II. THE COMMISSION: ITS FORMATION AND OPERATION

During the latter part of July, the City of Akron experienced six days of civil disorders. After peace was restored, the curfew lifted, and law enforcement units returned to their normal duties, one of the first actions of the Mayor was to appoint a commission of ten citizens to study the direct and indirect causes of the disorder and to make recommendations aimed at preventing similar occurrences in the future and, more generally, toward improving human relations in the city. The end of the disturbance occurred on Tuesday, July 23, 1968, and the Commission was appointed on Friday, July 26, 1968 (See Appendix A).

The organizational meeting of the Commission was held Sunday evening, July 28, when most of the members met each other for the first time. Ground rules for collecting testimony were agreed upon (See Appendix B), the powers and limitations of the Commission were discussed, the scope of the study was examined, and a series of dates for hearings was established. Almost immediately, controversy arose in the community over the composition of the Commission. The members also decided their charge from the Mayor was not entirely clear. After three meetings, including one with the Mayor, the scope and function were agreed upon, but it was decided to suspend operations until the membership issue was resolved. It was also agreed that the Commission would take no stand on membership as this was the responsibility of the Mayor.

It was not until mid-September that the Chairman was informed that there were to be no changes or additional appointments, and that there would be no replacement for one member who had resigned for personal reasons. The

first meeting was set for Tuesday, September 24, 1968. Just before the first witness was to appear, the privacy of the Commission hearings was challenged. The issue was resolved by a ruling by the City Law Director the next day (See Appendix C), and the Commission held its first hearing on Thursday, September 26, in Council Chambers of the Municipal Building. Witnesses continued to be heard regularly into December when the Commission began its attempts to analyze and interpret what it had heard and to work on its report to the Mayor of Akron. A few additional hearings were held in February and March, 1969, to seek supplemental information or clarification on points raised in earlier testimony.

The kinds of testimony believed relevant and those persons thought to possess pertinent knowledge in certain areas governed the selection of witnesses invited to appear before the Commission. It was decided to hear first from those persons whose activities were thought to be related in diverse ways to the actual events of the disorders. Subsequently, other persons were invited who were thought to be knowledgeable with respect to policies and procedures in both public and private sectors of the community. While suggestions for witnesses were obtained from the testimony, from members of the Commission, and other citizens, the final selection was always the responsibility of the Commission as a whole. All persons who appeared before the Commission were first given an opportunity to make whatever comments they deemed appropriate and then a period of questioning followed. The shortest appearance was thirty minutes and the longest almost three hours. Inasmuch as the Commission had neither investigative staff nor subpoena power, all persons who appeared did so voluntarily. The Commission believes that all who appeared and provided information were representative of more than themselves although no such claims were sought or made.

This report represents hundreds of hours of time and hard work by the members of the Commission in seeking and interpreting information from the witnesses, in reviewing transcripts and holding discussions on the meaning and importance of the testimony, and finally in the writing and rewriting of the report itself. Although it was unavoidable that each member of the Commission entered into the study with many attitudes and experiences related to the subject matter, a conscious and deliberate effort was made to base the report and to support the conclusions on the testimony presented during the hearings. Recommendations were developed as the conclusions were analyzed and their implications for the community emerged. Obviously the selection of witnesses was critical in this process and the Commission, as a group, made all selections. No instructions or guidance as to the nature or contents of the report were given the Commission by the Mayor or any one else.

The members of the Commission are fully cognizant of the possibility that this report will not please some people; indeed, it may please no one. The task was undertaken in good faith and in partial fulfillment of the civic responsibility, concern, and dedication of each member. It is not submitted with pride or in apology but as the product of a group of citizens who have performed a task in the hope of serving the community and its citizens. Thanks are due to all who contributed in any way to the work of the Commission, but it should be fully understood that only those persons who signed this report are responsible for its contents.

III. REVIEW OF THE CIVIL DISTURBANCE PERIOD IN AKRON

On July 16, 1968, many citizens thought of Akron as a major industrial city with renowned and reputable corporations; with serviceable schools and a variety of churches; with many kinds of services, types of people, and community activities; with a growing university; well-known sports events; extensive urban renewal; and with problems that would someday be solved. On July 23, Akron was a city that had experienced a civil disturbance. While a few people were genuinely apprehensive, most citizens, black and white, did not really expect a civil disorder--a kind of "it can't happen here" attitude was common. Quickly, this attitude changed to one of uncertainty and raised such questions as "Why?" "Was it necessary?" "Could it have been avoided?" and "Will it happen again?" This confusion was at least partially the result of the fact that Akron has generally not been a city of extremes---wealth but not ostentation; poverty but not extreme degradation; economic stability but some unemployment; responsible leadership, but rarely daring or imaginative.

This same moderateness had been thought applicable to race relations in the city--much indifference and apathy but not extreme hostility or hate. The following Tuesday a number of businesses were firebombed, hundreds of Akron's black citizens, however, have suffered the same discrimination and experienced the same prejudicial atmosphere as that which has characterized American cities in general. Conditions contributing to the impatience and resentment of the black people toward their treatment were not significantly worse in July, 1968, than they were in June, 1968, or July, 1967. But the possibility for trouble was greater--disturbances elsewhere, talk of disturbances here, and the fear of disturbances on the part of both black and white citizens--although many failed to realize it.

The mood around the country during June and July was one of hostility and rebellion and many scenes of violence were being seen over television. There had been student revolts at California, Columbia, Ohio State, and many other college campuses. Resurrection City in Washington was experiencing disrupted marches, arrests, and internal dissension. A riot occurred at the Ohio Penitentiary in June. Racial dissension among the Cleveland Browns was highly publicized.

In Akron, protests were voiced about welfare, recreation, and leadership from the Poor People's Headquarters and Community Action Council. There was a continuing dissatisfaction among many of the people affected by various urban renewal programs. On Tuesday, July 16, police broke up a fight between groups of black youths from rival North and West side gangs and also dispersed gangs in the downtown area. Early Wednesday morning, large crowds gathered on Wooster Avenue, police were called in increasing strength, rocks were thrown, windows broken, tear gas pellets were fired, and Akron had a civil disturbance. Before daylight National Guard troops had been called, Command posts were established, a state of emergency proclaimed by the Mayor and a curfew imposed. Between Wednesday and the following Tuesday a number of businesses were firebombed, hundreds of persons were arrested, including many young people, and there were innumerable confrontations between blacks and law enforcement officers. The lifting of the curfew on Tuesday was in doubt until the last minute but the decision to do so probably averted a major confrontation and more violence. The evening ended with a street dance and a release of pent-up emotions on all sides.

There is little evidence that the disorders were planned and even less that they were deliberately started in the middle of July, although

there were some persons and groups who were receptive to trouble and willing to encourage and accentuate it. There is also little evidence to suggest that Communist, subversive, or outside influences instigated the beginning or were very important at any time. Small numbers of youthful blacks were continuously involved in the disturbance with some adult support. Some of these people had maintained contact with militants in other communities. A larger number of young black people were sporadic participators while most black adults were highly ambivalent, worried but not entirely disapproving. Certainly many black citizens avoided the disturbed areas so they did not provide any support to those in the streets but neither did they openly oppose their aggressive actions. Recurring confrontations during the disturbance occurred between youthful spokesmen and the older, established leaders in the black community, stemming from the dissatisfaction of the former with the slow progress in removing the discriminatory patterns of centuries and their impatience.

