Confrontation in Chicago

Mayor Daley Meets the Movement . . Lois Wille

Chicago

Little girls in Chicago's old and proud Bridgeport neighborhood had a new jump-rope chant last week, and you could hear it all afternoon, over and over, in the playground behind their red brick grammar school:

I'd like to be an Alabama trooper,
That's what I would truly like to be,
'Cause if I were an Alabama
trooper,
I could kill the niggers legally.

Four blocks from their playground is the modest, bungalow-style home of Chicago's Mayor Richard J. Daley, the Venetian blinds in its bay window tightly shut against the hot afternoon sun. At night, the blinds remain shut—but against something far more disturbing to the Mayor than summer sunshine.

About 100 civil demonstrators file silently into the neighborhood around 10 P.M., and an eerie pantomime begins. Hundreds of Bridgeport residents, the sons and daughters of Lithuanian, Polish, Italian and Irish immigrants, gather on their front porches and lawns to stare at the marchers. No one jeers or hoots. No one says a word. They just stare, as if under command not to utter a sound—as, indeed, they are. Precinct workers from the 11th Ward Democratic organization circulate among them, shushing any talkers.

The marchers—ministers, social workers, college students and relief recipients, half of them Negro and half white—slowly walk around the Mayor's block, equally silent. Their cadres, dressed in denim jackets and wide-brimmed straw plantation hats, move up and down the lines whispering commands: "No talking, two-by-two, stay on the sidewalk, men on the outside." Even the Bridgeport babies sitting on their mothers' laps on the front steps of the bungalows are quiet.

The one overwhelming impression you get is this: Here are two teams of superbly disciplined, fiercely determined combatants. Neither is going to yield—ever.

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It's like the early black-white confrontations in the South—and that's precisely the point of this dramatic shift in Chicago civil rights demonstrations. By moving the battleground to the Mayor's sidewalk, the marchers hope to mold the city's sporadic and somewhat aimless protests into the first genuine civil rights movement in any Northern city.

"The shock of Negroes walking into Bridgeport must be compared to the shock of the first Southern demonstrations when Negroes walked downtown en masse," says one member of the Chicago civil rights' brain trust. "It's a whole new concept for the North. . . ."

The "new concept" is based on several radical moves that have appalled some of the rights' supporters, including influential clergymen who marched in Selma, Ala. (and newspaper editorial writers who endorsed the Selma marches):

«Mayor Daley has become the chief target of the demonstrations. To a powerful Democratic chief who prides himself on running a progressive city, this has been most distressing.

«Last month the Coordinating Council of Community Organizations (CCCO), Chicago's civil rights amalgamation, asked U. S. Commissioner of Education Francis Keppel to withhold federal funds from Chicago's schools, charging *de jure* segregation and violation of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. This would mean a loss of more than $16 million a year in badly needed federal assistance. Keppel is still studying the complaint, and has not yet said whether he will send an investigating team to the city. The core of the complaint is that Chicago schools are "separate but unequal," willfully segregated, with Negro schools inferior to those of the whites. As proof, the CCCO cites these figures compiled by the United States Civil Rights Commission, the Urban League of Chicago, and a team of educators headed by University of Chicago sociologist Phillip M. Hauser: Segregation in Chicago schools is increasing. In 1963, 81.6 per cent of all grade schools were virtually all white or all Negro. By 1965, the percentage rose to 82.3. The percentage of high schools that were almost all one race rose from 73.2 to 74.4.

«School Superintendent Benjamin C. Willis blames neighborhood segregation, but civil rights groups say Willis has further contained Negroes through such devices as trailer classrooms attached to all-Negro schools and "branch" high schools in all-Negro grade schools.

«The Hauser committee reported that white grade schools average 29.7 children per class, but the Negro classroom average is 34.4. It also said that Negro schools have fewer libraries, social-adjustment classes and auditoriums.

«The U. S. Civil Rights Commission reported that 12 per cent of the teachers in the average white school are noncertified—for one reason or another, they hadn't passed the school system's qualifying examinations for teachers. In the average Negro school, a whopping 27 per cent of teachers are uncertified.

In the past four years, Chicago civil rights groups succeeded in making the tough and intractable Willis a symbol of inferior, segregated education. Their cry of "Willis Must Go" was picked up by an imposing number of religious groups and social-welfare organizations. And in May it seemed they were finally getting what they wanted.

At an "unofficial meeting" (meaning its actions were not binding) seven of the eleven Board of Education members voted not to renew Willis' contract, which expires August 31. Ten days later the board met again for its official vote, and the outcome stunned the anti-Willis group: three members who had voted "no" changed their minds, and Willis was retained. As a compromise, the board extracted from him a verbal promise to retire on his 65th birthday in December, 1966.

