

The Five Great Shifts In Chicago

My history with the Order and the ICA goes back about 23 years when you were holed up on the West Side. I have followed your progress with interest and admiration. I will never forget the feeling of humility I had at the sheer madness of Joe Matthews when he asked me to speak to the Order on the vow of poverty. I said to Joe, "You must be kidding." When later he had me in to speak to the staff on Obedience, I guess I did it but with much misgivings.

This is a building that means a very, very much to me. I know that you are in the process of thinking that there may be an angel coming along who will buy it. I hope you don't sell it until you get a place suitable for the ICA and I know with the kind of leadership you have, you will.

It means very much to me because Joe Matthews, Lord have mercy on him, asked me to see him before he died. Lynn told me that he was sinking fast so I dropped everything and came up to see him. We had had many wonderful, beautiful days together. We sat down and laughed and he knew that he was going to be dead shortly. He died 2 days later.

We talked about old times and the West Side and many things and then I said, "Joe, is there something you want to say to me before you die that you would like me to remember?" There was a young nun who was taking notes over in the corner. Lynn was there and I presume that everything Joe ever said is somewhere in the records. He spoke about the Church and she gave me a copy of it which I have in my files. I treasure it very much.

Then, the days I was here for Joe's funeral which I will never forget. I was so honored. They asked me that day to represent the Church. It was a noble request and I carried it off as best as I could. And then to be here at Lynn's wedding. And then to be able to work with some of your people through the years...and coming here...Well, I'd better get into the work because I'm filled with a lot of nostalgia. And we have very much work to do.

There's a story I like very much which might help us a little bit. Winston Churchill, when he was Prime Minister, had the obligation to speak to the counterpart of the Womens' Christian Temperance Union (The English Counterpart). He didn't have any particular liking for the organization. They didn't have any particular liking for him. But it was part of the duties he had as Prime Minister. So, he did go to this magnificent hall which was vast, vast. The lady introducing him, the president of the organization, said, "This man has accomplished so very much in his life. He has served England so extremely well. She went through some of his exploits. Some of his responsibilities. "But", she said, "I hope you realize that this man does not adhere to any of the tenets of this organization. If the facts were really known, this man has probably consumed enough liquor that it would come up to the wainscoting of this magnificent ballroom."

Churchill got up and with a twinkle in his eyes, he looked at the vast ceiling and the length and breadth of the room and he said, "You know, there is so much to do and so little time to do it."

Now, that's exactly the way I feel about what I want to approach this morning.

I would like to talk to you...I understand that many of you are from Chicago and even if you aren't from Chicago, you probably are from a metropolitan area. I would like to talk to you about some of the hopes and the critical needs in Chicago.

I would like to propose that we could approach today's topic with some of the spirit of the great Daniel Burnham who said, "Make no little plans. Because," he said, "They have no magic to stir peoples' blood."

I had a man in the office the other day. Scott Bernstein, who you should listen to sometime. You should find time in your schedule to invite Scott Bernstein, Director of the Center for Neighborhood Technology. He is a brilliant young man. He came in to sell me on the idea that we ought to make only small plans. I guess Schumacher would support that.

But I don't think that you and I can be intimidated by the array of City and Metropolitan problems. I think that you and I, and particularly people like yourself who have a history of risking, that we could risk some bold new ventures and leadership in response to the problems that we're facing in the Metropolitan area. This is not a time either to be...it is a time to be prudent, but it's not a time for us to be cautious. And so, I want to say to you that it seems to me to be obvious, you know it, that RACE is the great American social issue. As it is in the city of Chicago and in our suburbs. It is also echoed down the halls of our history. It is still, to my mind, so many years after the Kerner report, our greatest domestic, social and moral challenge.

Today, I want to talk to you about five great changes; five great social trends which are sweeping across our city and suburbs which I believe profoundly affect race relations. Changes which we must confront. We must wrestle with them if we are to understand who we are and the challenges facing us as citizens and as members of responsible groups such as your Institute.

Now the facts about these changes are based primarily on the reporting and the analysis in The Chicago Reporter; a publication which comes out every month and which is edited by the former great religion editor of the Sun Times, Roy Larson. Previous to that, it was John McDermont. The conclusions and the recommendations are my own.

FIRST, I WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK ABOUT THE POSITIVE SIDE OF THE LEDGER.

To put these changes into perspective, I think I might astonish you by reviewing the positive side of this whole question. Some of the good things which have happened in race relations in our city and our suburbs.