The actual motivating factors of the major participants were complex and varied. They included resentment against discrimination toward blacks in all areas of community life, some anti-Semitism, personal animosities, opportunism and hoodlumism, a lot of youthful excitement, and the general contagion arising from an emotional buildup. It is not possible to state categorically that the events of July were racially inspired, but one cannot ignore the fact that the participants were primarily from a historically suppressed minority concentrated in a ghetto-like section of the city. Without denying that many people suffered economically, socially, and emotionally, the limited physical destruction and minimum

of personal injuries do not suggest either a well-planned plot to riot or a major black-white confrontation. It is also likely that in spite of a number of cases of excessive force and questionable decisions by individuals, the effective coordination and control shown by the Akron Police, Summit County Sheriff's Department, and the National Guard contributed to the limited damage and few injuries. It would be only speculation to suggest what might have happened if the law enforcement agencies involved had followed any other course of action.

There were several occurrences that may have prolonged the length of the disturbances. One factor that intensified the resentment of both participant and observer blacks was the unequal and inconsistent application of the curfew, especially in relation to different sections of the city and apparently to different classes of people. Another major irritant during the course of the disorder was the failure of the law enforcement officers to distinguish those black citizens who, at considerable personal risk, were attempting to ease the tensions and disperse those who were creating it from those who were active contributors to the disorders. There were also crimes committed and other individual actions which took place during the disturbance that were actually incidental to it, but nevertheless added to the rumors and general uncertainty about what was happening. While the police are convinced that the use of chemicals minimized the need for physical force, many blacks are certain that there was an excessive and indiscriminate use of tear gas. It is interesting to note that press, television and radio coverage was not referred to in any way by the witnesses, other than a referral to something they might have read or heard, as influencing the course of the disturbance.

After the hearings got under way in late September, it quickly became obvious to the Commission that witnesses were much more interested and concerned about preventive and corrective measures for the community than in concentrating on placing blame and isolating specific causes. The Commission generally responded to this orientation for two reasons: First, the Commission believed that its proper function was to seek out the fundamental causes rather than to determine the responsibility for specific actions and events; and second, this orientation placed the emphasis on the future rather than the past.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section contains the conclusions reached by the Commission as a result of the hearings and a number of recommendations developed as remedial steps to the conditions identified in the conclusions. The conclusions are all drawn from testimony, usually from more than one witness. The Commission did not have the staff or authority to investigate in depth all statements made. The recommendations are somewhat broader than the conclusions but the Commission supports them firmly as actions which, if undertaken by the appropriate persons, would lead to a betterment of the conditions for blacks, for all citizens, and the community as a whole. Many of the recommendations fall beyond the direct responsibility of the Mayor and his administrative staff. However, it is hoped that those with responsibility in each problem area will respond to the needs, and that the Mayor, his administration and City Council, will use their power and prestige to encourage, support, cooperate with, and press such persons and groups toward action.

The conclusions and recommendations are grouped by the major areas in which concern was shown by the witnesses. The order of presentation is based on frequency of comment, which may be treated as one way of measuring importance. Neither the conclusions nor the recommendations are necessarily in order of importance or feasibility. It does not follow that all members of the Commission place equal importance on the statements in this section but none are rejected or denied by any of them as being untenable or irrelevant. Therefore, the following conclusions and recommendations are presented to the Mayor of Akron as the collective judgment of the members of Akron Commission on Civil Disorders and with the recommendation that they be studied and implemented in any and all ways deemed appropriate.

A. GOVERNMENT

Services

Conclusions:

1. City services within the City of Akron have been (and still are) inadequate in certain areas, particularly those in which the residents are predominately black.
 - a. Garbage collections are not made with the same frequency in all areas despite the fact that the cost of such service is paid from the general fund.
 - b. There is no City program for frequent removal of trash. The present policy of once a year picking up trash placed in containers on the devil strip along paved streets is inadequate and discriminatory.
 - c. Street cleaning is inadequate particularly on the streets where the need is the greatest. This situation is due to the method of financing street cleaning as fixed by ordinance; namely, dividing the city into zones for street cleaning purposes and making the frequency of cleaning depend directly on the amount assessed for such service against the property owners with a different rate of assessment in each zone.
 - d. Certain areas are without sanitary sewers.
 - e. Streetlighting is inadequate in certain areas needing good lighting the most.
 - f. The existence of a large number of private streets complicates the problem of providing sewer and lighting on these streets.
2. While the evidence indicates an awareness on the part of the Akron City administration of the various problem areas in providing services, there is some indication of a feeling of lack of urgency on their part in resolving such problems.
3. There is no program in the City administration to enforce compliance with ordinances pertaining to building codes, sanitary conditions, etc. Enforcement is now directly through the Mayor's office or the Department of Health.
4. Information to the public has been inadequate as to City practices and policies in these problem areas.
5. City officials appear prone to rely upon the possibility of receiving funds from the state and Federal governments in meeting needs in service areas.
6. Complaints to various departments of city government are not systematically handled. Those that are directed to city councilmen seem to get best results.

Services

Conclusions (continued)

7. There is no central source of information whereby citizens can get information about city activities, division of responsibility, etc.
8. Opportunities for employment of blacks in City government varies substantially from department to department. The Fire Department is especially deficient in this respect.

It was found that the absence of a central office for the city for the purpose of collecting and disseminating information and other regulations relating with the city, serious consideration should be given to establishing such an office.

A department of public relations or public information should be established in the city government to the end that the public can be kept well informed as to the progress of the city in all aspects of its activities.

The administration should make sure that opportunities for employment and advancement are present for all qualified citizens, regardless of race, creed, and sex, throughout the city government.

The administrative and legislative branches should cooperate in a study of the budgeting and expenditure patterns of the municipal government and, if more funds are needed to provide adequate services on an equitable basis for all citizens, such funds should be sought.