Civil rights groups were enraged. "We felt the slap in the face we got with the reappointment of Willis came directly from the Mayor," says Albert Raby, a thin, intense Negro schoolteacher who heads the CCCO.

The three who changed their minds had all been appointed to the school board by Daley within

the past two years, and are considered close to him. One is an old family friend." All three insist they switched only after Willis agreed to be more cooperative and to retire next year. But civil rights groups are convinced the three changed their votes because Daley told them to, and Daley told them to because he feared a white backlash.

Daley now became the target. Every afternoon Raby and about 100 of his followers, including nuns, clergymen, teachers and school children, marched around City Hall with their anti-Willis, anti-Daley signs. To the city's white Republicans, this was pretty funny: Daley being turned on by the black masses that for years have produced solid Democratic votes. But to many of Chicago's million Negroes, it was frightening. To understand why, one has to know something of the grip the Democratic organization has on people in the Negro ghettos.

"It's like a plantation down here," says Mrs. Bernard Williams, a Negro mother and PTA leader. "If you step out of line at all, or do anything that might embarrass the alderman, you'd have so many building violations on your house you'd have to sell.

"During elections, Dawson [Rep. William Dawson, long-time political boss of South Side Negroes] floods this area with literature that says, 'I'm responsible for your getting public aid,' or 'I'm responsible for your old-age pension,' or 'I'm responsible for your housing-project flat.' He's not, of course, and he can't take them away from us. But how many know that? Who wants to take a chance?"

The prospect of stirring up the wrath of this monolithic machine —probably the last of its kind in the nation, but still healthy and strong—has kept many Negroes from participating in the City Hall marches.

"If they have relatives with patronage jobs, or are vulnerable in any way to housing inspectors or health inspectors, they won't turn out," says one Negro minister from Lawndale, Chicago's sprawling West Side slum. "I'm not saying the fear is justified—but it's there."

If the Negroes are nervous, so is the Mayor. For years the only thing that made him mad—red-faced, sputtering mad — was some well-publicized slurs at Chicago, particularly those recalling Al Capone. There is no doubt that the Mayor loves the city, and truly wants it to be beautiful, prosperous and contented. All this nation-wide publicity about marches on City Hall has troubled him as much as the Capone jibes. "He has vacillated in recent days between anger, incredulity and tearfulness," says the Rev. Stephen C. Rose, editor of *Renewal,* a magazine published by the Chicago City Missionary Society.

At one press conference, the Mayor hinted that the marchers were part of a Republican plot. At another, a reporter asked if the marchers were Communist-inspired. The old Daley would have brushed this aside with one of his non-comments, such as: "You gentlemen better ask them that." But this time the Mayor replied: "Many of the people who are marching are Communist. That's been printed. And the Police Department files show this is true."

The reaction was violent. "Disgusting," said Raby. A group of Catholic priests issued a statement expressing their "regret that the Mayor has insulted the intelligence and character of many people, including priests, ministers and nuns who have been participating in the current demonstrations." And Roy Wilkins, executive director of the NAACP dashed off a telegram to Daley urging him to withdraw his charge "or to produce solid evidence of its truth."

The evidence Daley produced was a story in Chicago's *American,* a newspaper that frequently says there are Communists in the civil rights movement. And the evidence in the newspaper story was that several demonstrators were "identified" as Communists or Communist sympathizers by the Chicago Police Department's "red squad."

This is the way you get identified by the "red squad": police photographers take pictures of civil rights demonstrators, peace marchers, pickets at House Un-American Activities Committee hearings, and the audiences at meetings sponsored by groups suspected of being very left wing. Recently the police photographers have also been snapping pictures of spectators at Board of Education meetings. "I walked into the room one afternoon and suddenly this camera was pointed at me," says one bemused University of Chicago economics professor who happened to be interested in a high school addition the board was considering. "Is that constitutional?" If your picture pops up often enough, you get in the "red squad" file of left wingers.

A few weeks ago Daley attended a mayors' conference in Detroit, and some of his pickets followed. Rather than confront them, he spent his days scurrying in and out of side doors in Detroit's Cobo Hall,

Mayor Daley's Home in Bridgeport

up and down back escalators, going far out of his way to get to his hotel across the street. He was in Detroit when Dr. Martin Luther King led 10,000 Negroes and whites down Chicago's State Street in a massive protest march to City Hall, and thus had to turn down King's request for a meeting. "He missed his chance," said one civil rights leader. "It would have been a great coup, and snuffed out our movement, if Daley and King had issued some sort of joint statement."

But this would have been out of character. Daley, according to some influential clergymen whom he has lately been consulting for civil rights advice, really doesn't understand what it's all about. "He keeps telling us how good things are here," said one. "He seems genuinely hurt."

