On Stony Ground: The Catholic Interracial Council in the Archdiocese of San Francisco

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Abstract

The Catholic Interracial Council (CIC) was founded by a Jesuit priest, Fr. John La Farge, in New York in the 1930's. Fr. La Farge's purpose in founding the CIC was to promote better relations between black and white Catholics. The group gradually spread throughout the nation in the ensuing decades, and by 1960 a chapter had been established in the Archdiocese of San Francisco. The San Francisco Bay Area was a rapidly growing region that had undergone tremendous social and economic change in the aftermath of World War II, including an exponential increase in the local black population. By the 1960's, Catholics who joined the CIC had begun to view the group's mission in light of the growing civil rights movement. Members of the group tended to split between those who advocated greater social action and those who saw the CIC as a discussion group and educational service. As the activists became more vocal, the CIC also clashed often with the archdiocese and the archbishop over such issues as fair housing and fair hiring practices. Many CIC members were also willing to challenge the Church's record on civil rights, and continued tension led to the archdiocese attempting to regain control over the civil rights issue. While the CIC branched out into other issues, particularly the farm workers struggle, it continued to decline in influence in the archdiocese as the decade progressed.

This study explores the activities of the CIC in the Archdiocese of San Francisco in the historical context of the archdiocese's mission to black Catholics, the unique character of the Bay Area and the changing political and social nature of the United States in the 1960's. The study is sourced with original materials from local archives, interviews and surveys of surviving CIC members, and other secondary sources. The story of the CIC in the Bay Area highlights several historical themes, including: the experience of the Catholic Church in California; the tensions experienced by Catholic activists in the turbulent 1960's; the increasing breakdown in ecclesiastic authority during the same time; and the foundations of the revolutionary change in the political and social character of the San Francisco area.

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Introduction

The Church and the World

From the very beginnings of the Christian community to the present day, the Christian Church has sought to transform the surrounding society to a more just, equitable and divine state. Jesus often referred to the "Kingdom of God," and used this term to define the goal of his teachings, exhortations and warnings for his followers. As defined by Jesus, the Kingdom was both imminent and teleological, both seemingly possible and impossible to achieve. But despite the difficulties of defining just what the Kingdom was or would be, and how Christians would know it when it came, one clear and consistent message resounds throughout the gospels: the Kingdom of God must be actively and consistently sought. But there was one vital question that Christians had to ask themselves as they went out into the world, seeking to transform it: how would the world and its different culture affect them, and to what extent would they allow themselves to be changed by the world while seeking to change it? Many Christian groups, from the early anchorites to the Amish of today, to varying degrees have closed themselves off from the world so as not to be corrupted by it. But this is an extreme position, and certainly for the majority of Western Christians throughout history the world was to be engaged even as it was transformed. Such a task is never easy, and the dangers and frustrations encountered

by Christians who went out into the world to "sow the seeds of the Gospel" were summed up by Jesus in the parable of the sower:

> And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up. And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth. But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit. And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased (Mark 4:4-8).

As Christians sought the transformation of society, and grew in numbers, the Church became much more intimately involved with, and within, the world. Christianity spread and grew to such proportions that over the thousand years after Christ the Church had emerged in the West as the entity known as "Christendom," in which religious, political and social elements were supposedly in harmony. Yet even during this period, the tensions that continually arose between the political and religious authorities attested to ongoing confusion over the proper boundaries of Christ and culture, Church and State. The Reformation finally shattered any semblance of religious harmony in the West and brought back into focus the questions that had once been so prevalent among early Christians in seeking to change the surrounding society: how far should one be willing to go in seeking to change the world before becoming compromised?