Services

Recommendations

1. The Akron City administration should take whatever steps may be necessary to assure that all essential services are provided to citizens throughout the city on a fair and equitable basis.
 - a. Steps should be taken to provide street cleaning on a total city basis so that streets needing the most cleaning will receive the most cleaning. If this requires enabling legislation by City Council, prompt consideration should be given thereto.
 - b. Attention should be given to the end that garbage collections are made with sufficient frequency in all areas and that no discrimination between or within areas be permitted.
 - c. The City administration should adopt a program for regular and frequent trash removal.
 - d. The City administration should study all areas of the city to the end that adequate streetlighting will be furnished where and to the extent needed.
 - e. Steps should be taken as soon as possible to provide all areas with sanitary sewers.
 - f. Steps have already been taken by the City to obtain easements from property owners on private streets for installments of sewers and to provide streetlighting. This effort is commended and should be extended to the end that all such private streets will have adequate sewers and streetlighting services.
2. The various building codes and building maintenance legislation should be reviewed to assure that such legislation does not or will not preclude the use of modern, less costly materials in the construction of needed housing units, when such materials are adequate to perform their required function.
3. To the end that there may be vested in one official the responsibility for strict enforcement of building codes, sanitary codes, and other regulations dealing with building, serious consideration should be given to establishing such an office.
4. A department of public relations or public information should be established in the city government to the end that the public can be kept well informed as to the progress of the city in all aspects of its activities.
5. The administration should make sure that opportunities for employment and advancement are present for all qualified citizens, regardless of race, creed, and sex, throughout the city government.
6. The administrative and legislative branches should cooperate in a study of the budgeting and expenditure patterns of the municipal government and, if more funds are needed to provide adequate services on an equitable basis for all citizens, such funds should be sought.

Recreation

Conclusions:

1. The lack of good recreation and park facilities in the City of Akron has been recognized but comprehensive action to remedy this failure has not been undertaken.
2. There has been little creative thinking with respect to programs of municipal recreation.
3. There has been a steady deterioration of virtually all parks throughout the City. Especially noticeable is the deterioration of parks in black neighborhoods.
4. Both the scope of programmed activities and the quality of park facilities within black areas are inadequate to meet the needs of the citizens for whom they are intended.
5. In the areas where the civil disorders occurred in the summer of 1968, minimal programs were staffed on a part-time basis on grounds at Lane and Robinson Schools, and the Perkins Woods Park and Pool were operated on a full-time basis.
 - a. The Recreation Division made no effort to devise special activities or attempts to augment programming in the troubled areas during the civil disturbances.
 - b. Throughout the entire City of Akron in the summer of 1968, forty ten-week summer programs, basically for younger children, were in progress.
6. There is much evidence of lack of understanding on the part of Akron citizens concerning the organization and functions of the Parks and Recreation Bureau, which includes four Divisions; namely, the Recreation Division, the Parks Division, the Golf Division and the Stadium Division, and also the Parks Board.
7. Political and financial support of the Parks and Recreation Bureau by both the citizens and the city government, is conspicuously deficient. During 1965 the budget for the operation of this Bureau represented approximately \$0.70 per capita. During 1966 this figure rose to approximately \$1.40 per capita, and in 1967 it again increased to about \$2.80 per capita. The standard level of support recommended by national parks' advisory agencies is approximately \$6.00 per capita and in many Ohio cities the level is well above the standard.
8. The Parks and Recreation Bureau suffers in not attaining even minimal programming through the method followed in the Akron city government for financing its operations. Political considerations are possible under the present system, in which all "capital improvements" are paid out of a single fund controlled by the City Council.

Recreation

Recommendations

1. A Master Plan for the development of the City's Recreational Programs should be prepared. The Mayor, through his administration, should seek out leaders of our community (black and white) who are concerned for the public recreation program and appoint a Citizens' Committee. This Committee would be charged with the formulation of a long-range master plan for recreation and parks throughout the City of Akron. The Metropolitan Park Board and surrounding community park and recreation bodies should be consulted in the development of such a plan. The Master Plan Committee should include in its study:

A review of the effectiveness of the Division structure currently in existence.

An analysis of the composition and duties of the Parks and Recreation Board.

The means whereby a more stable and adequate level of financing for the park and recreation program in Akron can be provided.

2. The Parks and Recreation Bureau should immediately initiate a plan that will provide at the earliest possible moment new programming and facilities within parks now located in minority neighborhoods which will make them operationally comparable to those in the City's regional parks such as Mason, Patterson, Firestone, and Reservoir Parks.
3. Installation of intermediary or "tot-lot" neighborhood parks scattered throughout Akron, especially involving the improvement of selected neighborhoods, should be undertaken at the earliest opportunity.
4. In certain parks located in proximity to compacted areas (such as Elizabeth Park and Perkins Woods), where a shelter house is an integral part of the facilities, employment of augmented park staffs on a full-time basis should be planned.
5. Park programs should emphasize variety. Park staffs should not emphasize athletics to the detriment of cultural and self-improvement activities. Emphasis should be placed on the arts and group activity programming so as to potentially involve all residents, young and old. The desires of the teenage group should be especially noted, directed, and promoted.
6. Criteria for regular and summer employment should be nondiscriminatory and publicized.

Recreation

Recommendations (continued)

7. The Administrators of parks and recreation programs should communicate with citizens more fully:
 - a. The Parks and Recreation Bureau should establish communication with citizens by initiating the establishment of neighborhood groups in numerous parts of the City, so as to permit expressions of neighborhood opinion in all matters pertaining to recreation and parks in their areas. It is to be hoped that youth, both boys and girls, will be encouraged to participate in such representative groups.
 - b. The Mayor and other representatives of the city government should visit the parks and recreational events of note at every opportunity to demonstrate the relationship between the city government and the Parks and Recreation Bureau.
 - c. Appointment of black members to the Parks and Recreation Board is an imperative step in the immediate future. Inclusion of the points of view of minorities on decisions affecting forms of recreation and cultural aims of neighborhood areas must be provided, in order that this Board may truly represent all the people in directing the work of the Bureau.

Law Enforcement

Conclusions

1. The Akron Police Department is a highly professional department which minimizes specialization and emphasizes mobility and centralized communication. Its overall performance with limited manpower has been good, however, it has been highly sensitive to criticism, and has rejected criticisms without regard to their validity. The Chief of Police reports directly to the Mayor which may contribute to this situation.
2. The Akron Police Department has been much more effective in its law enforcement than it has in public relations. It has been least effective in its relations with the blacks in Akron.
3. There has been an increase in the training of new policemen and in-service training of the present force about human relations and their importance.
4. There have been numerous instances of rude, belligerent, and discriminatory actions on the part of individual officers. These are not condoned by the department and when complaints are made, an investigation is undertaken with appropriate disciplinary action by the department if justified.
5. The Police feel strongly that disciplinary procedures should be handled internally and confidentially. This results in an unawareness on the part of the general public of such actions and a feeling of doubt that they really take place. The complainant is informed of the action but not all of the many people he may have talked to about the incident.
6. The Police Department has not been very effective in recruiting blacks for positions as policemen.
7. The Police, Sheriff's Deputies, and National Guardsmen were subjected to extreme abuse during the period of disorder and generally did not respond with force or violence.
8. Beat patrols are the most effective but almost the most expensive type of police protection. The recent increase in manpower has permitted a limited number of beats to be established.
9. Police protection has been least consistent in the areas with concentrations of blacks. As a result, many incidents are not reported to the Police because of a fear of reprisal, or the belief that it would be a waste of time.

Law Enforcement

Conclusions (continued)

10. There is much confusion on the part of the public as to the powers and responsibilities of the police in such areas as arrests and convictions, stopping illegal activities such as prostitution, gambling, and handling juveniles.
11. The combination of individual discriminatory actions, inconsistent responses to calls, the small number of blacks on the force and the reports of brutality by police here and in other cities has created a situation in which blacks have failed to support the police in their work and at the same time have demanded better protection.
12. The support of the police levy in black wards suggests a basic support for the police, but there is also a lack of respect and a hostility toward the police on the part of many blacks.