We have come a long way since the 1960's. We are not out of danger, but we are a better, finer city and nation than we were in 1964. The Federal Civil Rights Legislation, 1964-65-68; the great legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Movement have been tremendously successful. These reforms have not worked perfectly but they have deeply changed America for the better. They have triggered a peaceful revolution which is unprecedented in American history. They turned the fires of protest into peaceful paths. They have brought honor and respect to the nation. Today, we take this revolution for granted. But I think we only have to look to Ulster and Lebanon to see what might have been.

Many doors have been opened in Chicago, particularly to middle class blacks and to a lesser extent, to Latinos. Although, as you will see from the elections next Tuesday, Latinos are moving into distinguished positions of power and influence in our city. Blacks are in more management positions in public and private institutions than ever before. College educated blacks and Latinos are at a premium in the job market. Formerly closed middle class communities have opened up to minority home buyers. Where there were only a few blacks in such suburbs in the 1960's, now there are thousands. In fact, the increase in the black suburban population in the 1970's actually exceeded the black population increase within the city as a whole.

The number of black college students has soared, reaching almost statistical parity in 1980. And perhaps most hopeful, intact black families with college education have caught up with their white counterparts economically. We are still far, far away from full equality.

Some good things have happened. We have made some real progress. There is much more to be said in a positive way, but in summary, looking back, we can have some hope. All is not lost. We need not despair. There have been important, progressive steps made and all the religious groupings as WELL AS YOUR ORGANIZATION here and across the world and in this nation have played a worthy role and I think we have earned a right to hope.

think the people who are working in 5th City, as desperate as the situation is regarding employment, can look to the young men and women who have moved on to fine positions despite the great problems in that very difficult area.

NOW, I WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK SECONDLY ABOUT RACE RELATIONS IN CHICAGO IN 1986.

I think we need a spirit of hope as we contemplate the situation which faces us today. The race relations mood in Chicago today, to put it mildly, is not good. The power struggle in our City Council is becoming an ugly racial struggle. It has gone on and on in deep embitteredness and has become an embarrassment to all and a spectacle to our nation. We have become too much an example in our country of what is wrong in much of our race relations. Democratic candidates for the presidential nomination actually fear to come here, regarding our town as a political minefield. The fight in our City Council has become a festering sore, a wound which has gone unhealed for more than two years and the infection from that

wound, I fear, is beginning to seep into the community at large. In the City Council, insult begets insult, misunderstanding begets misunderstanding. The battle lines harden and the white and black communities are choosing up sides and may be drawn into direct conflict.

It was interesting to me that it was almost a miraculous thing that after very serious hard groundwork, that last week even though our press, the SUN TIMES and THE TRIBUNE did not report it at all, that THE NEW YORK TIMES thought it was important enough to give it a long article; that the City Council voted unanimously to make Chicago a Nuclear free zone. And that went unreported in our press. When they were called, (and I want to speak to Frank Devine whom I know, the editor of the SUN TIMES, they said they didn't think it was newsworthy. I thought it was newsworthy just because the City Council got together and voted unanimously no matter what they voted on. Well, anyway...

Now, ...still, I don't think the reality of race relations in the city is as bad as the image given by the Council wars. The good people of our city are wiser than the people in the City Council. The mood in the streets is not hostile. Most citizens recognize that the Council Wars are basically a power struggle among politicians. In other words, the struggle is unhealthy and unfortunate but it need not be fatal.

But, something else is happening here, something far deeper and more important than Council wars. Something that reflects the basic strength and dynamism of our community. Let me explain that.

With practically no awareness by the major media, Chicago has become the capital of race relations in the USA. It is here in the election of Harold Washington that the new mass movement of the black community into a political consciousness and action began.

Chicago is the hometown and base of The Rev. Jesse Jackson. A great charismatic leader and the first serious black candidate for president in history. Chicago is also the home of Minister Lewis Farakan of The Nation of Islam who preaches his own angry, separatist and racist message about the future of race relations in America. All these important movements and personalities are based here. Why? I believe it is because Chicago has become the home of the strongest black community in the United States. We have the strongest cadre of black leadership in the country. And in politics, in addition to Mayor Washington and Jesse Jackson, Chicago has more black leaders in Congress than any other big city. More than Atlanta, New York or Los Angeles. It also has more black aldermen than those cities.

In addition, Chicago is the headquarters of black business in America; the home of leading black manufacturing, publishing and banking. Now you don't read very much about this good news, these positive qualities and strengths of Chicago's black community. But they are part, I believe, of our greatness and they make relations in Chicago extremely important.

