Massive Resistance in the Urban North: Trumbull Park, Chicago, 1953–1966

Arnold R. Hirsch

On the evening of August 5, 1953, nearly fifty white teenagers bombarded Donald Howard's apartment with racial epithets, stones, and paving bricks. By August 9, crowds of between one and two thousand were congregating around the dwelling in the Trumbull Park Homes, a project of the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA), harassing the Howard family and damaging the structure with missiles of every description. It was the culmination of a week of uncertainty and the opening of a seemingly endless struggle between the South Deering community surrounding the public housing project and the CHA.[1]

The uncertainty stemmed from the fact that Betty Howard, an exceptionally fair-skinned African American, had made the application for the unit at 10630 Bensley Avenue. Although the Howards had moved into the project on July 30, it was not until August 4 that the manager of the Trumbull Park Homes telephoned the Chicago Commission on Human Relations (CHR) with the information that the family "might be Negro."[2]

Procedures heretofore effective in preventing the integration of the project had broken down. Had the clerk at the project rental office suspected she was Black, Howard would have been referred to the CHA's downtown headquarters. Given the degree of segregation in Chicago, the CHA headquarters staff had usually been able

Arnold R. Hirsch is professor of history and chair of the Department of History at the University of New Orleans. An earlier version of this essay was presented at the March 1994 meeting of the Urban Affairs Association in New Orleans, Louisiana.

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[1] Commission on Human Relations, *The Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances: A Chronological Report, August 4, 1953 to June 30, 1955* (Chicago, n.d.), 10–12; Commission on Human Relations, "The Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances, Documentary Report Number 1, Aug., 1953–March, 1954," n.d., pp. 2–3, folder 2, box 23, Robert Merriam Papers (Department of Special Collections, Regenstein Library, University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.); Elizabeth Wood to Commissioners, Aug. 24, 1953, Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances File (Chicago Housing Authority, Chicago, Ill.); *Chicago Defender,* Aug. 8, 1953, p. 1.

[2] Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances,* 10; "Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances: Documentary Report Number 1," p. 2; Wood to Commissioners, Aug. 24, 1953, Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances File.

to check the racial identity of its applicants discreetly, and by locating their present residences. But Howard's current address was not associated with an identifiably Black neighborhood and Donald Howard's status as a veteran meant the waiver of the CHA's customary home visit. Consequently, as Betty Howard had "not the slightest physical characteristics of a Negro," the neighbors did not immediately ascertain the racial identity of the family. By August 5, they did.[3] The result was nearly a decade of sporadic violence.

More than an idiosyncratic reaction, the ethnic uprising in Chicago's Trumbull Park revealed—nearly a year before the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* decision—the shoals upon which the postwar movement for racial equality would founder. Even as a popular Black uprising dismantled Jim Crow in the South, signs had already surfaced that similar victories would be harder to come by in the urban North. In a booming postwar economy, before urban renewal had ravaged ethnic enclaves, before the civil rights movement devolved into riotous violence, and before the draining Vietnam War helped spawn a debilitating political reaction, Chicago's ethnic communities had outlined the limits of Black advance. Trumbull Park, Marquette Park, Gage Park, Belmont-Cragin, South Boston, Charlestown, Bensonhurst, Howard Beach, and Canarsie hardly rate as civil rights landmarks in the same sense as Montgomery, Selma, or Birmingham, but they are symbols, nonetheless. More than mere examples of anti-Black animus, they exposed the political and ideological limits of the civil rights era.[4]

Trumbull Park was among the first to cast those limits in high relief. As a turning point in the long struggle between the CHA and the Cook County Democratic party, the disorders of the mid-1950s proved instrumental in the subjugation of the authority. The debacle in South Deering led to the removal of Elizabeth Wood, the CHA's founding executive secretary, who had struggled to undermine Chicago's pattern of residential segregation. More, the chaos in Trumbull Park capped a wave of postwar anti-Black violence that forced a rightward lurch in the famed Chicago machine itself. Indeed, Wood had experimentally breached the color line and maintained the CHA as a patronage-free agency of some reformist zeal only under the protection of Edward J. Kelly (mayor from 1933 to 1947), a boss whose flirtation

[3] Wood to Commissioners, Aug. 24, 1953, Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances File; Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances,* 59.

[4] On the civil rights movement's approach to urban ghettos and northern race relations, the difficulties it encountered, and the collapse of the white consensus on its behalf, see James R. Ralph Jr., *Northern Protest: Martin Luther King, Jr., Chicago, and the Civil Rights Movement* (Cambridge, Mass., 1993). On South Boston and Charlestown, see Ronald P. Formisano, *Boston against Busing: Race, Class, and Ethnicity in the 1960s and 1970s* (Chapel Hill, 1991); and J. Anthony Lukas, *Common Ground: A Turbulent Decade in the Lives of Three American Families* (New York, 1985). On New York, see, especially, Jonathan Rieder, *Canarsie: The Jews and Italians of Brooklyn against Liberalism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1985); and Jim Sleeper, *The Closest of Strangers: Liberalism and the Politics of Race in New York* (New York, 1990). For Chicago's immediate post–World War II experience, see Arnold R. Hirsch, "Race and Housing: Violence and Communal Protest in Chicago," in *The Ethnic Frontier: Essays in the History of Group Survival in Chicago and the Midwest,* ed. Melvin G. Holli and Peter d'A. Jones (Grand Rapids, 1977), 331–68; and Arnold R. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940–1960* (New York, 1983). On the 1940s and 1950s, see Dominic J. Capeci, *Race Relations in Wartime Detroit: The Sojourner Truth Housing Controversy of 1942* (Philadelphia, 1984); and John F. Bauman, *Public Housing, Race, and Renewal: Urban Planning in Philadelphia, 1920–1974* (Philadelphia, 1987).

with racial liberalism precipitated his being dumped by the local party shortly before the 1947 mayoral election. The ethnic upheaval in Trumbull Park completed the repudiation of Kelly's tentative course and coincided with the elevation of Richard J. Daley as Cook County Democratic party chairman (1953) and mayor (1955).[5] Before the end of Daley's twenty-one-year administration, the CHA was transformed into a bulwark of segregation that helped sustain Chicago's "second ghetto." The dissolution of the New Deal's legacy—as well as of the coalition that gave it life—could be discerned in the streets of Chicago's south side steel district.

The Trumbull Park Homes occupy nearly twenty acres of land on the city's far southeast side. Bounded by Yates, Bensley, and Oglesby avenues between 105th and 109th streets, the project was built in 1938 by the federal government as part of the Public Works Administration program. By the mid-1950s, the 462-unit project housed more than seventeen hundred persons.[6]

From the beginning, the development generated tension in the community, even though it was all-white. Half of the early project families had but a single parent, and nearly a third of them received public assistance. Thus, not only were the project tenants "outsiders" to the heavily ethnic neighborhood of South Deering, but their low status guaranteed conflict between the tenant population and the rest of the community.[7]

The race issue transformed a generalized sense of hostility into active opposition. In 1940 rumors that Blacks were to be introduced into the project provoked a spirited outcry from the South Deering Improvement Association (SDIA) and elicited from the CHA a statement that the authority would not change the "racial make-up" of the area and that it did "not intend to accept Negro families in Trumbull Park Homes."[8] This adherence to the federally prescribed "neighborhood composition

[5] Roger Biles, *Big City Boss in Depression and War: Mayor Edward J. Kelly of Chicago* (DeKalb, 1984); Arnold R. Hirsch, "The Cook County Democratic Organization and the Dilemma of Race, 1931–1987," in *Snowbelt Cities: Metropolitan Politics in the Northeast and Midwest since World War II,* ed. Richard M. Bernard (Bloomington, 1990), 63–90; Bill Gleason, *Daley of Chicago: The Man, the Mayor, and the Limits of Conventional Politics* (New York, 1970); Paul Kleppner, *Chicago Divided: The Making of a Black Mayor* (DeKalb, 1985); Joe Mathewson, *Up against Daley* (Lasalle, 1974); Len O'Connor, *Clout: Mayor Daley and His City* (Chicago, 1975); Milton L. Rakove, *Don't Make No Waves, Don't Back No Losers: An Insider's Analysis of the Daley Machine* (Bloomington, 1975); Mike Royko, *Boss: Richard J. Daley of Chicago* (New York, 1971). Notable recent scholarly treatments include William J. Grimshaw, *Bitter Fruit: Black Politics and the Chicago Machine, 1931–1991* (Chicago, 1992); and Roger Biles, *Richard J. Daley: Politics, Race, and the Governing of Chicago* (DeKalb, 1995).

[6] Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances,* 7.

[7] South Deering's 1960 population of 18,794 included only 125 (0.7%) Blacks and 8,823 (46.9%) individuals of "foreign stock" (those who were foreign-born or had at least one foreign-born parent). Among the foreign-born, "Yugoslavs" (primarily Serbs and Croats) predominated, followed by Russians (non-Jews), Poles, and Italians. See Evelyn M. Kitagawa and Karl E. Taeuber, eds., *Local Community Fact Book: Chicago Metropolitan Area, 1960* (Chicago, 1963), 116–17, 301. For early friction surrounding the project, see Commission on Human Relations, "Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances: Documentary Report Number 1," p. 1; and ". . . and a little child shall lead them," typescript, n.d., 3–4, folder 172, Stephen S. Bubacz Papers (Manuscript Collection, University Library, University of Illinois, Chicago). On the ethnicity of Trumbull Park rioters, see Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto,* 79–83.

[8] Wood to Mr. McGuire, April 13, 1940, box 6, Business and Professional People in the Public Interest Papers (Chicago Historical Society, Chicago, Ill.).

An aerial view of the Trumbull Park Homes, looking north. The Howards' apartment was situated on the development's exposed eastern border, Bensley Avenue. Trumbull Park, which does not appear in the photograph, lay across 105th Street, immediately north of the housing project.
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guideline" represented early CHA policy and led South Deering residents to believe that the authority was reneging on an agreement when the Howards moved in more than a decade later.