Law Enforcement

Recommendations

1. The Akron Police Department should continue to expand its training and education of new and present officers in the area of human relations, with special emphasis on the problems of blacks in contemporary society. There should be more reliance on experts and specialists outside the Department in the training.
2. The Department should intensify its efforts to recruit blacks.
3. The Community Relations Bureau should be expanded in number and in scope to permit more involvement in in-service training and public education about the duties and responsibilities of both the police and the public in maintaining a system of law and justice.
4. The Department should establish a system to follow-up complaints, at least on a spot-check basis, to determine if they have been handled satisfactorily. The good will, confidence, and support of the public are critical aspects of an effective Police Department.
5. The Police Department must respond to all calls with equal promptness and treat all citizens with dignity and courtesy, allowing for priorities in terms of seriousness.
6. Members of the black community must accept their responsibility as citizens and support the police in the performance of their duties. A black criminal or hoodlum must be recognized as a possible law breaker first rather than as a black. This will facilitate the providing of better service and protection and also help change prejudices individual policemen may have.
7. All members of the Police Department should participate more fully in the life of the community. Cooperation with and by social agencies, youth groups, civic clubs, and the like, will produce increased participation and will gain support for the police.
8. Police assignments should generally be made without regard to race, but there may be situations where special assignments are appropriate for black or white officers, and these should be made without concern for charges of discrimination.
9. A simplified and well-publicized method of filing and processing complaints against policemen should be established. The legal rights of both citizens and policemen should be protected.
10. All civil service examinations for appointment and promotion should be studied for (1) their relevance for law enforcement officers in modern urban areas, and (2) questions which tend to discriminate against blacks or contain cultural biases.

Law Enforcement

Recommendations (continued):

11. Effectiveness in Community Relations should be a factor in the promotion and recognition policies of the Department.
12. There should be serious consideration by the Mayor of ways to achieve more citizen involvement with the Police Department which do not interfere with the basic aspects of police work.

B. ECONOMICS

Industry, Business, Labor, Employment

Conclusions:

1. Large companies tend to have official policies of nondiscrimination in employment; but where these policies have not been vigorously implemented, earlier practices remain unchanged.
2. Charges of discrimination in industry and business are directed more toward personnel officers, supervisors and foremen, and hourly paid employees than top management.
3. Some companies have attempted to relate racial balance in employees with that of the population in the area in which they are located.
4. There has been an increase in the number of blacks hired by the large companies. Numerically, the increase has been greatest among the hourly paid workers. Although in numbers the increase is not great, percentage has been substantial. Blacks still tend to be placed in least desirable working conditions and given little chance for meaningful advancement.
5. There was some evidence of discrimination-in-reverse regarding salaried positions. A qualified black individual has considerable opportunity for employment. There is also evidence, however, that this represents only tokenism--a desire to have a black employee prominently displayed.
6. The most important single cause for changes in hiring and promotional practices has been the pressure from the Federal government particularly where government contracts are involved. A recipient of a government contract must guarantee nondiscriminatory practices in employment.
7. Those industries and businesses, most frequently the smaller ones, which have no contracts with the Federal government lack requirements for nondiscrimination. In such cases, policies and practices on racial matters tend to depend on personal attitudes which are more likely to be discriminatory.
8. Industrial managers report that the so-called hard-core blacks have been generally unprepared in skills and attitudes to compete in the industrial setting. These are mostly males, 16-25 years of age, and if they have work experience, it is in seasonal, part-time low-paying jobs. Current programs such as MDTA, STRIDE and NAB are effective but involve only a small proportion of the total who need training.
9. The increase in employment opportunities has not usually been accompanied by opportunities for advancement based on merit. This has been a factor in absenteeism, quitting of jobs, and uncooperative behavior on the job on the part of blacks.

Industry, Business, Labor, Employment

Recommendations:

1. Discriminatory employment and promotion practices must be eliminated. Such practices in industrial and business settings have a profound negative effect on the community. The elimination of these practices requires industrial and business leaders of the community to assume a more meaningful share of the leadership necessary for dealing with these problems.

Such positive leadership should include:

- (a) A continuing examination of employment policies dealing with race relations and a sustained effort at implementing non-discriminatory policies at all levels of employment and promotion.
 - (b) Emphasis on personal involvement rather than exclusive reliance on financial support in the area of race relations.
 - (c) Taking public positions on questions of race relations particularly as related to the work situation.
 - (d) Providing support for other community leaders in their efforts to prevent discrimination in other areas of community life.
2. Small business organizations must adopt and implement nondiscriminatory employment practices. The various trade associations should influence their members to follow the lead of those companies who contract with the Federal Government and adopt policies of nondiscrimination. It should be possible for the small businessman to recognize that his own self-interest coincides with that of his community--that discrimination in employment practices is inimical to his community and to his business.
 3. Inasmuch as decent employment is crucial to a decent standard of living, those persons who can control or influence employment in various ways should accept the fact that they have no right to let personal prejudices influence their actions. Employers, managers, supervisors, foremen, union officials, and stewards have the responsibility to accept persons who can provide the necessary skills and services without discriminating because of race, creed, or color.
 4. Company personnel must be properly oriented to programs for the employment of the hard-core or disadvantaged, and they must be organizationally supported, especially by top management. Personnel directors in particular should seek to include the disadvantaged rather than to exclude them. In conjunction with this, the limited value of traditional selection devices must be understood. Shyness and the lack of responsiveness of the disadvantaged to standard testing procedures are well documented. Similarly, the stigmatization of welfare recipients, arrestees, public school failures, job hoppers, etc. must be transcended, for these are the very criteria by which the disadvantaged are defined.

Industry, Business, Labor, Employment

Recommendations (continued)

5. Absolute adherence to formal job qualifications should be eliminated as neither a high school diploma nor a college degree provide a guarantee of adequate performance on the job. Individuals should be hired because they can do a job. Formal credentials or their equivalent should make a person eligible for consideration for employment. A police record should not automatically disqualify an individual. The employer must examine the type of offense and circumstances of its commitment to determine if the individual is eligible to be hired.
6. In view of the special problems of the disadvantaged job seeker, priority consideration must be given to: (a) employment (even if tentative) before training; or minimally, to (b) guaranteed hiring upon successful completion of training.

Pre-apprenticeship training should be greatly expanded. Because a substantial number of black youth are unprepared for employment, training programs such as the Manpower Development Training Program, STRIDE, and others should be expanded and should get the full support of local business and industry. Every effort should be made to train only for jobs available and to train only sufficient numbers of persons for whom potential jobs exist. Successful completion of training must be followed by employment. The training programs will fall into disrepute if ex-trainees have no jobs available to them after completion of training.