I believe that the new agenda for American race relations is being written here. What happens here, make no mistake about it, is of national importance. If we become a symbol of the new racism of the 1980's, the

American dream of an inter-racial society, liberty and justice for all, becomes bogged down here. Chicago will be badly hurt but so will America.

If, on the other hand, we become a symbol of racial integration, reconciliation and cooperation, our city will thrive and our country will benefit.

What about the other principal partner in Chicago race relations? The white community. Here, too, as I move across the city and you do, too, I believe the quality of strength and dynamism is much closer to home than we understand.

White Chicago is in the majority a Catholic City. And the Chicago Catholic community which also includes some 50,000 blacks and many Latinos, as you know, is one of the most influential Catholic communities in the nation.

This community, mostly from poor people, has built many of Chicago's great institutions; 14 hospitals, 5 colleges and universities and the largest private school system in the nation. The network of Catholic schools and parishes has been a great anchor of stability for many thousands of Catholics and non-Catholics, also. The result is that white Catholics have not moved out of Chicago to the same extent as other religious groups. Now, I mention this because and maybe only because as a Catholic priest I stand before you as one who recognizes the unbelievably heavy burden Catholics bear, and a welcome burden it is, but also the responsibility we carry to improve race relations in this city.

We have a strong tradition of leadership and innovation in social action stretching back to the middle 40's in the city of Chicago; a tradition which has had its ups and downs as have all traditions. It has been revived in the leadership of Cardinal Bernardin and the American Bishops' Pastoral letter on nuclear warfare; a historic statement on the moral issues involved in nuclear war which has won admiration across the nation.

Also, a new letter will be issued in the fall on the economy. These two letters are entirely new. It is the first time in my memory, maybe the first time in history, that the Catholic hierarchy as a group, have taken issue strongly with the administration in Washington. (Much to their chagrin. (Washington D.C. administration))

The special strengths of Chicago's black and Catholic community mean, in my judgement, that at this time in a very real way the black community, and, I think, our Catholic community, hold the future of Chicago in their hands.

Now, I think this is our situation. As a challenge and an opportunity. It's also an agony and an ecstasy. I have a lot of doubts whether or not we are going to be able to meet that challenge.

One of the things I'm trying to do is to bring together those extraordinary and very wonderful people who are the heads of the various churches. All of our mainline Protestant groups, the Black Churches and the Jewish community which is so influential in our town. And the

Catholic community. To bring the top people together in the Council of Religious Leaders in metropolitan Chicago so that they might be able to work and plan together to meet this challenge. Nobody can or should do it alone.

Now, I think this is the base from which we face the future. The great changes which I am now going to describe are social forces which I think mold the future.

FIRST OF ALL, THE NEW BLACK POWER

The first of the changes is the emergence of the black community into real political power. The blacks in this town, to those of you who remember Bill Dawson, the congressman from the first district, were always a powerful community but a community which was locked in either to the Republican party before the time of Franklin Roosevelt or after that under Bill Dawson; locked into the Democratic Party and particularly when Mayor Daley was mayor. The Black Community had no independent power, let me say.

The election of Harold Washington as Mayor of Chicago symbolizes a change in the black political structure. It marks an historic milestone in the social life of the community. This is a change with great potential for good but like all change it also brings new problems and needs in its wake. I think we have to see beyond the battlesmoke of the City Council to appreciate the great positive potential of this change of command for the future of race relations in Chicago and indeed for the future.

The election has created a positive mood of pride and hope in the black community which is unprecedented in our city. This spirit is an antidote to the despair and hopelessness which has blighted so many lives and undermined so many efforts to improve the quality of life for the poor inner city neighborhoods. Mayor Washington has potential to be the greatest force for racial reconciliation and progress in Chicago in the 1980's and I hope he succeeds. It is important to race relations progress that he become an effective mayor.

Candidly, however, I must say that, in my judgement, he has not yet fulfilled that potential as a reconciler in the way I had hoped. But I still have hope. The burdens he carries are enormous and there is still time to heal the wounds of the last 40 months and achieve the kind of reconciliation and political compromise that will make it possible for the city government and the whole community to move forward together.

Now it is not the role of the Churches, nor, I suspect of this distinguished organization, the ICA, to take sides in the political power struggle now being waged. We cannot be pro-Washington or pro-Vrydolyak, or pro-Byrne. But we have to be pro-Chicago. We must be concerned about the danger of racial polarization growing out of an unending racial struggle. We ought to do this even if the prospects for success are limited. Such efforts are worthwhile because they may prevent the widening of the conflict.