The violence at the Trumbull Park Homes exposed what had become, by 1953, an increasingly bitter struggle over the authority's racial posture. The neighborhood-composition rule that had preserved South Deering's homogeneity also covered three other older CHA projects. Despite state law and the CHA's formal adoption of a nondiscrimination policy in 1950, the Lathrop Homes, Bridgeport Homes, and Lawndale Gardens also remained all-white. The maintenance of segregation in these developments had provoked the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and other liberal organizations to demand the integration of the four projects months before the disorders began in Trumbull Park.[9]

For their part, Elizabeth Wood and her staff prodded the CHA's governing board of five commissioners by forwarding the applications of potentially "ideal" Black tenants along with copies of the authority's own statements on nondiscrimination. Such aggressive leadership characterized Wood, who had earlier searched for mixed neighborhoods in which, even under the neighborhood-composition guideline, racially mixed projects could be opened. She further displayed her predilections, with explosive results, when she integrated veterans' housing projects after the war. Now, her desire to integrate the remaining handful of all-white projects ran into the opposition of a governing board that verbally ordered her to disregard its own proclaimed policy. Such constraints merely led Wood to leak details of the authority's duplicity to civil rights groups, which then pressured the CHA publicly. Her racial views had led to accusations of insubordination and subversion when the Howards moved into Trumbull Park. Events now forced the authority to consider "the disastrous effects of . . . [a] retreat before mob violence."[10]

The CHA made a two-pronged response. The first was a hard-nosed approach toward CHA tenants taking part in the disturbances. A letter from Wood informed white residents of the Trumbull Park Homes that their participation in anti-Black incidents would leave the CHA no choice but "to terminate the leases of those families [involved]."[11]

The second part of the CHA response was of greater import. Linking the fresh articulation of CHA intentions to the outbreak of racial problems (which were "greater than the press had indicated," according to Wood), the executive secretary stated that "non-segregation" was "now a matter of policy on the part of the Chicago Housing Authority." In a staccato burst of resolutions, the CHA affirmed that there would be "no racial barriers to a home in public housing" and condemned mob

[9] Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances,* 9; Commission on Human Relations, "Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances: Documentary Report Number 1," p. 1; Council Against Discrimination, Minutes, May 19, 1953, folder 152, Barratt O'Hara Papers (Manuscript Collection, University Library); *Chicago Defender,* May 2, 1953, clipping, box 9, Daniel M. Cantwell Papers (Chicago Historical Society); Sidney Williams to Wood, May 27, 1953, folder 702, Chicago Urban League Papers (Manuscript Collection, University Library).

[10] Wood to Commissioners, Aug. 24, 1953, Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances File; Wood to [Wilfred] Sykes, March 30, 1953, *ibid.*; James Cassels, confidential memo, April 23, 1952, folder 10, box 88, American Friends Service Committee Papers (Manuscript Collection, University Library).

[11] Wood to Commissioners, Aug. 24, 1953, Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances File; Wood to Tenant, Sept. 2, 1953, Elizabeth Wood Reports Folder, box 4, Business and Professional People in the Public Interest Papers.

violence.[12] Its public resolve, however, covered a cautious course of action. Integration *would* be limited and carefully managed. Even as it announced a blanket policy of nondiscrimination, the CHA maintained but a token Black presence in the community.

As the first Blacks in the project, the Howard family bore the brunt of South Deering's displeasure. Crowds repeatedly threw bricks, stones, and sulfur candles through their windows, forcing the Howards to replace their living room windowpanes with plywood. Another weapon in the arsenal of the anti-Black protesters was the aerial "bomb." Such bombs were fireworks that, according to the Commission on Human Relations, propelled a series of charges, which exploded with a "brilliant flash" and deafening thunder. On the worst nights, one hundred such noise-making devices might be detonated.[13]

When not besieged in their apartment, the Howards found venturing beyond its meager protection a harrowing experience. Normal activities—a trip to the store, travel to work, an evening's stroll—were dangerous, if not impossible. Simply picking up a six-pack in the neighborhood necessitated an armed police guard. Such escorts quickly became an omnipresent feature of Black life in Trumbull Park.[14]

Freedom of passage through the area by nonresident African Americans also came into question. Prior to the Howards' arrival in the Trumbull Park Homes, many Blacks living in the Altgeld Gardens housing project to the south passed through South Deering on Torrence Avenue en route to jobs in the industrial district north and immediately east of Trumbull Park. Once the issue of a permanent Black presence emerged, nonwhite transients found themselves targeted. From the first week of the disorders, cars driven by Blacks attracted marauding mobs and an occasional shower of rocks.[15]

If there was no unanimity among whites in Trumbull Park, there was no visible opposition to the protesters. Some certainly objected to the use of violence, but most condoned it. For those bold enough to break racial ranks, punishment was swift. Less than a month after the Howards came to Trumbull Park, vandals burned a liquor store near the project that continued to serve Black customers.[16]

The pattern of resistance quickly became apparent. If Blacks insisted on living in the neighborhood, they would be harassed day and night. Those whites who would have tolerated, if not befriended, them were made to fear for their own safety. The only close associations made by African Americans living in the Trumbull

[12] Advisory Committee to the Chicago Housing Authority, Minutes, Oct. 7, 1953, Welfare Council, 1950–1953, Folder, box 21, Lea Taylor Papers (Chicago Historical Society); Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances,* 16, 20.

[13] Commission on Human Relations, "Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances, Documentary Report Number 1," pp. 2–5; Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances,* 10–12, 17; Wood to Commissioners, Jan. 11, 1954, Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances File.

[14] Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances,* 16.

[15] Commission on Human Relations, "Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances, Documentary Report Number 1," p. 3; *Chicago Defender,* Aug. 13, 1953, p. 1.

[16] Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances,* 17.

Donald and Betty Howard test a protective plywood window at their Trumbull Park Homes apartment. *Courtesy Chicago Historical Society; negative 15102.*

Park Homes with local people of other colors were the bitter ones that developed between them and their constant companions—the police.

The Howards endured this ordeal alone into the autumn. The introduction of three additional Black families on October 13 was an act of the utmost significance. It tangibly confirmed the CHA's heretofore merely verbal commitment to desegregation—an important point since questions already clouded the Howards' continued residence in the project. Indeed, within a month of their entry, the CHA found that the Howards were in technical violation of CHA income regulations. Liberal and African American groups consequently urged the authority to speed the entry of qualified Black applicants into the project. The NAACP and the city's major Black newspaper, the *Chicago Defender,* insisted that the Howards not be moved out until other African Americans were brought in. It would be important, the interra-

cial Council Against Discrimination (CAD) agreed, to recruit other Black families before the Howards left "lest it seem that mob rule has forced the Authority to retreat."[17]

The CHA did not retreat. Though fearful of provoking further violence, CHA officials determined by early September to bring more Blacks to Trumbull Park before starting eviction proceedings against the Howards. By midmonth, the authority had processed the applications of eligible Black families to deny "the community a feeling that they had accomplished something through riots and disorder."[18]

The CHR reported as early as October 8 that people in the community knew of the authority's plans. Expecting resistance, the police increased their detail in Trumbull Park to twelve hundred officers on moving day. The CHA also took great care. Furnishing a representative to travel with each family, it arranged for the Blacks to be moved "in a caravan under police escort." A crowd estimated at up to two hundred greeted the thirty-car convoy with a barrage of sticks and stones. The overwhelming presence of the police, however, prevented the clash from escalating.[19]

This show of force on the part of the authority, the police, and South Deering's whites convinced each of the parties of its adversaries' determination. The hostile demonstration and a "series of [later] incidents" led the CHA to put a temporary "freeze" on the admission of Black tenants. When they resumed, the agency moved solitary Black and white families in simultaneously without advance publicity.[20]

When the CHA brought the next Black family in February 1954, no violence occurred. Whether outmaneuvered by the CHA's complex arrangements (midweek, daylight moves guaranteed that most local men would be at work) or merely convinced that they could do little against massive numbers of police, Trumbull Park's whites harangued Blacks as they entered the project and reserved the use of force for attempts to drive them out once the precautions taken on moving day were lifted. With mechanical regularity throughout the first half of 1954, Black families entered the project, one by one, under the watchful eyes of the police.[21]

Unable to prevent Blacks from residing in the project, South Deering residents attempted to make life so unbearable that they would soon leave. Failing that, they hoped the city would remove them for the sake of peace. In this context, the continued presence of Donald Howard had great symbolic value. Even after other African Americans had occupied their apartments, Howard remained the primary target. Efforts to secure his removal received official support. In January 1954 a

[17] Wood to Commissioners, Aug. 24, 27, 1953, Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances File; *Chicago Defender,* Aug. 20, 1953, p. 1; Strategy Committee on Trumbull Park Homes, Meeting notes, n.d., folder 649, Chicago Urban League Papers.

[18] American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Chicago Division, Executive Committee, Minutes, Sept. 3, 1953, folder 6, box 104, ACLU—Illinois Division Papers (Department of Special Collections, Regenstein Library); Committee on Racial Tensions in Housing Projects, Resumé of meeting, Nov. 4, 1953, folder 4, box 23, Merriam Papers.

[19] Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances,* 22–23; Wood to Commissioners, Oct. 6, 15, 1953, Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances File.

[20] Advisory Committee to the Chicago Housing Authority, Minutes, Nov. 19, 1953, Welfare Council, 1950–1953, Folder, box 21, Taylor Papers; Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances,* 29.

[21] Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances,* 32–33, 35–37, 40, 42, 47–48.

committee appointed by the city council to investigate the Trumbull Park situation concluded that "the Howard family has come to stand as a symbol of all the tensions . . . in the Trumbull Homes area; and its removal should therefore be expedited in the interests of tranquility."[22] The CHA also wanted the Howards to leave the project. The authority had, in fact, offered the family another apartment until permanent quarters could be located. When the Howards rejected this offer, the CHA proceeded with its previously announced intention to evict them.[23]

Once again, the *Defender* led the chorus in the Howards' defense. If the family was a symbol of racial tension, the *Defender* argued, it also represented "the city's determination not to be dictated to by racists and hate mongers." After some delay, however, the Howards left the project voluntarily on May 3, 1954—two weeks before the United States Supreme Court rendered its judgment in *Brown*. The police and the remaining Black families shared hopes that things would quiet down.[24] The *Defender*'s fears about lending encouragement to mob action, however, proved more prescient.

With the Howards gone, ten Black families remained in the Trumbull Park Homes; there were fifteen by mid-July 1954. Unlike the Howards, whose quarters were exposed on the periphery, they were all in apartments tucked well into the interior of the project. The numbers of African Americans now resident in Trumbull Park, the inaccessibility of their homes, and the removal of the focal point of the surrounding community's anger all led to a new phase in the conflict. The increased demand for the use of community facilities, even if only access to a grocery store or church, forced the issue into the streets. The question became one of community control.

The exodus of the Howards thus spurred the resistance. To learn more about the disorders, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) infiltrated the community by planting a Polish-speaking informant in the nearby Wisconsin Steel Works plant. The young man blended artfully into his surroundings and, for several months in 1954, reported daily to his handlers all the information he could glean on the job or in local taverns. He indicated that the Howards' departure encouraged local residents, who interpreted it as a "sign of victory." He also made it clear that South Deering's whites closely followed developments within the project. They knew, for example, that the constant harassment had strained the Howards' marriage. More than a cause for raucous tavern laughter, most felt that such difficulties had something to do with the Howards' flight. They similarly believed that the remaining Blacks were "getting the jitters" and that the South Deering Improvement Association "had a good system."[25]

[22] Committee on Racial Tensions in Housing Projects, *Report to the Mayor and the City Council* (Chicago, 1954), 8.