7. In view of the skills gap dilemma, it is desirable for employers to re-evaluate their current job structure. Some companies have found that by breaking down highly complicated jobs into separate, simplified components, entry level jobs can be created to serve the manpower needs of the employer and the job needs of the disadvantaged. Similar re-evaluation can and must be undertaken if we are to even begin to solve the unemployment problems of women and youth. Imaginative and creative reorganization and redefinition of jobs for skilled, as well as unskilled workers and recruits, have value throughout industry and business.
8. The industrial and business setting must make it possible for the black employee to function. The introduction of black employees into a previously all-white business or department of an industry may be difficult initially for both the blacks and the whites. Adequate support must be given to both groups by management. Management must make it clear, however, that it expects compliance with its decision to introduce black employees.

It may be necessary to provide the hard-core person, both black and white, with intensive on-the-job counseling initially in order to maximize his chances of remaining on the job and becoming a productive worker.

Industry, Business, Labor, Employment

Recommendations (continued)

9. Blacks must be fully aware of the job opportunities. Information regarding availability of jobs needs to be disseminated more widely. Success in this effort would not only make it possible for interested individuals to check into job opportunities but would also help eliminate some of the widespread rumors that industry has no place for black people.

The public relations sections of the various industries should consider the use of pamphlets, newspapers, films and television to get the message across that industry welcomes blacks. Personal contact is also necessary. This can be accomplished through the various neighborhood organizations in existence and those yet to be organized. There are many programs which address themselves to the poor and the staffs have the direct and personal access to the community which industry lacks. Business and industrial representatives should maintain contact with such key people and use them as intermediaries to spread up-to-date information regarding employment.

10. Any contractor before being awarded a contract for any job financed by the City of Akron should be required to submit a pledge of non-discrimination and a program of employment and promotion that will assure it.
11. All labor unions should examine their own policies and practices with regard to membership, elections, and support in grievance procedures for possible discrimination against blacks.
12. Labor unions should support companies which are making efforts to eliminate discrimination in their employment and promotion policies.

Finance, Credit

Conclusions

1. Official policies of banks and savings and loan companies appear to be nondiscriminatory in terms of reviewing applicants for loans and credit. The same standards are basically applied to all. Department stores and retail outlets are much more individualized in their standards and, therefore, more likely to be discriminatory.
2. Because of their lower employment levels and concentration in residential areas in certain sections of the city, the application of these standards to blacks on an equal basis with whites results in a much poorer opportunity to actually get loans or credit and is in fact discriminatory in its effects.
3. The young are considered poor risks because they have not yet established a record of responsibility, while the older persons cannot get assistance because they have a limited time of employment for repayment purposes.
4. It takes three to five years or more to re-establish a good credit rating once it has been lost. This particularly affects the black who is attempting to upgrade himself through some of the recent opportunities for job training or entry into new fields of employment.
5. On home, large appliance and car loans, the down payment required is usually too high to permit most low-income persons to receive loans through the larger lending institutions which have lower interest rates.
6. Insurance companies frequently refuse coverage of homes in cases where lending institutions are otherwise inclined to take a chance.
7. Black contractors and businessmen believe there are double standards in making loans for purposes of meeting payrolls or purchasing materials.
8. Banks and savings and loan companies believe that many persons who would be eligible do not know about or utilize their services.

Finance, Credit

Recommendations

1. Financial, industrial, and business institutions should investigate the possibilities and opportunities of establishing an Institution for Investment in Economic Opportunities for Blacks.
2. The criteria for determining "risk" level should be re-examined with a view toward assisting blacks who do not meet traditional criteria in getting credit but who deserve help.
3. A consulting service should be made available to persons in the low-income groups to advise them on matters such as personal budgets, comparative buying, methods and costs of installment buying, and management of personal income. One logical and available source of talent for such an undertaking would be the recently retired persons from the financial, industrial, and business community.

C. EDUCATION

Conclusions:

1. Segregation does exist in the City of Akron and de facto segregation exists in the schools.
2. Racial isolation in the schools, whatever its origin, inflicts harm upon both black and white students and the entire social structure.
3. As an American citizen the black student is entitled to a first-class education. This expectation is precisely the one which white students have but are more likely to have fulfilled.
4. At present the Akron Public Schools recruit at only two predominately Negro colleges--Central State and Wilberforce--thus limiting the availability of black educators.
5. Compensatory programs such as Remedial Reading, Remedial Mathematics, Junior First-Grade Readiness, Pre-Kindergarten, Academic Day Camp, Learning Resource Centers, Counselor-Home Visitors, and Tutoring have been somewhat successful in efforts to improve individual achievement in both public and parochial schools.
6. The responsibility for equal, integrated and quality educational opportunity must be shared by the entire community; business leaders, professionals, clergymen, civic groups, and fraternal organizations as well as school officials and this responsibility is not fully accepted at the present time.
7. Community-school relations have varied widely in their effectiveness from school to school and neighborhood to neighborhood.

Recommendations

1. A coalition of government, business, industry, and education should exert vigorous and bold leadership in Akron's efforts to eliminate segregation in the City of Akron and de facto segregation in the schools.
2. Increased numbers of qualified minority personnel should be employed on each professional, paraprofessional, and sub-professional level, especially at the policy-making level.
3. Special preservice education should be a requirement for new urban teachers.
4. Both intensive and extensive in-service training should continually be strengthened as a necessary activity concurrent with striving toward educational excellence.
5. A requirement for educational excellence in our schools is a continuing revision of the curriculum to make it relevant to all classes and races of people served by the schools.
6. The success of the Head Start and other preschool programs in bringing the benefits of comprehensive early childhood education to children from disadvantaged homes should be the basis for expanded services to all such children.
7. To increase the relevance of education to needs and aspirations of disadvantaged youths and to prepare them for full participation in society, opportunities for vocational education should be expanded. It is also important to stress that these programs must provide important and relevant quality education.
8. To making better use of the major capital investment in school plants, school facilities should be available during the after normal school hours and on weekends for a variety of community service functions for both children and adults. This approach will encourage residents to regard their schools as vital community centers.
9. Year-round education is needed, but not twelve months of the same routine. Innovative programs tailored to educational needs and providing a wide range of educational activities (verbal skills, culture and arts, recreation, job training, work experience and camps) should be developed during the summer months.
10. As the school board and school administration discover performance differentials among the schools, the causes should be sought and remedied as quickly as possible.

Recommendations (continued)

11. Opportunities for community and parental participation in the school system are essential to the successful functioning of schools. School personnel should seek the consultation of non-professionals in the community in developing school policies. A Task Force composed of school board members, the principal, teachers, parents, and students should be developed for every school or cluster of schools.
12. Parents and educators must make the learning process from pre-kindergarten through high school, so attractive to children that they will be eager to be in school instead of conniving to stay out.
13. The emphasis of the school system should be on Urban Living which encompasses the relationships among classes, races, and the total way of life of the citizens.
14. The University of Akron should seek to employ greater numbers of qualified black personnel on both the academic and non-academic levels.
15. Ghetto concern must be a vital part of The University of Akron's service to the greater Akron community.
16. The University of Akron should continue its efforts to develop new courses and to create options in existing courses to educate all students about the black man and his contributions to the development of the United States.
17. The University of Akron should seek ways to provide more tuition-free educational opportunities for both black and white young people of high potential and limited financial resources.