But the potential for black-white polarization remains and we have to be aware of the deep emotions at work. The black community is very proud of Harold Washington and wants deeply for him to succeed. If you didn't believe that, you should have been there (I got a report on it) at the Quinn Chapel last Monday night. I got some report on the depths of emotion expressed there. They are very proud of Harold Washington and they feel that rightly or wrongly the present investigation, even though they concede many mistakes have been made, they feel it is an attack on his administration and that it is unwarranted. Be that as it may, I think that the facts will fall one way or another as the weeks go on.

Now, I think it is understandable that the Blacks feel that way and I think we should be sympathetic and supportive in every appropriate way. We, too, want Mayor Washington to succeed in the sense that we want all mayors to be effective servants of the common good. But the new mood in the black community has bred a new suspicion, almost a paranoia, about criticism of the Mayor. Among some outspoken black leaders, any and all criticism of the Mayor or the city administration are attributed to racism. This is deeply resented in much of the white community as unfair. A serious communication gap has opened between blacks and whites on this issue and I think we, we speaking as part of the family here, must do what we can to build bridges across this gap

This bridge building must be in both directions this time. For all of our lives, basic educational work in Civil Rights has been to explain blacks to whites, to educate whites to the humanity of black people, the justness of their cause, the seriousness of their problems, their needs, their hopes and their dreams. This is good work and continues to be necessary but it is no longer, I submit to you, sufficient in itself. Today, with the emergence of the black political power, it is necessary for the first time to begin to explain whites to black leaders.

People say to me, "Jack, what are you doing these days?" And I find it almost impossible to explain. I mean that if I were an automobile salesman I would say, "I sold 37 cars this last week or month." But it is so difficult to explain my work in Chicago today. One of the things I am trying to do is to begin to explain white people to black leaders. They just don't know and part of the problem is that far too many of them just don't want to know. Mayor Washington is not one of those. But some of the people around him are and in a certain sense it is understandable. I know they know nothing about the Roman Catholic Church. I don't know if they know much about the other mainline Churches either. And they know precious little about the Jewish groups in town. But they also don't know white people.

And they don't know the mentality and the value system of the various ethnic groups; the culture. And I think this organization (ICA) might be able to make a great contribution there if people are willing to listen. I believe a large number of them are. This is particularly true of Northern Urban whites. So called white ethnics which term has become a synonym for white city dwellers.

These are not the white people the blacks have come to understand historically and culturally through intimate observation on the plantations and in the small towns of the South. These whites are not the descendants of slave owners. They have no instinctive guilt about race relations. The truth is that black political leaders do not understand these people. They don't understand their particular histories, their hardships, their needs and their hopes.

There's a genuine fear in many white communities about the direction of the black political agenda. Fear that Mayor Washington may not be interested in being mayor of the whole city and that the needs of their communities may be neglected. There is fear that affirmative action programs may result in the loss of jobs and opportunities for them and their children. We need to hear and understand these fears if we are to minister to our people and to be genuine peace makers. The new black political power may also affect the charitable work of this group and many groups in the city on behalf of the poor.

For most of our lives the minority poor have been presented as victims, helpless victims of racial injustice who deserve charity precisely because they were unable to help themselves. Today, with a black mayor controlling a budget of one and one-half billion dollars and an institution of 41,000 employees, this picture of helplessness no longer rings true to many whites. There is a new mood growing which says, "The black community no longer needs our help."

This mood must be countered lest much important work in the inner city suffer a withdrawal of support. I suggest a new strategy is needed to maintain white interest and support for work in poverty areas. (And I might say this is becoming more and more difficult with the various kinds of budget cuts that are emanating from the White House and congress.)

SECONDLY, THE LATINO SURGE.

The second great change in Chicago's race relations stems from the growth of Chicago's Latino or Hispanic community. Latinos are the fastest growing group in our city. As recently as 1960 they were a small, almost invisible group. A tiny piece of the city's ethnic mosaic. But since then an explosion has taken place. By 1970 their numbers had grown to 225,000. By 1980 the census had counted about 425,000 but even this growth does not tell the whole story. As everyone knows, the Latino population is actually much larger and somewhere about 700,000 because of the phenomenon of undocumented immigration.

Today, there are more Latino children than white children in Chicago's public schools.