[23] Wood to Commissioners, Jan. 11, 1954, Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances File; Wood to John Fugard, Feb. 2, 1954, *ibid.*

[24] *Chicago Defender,* Feb. 6, 1954, p. 10; *Christian Science Monitor,* June 11, 1954, clipping, Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances File; Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances,* 33, 41.

[25] Trumbull Park Committee of the Council Against Discrimination, Minutes, May 13, 1954, folder 712, Chicago Urban League Papers; Operative L. G., "Confidential Report," May 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 1954, folder 9, box 11, ACLU—Illinois Division Papers.

"System" was a proper characterization of the SDIA operation by mid-1954. It had ritualized the sporadic violence that plagued the area and carried on a sophisticated psychological war against the remaining intruders. By summer, explosives were detonated at precise thirty-minute intervals. The numbing regularity of the blasts served as a pointed reminder that a hostile community awaited any "invader" who "might take a chance and walk out." In case that was not enough, whites congregated on nearby street corners, the ACLU's operative reported, "so the negroes can see them" and have no doubts that a crowd was "waiting to catch them." The SDIA also rendered legal and financial aid to those arrested in connection with the disorders and created the *South Deering Bulletin,* an unashamed hate sheet designed to voice their concerns.[26] James C. Downs Jr., housing coordinator for the city, concluded simply: "There is a conspiracy. This has changed from a demonstration to an attack."[27]

The struggle over public facilities in South Deering proved exceptionally bitter precisely because local whites were unable to prevent the CHA from bringing Black tenants into the Trumbull Park Homes. A syllogistic array of assumptions revealed their deepest fears. If African Americans roamed freely through the area, they would soon feel confident enough to use the park, the playground, and other public amenities, locals believed. They would then try to buy homes outside the project, and it would only be a matter of time before "the whole thing will be Black and they will buy at their own price."[28] Homes, savings, and the ability to maintain social and familial networks were at stake.

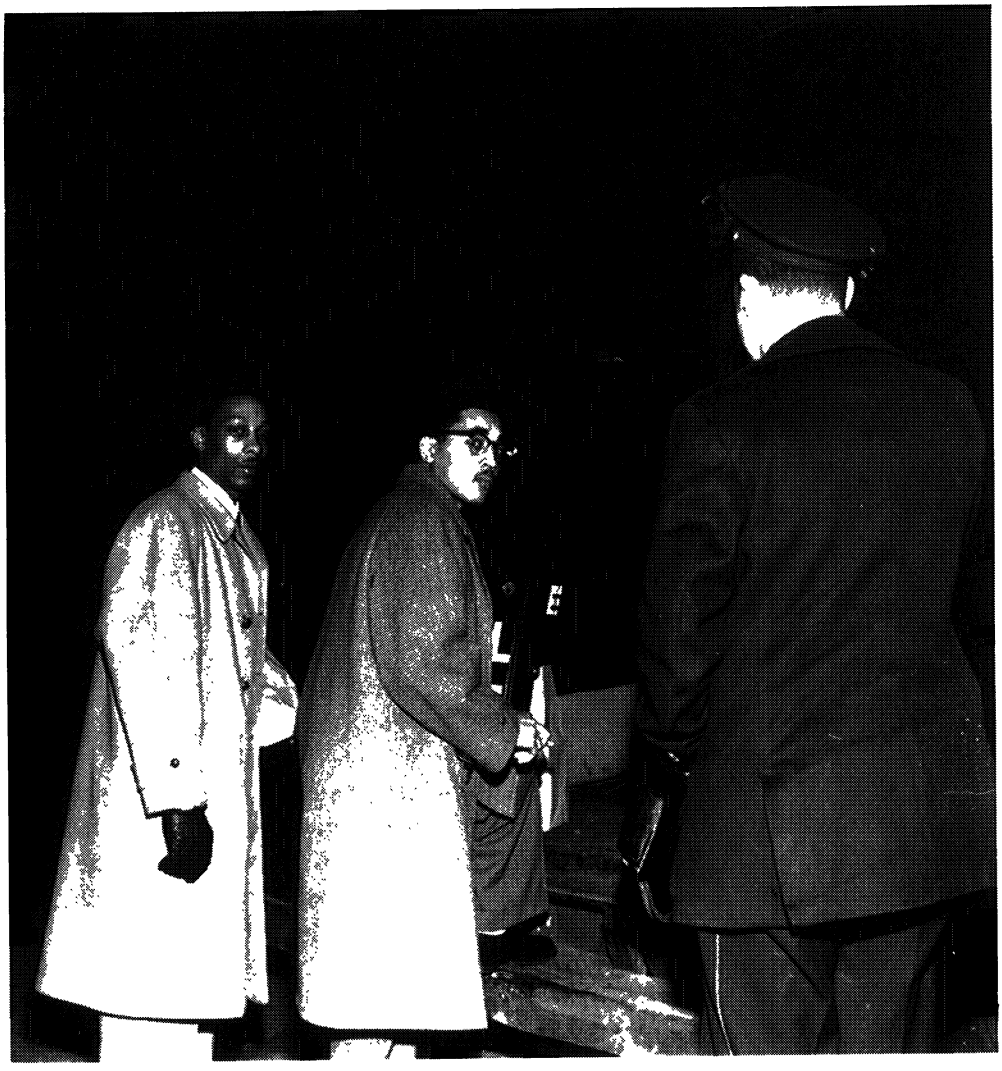
Whites believed that residence-linked jobs in the nearby steel mills similarly hung in the balance. The Wisconsin Steel Works, a major local employer, had not hired any Blacks until compelled to do so in World War II. Though returning white veterans had "bumped" recently hired African Americans immediately following the war, there was a substantial Black presence again by the time the Howards moved into Trumbull Park; the No. 3 mill, for example, had hired only fourteen Blacks between 1945 and 1949, but it put on seventy between 1950 and 1954. There were, in short, reasons for South Deering's whites to feel vulnerable. Indeed, the ACLU's agent reported the overwhelming perception that Wisconsin Steel's attitude was now "favorable to the negro in employment." "Everything that any one talks about out here centers in the mills," the operative wrote. "The whole of [their] life is centered in that and if they should lose control of that then in [their] minds everything is lost."[29]

[26] Operative L. G., "Confidential Report," Aug. 6, 10, 24, 27, Sept. 2, 3, 1954, folder 1, box 12, ACLU—Illinois Division Papers; Ed Holmgren to Housing Opportunities Committee, "Trumbull Park Program Proposals," memo, Jan. 19, 1956, folder 15, box 87, American Friends Service Committee Papers.

[27] Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances,* 33.

[28] Operative L. G., "Confidential Report," July 23, 1954, folder 1, box 12, ACLU—Illinois Division Papers. On the fear of pecuniary loss due to racially changing neighborhoods, see W. Edward Orser, *Blockbusting in Baltimore: The Edmondson Village Story* (Lexington, Ky., 1994); and Hillel Levine and Lawrence Harmon, *The Death of an American Jewish Community: A Tragedy of Good Intentions* (New York, 1992).

[29] Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919–1939* (New York, 1990), 36, 354; William Kornblum, *Blue Collar Community* (Chicago, 1974), 55; Operative L. G., "Confidential Report," April 26, May 23, 28, 30, June 5, 9, 10, 1954, folder 9, box 11, ACLU—Illinois Division Papers. On deindustrializa-



"Living in a virtual police state." Donald Howard, right, and companion board a police wagon, c. 1953. *Photograph by Claude Barnett. Courtesy Chicago Historical Society; negative 25355.*

Finally, fears of Black sexuality, of intermarriage, and, ultimately, of the loss of "white" identity provided an emotional charge. From the *South Deering Bulletin*'s

tion and white fears of economic vulnerability in the 1950s, see Thomas J. Sugrue, "The Structures of Poverty: The Reorganization of Space and Work in Three Periods of American History," in *The Underclass Debate: Views from History*, ed. Michael B. Katz (Princeton, 1993), 85–117; Thomas J. Sugrue, "The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race, Industrial Decline, and Housing in Detroit, 1940–1960" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1992); and Thomas J. Sugrue, "Crabgrass-Roots Politics: Race, Rights, and the Reaction against Liberalism in the Urban North, 1940–1964," *Journal of American History*, 82 (Sept. 1995), 551–78.

jeremiads against "race-mixing" to whispered concerns about rape and interracial dating, anxieties rose in proportion to the African American communal presence. Pointedly, the barroom conversation in the wake of the *Brown* decision revolved not around school desegregation or the South's Jim Crow system, but around Black penetration of white neighborhoods. South Deeringites, the ACLU learned, "say that it won't be long now and negroes and whites inter marrying will be a common thing and the white race will go down hill." They talked, the ACLU's operative reported, "about nothing else."[30]

Black use of the streets, the park adjacent to the project (also called Trumbull Park), and local churches was, therefore, hotly contested. To commute to their jobs, Blacks, after signing police logs to get out of their apartments, were driven to either 95th and State Street or 95th and Cottage Grove by armed escorts; at those points of safety, they boarded public transportation. Squad cars substituted for the usually filthy and foul-smelling police wagons in May 1954 when Blacks complained of the indignity of being treated as criminals.[31]

The frustration associated with this treatment led first to unilateral action by Black tenants and then to negotiations. Frank Brown, one of the African American residents, dramatically expressed his feelings in the novel he later wrote about his experiences in South Deering. Eager to see the expressions of whites reacting to his presence on their "sanctified streets," Brown felt that "walking the streets like a man, by myself, was the only way I was going to get any peace."[32] Donald Howard had earlier taken matters into his own hands when he frightened off a group of attackers by pulling out a carefully concealed gun. Other tenants followed Howard's example on May 23, 1954, by organizing an armed convoy of four to a local grocery. It proved a fruitless exercise, as two of the four were arrested for carrying concealed weapons. The police had stopped them because of the sheer novelty of their presence "out of the project without a police escort."[33]

This last incident, which occurred just weeks after the Howards left the project,

[30] *South Deering Bulletin,* June 13, 1957, clipping, box 17, Catholic Interracial Council Papers (Chicago Historical Society). The *South Deering Bulletin* was a small, crudely produced neighborhood paper that generally ran about eight to ten pages in length. Frequently, its pages went unnumbered. Operative L. G., "Confidential Report," May 17, 1954, folder 9, box 11, ACLU–Illinois Division Papers. On the emergence of a "white" identity among the various European "ethnics" in Chicago, see Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto,* 171–211.