The Church in the United States

That question weighed heavily on the minds of many Roman Catholics as they came to the new United States of America. Despite persecution of Catholics in such nations as Great Britain, the Catholic Church still did not endorse the kind of religious liberty advocated in the United States. Although Catholics could openly practice their religion, the Church also was surrounded by an overwhelmingly Protestant culture that looked on Catholics with deep suspicion as Papists, Monarchists and anti-Americans. The Church's unwillingness to embrace the American political system without reservations did not help matters. Still, Catholics were not content to sit by and let the American experiment continue without their input. As the Church grew in America it established itself as an institutional entity providing essential services such as health care and education to the surrounding community, beginning in the eastern cities teeming with Catholic immigrants and moving westward with the rest of the nation. Catholics, and the members of religious orders particularly, built not only their own churches but also schools and hospitals, and were responsible for helping to bring European civilization to the frontier as America expanded. As more Catholic immigrants became acclimated and the Church grew in stature a great cultural crisis of American Catholicism exploded throughout the Church in the nineteenth century. Catholics began to wonder about

the consequences of becoming "Americanized," with culturally acclimated and classically liberal "Americanists" looking with disdain on their more conservative coreligionists, who had the support of the Church in Europe. The controversy culminated in the 1899 papal letter *Testem Benevolentiae*, in which Pope Leo XIII condemned a rather ill defined and hazy system of thought he termed "Americanism." It is important to remember what the Pope did not call "Americanism," namely, "the condition of your commonwealths, or the laws and customs which prevail in them." But the letter did condemn some particularly American traits, such as the tendency towards individualist thought and the desire to inject American-style "liberty" into the Church's structures. While Leo's condemnation dampened the intellectual exuberance of the American Catholic community into the twentieth century, it was not in the least the last word on how American Catholicism might seek to transform the world and the wider Church.

At the same time the Church was asking how much Americanism was allowable in its pews and pulpits, it was also asking how and when Catholics should try and inform the American system with Catholic ideals and values. In the nineteenth century the Church did not take sides in the Civil War, and though it had condemned the slave trade some American Catholics thought that Rome could have played a much larger part in bringing slavery to an end in the United States. While the Church did hold some political sway in areas where Catholics existed in great numbers, by and large it was still reluctant to engage the American system on a

nationwide scale. But by 1928, what had been unthinkable one hundred years before finally happened when New York Governor Al Smith became the Democratic Party nominee for President. Despite this enormous stride, America was still not ready for a Catholic President, and the Smith campaign was characterized by classic anti-Catholic sentiments. Widespread Catholic support for the popular New Deal in the 1930's, for the Allies in World War II, and Catholic enthusiasm for post-war anti-Communism eventually coupled with a more tolerant American religious culture to bring Catholics more fully into the American fold. The 1950's was perhaps the Golden Age of American Catholic culture, with such popular figures as Bishop Fulton Sheen helping to bring the Church into the mainstream. But the comfortable and non-threatening patina of Catholic culture, in what historian James Hennesey termed the "halcyon days" of the American Church, tended to make it seem more of a moralistic society than an intellectual force.[1] Underneath the unity and growing acceptance there existed a stubborn and continuing indifference (if not hostility) to Catholic thought in the United States. As Catholic scholar John Tracy Ellis argued at that time, the hostility contributed to the lack of a "strong and vibrant intellectual life" in American Catholicism.[2] Yet even in this atmosphere, the Church began to take steps toward addressing issues that did not directly concern only Catholics, such as segregation in America. As early as the 1940's, and most specifically in a

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[1] James Hennesey, American Catholics: A History of the Roman Catholic Community in the United States. New York: Oxford University Press, 1981, p. 287.
[2] John Tracy Ellis, American Catholics and the Intellectual Life, Chicago: The Heritage Foundation, 1956, p. 17.

pastoral letter of 1958, the bishops of the United States spoke out against racial discrimination as being incompatible with Christian morality and values. These efforts positioned the Church in the United States as an organization that was engaged in contemporary social thought. By engaging the topic, the bishops helped set the stage for greater Catholic involvement in the social issues affecting all Americans at the time.