Raby made the same complaint on August 18, when he and twenty-one other rights leaders emerged from a two-hour meeting with Daley to discuss racial disturbances that flared over the weekend in Chicago's West Garfield Park neighborhood. More than seventy-five persons were injured in rioting that began when a Negro woman was killed by a falling stop sign knocked over by an unmanned fire truck. The fire house, staffed with white firemen in the largely Negro neighborhood, became the center of the rioting "It was a totally fruitless meeting," Raby said "Apparently the Mayor called us in to tell us what a great job he has done"

It's easy to understand his reasoning. After all, hasn't he always tried to do a lot for Negroes? Didn't he get for Chicago its $21 million anti-poverty program, its huge public-housing developments, its extensive urban renewal? Hasn't he appointed Negroes to many lofty government jobs?

His opponents answer yes, but. . . . But the great new poverty program is run by a fifty-six member board of "establishment" people, with no poor, no representatives from the fledgling grass-roots community organizations pushing up in the slums; the public housing developments are carefully placed within the Negro ghettos and have won the title of "high-rise concentration camps"; the urban renewal program has leveled Negro neighborhoods—old ones and crumbling ones, to be sure, but neighborhoods nevertheless. And the Negroes he has appointed to government jobs, they say, are *his* Negroes—loyal first to his organization, and then to their people's struggles These things Daley doesn't understand, according to the clergymen who have been meeting with him.

On August 1, the civil rights marchers shifted their battleground from the City Hall to the Mayor's home neighborhood in Bridgeport, a lower-middle-class, 2-mile-square area, where he and his wife were born and where Chicago's two mayors before him had been raised. Bridgeport is what Daley trusts: Many of his closest aides are his Bridgeport neighbors, or sons of his Bridgeport neighbors. About 900 of its breadwinners hold patronage jobs (the average for Chicago's fifty wards is about 400), and they are the elite of the patronage jobs. The community, proud of its role as the mother of city government, is self-conscious about keeping up appearances. The little bungalows have bright striped awnings, fancy and freshly painted iron fences, flower boxes, tidy lawns. With its mixture of East European, Irish, German and Italian stock, it could be a model for an old city neighborhood in the best American melting-pot tradition. But it isn't, chiefly because of some shameful racial incidents.

About 150 Negroes live in the southeast corner of Bridgeport, tightly contained. "They wouldn't dare cross the street to the white section after sundown," insists Albert Raby. Three years ago, at the time of James Meredith's violent entrance into the University of Mississippi, a 5-year-old Negro girl from this section was enrolled in a white kindergarten. Meredith made it. The little Negro girl didn't. After obscene phone calls and threats, her parents withdrew her.

In 1961 a group of eighty Negroes, burned out of an apartment building near Bridgeport, were jeered and threatened by a white mob as American Red Cross volunteers shepherded them into Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Bridgeport. The volunteers, badly frightened, took the fire refugees to a church in a Negro neighborhood instead. "The mob won," said an angry Red Cross executive.

Last October, a white high school teacher bought a two-flat in Bridgeport three blocks from Daley's home and rented one apartment to a Negro student at Loyola University. "I just wanted to see what the Mayor would do," explained the teacher. The young man moved in on a Friday. For three nights crowds gathered in front of the building, smashed windows with rocks and threw bottles at the walls. On the fourth day, while the occupant was in night school, his belongings mysteriously disappeared from the flat and reappeared in the district police station down the street from Daley's house. By the time he returned from school, two white men from the neighborhood had moved in, with a brand-new lease from the owner's real estate agent. The owner, furious, accused the 11th Ward Democratic organization of arranging the switch. On the fifth day, the two new tenants celebrated with an open house for their neighbors.

Even Bridgeport's public-housing project is all white, although the Chicago Housing Authority announced in three years it would "gradually" integrate it. "Any stranger, white or black, regardless of religion or national origin, finds himself uncomfortable in the area," says Raby. "A mood of suspicion and subtle hostility seems to prevail. This is why we call it a closed society."

Into this closed society came civil rights marchers, and Bridgeport greeted them much as they had expected. with Ku Klux Klan signs, the Alabama trooper song, shouts of "Go back to the zoo," and with eggs and tomatoes. "I've never heard such filthy language," said one pretty young Negro woman. "I wanted to shout at them, 'I wouldn't think of living next door to you.'"