[31] Wood to Commission on Human Relations, "Trumbull Park Homes (May 13 to July 27, 1954)," memo, n.d., pp. 2–3, box 4, Business and Professional People in the Public Interest Papers; Commission on Human Relations, "Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances, Documentary Report Number 1," p. 5; Frank Brown, *Trumbull Park: A Novel* (Chicago, 1959), 32, 83, 89. Brown's treatment of the disorders is accurate in its broad outlines, but the chronology of events and some details have been altered for dramatic effect. The book's primary value is in its account of the personal reactions of the Black tenants. In this regard, Brown's narrative is an insider's story of considerable worth.

[32] Brown, *Trumbull Park,* 186–201, 360.

[33] *Ibid.*, 186–207; Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances,* 38, 43; Alan Paton, "The Negro in the North," *Collier's,* Oct. 29, 1954, p. 74; [Ed] Holmgren to Wood, July 9, 1954, Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances File. On similar acts of opposition in areas where legal segregation held sway, see Robin D. G. Kelley, "'We Are Not What We Seem': Rethinking Black Working-Class Opposition in the Jim Crow South," *Journal of American History,* 80 (June 1993), 75–112.

precipitated a series of meetings in which the Black tenants negotiated with the police for their freedom of movement. Aware of the rising tension in spring 1954, the police felt a settlement would enable them to control threatening Black, as well as white, actions. The African Americans first requested—and authorities accepted—the discontinuation of the humiliating logbooks. They next solicited police protection that would enable them to shop at a food store on 106th Street and walk to public transportation. Police acceded to the first demand but hesitated at pushing "too fast" for the second.[34]

A later meeting held in early June included representatives of the NAACP and the CHR. At this session, the police finally agreed to "open" the west sides of Bensley and Oglesby avenues from the project to 103d Street so that Blacks could walk to a major bus line. Other streets around the project, including the bitterly contested 106th Street, would be "opened in one week," police said, "if there was no difficulty."[35] The community surrounding the project viewed this policy as wanton aggression. Crowds gathered "almost nightly" to harass Blacks as they walked home from the bus stop. Protected on the west side of Bensley, those brazen enough to run the gantlet between the project and the bus stop were threatened with lynching should they walk on the east side of the street.

Crowds also gathered around 107th and Torrence to attack Black steelworkers on their way to the mills. These assaults had occurred "spasmodically" since the initial disturbance in August 1953, but there were at least ten attacks (the CHR believed that many others "went unreported") in a little more than a week after Oglesby was "opened."[36] As a result, the police continued to limit Black movement through the area and retained the despised escort service.

As the attacks on Black individuals continued at an accelerated pace, it became evident to CHA officials that the attempt to "open" the streets to Black tenants had also sparked a renewal of violence within the development. "There has been a noticeable resurgence of bombings and of the congregation of sizable mobs ever since June 11, when Bensley and Oglesby were placed under police guard," Wood wrote. "Bombings are nightly occurrences," she continued; they "have increased in number and power, and have occurred closer to the homes occupied by the Negro tenants."[37]

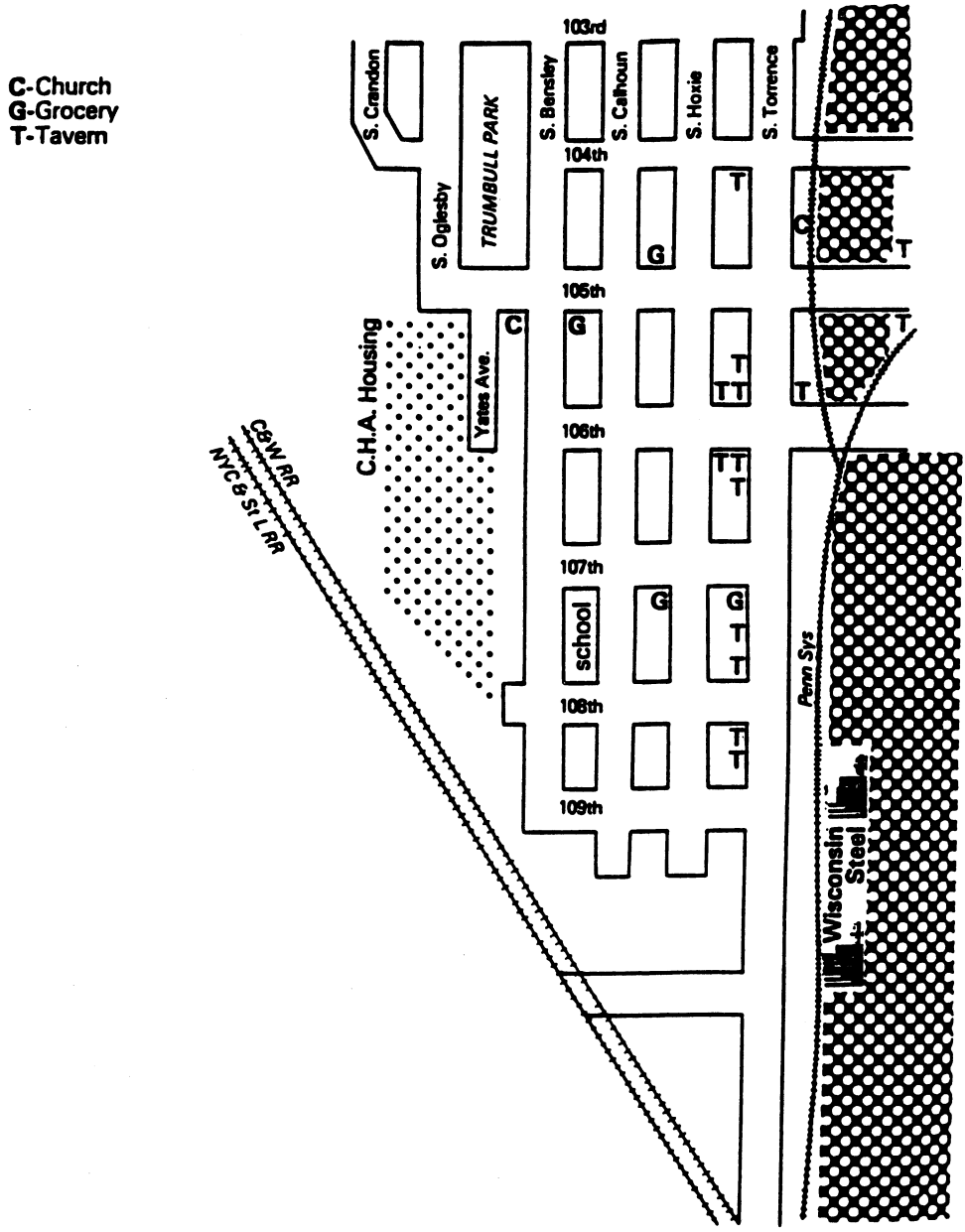
The failure of such measured violence to restore the status quo ante produced a choking sense of despair among whites. Reaction and rage deepened, moreover, with fresh Black efforts to use Trumbull Park itself. On June 22, whites assaulted

[34] Brown, *Trumbull Park,* 245–61; Wood to Commission, "Trumbull Park Homes (May 13 to July 27, 1954)," memo, n.d., pp. 2–3, box 4, Business and Professional People in the Public Interest Papers.

[35] Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances,* 45; Wood to Commission, "Trumbull Park Homes (May 13 to July 27, 1954)," memo, n.d., p. 6, box 4, Business and Professional People in the Public Interest Papers.

[36] Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances,* 46.

[37] Holmgren to Wood, July 9, 1954, Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances File; Wood to Commission, "Trumbull Park Homes (May 13 to July 27, 1954)," memo, n.d., pp. 14–15, box 4, Business and Professional People in the Public Interest Papers.



The Trumbull Park neighborhood, c. 1967. The shaded area labeled C.H.A. Housing represents the Trumbull Park Homes. Map from William Kornblum, *Blue Collar Community* (Chicago, 1974), 70. © *1974 by the University of Chicago. Courtesy the University of Chicago Press.*

two African Americans who tried to play ball there. This precipitated a July 1 meeting between the victims, Willoughby Abner of the NAACP, the police, and Chicago Park District officials. The chief of the park district police informed the

Blacks that park facilities were "open to all persons" and agreed to arrest those harassing innocent citizens. A rainstorm, however, enabled fearful park district officials to cancel a permit reserving a baseball diamond for the African Americans on July 3; officials said that playing on the wet turf would "damage" the park. Abner protested, feeling that "it was a mistake not to meet the issue of the open use of the park there and then." The reward for Black acquiescence in the park's closure was receipt of a second permit for the following Saturday—July 10.[38]

News of the permit spread rapidly and revitalized the resistance. Even those sympathetic to the civil rights cause realized that attempts to use the park "really aroused" the community, and the CAD asked the NAACP to coordinate its activities with other agencies. "Most of us were convinced," wrote Lloyd Davis of the Catholic Interracial Council (CIC), "that it was more important to get the Negro families to attend Church and register their children for school than at this particular time to play ball in the local . . . park."[39] The antagonism aroused by this issue, they believed, endangered other efforts to make life easier for African Americans in South Deering.

Blacks entered Trumbull Park late in the afternoon on July 10 and occupied the diamond in the northwest corner of the park. Park district police surrounded the playing field while Chicago police encircled the entire park; patrol cars sat on the grass on all sides of the outfield. As the Blacks who lived in the project entered the park, the whites who lived on the east side of Bensley came out of their homes and began shouting abuse. Hostile whites then took positions along the left field foul line to watch the game. Estimates of the crowd ranged from two hundred to five hundred; approximately four hundred police massed as a counterforce.[40]

Play began peacefully, but trouble came quickly. A firecracker tossed from the crowd struck a ballplayer on the arm and drew blood. Police made no attempt to locate the attacker. Shortly thereafter, when an African American went into the crowd to retrieve a foul ball, a shoving match broke out. Spectators tossed a second foul ball across the street into an empty lot. The player who went to recover it was set upon by the white crowd and never made it back to the game. The melee began in earnest when the rest of the ballplayers went to his aid.[41]

Once the fighting began, police rapidly replaced Blacks as the objects of the mob's anger. The captain in charge of the Trumbull Park detail was well known

[38] Commission on Human Relations, "The Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances, Documentary Report Number 2, April–June, 1954," n.d., p. 2, folder 2, box 23, Merriam Papers; Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances,* 46–48; Lloyd Davis to David F. Freeman, Sept. 2, 1954, box 6, Catholic Interracial Council Papers; Holmgren to Wood, July 9, 1954, Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances File; Wood to Commission, "Trumbull Park Homes (May 13 to July 27, 1954)," memo, n.d., pp. 11, 16–17, box 4, Business and Professional People in the Public Interest Papers.