D. HOUSING

Conclusions:

1. Patterns of racial segregation in housing throughout Akron and nearby communities are obvious and continuing, despite many efforts and laws intended to ameliorate the City's housing problems.
2. Reports of discriminatory practices, with respect to housing, were consistently heard from black witnesses. No white witness appeared who acknowledged that he or the civic sector of which he was a representative currently engages in racially discriminatory practices.
3. More than two-thirds of Akron's black citizens are concentrated in only 17 of the City's 58 census tracts, most of which are deteriorated neighborhoods.
4. Creation and growths of black ghettos in Akron, mostly during the past twenty-five years, cannot be explained solely in terms of increases in black population. White hostility toward virtually all issues and actions which involve the prospect of acquiring black neighbors has strongly shaped the City's changing patterns.
5. One of the root causes of the civil disorders in July, 1968, was the aggravated compression of black people into Akron ghettos primarily as a consequence of the urban renewal programs in the Grant-Washington area, the area south of the University, and the downtown area.
6. Lax enforcement of Akron's housing and building ordinances contributes distresses to ghetto tenants, further aggravating the injuries of unstoppable overcrowding.
7. There is still a serious shortage of low-cost and low-rental housing. No new housing of any description has been constructed under Akron's urban renewal program. In this respect, expectations have not been realized. The failure to provide living accommodations for the thousands of citizens dispossessed represents a deficiency in both the philosophy and the implications of urban renewal. The "relocation service" offered to those citizens has greatly contributed to the compacting of the ghettos. Even less excusable is the practice, too frequently followed, whereby Akron residential properties have been condemned, commandeered, demolished and left as empty scars on the city, in locations so small and scattered as to preclude any possibility of private developers undertaking suitably large-scale projects of constructing new residences, low cost or otherwise. Subsequent use of these sites as commercial parking lots is a further irony.

Conclusions (continued)

8. Authorized, recognized, and responsible leaders and officials of the City have taken too little interest in the emergence of housing situations which have entrapped thousands of Akron citizens in environments which individually are merely inadequate but which collectively comprise a menace to the public.
9. Since the civil disturbances in July, 1968, the only visible step taken by Akron's city government to mitigate the City's housing crises has been the appointment of a Housing Commission.
10. Most ghetto dwellers consistently demonstrate good citizenship. Their captivity within the ghettos is exploited, however, both by criminal elements for their purposes, and by aroused black leadership for demonstrations of the injustices of the predicaments of which they are a part but which they are incapable of resolving by themselves.
11. Some progress is being made. Akron is fortunate in containing and benefitting from a variety of housing programs and excellent private enterprises all dedicated to amelioration of housing problems. Current accomplishments by the federally funded Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority, under which 1400 housing units are now being operated, with provision of many hundreds more in prospect, should be singled out for commendation. Similarly, the constructive efforts of such non-government organizations as Fair Housing Contact Service, West Side Neighbors, Inpost, and the Lane Improvement Association, are contributing much of value to the community.

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Recommendations

1. A Summit County Housing Coordinating Agency should be established by joint action of mayors and commissioners and charged with the following duties:
 - a. Soliciting and reviewing current information from all agencies (governmental and private) engaged in programs related to amelioration of housing problems; coordinating and disseminating the resultant information to citizens and agencies, whereby pertinent facts can readily be made known to any inquirer.
 - b. Sponsoring and publicizing "self-help programs," throughout Summit County, whereby individuals and groups seeking to rehabilitate housing can be given guidance and voluntary assistance on a coordinated basis.
 - c. Publicizing instances of salutary housing accomplishments, and of instances of prejudicial injustices in housing affairs, as contributions of value in community education.
 - d. Assisting in the development of essential housing programs in both the public and private sectors throughout Summit County.

It is recognized that to establish any such county-wide agency, and to provide it necessary support, may require legislative and financial innovations, in order to qualify it to work across all boundaries. To make its activities possible and effective, it should be provided with public and/or private funds sufficient to permit employment of a professionally qualified full-time executive director, and to pay for essential office accommodations and services.

2. Existing or improved housing and building codes should be strictly enforced, particularly with respect to the correction by landlords of unsafe, unsanitary or excessively dilapidated housing. Whenever appealed to by tenants of substandard living accommodations, the City should be prompt and adamant in requiring compliance with applicable codes and ordinances.
3. With the passage of numerous city, state and Federal laws prohibiting discriminatory housing practices, perpetrators of such practices should expect their illegal activities to be given the same treatment in the Akron Beacon Journal and the other news media as other law breakers receive; namely, prompt and conspicuous citation.

Recommendations (continued)

4. Rehabilitation of large tracts of substandard housing, as a civic objective, seems as urgent and significant a requirement as demolition and reconstruction. Economic integration of neighborhoods, whereby the affluent and the not-so-affluent and the poor can reside in community, is another essential objective, to assure long-term civic stability.
5. Future extensions of Akron's urban renewal program should include firmly-planned arrangements to provide replacement housing on a scale at least as substantial as the intended residential demolition.

General Recommendation

A council of representatives from all political subdivisions in Summit County--Cities, Towns, and Villages, the County, Townships, and School Districts--should be created for the purpose of examining and recommending to their respective units ways of cooperating and coordinating those actions which have impact beyond their unit. It seems indisputable that effective resolution of many of the areas referred to in this report cannot be achieved by the unilateral action of one political unit. At present, there seems to be a willingness to shift problems from one jurisdiction to another without recognition of the fact that they are thereby left unsettled. The creation of a council to undertake joint consideration of the complex problems which Summit County citizens must face would not threaten the sovereignty of any unit. It would require that the welfare of the community as a whole be placed above narrow partisan interests. Such a council should be initiated as an advisory and recommendatory body, with any change in its status to be reserved for the future.

V. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS OF THE COMMISSION

The following comments are based on the reactions of the Commission members to more than six months of study and thought on race relations in Akron. They are intended to express overall feelings which could not be presented in the specific conclusions and recommendations above.

The level of vitality and the well-being of a city are intimately linked with the cooperativeness, respect, and responsiveness with which people relate to each other. The impetus for growth and betterment must come from a general concern, not a narrow self-interest. The welfare of every person in the community is to some extent linked to the welfare of every other person. If businessmen are only interested in business, teachers only in the schools, blacks only in blacks, and the poor only in the poor, the basic social relationship is going to be one of conflict with those outside that area of interest. Certainly people must look out for themselves and protect their interests but they must also realize that cooperation with and assistance to others is a way of helping themselves.

