"From A Grateful City"

Remarks of

Mayor Richard J. Daley Of Chicago

On The Occasion Of

The 5th City "Decade of Miracles" Celebration

December 15, 1973

Dean Joseph Mathews, Distinguished clergy, Lela Mosley, Mr. David Wood, Mr. Floyd Stanley, Aldermen Ray and Washington and Cross, Senator Simms, Commissioner Hill, Mr. Quigley, Mr. Livermore, the associates of the Ecumenical Institute, associates of the 5th City Renewal Project, banking officials, residents and businessmen of the community, and friends. After listening to the remarks of Dean Mathews, Mrs. Mosley and the other speakers, I can understand why we're celebrating ten years of achievement in the opening of the shopping center, as well as the Community Center, here on the West Side of Chicago, today.

I'd like to congratulate all the banking officials and all the people who played a part in cooperating with the people of this community to do something for themselves. We all thank the Lord for this day, but we also thank you who worked with him in what you call dreams or plans or programs put together by men and women who had vision, and who had imagination, but above all who had great determination. This is a day in our city and in this community for gratitude, a day to be proud, and a day for us to thank so many.

Ten years ago, The Ecumenical Institute was established here, as the Dean said, in this community, and as Mrs. Mosley has so well recorded, as history. It was established by men and women of all religious faiths who had a deep social passion and an intense desire to put their religious principles into action. The men and women of the Ecumenical Institute have been dedicated to opening opportunities for the people of this community, toward helping the children with one of the finest pre-school programs in the nation, by operating a Health Clinic, by making available this building as a community center for 5th City, and by supporting the 5th City Shopping Center.

In carrying out these programs there's been conscientious enlightened backing from generous private donors and many of the leaders in our city's banking community. We all know that this kind of involvement and commitment by the financial community and private citizens have been essential in carrying out these programs.

But most of all the pride and determination of the business men and women and the residents of the community have been the most important element in these successes and achievements. I want to thank and commend Mrs. Mosley and all of the members of the 5th City Board of Managers and Mr. Stanley and all of the local businessmen and the political leadership
of the community: Alderman Ray and Alderman Washington, Alderman Cross, Senator Simms, Committee member O'Quigley. Because of the work and determination of all of the men and women who are in this great community center today, there are many more units of decent housing. There's going to be a fine new supermarket and, as we heard, a drug store and a barbershop, and a currency exchange and a laundromat and cleaning shops, all owned and operated by the businessmen in this neighborhood and in this community.

The city government will continue to do everything it possibly can to be of assistance and to aid in helping in this project. We propose as a part of the improvement program, as has been requested by the people who are leading the shopping center, to close to traffic a portion of 5th Avenue, near Jackson, so that it can be used as a part of a shopping center mall.

This building, which is now the Community Center of 5th City, has a great history. It once was the home of the Sheetmetal Workers Union, an organization which is very close to me. My Dad, God love him, was one of the organizers of Local 73 of the Sheetmetal Workers. It was in this place where working men banded together to try to improve their lives and the lives of their children. That same tradition is being carried on here today by you, the leadership of this community, the men and women who live here have come together and have worked to bring about the shopping center and to bring about the Community Center. This building and the Men's Service Club, and the Pre-School Facilities have all been conveyed by the Ecumenical Institute to the community. This is a great way to celebrate the Institute's tenth anniversary.

Everyone here has accomplished much, that is why I say, we thank the Lord and thank you for this fine day. And hope... with the help of God, that what you are doing here will be emulated, and imitated and repeated in every neighborhood in our city. Because when we improve the neighborhood and we improve the communities, then we improve the city. And there's no reason why we can't do what you've done, in ten years, in the next ten years to remove every slum and every blight in Chicago and to have a decent home and a decent school and a decent park and decent medical attention, to be of service to all people in our great city.

Congratulations again from a grateful city to fine, hard-working people who had a dream. And Dean, may we dream and have visions because a country without vision and without dreams would be lost. And I think, as you said, no time in the history of our country do we need wholesome and good dreams of what the future should be of our cities and our country than we need today. Good luck to all of you, and thanks again from a grateful city to each and every one of you.

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