[39] Davis to Freeman, Sept. 2, 1954, box 6, Catholic Interracial Council Papers.

[40] Operative L. G., "Confidential Report," July 10, 1954, folder 1, box 12, ACLU—Illinois Division Papers; Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances,* 48–49; Wood to Commission, "Trumbull Park Homes (May 13 to July 27, 1954)," memo, n.d., pp. 18–20, box 4, Business and Professional People in the Public Interest Papers.

[41] Operative L. G., "Confidential Report," July 10, 1954, folder 1, box 12, ACLU—Illinois Division Papers; Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances,* 48–49; Wood to Commission, "Trumbull Park Homes (May 13 to July 27, 1954)," memo, n.d., pp. 18–20, box 4, Business and Professional People in the Public Interest Papers.

to the crowd, and his arrest of the white who precipitated the fight made the gathered whites "go wild." Shouts of "kill that dirty nigger loving bastard" came from the mob, and the captain had to fight his way to safety as his fellow officers, in a display of dissension, left him unassisted. One observer concluded that "sympathy for the white rioters on the part of the average policeman . . . [was] extreme." Their favoritism did them little good, however. A missile ripped an eight-stitch gash in one policeman's head. When a Black policeman placed his arms around a white woman to prevent her from throwing a rock, the mob, one eyewitness reported, "really went mad and started after these colored policemen." Police eventually arrested fifteen of the most active white fighters as well as the Black player who chased down the foul ball.[42]

The anger that had emerged at the prospect of Blacks entering the park grew after the riot. "To-night the reaction has set in," the ACLU's agent reported, "and everyone is talking and they are really inflamed for the first time." There was now talk not simply of intimidating the Blacks, but of "burning the dirty bastards out." The infiltrator felt that plans should be made to protect the Blacks' apartments "if and when they attempt to play ball again." He had heard several whites say "that it would be a good time to touch the joint off."[43]

As Lloyd Davis anticipated, the rising tensions rendered attempts to integrate local churches far more difficult. With masterly understatement, he lamented that conditions for integrating the area's churches were "not as favorable as we might have desired."[44] Rumors still flew, however, concerning the prospective Black efforts to attend the South Deering Methodist Church and the Catholic Saint Kevin's Church. Both became new fronts in South Deering's escalating racial war.

Authorities and residents alike expected that Blacks would attempt to attend both churches, but most of the attention focused on Saint Kevin's. Saint Kevin's was far larger—an estimated 80 percent of South Deering's whites were Catholics—and the first to feel the heat generated by the race issue. Representatives of the ACLU, the Council Against Discrimination, and Father Raymond A. Pavis, assistant pastor at Saint Kevin's, met within weeks of the Howards' move to Trumbull Park. They had learned that Betty Howard was Catholic and felt the need to "discuss the [religious] problems of the Negro tenants at the project." As a result of the conference, Father Pavis telephoned Howard and welcomed her to mass. The CIC commended the assistant pastor "for his forthright stand in defense of interracial justice and charity," and Howard attended mass on August 16, 1953, "without incident."[45]

[42] Operative L. G., "Confidential Report," July 10, 1954, folder 1, box 12, ACLU—Illinois Division Papers; Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances,* 48–49; Wood to Commission, "Trumbull Park Homes (May 13 to July 27, 1954)," memo, n.d., pp. 18–20, box 4, Business and Professional People in the Public Interest Papers. See also ACLU, Illinois Division, Executive Committee Meeting, Minutes, July 15, 1954, folder 2, box 23, Merriam Papers.

[43] Operative L. G., "Confidential Report," July 10, 1954, folder 1, box 12, ACLU—Illinois Division Papers; Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances,* 49.

[44] Davis to Freeman, Sept. 2, 1954, box 6, Catholic Interracial Council Papers.

[45] Homer Jack, "Trumbull Park: A National Symptom of the Shame and Glory of the Churches," an address delivered at Breasted Hall, University of Chicago, Feb. 14, 1956, p. 3, box 11, Catholic Interracial Council Papers;

Despite her courageous actions, Betty Howard's victory at Saint Kevin's proved fleeting. She did not return to the church until January 1954, and she did so then only with a police escort. On that visit, and one the following week, the Howards were taunted on the streets and the police car they rode in was struck by a rock. That Donald Howard felt compelled to sit behind his wife with his "forty-five" when "she got on her knees and prayed" suggests a less than comforting spiritual experience.[46] They did not return.

The respite thus gained by the white parishioners of Saint Kevin's proved brief. There were other Catholics among the Black tenants of Trumbull Park and by the summer of 1954 they, too, expressed the wish to attend mass. The pastor, Father Michael Commins, Davis, and three Black Catholic women from the project met on July 2, 1954. Father Commins, not a forceful personality, was clearly intimidated by the vehement feelings of his flock. He reluctantly agreed to register Black children in the parochial school for the following fall. He detailed his problems with the community, however, and asked that the women not attempt to attend mass until July 18 so that he might "prepare his parishioners for their attendance."[47]

The efforts of Father Commins availed little. He did not distribute the literature given him by the CIC because he felt it "too advanced under the circumstances," and his own appeals proved ineffective. On July 18, the three women drove to church without their families and, significantly, without a police escort. They entered the church a few minutes after mass began and "seated themselves without incident in full view of the parishioners." After mass they waited until most of the people left before making their own exit from the side door. A crowd of at least thirty awaited them as they came out of the church. One white woman, no longer able to contain herself, attacked the Blacks with her umbrella. Others set out after a representative of the CIC who had attended the mass and had tried to reason with the local residents "in terms of Catholic doctrine." He fled in his car. This incident left the church once again in hostile hands. Father Commins felt that he was "powerless" to do more, and the parish bulletin of July 25 carried only a flaccid reproach: "Hissing, hooting and assaulting anyone for going to Mass is very un-Christian like." The Blacks refused to attend Saint Kevin's without some "assurance that they . . . can come to pray without danger of physical and verbal abuse."[48]

The summer's violence at the park and Saint Kevin's climaxed a year of disorder and propelled the South Deering Improvement Association toward a political solution. Some talked, in true Chicago fashion, of going to the city's politicians "with

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Catholic Interracial Council, Board of Directors Meeting, Minutes, Sept. 10, 1953, box 4, *ibid.*; Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances,* 13–14.

[46] Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances,* 31; Brown, *Trumbull Park,* 113.

[47] Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances,* 49; Wood to Commission, "Trumbull Park Homes (May 13 to July 27, 1954)," memo, n.d., pp. 21–22, box 4, Business and Professional People in the Public Interest Papers; Davis to Catholic Interracial Council Board Members, confidential memorandum, July 3, 1954, box 6, Catholic Interracial Council Papers.

[48] Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances,* 49; Wood to Commission, "Trumbull Park Homes (May 13 to July 27, 1954)," memo, n.d., pp. 21–23, box 4, Business and Professional People in the Public Interest Papers; "Report on Incident at St. Kevin's Church, Sunday, July 18, 1954," n.d., box 6, Catholic Interracial Council Papers..

cash in hand" to solve their problems. Others, the ACLU's agent wrote, spoke in electoral terms and organized a massive letter-writing campaign. For months the SDIA had wanted to "inject the race issue" into the city's politics. As missives poured into the offices of city officials and politicians, the resistance became convinced that it had "made the Democrats realize that they are going to lose at the polls" because "the white people mean business."[49]

The resort to the political arena produced a stunning reversal of CHA policy. First, in meetings with the SDIA, Mayor Martin H. Kennelly and other administration figures slapped a quota on the number of Black families (roughly 25 in the project's 462 units) allowed in the Trumbull Park Homes.[50] Second, and most important, Elizabeth Wood was ousted when she balked at the "deal." In dispatching the executive secretary, after seventeen years in office, South Deering's northern brand of massive resistance severed what had perhaps been one of the city's most visible links to the New Deal.

Thrown into an apparent panic by the escalating disorders of the summer of 1954, the mayor and local Democratic party leaders proved willing negotiating partners with the SDIA. Wood—rendered vulnerable not only by the open wound in Trumbull Park but also by her opposition to the appointment of the new party chairman's cousin, John Daley, as CHA counsel—was eased from power by an "efficiency" study that reorganized the authority. When she displayed her contempt for the CHA commissioners by issuing a press release declaring that they paid only "lip service" to their stated policies of nondiscrimination while "privately issuing instructions thwarting those policies," they fired her. Cora M. Patton, president of the local branch of the NAACP, summarized the prevailing view when she called Wood's departure a victory for "the racists and spoils politicians."[51]

Though not the final act in the subjugation of the CHA, the firing of Wood in the midst of the Trumbull Park disorders marked a turning point and accelerated a process already underway. The transformation had started with the dumping of Ed Kelly before the 1947 mayoral election. Kelly had rammed public housing sites through the city council over the protests of recalcitrant ward bosses even as he protected Wood and refused to tap the CHA's patronage potential. Not only did he publicly affirm the right of Blacks to live anywhere in Chicago, but he refused to back down when white protests targeted the integrated veterans' projects. Just weeks after one such uprising at the Airport Homes in December 1946, party leaders conducted a poll that sealed Kelly's fate. The results, tersely reported by one respondent, said simply that Kelly was "too good to the niggers."[52]

[49] Operative L. G., "Confidential Report," Aug. 5, 1954, folder 1, box 12, ACLU—Illinois Division Papers; Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances,* 29.

[50] Davis to Freeman, Sept. 2, 1954, box 6, Catholic Interracial Council Papers; Edward H. Palmer, Affidavit, June 7, 1968, box 3, Business and Professional People in the Public Interest Papers; Operative L. G., "Confidential Report," Aug. 9, 1954, folder 1, box 12, ACLU—Illinois Division Papers.

[51] Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto,* 234–38; Elizabeth Wood, press release, Aug. 30, 1954, folder 700, Chicago Urban League Papers; Cora M. Patton to Martin H. Kennelly, Sept. 20, 1954, Peoria St. Folder, box 13, Addenda, ACLU—Illinois Division Papers.