Accepting this principle of common interest and responsibility, the Commission cannot conclude this report without taking note of the deep concern expressed by a large number and variety of witnesses. This concern, often accompanied by a sigh of despair, usually took the form of one or the other of these two statements: "So little has happened since the Civil Disorders" or "So many people don't seem to care." To the members of the Commission, these two statements are inseparable, and together they explain the despair, resentment, and anger of the black people of Akron. No human, no matter what the color of his skin or the extent of his patience, can

live without the hope of accomplishments, results, action, victories, or successes. Neither the leadership in the public and private sectors of the city, nor the general public, has conveyed to the blacks sufficient statements or actions that would encourage them that results will be forthcoming. The failure to show concern about the conditions of poverty, deprivation, degradation, inequality, and discrimination is the food on which tension and hostility feed. It cannot be denied that sound and effective actions to remedy existing conditions take time, money, and planning but sincere concern can be immediate and is a prerequisite for them. Collective violence is a measure of the extent of desperation of people who see no other way to be heard. Whether it is justified or whether it accomplishes anything are not the questions asked by persons directly involved because they are engaged in an action of hopelessness, not hope.

It is also apparent that open and frank communication does not exist in Akron. Within the black community, there has been a struggle for power, especially between generations, that has severely hampered communication of the problems to the people as a whole. Younger blacks have demanded action now while older people have argued for change on a less dramatic basis but neither have developed a comprehensive plan containing priorities and procedures for implementation. It might be argued that this is not the responsibility of the blacks, but the fact remains that it would establish communication with the whites in terms the whites are more likely to understand. Moreover the failure to do so has permitted white leaders to rationalize their inaction by placing blame on the blacks, i.e., "how can we help them if we don't know what

they want?" There are also instances in which black leaders have lost much of their possible effectiveness because they have placed personal ambition or the desire for recognition above the welfare of the black people and the community as a whole. Differences in philosophy or approaches are inevitable and often desirable but rejection or non-support of ideas and proposals because of personality conflicts can only be harmful. It was most disappointing to the Commission to find the only persons who refused to appear were a small number of blacks who were not willing to share their information and ideas with the community through this report. Some of the refusers were persons who have been loudest in their insistence in having a voice in the planning and decision-making processes.

The major focus of this report has been on the problems of the blacks in Akron as they have experienced discrimination and its consequences. Obviously many of the conditions of poverty and deprivation are equally applicable to many whites and the implementation of many of the recommendations would have beneficial results for people with limited education, training, and income, regardless of race. There are many needs of such people that must be resolved by state and Federal government action and thus the Commission members felt were beyond the scope of their assignment. One of the most serious of these needs lies in the inadequacies and inequities in the public welfare program. Until the policies, procedures, and payments are related to the contemporary situation, a basic current of dissatisfaction and hostility will continue to run through the community. Lack of support and out-of-date policies are also applicable to the mental hospitals and correctional institutions in Ohio which bear on community problems in the form of an absence of adequate rehabilitation facilities.

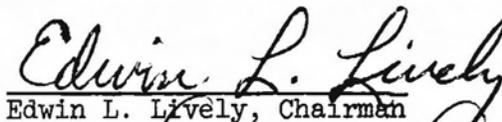
There are other situations which require action beyond the boundaries of Akron, but this should not be considered as justification for inaction in areas in which local action is possible.

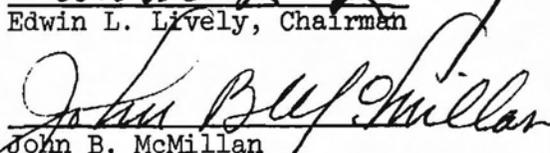
Finally the question of cost and expenditures of remedial action should be examined. If a segment of the population lacks purchasing power, or disrupts the schools, or engages in anti-social behavior, what is the cost and who must bear it? Is it preferable to spend money on the costs of the civil disturbances rather than on recreation, job training, special educational programs, and the like? Those concerned do not understand why money can be found after disturbances when it was not available before (i.e., why are priorities in expenditure more flexible at one time than another?). Even if the immediate costs were the same, there is a greater return in the long run in preventive measures. The increasing cost of the United Fund and public service agencies, higher crime rates, expanding welfare roles, and even the problems of downtown businesses, are influenced by failures in the area of human relations.

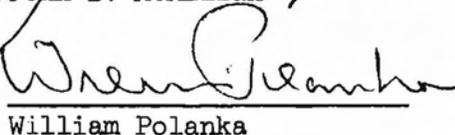
We wish we could conclude this report on a note of optimism, but at present we cannot. Those conditions which fostered the hostility behind the civil disorder of 1968 are still present. The people of Akron and its surrounding communities have not shown an understanding and concern that could lead to their reduction and elimination. Whether future disturbances actually take place will depend on many things, but all the ingredients are still present. It is hoped the implementation of all or part of the recommendations presented above would reduce the probability of trouble. In recent weeks there have been positive developments that should not be

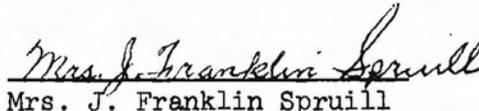
overlooked--the commitment to Joy Park, the opening of some black-owned-
and-operated businesses, the possibility of providing an agency center in
the former Fire Station on Wooster Avenue. However, above and beyond all
actions, there remains a community attitude of indifference. Until this
changes, the members of the Akron Commission on Civil Disorders cannot be
very hopeful for the future of race relations in Akron.

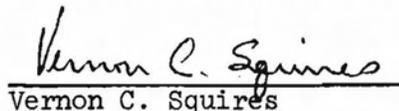
Respectfully submitted by the
Akron Commission on Civil Disorders,


Edwin L. Lively, Chairman


John B. McMillan

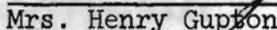

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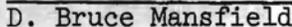

Mrs. J. Franklin Spruill


Vernon C. Squires


John M. Burrell


Martin O. Chapman


Mrs. Henry Gupton


D. Bruce Mansfield

City of Akron, Ohio

JOHN S. BALLARD
MAYOR

July 27, 1968

Dr. Edwin L. Lively
Dean of Graduate Studies
The University of Akron
Akron, Ohio

Dear Dr. Lively:

During the evening of Wednesday, July 17, 1968, the City of Akron experienced an eruption in the Wooster Avenue area which quickly grew into a serious civil disturbance requiring the assignment of all available police and Sheriff's personnel to the area.

In the early hours of the following morning, units of the National Guard were assigned to duty in Akron.

The civil disturbance continued until the following Tuesday, July 22, 1968. During this six day period serious disturbances also occurred in the South Arlington Street area.

A large number of citizens of all ages, both black and white, participated in varying degrees of involvement in the disturbances.

It is clear that a deep feeling of alienation, hostility and frustration is held by substantial numbers of our Negro citizens, especially the youth.

There was evidently no precipitating incident which "triggered" the disturbance. Once started however, alienation, frustration, and enmity provided fuel for the spread and escalation of the disorder.

I have appointed the Commission of which you have graciously accepted the chairmanship to investigate these underlying forces and feelings which erupted last week.

We need insight into how widespread and deep-seated are these feelings of frustration, anger and alienation in Akron.

We need insight concerning the aims and objectives of some militant organizations which are attempting to exploit and deepen the alienation which exists in our community.