The crowd got so nasty on the second night, August 2, that police had to act They arrested sixty-five of the demonstrators, but none of the screaming mob. Since Illinois has no law forbidding picketing of homes, the Illinois division of the American Civil Liberties Union has protested to the city legal department that these arrests were unconstitutional. But by the third night the precinct captains had moved in and brought the mob under control. Some civil rights leaders have interpreted this new silence as the beginning of "an educational process" in Bridgeport. Others, more hard-headed about Chicago, say the silence means only that most people in Bridgeport either are on the city payroll or have a relative on the payroll. "And when the 11th

Ward says shut up, you shut up," says one authority on Chicago politics. "What you're seeing is ward discipline. A riot would hurt Daley, and he's told his people there isn't going to be a riot."

As the Bridgeport people stopped hollering, many influential Chicagoans jumped to their support. Picketing a man's home is an outrageous invasion of privacy, they say. The villain who lured all these marchers to Bridgeport, as they see it, is Dick Gregory, the rambunctious Negro comedian who always seems to be at the head of any civil rights march anywhere. "He's the John Brown of the movement," says one admirer.

It's true that Gregory, in his denim jacket and straw "freedom" hat, has led the marches in Bridgeport. But it's also true that the marches have the open or behind-the-scenes support of most of the Chicago civil rights leaders. And they say that among the Negro masses the idea of black men parading through forbidden Bridgeport has immense appeal, more than any complex school issue the rights struggle has raised. "The mayor has lived in the tightest, most closed community of the city for a long, long time," says the Rev. Alvin Pitcher of the University of Chicago Divinity School. "And he cannot duck responsibility for it."

The few Democratic Negro politicians who have been sympathetic with the civil rights movement in the past are clearly embarrassed by its new anti-Daley tone. State Rep. Cecil Partee points out that it was suburban Republicans who defeated his open-occupancy bill in the state legislature, and asks: "Why haven't they been picketed? I say the marches are political. . ." They are, in the sense that their ultimate goal is to break through the monolithic machine and force politicians to hear, and hopefully to correct, their complaints about urban renewal, slum landlords and inferior schools.

Whether this is possible through nightly marches is another question. "I'd say the net result so far is that they're doing Daley some good in the white wards," says one astute City Hall authority. "He won't lose many Negro votes, unless the civil rights organizations start working a lot harder, out in the precincts."

But attorney Leon Despres, one of the few civil rights minded aldermen in the Chicago City Council, thinks the marches have had a profound effect. "Anybody in politics who has to do organizing himself knows that to produce marchers day after day, from thirty-five to 100, is a mammoth task and requires a tremendous underlying sentiment of support," he says. "Laymen don't always realize that. They think, well, 100, 125 people—that isn't much. But that means you have to draw on a very big body of interested people. Daley knows this. That's why he is very anxious For ten years he has relied on keeping a balance between Negroes and white reactionaries. Through the political patronage system, through subsidizing Negro ministers, through such things as the poverty program, through the appeal of the Democratic label, he controls enough Negroes directly so that their support is firmly under him. With this support guaranteed, he is able to curry favor with the white segregationists, whose support he also needs. With this equilibrium," Despres adds, "he's been able to avoid any kind of progress, any boldness, in civil rights, without exception The meaning of the marches is that there is a real crack developing in this coalition."

If that's their meaning, what is their immediate goal? This is the question most often asked by the marchers' critics, who keep telling them to go home and do something "constructive" instead.

John McDermott, director of the Catholic Interracial Council of Chicago, a group that has lost considerable financial support this summer because of its civil rights activities, has given the best answer. "The Democratic Party is for all practical purposes the only party in the city," he says. "If civil rights is our number one issue, and I think it is, we are saying to the Mayor that we want him to have a civil rights program—much as President Johnson has." McDermott agrees with many Chicagoans that in every other area Daley has been an excellent mayor. "But on civil rights the fact is he does not have a program," McDermott adds. "He has a policy of peace first, and justice second."

REVOLUTIONARY WARFARE

How To Tell When the Rebels Have Won

Eqbal Ahmad

Vice President Humphrey expressed the national concern over guerrilla warfare recently when he spoke of this "bold new form of aggression which could rank with the discovery of gunpowder" as constituting the "major challenge to our security." It is viewed as the latest weapon in the Communist arsenal with Vietnam as its testing ground [see "Goliath and the Guerrilla," by Eric Hobsbawm; *The Nation,* July 19]. "If guerrilla techniques succeed in Vietnam," wrote James Reston in *The New York Times*, "nobody in Washington dare assume that the same techniques will not be applied in all Communist rimlands from Korea to Iran." This view is based on two assumptions and at least one serious misconception. It assumes that the Vietnamese situation is typical, historically and politically, of other underdeveloped countries, and that American policy toward other nations would be comparable to the one pursued in Vietnam. The misconception concerns the nature of revolutionary warfare.

America's interest in revolutionary warfare began from a defensive

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