[52] Hirsch, "Cook County Democratic Organization and the Dilemma of Race," 67–70; Milton L. Rakove, *We Don't Want Nobody Nobody Sent: An Oral History of the Daley Years* (Bloomington, 1979), 12; Eugene Kennedy,

Beset by scandal as well as racial division, Cook County Democrats selected businessman Martin H. Kennelly to succeed his tainted predecessor. A social conservative who would never be mistaken for a New Dealer, Kennelly allowed the ward leaders to have their way on racial policy. The city council quickly requested and, with the help of a cooperative state legislature, received veto power over the selection of public housing sites. More, a wave of postwar housing violence, including the Trumbull Park disorders, coincided neatly with Kennelly's two terms in office (1947–1955), leaving him shell-shocked and alienated from whites who blamed him for the disruption of their neighborhoods as well as from embittered Blacks who vainly sought his protection. It quickly became apparent that his earlier promise to support Wood as long as he was mayor meant little once South Deering erupted.[53]

Kennelly's desperate backpedaling on race, which included cultivating and courting a white backlash vote in his 1955 reelection campaign, could not, in the end, keep him in office. Richard J. Daley, having seized the party chairmanship just nine days before the Howards moved to Trumbull Park, denied Kennelly the organization's support and ran successfully for mayor in 1955 with the backing of both the *Chicago Defender* and the SDIA. That ironic twist was testimony not only to his political skill, and Kennelly's ham-handed lack of it, but also to the ambiguity of a candidacy in a time of transition. SDIA sound trucks campaigning in the steel mill district touted a "deal" with the mayor-to-be, even as African Americans expressed great expectations for the same man, who had emerged from Ed Kelly's New Deal wing of the party and who in 1946 had run (significantly, it was his only unsuccessful campaign) as a "progressive-minded" candidate for county sheriff, opposed to restrictive covenants.[54] If Blacks had envisaged the second coming of Kelly, they would be disappointed. The search for peace and power pushed the new mayor away from challenging the racial status quo.

The year of chronic violence that culminated in Elizabeth Wood's removal and Richard J. Daley's triumph in early 1955 ushered in an uneasy truce. The SDIA put out the word that peace was the price for capping the Black presence and Wood's political execution. Indeed, the Commission on Human Relations reported that, by the end of 1954, the "riotous disturbances . . . and the large and hostile crowds which met the men returning from work and walking through the area from public transportation no longer occurred."[55] For the next decade, however, violence ebbed

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Himself! The Life and Times of Richard J. Daley (New York, 1978), 80–81; Biles, *Big City Boss in Depression and War*, 146–48.

[53] Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 40–67; Peter O'Malley, "Mayor Martin H. Kennelly of Chicago: A Political Biography" (Ph.D. diss., University of Illinois, Chicago, 1980); Arnold R. Hirsch, "Martin H. Kennelly: The Mugwump and the Machine," in *The Mayors: The Chicago Political Tradition*, ed. Paul M. Green and Melvin G. Holli (Carbondale, 1987), 126–43; Patton to Kennelly, Sept. 20, 1954, Peoria St. Folder, box 13, ACLU—Illinois Division Papers; Rabbi Morton M. Berman to Friend, Aug. 30, 1954, folder 700, Chicago Urban League Papers.

[54] O'Connor, *Clout*, 80; Hirsch, "Martin H. Kennelly," 140–43; Grimshaw, *Bitter Fruit*, 92, 97–101; ACLU, Illinois Division, Executive Committee, Minutes, April 4, 1955, folder 9, box 104, ACLU—Illinois Division Papers; *Chicago Defender*, Nov. 2, 1946, p. 1; *Chicago Bee*, Nov. 3, 1946, p. 8.

[55] Operative L. G., "Confidential Report," July 17, 18, 21, 22, 1954, folder 1, box 12, ACLU—Illinois Division Papers; Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances*, 52.

Marchers picket city hall to protest the continued violence at the Trumbull Park Homes, 1955. Reprinted with permission, *Chicago Sun-Times.* ©1995.

and flowed around those Black families already in the project. Daley begged for time and struggled with what he called an "inherited mess."[56]

The new mayor was assisted in his search for calm by the intervention of outside agencies such as the Catholic Interracial Council, the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), and the South Chicago Community Center (SCCC) that worked to ease Trumbull Park's remaining Blacks into the life of the community. Metropolitan groups became involved because, unlike earlier Chicago disturbances, the South Deering violence was well publicized. Television news crews visited South Deering frequently, and the city's print press granted the turmoil considerable attention. Locally, two large demonstrations dramatized the situation. The Chicago Negro Chamber of Commerce called the first for March 19, 1954; a second, called by the Chicago NAACP and a host of labor, religious, and civic organizations in October 1955, turned out a crowd of nearly five thousand citizens who marched around city hall to "spotlight" two years of Trumbull Park disorders.[57]

[56] *Chicago Defender,* June 18, 1955, p. 1.

[57] Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances,* 35–37; *Chicago Defender,* Oct. 29, 1955, p. 1; "A Shame on Chicago," handbill, n.d., folder 1, box 50, American Friends Service Committee Papers.

The *Chicago Defender* calls for a National Day of Prayer for the Trumbull Park rioters on August 22, 1954. Cartoon from *Chicago Defender,* July 31, 1954, p. 10. *Courtesy* Chicago Defender.

Nationally, the media, religious leaders, and politicians combined to place Trumbull Park before an audience of millions before it was eclipsed by more scintillating southern developments. On July 4, 1954, Eric Sevareid focused his television show, *American Week,* on South Deering. For a half hour on Independence Day, the country watched films of disturbances at the project and listened to an interview with Frank Brown, a Black resident of Trumbull Park Homes. The *Chicago Defender* promoted a "National Day of Prayer" for the souls of the rioters, organized by the

Illinois Baptist Convention and the African Methodist Episcopal Ministers Conference of Chicago. The *Defender* estimated that forty million Americans prayed for South Deering's whites on August 22, 1954. "Not since the Civil War," it concluded, "has so much moral energy been turned to asking God for forgiveness of sinners as Americans expend[ed] in prayer . . . for the anti-Negro rioters at Trumbull Park Homes."[58]

Outside criticism particularly rankled and mobilized the city's liberal forces. The Chicago chapter of the AFSC, for one, surely felt the sting of comments made by a "fiery judge from Clayton," Alabama, at the 1956 Democratic National Convention. Speaking in Chicago, George C. Wallace pointed to the police protecting Black lives within "shouting distance" of the conclave and advised northern Democrats to attend to their own problems. Trying to relieve the pressure on the South in the wake of the *Brown* decision, the lynching of Emmett Till, and the Montgomery, Alabama, bus boycott, Wallace hoped to weaken the party's civil rights plank at platform hearings. He chided his hosts by adding that "at no place in the South . . . is a Negro prevented from buying a home."[59] Such prodding led the AFSC to acknowledge the national character of racism by appointing Clarence Pickett, a member of the Quaker mission in Montgomery, to head a similar mission in South Deering.[60]

Nor did the AFSC stop there. Within a year, the committee's Housing Opportunities Program, which was founded to fight segregation in the wake of the 1951 riot in Cicero, Illinois, decided that the South Deering disorders symbolized all the "violence, intimidation, and fear" associated with racial discrimination. To express their concern, the Friends assigned a fieldworker to visit South Deering's Blacks almost weekly. They organized interracial camps for project tenants and arranged meetings between community, church, and political leaders. When all else failed, they invited Martin Luther King Jr.—twice, without result—to visit Trumbull Park.[61]

The Catholic Interracial Council similarly waged a vigorous campaign. Tensions surrounding Saint Kevin's made the problem a denominational one, and the CIC determined to do battle with the SDIA and the *South Deering Bulletin*. The association and the paper provided the opportunity when the former denounced the CIC for its "communistic connections" and the latter declared in a front-page editorial that the council's "professional pushers" should "stick to their preaching" and not

[58] Commission on Human Relations, *Trumbull Park Homes Disturbances,* 48, 51; Wood to Commission, "Trumbull Park Homes (May 13 to July 27, 1954)," memo, n.d., box 4, Business and Professional People in the Public Interest Papers; *Chicago Defender,* July 31, 1954, p, 10; *ibid.*, Aug. 14, 1954, p. 1; *ibid.*, Aug. 28, 1954, p. 1.

[59] *Chicago Daily News,* Aug. 11, 1956, p. 6.

[60] John W. Willard to Board of Directors, American Friends Service Committee, memo, March 30, 1956, folder 15, box 87, American Friends Service Committee Papers; Willard to Board of Directors, American Friends Service Committee, "Trumbull Park Homes," memo, March 30, 1956, *ibid.*; Clarence E. Pickett et al., *Quakers Look at Trumbull Park* (Chicago, 1956).

[61] Jack, "Trumbull Park," 4; Pickett et al., *Quakers Look at Trumbull Park;* Holmgren to Barbara Moffett, July 17, 1956, folder 15, box 87, American Friends Service Committee Papers; Moffett to Holmgren, July 19, 1956, *ibid.*; Moffett to Willard, April 11, 1956, *ibid.*; Holmgren to Martin Luther King Jr., July 12, 1957, folder 1, box 50, *ibid.*; King to Holmgren, July 15, 1957, *ibid.*

engage in "forced mongrelization." A new assistant pastor at Saint Kevin's, Father McHugh, eagerly cooperated with the CIC. He felt that the public attack presented "the chance we have been waiting for to speak out strongly from the pulpit." Even the usually placid pastor of Saint Kevin's was "upset" by the *Bulletin*'s charges that the church was "interfering" in community problems. References to Catholic teaching on race relations soon filled the parish bulletin and sermons at Saint Kevin's. By the end of 1957 one optimistic observer allowed that "a few cracks do seem to be appearing in the once-solid SDIA wall."[62]

If cracks could be detected in the community outside the Trumbull Park Homes, fissures appeared within the development itself. The "greatest factor" diminishing tensions inside the project was an affiliate of the Congregational Church—the South Chicago Community Center. Located within the project, the center sought to raise living standards and improve the self-respect and security of the tenant population. If this were accomplished, program director Mary Jane Eaton felt, the Blacks would "cease to be the threat they now are." Presaging later universalistic appeals that rejected race-specific remedies, the SCCC took a "problem-centered" approach and refused to treat the race issue as "primary." Though "severely limited by fear and hostility" for a number of months, the SCCC ultimately attracted clients to an interracial nursery school that met an expressed local demand. Within the project, at least, the technique of focusing attention on "some very real and mutual problem" succeeded in allaying racial fears.[63]

The area's religious institutions gave further evidence of relaxed tensions. The emergence of a liberal spirit in the South Deering Methodist Church can be traced through its changing leadership. William Vernon, a theological student, served as part-time minister at the church throughout the first phase of the disturbances. Vernon openly sympathized with the resistance and, at one community meeting, offered to compile a list of 150 "eminently qualified and desirable white applicants for the purpose of filling all of the present and future vacancies in the project."[64] Vernon's replacement by Frank H. West encouraged the AFSC to approach the new minister regarding Black access to his church. While affirming his intention to treat Blacks "as anyone else," West responded defensively that there was "no reason why [the AFSC] should . . . invite them." His most significant achievement, consequently,

[62] *South Deering Bulletin,* May 7, 1955; *ibid.*, Sept. 24, 1955; Davis to Freeman, Oct. 4, 1955, box 9, Catholic Interracial Council Papers; Davis to Freeman, April 9, 1956, box 12, *ibid.*; "Memorandum on Trumbull Park," Sept. 24, 1955, box 9, *ibid.*; "Memorandum on Trumbull Park," Oct. 4, 1955, *ibid.*; Judy Miller, "Report from Trumbull Park," typescript, Dec. 5, 1957, folder 23, box 87, American Friends Service Committee Papers. For a broader context, see John T. McGreevy, "American Catholics and the African-American Migration, 1919–1970" (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1992).