In short, I ask the Commission to provide me with its assessment

Dr. Edwin L. Lively
July 27, 1968
Page two

of the causes of the disorder and make realistic recommendations which are within the competency and resources of Akron's Municipal Government concerning steps we can and should take to reduce or eliminate the alienation and division which exists in our City.

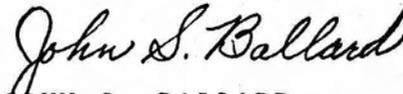
I want to thank each member of the Commission for his willingness to serve our City in this most difficult assignment. I am sure you all appreciate how important and trying are the responsibilities you have assumed.

I hope the Commission will approach its task with objectivity and realism and will "tell it as it is". No doubt your report and recommendations will be criticized by many. I do not ask you to attempt to please everyone or anyone. I only ask you to do your best.

The City Government stands ready to cooperate with you in your work in any way we can.

Again, many thanks.

Yours very truly,



JOHN S. BALLARD
Mayor

JSB:kb

AKRON COMMISSION ON CIVIL DISORDERS

Hearing ProceduresIntroduction

In order to fulfill its task of reporting to the Mayor concerning the civil disorders in Akron and the overall picture of race relations as causal factors, the Commission will conduct a number of hearings. These hearings are intended to provide information from which a set of recommendations for alleviating the tensions and conflicts in the community can be developed. It is not possible at this time to determine the number of witnesses to be called or the number of hearings to be held.

Witnesses

It is anticipated that there will be two kinds of witnesses: (a) Those invited to provide general information about the situation in the community, i.e. the direction of their testimony will be unknown prior to the hearing, and (b) those invited to testify on a specific situation or area of concern. Witnesses of type (a) will be heard first and will continue until an overall impression of the problems involved is gained by the Commission, and then details or specific directions will be pursued through witnesses of type (b).

Witnesses during the initial phases of the hearings will be sought from the general community as known leaders of associations, units, and organizations or as persons known to be related to the problems the Commission expects to be concerned with. Suggestions as to these witnesses will be obtained from Commission members in the beginning, from witnesses themselves, and other appropriate sources.

In the second phase of hearings a planned sequence of witnesses will be developed to establish a systematic investigation of those areas of concern. Such areas might include the following: housing, industry, labor, schools, police and fire services, retail stores, insurance, banking and finance, government offices, and the like.

In cases of uncertainty as to the appropriateness of a given witness, a majority vote of the Commission shall decide the question.

Witnesses invited to appear before the Commission shall be notified of the date, time, and place by Certified Mail and will be requested to confirm their appointment and intention to appear by telephone. A specific member of the Commission shall be designated to receive this confirmation.

Hearings

Closed hearings will normally be held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings each week until the Commission feels it has sufficient information with which to prepare a report. The time schedule is as follows:

7:00 Business Meeting of Commission - Planning for evening's meeting
7:30 Presentation by Witnesses

Conclusion of Testimony - Business Meeting of Commission -
Planning for next session

Other business of Commission will be conducted in meetings called by the Chairman at other times.

A quorum of the Commission shall consist of five (5) members and no hearings shall be held or business conducted without a quorum in attendance.

The hearings shall be held in public buildings with preferences being the following: (1) Council Chambers, (2) Court House, (3) Mayor's Office. A law enforcement officer shall be stationed outside the hearing room to serve as bailiff and sergeant-at-arms.

Hearings shall be chaired by the Chairman of the Commission, or in his absence, (1) the Vice-Chairman or (2) someone designated by the Chairman. The Chairman shall present the witness to the Commission and aid him in the presentation of his material. Names shall be placed in front of each Commission member present to enable the witness to respond to a questioner by name. All members of the Commission present shall be given the opportunity to question any witness who appears for a hearing. Witnesses may be permitted to have legal counsel if they desire.

Testimony

All testimony will be recorded by the Commission stenographer and one transcription of each day's testimony will be provided. The Chairman shall be responsible for keeping such transcripts and for making them available for individual members of the Commission's use when appropriate.

Members of the Commission will not discuss the testimony or business of the Commission outside the Commission meetings with anyone other than other members. Public statements on behalf of the Commission will be made by the Chairman only. Members of the Commission should make it clear to others that they will not speak of the work of the Commission in public.

Final Report

The preparation of a final report shall begin upon the conclusion of hearing witnesses. This report should include a brief resume of the actions of the Commission, a set of recommendations based upon the Commission's assessment of testimony, and general suggestions for implementing the recommendations.

Final Report (continued)

Work on the report prior to the final draft will be done through subcommittees of the Commission. Areas of concern will be identified and assigned to members of the Commission as individuals or in groups to draft a summary and tentative recommendations. These will be examined by the Commission as a whole, returned to committee if necessary, and then the entire Commission will work together to compile the final report.

The report in final form shall be presented to the Mayor. It seems proper to suggest public release and distribution of it, although the final decision is his. The press and radio shall be notified of the submission of the report to the Mayor but shall not be released to them by the Commission, nor shall any details be "leaked" by individual members.

The Commission shall be discharged as a Commission upon submission of the report to the Mayor.

Edwin L. Lively
Dean of Graduate
The University
September 24, 1968
Akron, Ohio

Re: Advice

Dear Dr. Lively:

Mayor Bailor
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cc: Mayor John



WILLIAM R. BAIRD
DIRECTOR OF LAW
CHARLES M. GREENE
JAMES R. GRAVES
ALVIN C. VINOPAL
GEORGE L. WIDICAN
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CITY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE:

CARL L. REED
BRUCE N. METZ
MICHAEL B. HENDLER
JOHN C. ZIMBARDI
HAROLD K. STUBBS
ASSISTANT DIRECTORS OF LAW

September 25, 1968

Dr. Edwin L. Lively
Dean of Graduate Studies
The University of Akron
302 East Buchtel Avenue
Akron, Ohio 44304

GRADUATE
SEP 26 1968
DIVISION

Re: Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders

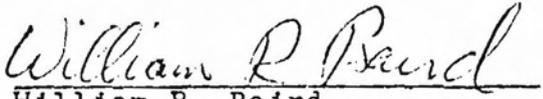
Dear Dr. Lively:

Mayor Ballard has requested that this office reply to your inquiry as to whether the Mayor's Commission on Civil Disorders may properly conduct its meetings in private.

In response to your inquiry, we have examined the provisions of the State Statutes, the Akron Charter and the Akron City Code relative to "open meetings." The statutory prohibition only applies to meetings where final, formal action is taken (Ohio Revised Code, Section 121.22; Beacon Journal Publishing Co. v. Akron, 3 Ohio St. 2d 191). Both the Charter Provision (Section 141) and the Akron City Code Provision (Section 133.01) relate only to meetings of boards or commissions created by the Charter or by action of Council.

The meetings in question are investigatory in nature, and this Commission is an advisory commission to the Mayor and was not created by the Charter or by Council action. Accordingly, since none of the above criteria are applicable to these meetings, there is no requirement that they be public.

Very truly yours,


William R. Baird
Director of Law

WRB/ns

cc: Mayor John S. Ballard