TAPE CHANGE

Just get into a car and wander through Pilsen or go over to the Humbolt Park area and any of the seven wards which are up for re-election, which were re-districted. The control of the City Council hangs in the balance. If you don't think the Latinos are people who are being courted today, tomorrow and the next days, by the Vrydolyak forces and the Washington forces, then go back to bed.

The Latino surge has complicated the race relations agenda and has added new issues like bilingual education and the immigration policy, just to give two examples. On the issue of immigration reform, I think we should be sensitive to its important local impact. Though this issue is debated and will ultimately be decided in Washington: (When, God knows) we are the ones on the firing lines. And it is very important to the future of social health of Chicago that some kind, some kind of humane program for undocumented aliens be worked out. Thousands of undocumented workers here live a kind of underground, marginal existence in order to escape detection, as you know. If this persists for long, we may end up with masses of people living outside, completely, of American Society. A culturally and linguistically separate nation.

We must make it possible for most of the illegal people who are here to be welcomed into the society as full fledged and responsible citizens and the sooner the better

I think that all of us have a great responsibility today to the Latino community. They are going to be a major part of Chicago in the next generation, for the rest of our lives and the rest of Chicago's life. I think we need to expand our efforts to welcome them into the total community and to assist them to make the transition into the mainstream of American political, social and economic life.

I believe that we also should give great priority to the education of our Latino youngsters. The Latino migrants bring some impressive strengths. A strong family tradition, a strong work ethic, and youthful energy. There are relatively few Latinos on welfare or in public housing. But educational levels are low and the public school system is clearly unable to meet Latino needs in elementary and secondary education.

They have the highest public highschool dropout rate in the city; something like 70 %. And already we can see the beginning of a Latino underclass in the growing pathology of youth unemployment and gang violence.

THE THIRD CHANGE I want to mention to you for your consideration, is the suburban power shift. The third great change I believe is the profound shift in the city-suburban relationships.

The center of gravity, the center of power in this metropolitan area has moved from the city to the suburbs. You and I cannot correct that fact. Chicago is smaller than at any time since the 1920's. Something like around three million people. The great upward curve of growth that we have known from our beginning days in the middle of the 19th century has come to an end.

In the 1970's Chicago lost some 324,000 people while the suburbs gained about 500,000. Most Chicagoans now live in the suburbs. In 1960 Chicago had 57 % of the population of all the people in the metropolitan area and the suburbs had 43 %. Today, it is just the reverse. Fifty eight % of the people live now in the suburbs and only 42 % live in the city. The trend is not new. But in our day it has finally served to reverse the

city-suburban power relationship. The suburbs are no longer subservient to the City of Chicago, politically. The suburbs have a combined plurality of more than 700,000 registered voters than in the city.

And if I may say, next Tuesday will prove that people in the suburbs are more inclined to vote. Should we have election day on a work day? In my heart I've always been opposed to that. I thought it was a very difficult thing. I think we should have it today, on a Saturday. But anyway, there's something in the paper about that this morning. It comes up every time there's an election. But nothing's ever done about it.

The suburbs are no longer subservient to the city economically. They are no longer just bedroom communities. If you doubt that, go out I-5 to Aurora or go up the Northwest corridor toward Rockford and you will see the tremendous change.

For the first time in our history, most of the jobs are now in the suburbs. Including most of the entry level jobs. The city lost some 85,000 private sector jobs in the 1970's while the suburbs gained 400,000 such jobs.

Today, the suburbs have about 100,000 more private sector jobs than exist in the city. In 1960, just 26 years ago, the city had 700,000 more jobs than the suburbs. I submit to you this is a fantastic change. The implication of this power shift in population, political power, jobs and wealth are tremendous. The city cannot go it alone in solving the city's social problems. The city is smaller and weaker and less able to serve the needs of the needy who are still concentrated here.

The city has 42 % of the population in the metropolitan area but some 85 % of the poor. Suburban people, communities, institutions, churches, must be encouraged to play a leadership role commensurate with their new status as wielders of power and wealth. They must be challenged and I think the ICA can help in this. Challenged to play a responsible role in resolving the social problems of our Metropolitan Community

The city and suburbs need each other. Suburban vitality is dependent on a strong central city. And it is very interesting to me; I've been interested in the growth and decline of cities for the last 20 years ever since I met Jane Jacobs who wrote that great book (Unclear Title) and also THE WEALTH OF AMERICAN CITIES.