[63] American Friends Service Committee, "Trumbull Park: A Progress Report," typescript, March 1957, folder 22, box 87, American Friends Service Committee Papers; Jack, "Trumbull Park," 4; "Trumbull Park Branch—South Chicago Community Center," typescript, May 1, 1956, pp. 1–7, folder 172, Bubacz Papers; "A Proposal for Program Services in Trumbull Park, 1959–1963," typescript, Jan. 3, 1958, pp. 1–9, *ibid.*; ". . . and a little child shall lead them," 2–13; Judy Wicoff to Holmgren, May 24, 1957, folder 1, box 50, American Friends Service Committee Papers.

[64] E. K. Greenhalgh and Holmgren to Wood, May 14, 1954, Commission on Human Relations File.

was the construction of a new parsonage that burned to the ground within two months.[65]

West's successor, David K. Fison, brought the church actively into the battle for integration. In so doing, he alienated much of his congregation. His parsonage, a storefront on 106th Street, suffered repeated vandalism. The *South Deering Bulletin* declared that Fison was "aiding and abetting the influx of negroes," and the paper warned that such actions put the "kiss of death" on his ministry. Fison's landlord soon evicted him, and the SDIA supported Vernon's efforts to establish a new church. It apparently made little difference to Vernon that Catholics constituted an estimated 90 percent of the SDIA membership as he accepted their aid in the hope of "wean[ing] away white members from the present S. D. Methodist Church." Fison persevered, however, and worked to ease racial tensions until he was replaced in 1960.[66]

Father McHugh at Saint Kevin's similarly tried to pull his parishioners away from the anti-Black resistance and eased SDIA members out of positions of parish leadership. The CIC thought the new assistant pastor an "excellent friend"; he visited Black families and conferred "at least once a week" with CIC field representatives. After locating some sympathetic white parishioners, however, McHugh failed to get a single one to meet with the CIC. They resisted his entreaties for "a small unpublicized meeting" out of fear they would be "discovered by the rest of the community."[67]

Even more disturbing were the continued problems concerning Black attendance at Saint Kevin's itself. After the "umbrella incident" of July 1954, Black attempts to worship at Saint Kevin's occurred only episodically. Each time the African Americans had to be driven to mass in a police car and plainclothes officers stationed themselves inside and outside the church. Even on the few occasions when Blacks were not harassed, worship was hardly pleasant. Fireworks exploded during the service, and if the whites inside the church kept silent, in the words of one Black parishioner, they were still "talking with their eyes." Participation in church clubs or the parochial school proved impossible. As one beleaguered worshipper put it: "We have enough troubles going to Mass, we might have to fight to go to confession."[68]

Bitter feelings also accompanied the failure to negotiate access to South Deering's streets at the end of 1955, but events the next year vindicated the optimists. A

[65] Joan Seever, "Report on Trumbull Park Homes," typescript, Sept. 20, 1955, folder 24, box 86, American Friends Service Committee Papers.

[66] *Chicago Daily News,* April 15, 1957, p. 19; Ed [Holmgren?] and Judy [Wicoff?] to Moffett, May 3, 1957, folder 23, box 87, American Friends Service Committee Papers; American Friends Service Committee, Chicago Regional Office, Housing Opportunities Committee, Minutes, Feb. 7, April 2, 4, 1957, folder 2, box 50, *ibid.*; *South Deering Bulletin,* April 11, 1957, clipping, folder 1, *ibid.*

[67] Statement, typescript, Dec. 1956, box 14, Catholic Interracial Council Papers; Davis to Freeman, April 9, 1956, box 12, *ibid.*

[68] African American Trumbull Park families interview by Catholic Interracial Council representatives, Nov. 18, 1955, sides 1 and 2, tape, box 77, Catholic Interracial Council Papers; *Chicago Defender,* Nov. 12, 1955, p. 1; Jack, "Trumbull Park," 7–8; Mary Chrysostrom Roach, O.S.F., "A Study of Opinions to Determine the Continuing Problems and the Effectiveness of the Present Policies Relative to the Reduction of Tension in the Trumbull Park Homes," typescript, July 1960, p. 16, folder 14, box 62, American Friends Service Committee Papers.

new interracial group within the project—the aptly named Walk and Pray Group—grew out of a weekend camp conducted by David Fison and dedicated itself to the abolition of the squad car escorts. Consciously modeled on the Montgomery bus boycott, the group instituted regular car pools and issued its own newsletter. The subsequent dramatic drop in requests for police escorts led to their discontinuation in December 1956. By early 1957 the AFSC concluded that Blacks had "won their primary objective—mobility."[69]

The formation of the Walk and Pray Group proved symptomatic of a more general movement toward interracial contact and association. Visitors to the development noted that "quite friendly" relationships had emerged, and Black tenants commented on the now casual interracial conversations in the project's laundry room. One woman even reported exchanging social calls and being on a "first name basis" with her white neighbor. Whites similarly reported a decrease in tension within the project.[70]

Still, despite the advances, careful observers could have detected causes for concern. Though friendly relationships often existed between project neighbors, they did not manifest themselves publicly. Women talked in the laundry room, but not outside it; the fear of reprisals remained very real. Moreover, change came at a glacier's pace. It was over three years, for example, before Blacks were able to walk the streets of their new neighborhood without armed guards. During that time the constant strain of living under virtual house arrest took a fearful toll.

Frank Brown and his family best illustrated the devastating effects of prolonged tenancy in the project. Brown came to Trumbull Park in April 1954 and assumed unofficial leadership of the Black families after Donald Howard left. In his role as spokesman on Sevareid's telecast, Brown asserted that he had a "duty to stay out here—a duty to every Negro in the world, a duty to every white person . . . who believes in democracy." He underscored his determination to stay by disparaging the "cowardly Negroes" who ran.[71]

Yet, there was more to it than simple courage. His wife found the fireworks "nerve-wracking" and the isolation "very difficult." She disliked the inability to use the streets and found the police escort a persistent "source of humiliation." The Browns' children lived with relatives during the week so they could attend school in Hyde Park, and their marriage suffered severe strain when Frank Brown felt driven to take an active role in fighting the restrictions confining them. Near the end of their tenure in the project, Brown, who did not drink, boldly entered

[69] American Friends Service Committee, Chicago Regional Office, Housing Opportunities Committee, Minutes, Feb. 7, 1957, folder 2, box 50, American Friends Service Committee Papers.

[70] Judy Miller to Holmgren, "Visit to Trumbull Park Homes, Dec. 14, 1956 and Dec. 15, 1956," memo, Dec. 17, 1956, folder 14, box 87, American Friends Service Committee Papers; Miller to Holmgren, "Visit to Trumbull Park Homes," memo, Dec. 20, 1956, *ibid.*; Mary Berger to Holmgren, "Visit to Trumbull Park Homes, April 20, 1956," memo, n.d., *ibid.*

[71] Council Against Discrimination, *C. A. D. News* (Summer 1954), 3, clipping, box 12, Friendship House Papers (Chicago Historical Society); Paton, "Negro in the North," 76.

area taverns to see if he would be served. Finally, "because of the extraordinary pressures," they moved out of Trumbull Park in autumn 1956.[72]

The turnover of Black tenants, the aggressive stance taken by some, their increasing freedom of movement, and the removal of the police buffer combined to produce a reescalation of racial tensions during the spring and summer of 1957.[73] As early as March, reports indicated that the Black tenants' increased use of neighborhood streets and stores had stimulated a "slight increase" in the number of "negative incidents." Newcomers to the project added to the friction not only by making frequent use of the streets but also by venturing into territory hitherto unchallenged, such as 107th Street. Experienced Black residents anticipated "more trouble and vigilante activity" with warmer weather. As early as April 1957, one AFSC worker wondered "if we have done everything possible to prevent a serious incident."[74]

Tensions escalated with the arrival of Mr. and Mrs. William Griffin, who vowed to fight anyone who "messe[d]" with them. William Griffin's involvement in a scuffle after his daughter was struck by another child portended future conflict. An AFSC fieldworker characterized Mrs. Griffin as "a little tigress who has to defend her three children and . . . husband against any and all slights." Despite the organization's best efforts to contain the "damage" and restrain the Griffins, they refused, much to the consternation of the AFSC, to discuss the philosophy of Martin Luther King Jr. or the Montgomery boycott. In the end, the Friends simply left behind articles written by King that stated "eloquently what . . . [we] have no right to say in this situation."[75]

By early July racial strife in South Deering reached alarming proportions. Local Blacks and their white sympathizers discussed the possibility of "making a fight on Trumbull Park itself" but rejected the proposal because of the rising tension. "We mutually felt," one white participant wrote, "that it might be wiser to get through the summer having established the right to use the streets and stores, and hold off on the park as the last fight to be made."[76]

Vitriolic opponents, however, took little comfort in such self-restraint. The *South Deering Bulletin,* revealing the precarious nature of the peace, approached hysteria over the growing Black assertiveness; it even published a "terribly inciting editorial" that singled out William Griffin by printing his name and address. The AFSC made

[72] Berger to Holmgren, "Visit of March 30, 1956 to Trumbull Park Homes," memo, n.d., folder 14, box 87, American Friends Service Committee Papers; Judy Miller, "Report from Trumbull Park," typescript, June 20, 1957, folder 23, box 87, *ibid.*; Judy Miller, "Report from Camp Reinberg," typescript, June 15–16, 1957, *ibid.*

[73] Judy Miller, "Report from Trumbull Park," typescript, July 2, 1957, folder 23, box 87, American Friends Service Committee Papers. From July 1953 to March 1959, 57 Black families moved into the project and 37 moved out; see chart of Black Trumbull Park Homes tenants, folder 1, box 50, *ibid.*

[74] Judy Miller, "Report from Trumbull Park," typescript, March 14, 1957, folder 23, box 87, *ibid.*; American Friends Service Committee, Chicago Regional Office, Housing Opportunities Committee, Minutes, Feb. 7, March 7, 1957, folder 2, box 50, *ibid.*; Judy Miller, "Visit to Trumbull Park," typescript, April 26, 1957, folder 23, box 87, *ibid.*; Judy Miller, "Report from Trumbull Park," typescript, Feb. 28, 1957, *ibid.*; ACLU, Illinois Division, Board of Directors Meeting, Minutes, June 13, 1957, folder 2, box 105, ACLU—Illinois Division Papers.