Everybody in the 1960's told me, I mean the real sharp, intelligent, well-informed city planners, developers, etc., that our downtown area was through. Finished, washed up. Would never come back. Well, when you get through going through Pilsen and Humbolt Park, maybe you could tour around the western part of the Loop. Go down to River City and then maybe walk up Wacker Drive north and then turn up Addison Ave. or Adams. See the new buildings.

Somebody said when you went to Manila during the last 10 years, the thing you noticed, was that there were no more cranes on the buildings. Well, that ain't true in Chicago. Believe me, I am just amazed. And as I was talking to a City Planner yesterday, I said, "My guess is that there is no

power on this earth that can stop the unbelievable growth of our city area". West to Ashland Ave. West of the Loop. I just think it is going to be a burgeoning area. I never thought I would see it. But everything will be either re-vamped, refurnished or torn down and rebuilt. An amazing development.

AND IT'S NOT GOING TO HELP THE POOR. It's going to help people like yourselves; the yuppies of this century. "That was a joke".

I think the single most important, valuable thing that the suburban communities could do would be to open their doors to more poor people. Middle class suburbs should be asked to make it possible for a reasonable number of low income people to live in their communities. This would do more than any massive social welfare program in the inner city to improve the lives of the poor. It would give the poor access to jobs, to stores, to services, good schools and it would be a chance to live in a safe environment.

Now, I know this is political dynamite. I've been around long enough to know that, but it's in keeping, it seems to me, with the traditions of my Church and the tradition of the ICA. And certainly with our whole Judeo-Christian tradition. This is the basic moral issue we have to bring suburban people and the communities to face.

THE SIN OF THE SUBURBS IS THE EXCLUSION OF THE POOR.

Can one be a good citizen or part of a community which deliberately excludes the poor, and in some cases even working class people, through housing and zoning regulations? I DON'T THINK SO. I think that you must help inspire suburban people to address this question courageously and that you must also approach them with sympathy and understanding.

There's a deep fear of the poor in the suburbs. Fear that the poor and their attendant problems and pathologies will undermine the safety, the security, and the amenities of the suburban communities. Qualities which so many parents have struggled to achieve for themselves and their children. And I would like to submit to you that we should not dismiss their fears as groundless.

For many they were born in the crucible of real experience. And there is nothing wrong with people wanting decent, middle class standards. But there is a line between working for decent standards and erecting a wall of selfishness to keep others out. We need prophets who will help people see the moral issues involved in suburban housing policies. But we also need leaders who can devise programs which will give people a practical handle on the problem. A way to open suburban communities to the poor while at the same time protecting legitimate self-interest.

There are some good programs which meet this standard and can serve as models for us. I am thinking here of the Northshore Inter-faith Housing Council. An Inter-faith group sponsored by some 40 churches and synagogues on the Northshore which works to educate and advocate more inclusive housing policies and which has been responsible for the first subsidized housing along the Northshore.

The strength of their approach is that it comes from inside the suburbs themselves. It is not a solution proposed from the outside. It appeals to the best in people. Their sense of fairness and generosity. And it does not seek to overturn the fundamental middle class character of suburban communities. But only to help these communities share their affluence and advantages with some poor people.

NOW, THE FOURTH CHALLENGE, WHICH IN A SENSE IS THE SADDEST, THE MOST DIFFICULT, and one which I commend to your prayers and your work. And I have absolutely no solution to this.

It has come upon us gradually, silently, in a sense, but it is probably the most serious problem we are facing in the city. Here, I am talking about THE NEW POVERTY.

The fourth great change is perhaps the most serious and dangerous trend attacking race relations. It is the development of what is called "the new poverty". Poverty used to mean individuals and families who worked but did not have sufficient income. As recently as 1950 most poor people had families where at least one adult worked for part of the year. Did you hear what I said? "The 1960's". They were in the economy but did not earn sufficient income. This is not what poverty means anymore. Today, poverty has come more and more to mean permanent unemployment and permanent dependence.

We call the people caught up in this tragedy, "The Underclass." Mostly minority, they are the victims of a vast change in our economic life. Both in the nation and certainly in our metropolitan area. And I think we have to become more sensitive to the social consequences of this change. For the first time in our history, Chicago does not have much need for the unskilled labor of the poor.

For most of our history, this great city, "The Hog Butcher of the World", as Carl Sandburg called it, was a Mecca for humble people. I'm old enough, probably older than anybody in this room, and I remember my father coming to this area. When we first came to Chicago from New York my father was a bus driver. We lived on the 4800 block on Kenmore. We were poor! We were poor! But there was always the chance that my dad would be able to move up some kind of a ladder. And he did. So, he was able to send us to school.

I lived through the depression. There was a vast number of people unemployed. But we knew there would be a change. We hoped and prayed there would be a change. There was a great hope there. Well, it was a Mecca for poor people, our City. And probably if you are from Chicago, your parents were the same as my folks. Poor but decent people who worked hard and sent their kids to school and had a hope for a better future economically, culturally and socially.

So many of the people I meet across the city and in the suburbs, too, are like that. Their parents and grandparents came from the peasant farms of Europe. They were unable to speak English but they found unskilled jobs in the steel mills and the stock yards. Within a generation, they and

their children were on their way into the American mainstream. Almost all of us here have a personal family history which reflects that story. That was the American Dream.

That dream does not work here anymore. We have to build a new dream. There are 600,000 people in the city of Chicago living below the poverty line. That is about 20 % of the city. A full third of the black community and a quarter of the Hispanic community and some 10 % of the white community make up these ranks. Keep that figure in your head. Six hundred thousand people in the City of Chicago living below the poverty line.

I don't want to make it too sad. When I was talking about the humble people coming from the peasant farms of Europe I was thinking about my people. I had an uncle. My Uncle Jim was a construction worker and another brother came over, another uncle of mine, Uncle Mike. He wanted to get a job on the streets and sanitation and sewer departments. He didn't have much education and my Uncle Jim was giving him some questions to answer. Some things that might come up in the examination the following week. And he said, "Mike, if you were walking down the street and you saw an excavation, what would you do?"

And Mike said, "Why, I'd shoot the damn thing."

Now, within those 600,000 people some 250,000 to 300,000 have been on welfare five years or more. They are the hard core of the underclass and their ranks are growing. This new poverty of permanent unemployment and dependency has caused and is causing massive social change and damage which threatens the stability and safety of this community. Today's poor communities, I do not have to tell you, are not very pleasant or safe places. Poverty has never been pretty, but many people remember when it was safe to walk through almost any part of our city. When people on hot nights could sleep on the grass in our parks or along the lake front. And do so without fear.

That's no longer true. I was with Cardinal Bernardin the night of the day he went through the Housing Project over in Rockwell Gardens. He spent some time there alone with Sister Julia (?). from Merlack House (?) He had gone through most of Rockwell Gardens which is not one of the real high rise public housing projects in our city. I was with him that night and let me say he had not recovered. He said to me, "Jack, I just didn't know that people had to live in situations such as this". He said, "I had to walk up 8 floors because the elevator wasn't working". Etc., etc., etc.

Most of you hve had this experience. And it's marked him. He hasn't been the same since, really. It was a consciousness raising experience for him. I'm glad he had it.

The new poverty of uselessness (There's not a person here in this room who has ever had a day of feeling useless) of having no place or function in society, has eroded hope, self respect and social standing. Family structure has been weakened as we see in the massive growth of illigetimacy. Over 50 % of the children born in Chicago last year were

illigetimate. Teen age pregnancy, babies having babies, crime and violence and our more than 50 % public highschool drop out rate. We are breeding a generation of thousands of un-nurtured, ill-educated, damaged people who are growing up without hope in our midst.

Yet a dangerous defeatism has grown up about these people, a feeling that nothing can be done. I can find no great movement to help them. There are even some journalists who have described them as a "doomed people". I suggest to you that we must reject this counsel. They, too, deserve a chance. The task is to create new leaders of opportunity, new paths of upward mobility that can reach down where the people are and help them break out.

I was talking last Wednesday with a young man who came out of Cabrini Green. He is in his second year of law school at Notre Dame. An extraordinary young man. He had a strong mother who was determined that no matter what sacrifice she had to make, her youngster was going to have a good high school education, a good college education. Now he has another year of two before he gets a law degree.

OUR TASK IS TO REBUILD AND REFORM OUR PRINCIPAL PUBLIC SOCIAL SUPPORT SYSTEMS, OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS, OUR PUBLIC HOUSING AND OUR PUBLIC WELFARE.

These systems are supposed to provide these leaders. They are more generously funded than anything Franklin Roosevelt ever dreamed of but they do not work very well. Surely we can do better. If less affluent European communities can do it, surely we can do it. The need is for will and determination that there will be no doomed people in our city. Our public schools must be strengthened so they can offer poor children an education that provides literacy, basic skills and an entry into our economic systems.