[75] Judy Miller, "Report from Trumbull Park," typescript, July 26, 1957, folder 23, box 87, American Friends Service Committee Papers.

[76] Miller, "Report from Trumbull Park," July 2, 1957, folder 23, box 87, *ibid.*

one last attempt to forestall a bloodbath by appealing to Martin Luther King Jr. to run a workshop on "non-violent techniques" for the Black families at the project. King begged off because of an "extremely crowded schedule," and a Trumbull Park fieldworker concluded that there "will be a serious riot this summer if we are not able to convince the police to discharge their responsibilities better than they have been doing."[77]

When violence erupted in the nearby Calumet Park at the end of the month, Trumbull Park exploded as well. As white mobs roamed the southeast side of the city, South Deeringites again gathered at the Wisconsin Steel Works to attack Blacks. Mobs also descended on the project itself, beating one African American caught on the street and attacking the Griffin apartment. A crowd of nearly one hundred ransacked the home, broke furniture, threw a television and radio into the street, set fire to the curtains, and left open the gas jets in the kitchen.[78]

After the riot, Black tenants "didn't verbally express their bitterness and shock as much as might have been expected." Many of them, however, vented their feelings by leaving. The riot of July 1957 shattered the optimistic illusions held earlier in the year. Eighteen Black families left the Trumbull Park Homes between July 1957 and April 1959; nine of those who departed did so in the four months immediately following the riot. Where thirty such families occupied the project at the time of the riot, only twenty did so two years later.[79]

At the end of nearly a decade of chronic tension and intermittent disorder the Trumbull Park situation remained a "running sore." Yet, it was not the same problem that had confronted the Howards in the summer of 1953. There was much less violence by the early 1960s. Occasional aerial bombs still split the night air, but not "with the frequency of earlier years." By mid-1960, liberals applauded the fact that the area had been "generally quiet" for the "better part of two years." But there was little else to cheer. One close observer of the neighborhood noted that the expression of anti-Black attitudes was merely "less overt and violent than in the past." The *South Deering Bulletin* illustrated the soft articulation of the hard line on race when it changed its slogan from "White People Must Control Their Own Communities" to "Boost Your Community, Preserve Your Community" in the early 1960s.[80]

[77] *Ibid.*; Judy Miller, "Report from Trumbull Park," July 29, 1957, *ibid.*; Holmgren to King, July 12, 1957, folder 1, box 50, *ibid.*; King to Holmgren, July 15, 1957, *ibid.*

[78] Miller, "Report from Trumbull Park," July 29, 1957, folder 23, box 87, *ibid.*; Commission on Human Relations, "A Preliminary Report on Racial Disturbances in Chicago for the Period July 21 to August 4, 1957," typescript, n.d., pp. 9, 13–14 (Municipal Reference Library, Chicago, Ill.); "Chicago: Where Whites and Negroes Battle Again," *U.S. News & World Report,* Aug. 9, 1957, pp. 31–33.

[79] American Friends Service Committee, Chicago Regional Office, Housing Opportunities Committee, Minutes, Sept. 26, 1957, Feb. 27, 1958, folder 2, box 50, American Friends Service Committee Papers; List of Trumbull Park Transfers, typescript, *ibid.*

[80] Kenneth Douty to Theodore M. Hesburgh, May 6, 1959, folder 6, box 7, ACLU—Illinois Division Papers; Miller, "Report from Trumbull Park," June 20, 1957, folder 23, box 87, American Friends Service Committee Papers; Jane Weston, "Report from Trumbull Park," typescript, June 15, 1960, folder 25, box 85, *ibid.*; *Chicago Sun-Times,* Sept. 30, 1962, p. 50; *ibid.*, Aug. 18, 1963, p. 60.

The simple fact was that violence had already triumphed. The CHA's determination to maintain a token Black presence in the project meant that local residents could not restore the area's racial homogeneity. But by the 1960s, they maintained the neighborhood as a "white" community. "They feel they've won the fight, so they don't need to raise Cain any more," one liberal group concluded. An "uneasy truce exists in the Trumbull Park Homes area which apparently rests on the belief of the organized racist forces . . . that only token integration will be permitted at the project."[81]

Muting disorder while maintaining the status quo apparently suited Richard J. Daley's needs and desires even as it provided experience in negotiating a treacherous racial frontier. By meeting with project residents and city hall picketers, inviting discussions with the Quaker delegation, appointing a twenty-three-member commission to investigate the problem, and speaking at the ground breaking for the new South Deering Methodist parsonage, he displayed the political skills put on more prominent display a decade later in his confrontation with Martin Luther King Jr.[82]

Yet the mayor "stubbornly resisted," in the words of the *Defender,* commenting directly on the violence, and he never repudiated the backing of the SDIA; nor did he seem overly disturbed by the inability of the police to suppress violence that some believed encouraged the resistance. Indeed, within months of Daley's inauguration, the SDIA leadership noted confidently that city officials "are starting to see the light . . . and . . . South Deering's side of this . . . fight against forced integration and mongrelization." More, the passage of time and the accretion of Daley appointments to the CHA incorporated that agency into the mayor's political apparatus, making certain that it pursued no controversial policies. Similarly, Daley's domestication of the city council and the Commission on Human Relations ended all disputes regarding the siting and segregation of public housing. Not only did the pressure on the Trumbull Park Homes diminish, the Bridgeport Homes—in Daley's own neighborhood—remained one of the few remaining all-white projects.[83]

People strolling the streets of South Deering in 1962 saw Members Only signs in the taverns, SDIA decals in store windows, and copies of the *South Deering*

[81] American Friends Service Committee, "Progress Report on Trumbull Park, March, 1959," typescript, n.d., p. 11, folder 14, box 62, American Friends Service Committee Papers.

[82] *Chicago Defender,* June 18, 1955, p. 1; *ibid.*, July 9, 1955, p. 1; *ibid.*, Oct. 29, 1955, p. 3; American Civil Liberties Union, Illinois Division, Executive Committee, Minutes, June 16, July 7, 1955, folder 9, box 104, ACLU—Illinois Division Papers. For characterizations of Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Summit Agreement" with Richard J. Daley as a defeat for civil rights forces, see David J. Garrow, *Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference* (New York, 1986), 475–525; Adam Fairclough, *To Redeem the Soul of America: The Southern Christian Leadership Conference and Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Athens, Ga., 1987), 279–308; Alan B. Anderson and George W. Pickering, *Confronting the Color Line: The Broken Promise of the Civil Rights Movement in Chicago* (Athens, Ga., 1986), 359–62; Stephen B. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York, 1982), 403–5; and David L. Lewis, *King: A Biography* (Urbana, 1978), 313–53. For an attempt to qualify that characterization, see Ralph, *Northern Protest,* 227–33.

[83] *Chicago Defender,* Nov. 12, 1955, p. 1; *Christian Science Monitor,* March 29, 1955, clipping, folder 8, box 9, Merriam Papers. The *South Deering Bulletin* noted that Daley spoke in favor of "the preservation of neighborhoods," and that he still lived in the community in which he was born, a community "very much like South Deering." See *South Deering Bulletin,* May 7, 1955. *Ibid.*, Nov. 11, 1955; Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto,* 238–46.

Bulletin on every newsstand; they did not see African Americans in the park or at the local public swimming pool. Indeed, in the summer of that year, open warfare erupted again when a car that had carried Blacks into the park was burned. It was 1963, a full ten years after the Howards moved into the community, before Blacks, under heavy police guard, were able to use Trumbull Park.[84] The decade of resistance that prevented all but a token African American presence maintained South Deering as a white domain even as King negotiated the desegregation of Birmingham, Alabama.

When King brought the Southern Christian Leadership Conference to Chicago in 1966, he thus entered a war zone enjoying a tenuous calm only recently imposed on it by the city's political mandarins. His presence and the open housing marches he led through Chicago's ethnic bungalow belt, including a rainy August trek in South Deering, provoked a violent response that exposed both the depth of northern opposition and the racial fault line that lay beneath the city's neighborhoods.[85] Those whose recent attention had been captured by the drama of massive resistance in the South may have been shocked by this outpouring of northern bile, but observant and savvy Chicagoans were not. For Daley, unlike King, the lessons of neighborhood disorder were political, not moral, and he simply reoriented his organization to gather the preponderance of its votes from outlying white areas rather than from the poverty-stricken inner city.[86] If King could force the mayor to the negotiating table, he could not, ultimately, extract concessions that would have meant Daley's political demise; their "Summit Agreement" consequently did little more than cover King's departure.

The failure of the southern freedom struggle's strategy and tactics in the urban North indicated a shift in the political balance that had produced the legislative landmarks of the 1960s. By the end of the decade, the issues had changed, the public mood had been transformed, the geographical center of the struggle had shifted, and there were few remaining victories to be had. In that light, the Trumbull Park opposition appeared less atavistic and seemed—in its resort to tokenism, non-deadly violence, and political reaction—more a harbinger of the post–civil rights era.

[84] *Chicago Sun-Times,* Sept. 30, 1962, p. 50; *ibid.*, Aug. 18, 1963, p. 60.

[85] For eyewitness accounts of King's march in South Deering, see Paul Heitmann to Edwin ("Bill") Berry, Aug. 22, 1966, folder 1, box 69, Chicago Urban League Papers (76-116); and Sanford Sherizen to Pat Fitzgerald, Aug. 24, 1966, *ibid.*

[86] It has been widely acknowledged that Daley's early electoral success as mayor owed much to the votes of inner-city Blacks, whereas his post-1963 victories were rooted in the demobilization of Black voters and appeals to outlying white neighborhoods. See Kleppner, *Chicago Divided,* 71–90; Grimshaw, *Bitter Fruit,* 115–40; William J. Grimshaw, "The Daley Legacy: A Declining Politics of Party, Race, and Public Unions," in *After Daley: Chicago Politics in Transition,* ed. Samuel K. Gove and Louis H. Masotti (Urbana, 1982), 57–87; and Michael B. Preston, "The Resurgence of Black Voting in Chicago, 1955–1983," in *The Making of the Mayor: Chicago, 1983,* ed. Melvin G. Holli and Paul M. Green (Grand Rapids, 1984), 39–51.