Our Public Welfare system is badly, badly in need of reform. And this should not be the business simply of social workers. Inadvertantly, the Federal aid to families with dependent children program, the FDC, has become an engine of family destruction. Despite all the evidence we have about the importance of strong family structure in raising children, overcoming poverty, our public welfare system is simply not designed to support the family. The focus is only on the mother and child.

Family structure is hurt when the husband and father cannot find work. But it is also hurt by a welfare system which provides incentives for fathers to leave the home. The silence on this issue among liberals is deafning. We are in an era when to be pro-family is thought to be ill-liberal and anti-feminine. There was an article in the paper this morning about awards given to a number of women for distinguished service and professional competence and this one lady said, "I raised the question, 'Why did you hve no award for a homemaker?' We have superb homemakers around, you know."

I won't get into that little discussion but I think we need courageous leadership to confront this nonsense head on, to reform the welfare system so that it supports the family structure. We need to provide incentives in the welfare system to encourage parents to stick together and to be responsible for their children.

We need a welfare system which provides work, even public service work if necessary, to give dignity and hope to the poor among us. We also need to reform our public housing system. The management and the occupancy policies of public housing have been a disaster. We have created snake pits for poor people. No wonder the prospect of scattered site public housing evokes such fear. We need new leadership to reform public housing to make it a privilege, not a right. To provide stronger management so that anti-social elements can be removed. And public housing projects become places of safety and decency. With tenants playing a role in management and social control. But none of these reforms will ever happen unless you and I really care.

The new racism of the 1980's, I believe, I submit to you, is indifference. Indifference to the plight of the underclass. The collective pushing them out of our consciousness and lives. We must not let the inner city be forgotten. We must devise practical ways for the middle class and the affluent to become involved. We must not be satisfied with merely keeping people alive.

NOW, THIS IS GETTING A LITTLE LONG. LET ME MOVE ON TO THE LAST, THE 5TH, THE DECLINE OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT.

I know the change affecting race relations in Chicago and nationally has to do with the Civil Rights Movement. That movement, an inter-racial social force for racial justice which has done so much good, is suffering from a malaise.

I got a call yesterday from Bill Barry, one of the great Civil Rights leaders in our city. Bill Barry is a great man. And he said, "Jack, I need your help. What we want to do is revitalize the NAACP in this city."

He said, "It just hasn't done anything in the last several years. (He was speaking very emotionally.) Will you help us?" Etc., etc., etc. "We'll get some real life into the NAACP". Well, all right....

I believe that the inter-racial cohesion that we had in the '60's and the consensus has been weakened. You could almost say that the Civil Rights Movement is dead. Twenty years ago this movement carried the banner of American Idealism. You know that.

Martin Luther King's goal and vision was the inclusive society, the racially integrated community where there would be no religious, racial or ethnic barrier to individual fulfillment. His fundamental insight was moral and religious. We knew that in the spirit of the New Testament the only way to combat the evil of racism was to replace it with something good.

The Civil Rights Movement today has drifted away from Dr. Kings' vision. Who talks about integration anymore? That's passe. The movement, or what is left of it, has become ethno centric, interested primarily in group status and group rights. And today, all of us, blacks and whites and Hispanics have become ethnics. We don't propose to lead America any more but only to take care of ourselves. This narrow vision, this trend toward

racial separatism, is a terrible mistake and weakens our fight, yours and mine, against racism.

Our "group" should not become our primary loyalty. "Group status" should not become the primary organizing principle of society. We are also Americans. There is an American community. An American culture and American ideal. I believe profoundly that the more we remain true to Dr. Kings' vision, the more we identify the goal of civil rights as justice and integration, the more we will succeed in achieving full racial justice in America.

Now, why have we drifted into that fragmentation? Some have become discouraged, feeling that whites are insincere and will never integrate, will never accept them as equals. Many whites have become fearful and troubled, confused about the minority agenda. Fearful that it conflicts with individual rights and that it is essentially anti-white.

I also feel, IN CONCLUSION, that these great changes that I spoke about create a new and unbelievably beautiful challenge for our future. The ICA and The Ecumenical Institute have never been a group of people here or across the world who have either despaired or moved away from challenging problems. I think our basic task is to revitalize our faith as it applies to race relations today. To form people to live their faith. People who know our common unity in the Lord is a higher loyalty than all other claims.

Note, while this is very close to the end of the talk, the tape ran out at this point and missed some few sentences.