As the 1950's drew to a close two events began to take shape, the confluence of which would dramatically change the nature of the relationship between the United States and the Catholic Church. In America, just over 30 years after Al Smith was defeated, America elected its first Catholic President, John Kennedy. In Rome, another John was beginning to lay the groundwork for a second Vatican Council that would bring sweeping modernization to the Church and bring it even closer to blessing the American system of government. American Catholics felt freer than ever to challenge and transform the surrounding society with the Church's social thought, and became deeply involved in the great American social movement of the time, the civil rights struggle. Catholic (and Jewish) participation in the movement would help contribute to bringing it out of its Southern and Protestant roots and make it a truly national movement among many different religious and non-religious groups. Newspapers and television cameras loved the image of the nun and priest, popularly imagined as docile and cloistered, marching and yelling along with students and other "agitators." The Church through its vast infrastructure

had the capacity to bring about enormous change in the 1960's, and activist laypersons began the hard work of urging their hierarchy to make sure this happened. But there was a temporal, as well as cultural, lag between the *aggiornamento* going on in the Vatican and the revolution going on in American society in the 1960's. Even as Catholics were being encouraged by their Church to be engaged in the world in new and exciting ways, the world was changing much too quickly for the tastes of much of the hierarchy. Perhaps the greatest clash involved authority – despite attempts to decentralize authority after the Vatican council by stressing collegiality and greater responsibility for laypersons, the Catholic Church was still hierarchical and in many ways still authoritarian. The world American Catholics would engage in the 1960's was increasingly suspicious of authority, and would encourage a healthy dose of cynicism about traditional sources of authority such as the government and the Church.

Catholicism in San Francisco

The Catholic Church held tremendous sway in the San Francisco Bay Area as the 1960's dawned. The Archdiocese of San Francisco had become the eighth largest archdiocese in the country by 1960, totaling 1,030,833 Catholics, which represented a growth of over 70,000 Catholics from the previous year.[3] San

[3] AASF, Statistics, Mass Attendance, 1935-1960

Francisco's Irish Americans, unlike many of their eastern cousins in such places as Boston, had taken the reins of power since the nineteenth century and by 1960 had become firmly entrenched in local government. The next largest ethnic group in San Francisco Catholicism, the Italians, also had broken the mold compared to the experience of their fellow Italians in the East. San Francisco's Italian community emigrated largely from the northern parts of Italy, which were more educated, technological and urbane than the southern regions that supplied so many of the immigrants to the East coast. Catholicism was well represented in the politics and culture as well as religion of San Francisco, with Catholics serving as mayors and in other positions of municipal authority before this occurred in many other United States cities where large numbers of Catholics lived. Just as the civil rights movement was getting underway, the Church in San Francisco was at the apex of its power.

It may be somewhat surprising to contemporary readers that there was really any need for civil rights activism in the city of San Francisco and the surrounding counties. The state of California, from the Gold Rush on, has always had a reputation as a free-wheeling and permissive society, particularly compared to the rigid social structure and conventions of the more established parts of the nation (usually referred to collectively by Californians as "back east"). But many of California's new residents brought their culture with them, or at least aspects of that culture. Southern California in particular is still known for its conservative nature,

and in the time period of this study was the center of a politically conservative revolution that would challenge New Deal, Democratic progressivism and bring both conservative Californians to the White House after decades of liberal Democratic administrations. Northern California, the Bay Area in particular, is decidedly different in culture and outlook from the southern part of the state. But before the hippies came to the Haight-Ashbury section of San Francisco and the student movement at Berkeley put the region at the forefront of radicalism, many Bay Area residents were more than willing to tolerate a system of *de facto* segregation. In many ways, civil rights advocates would have a much harder time fighting against a culture in which (unlike the South) there was no outright legal segregation, and particularly in trying to make a moral argument. Fighting against an unjust legal system was one thing; convincing neighbors to change their hearts and minds about how they viewed those of another race was quite another. As many Californians saw it, San Francisco was not Alabama, nor had the state suffered the same kinds of racial disturbances as the urban Northeast and Midwest. Californians saw little reason to re-examine their attitudes on race as long as black and white residents continued to operate under a "live and let live" philosophy, even if that meant blacks and whites still did not live together in the same neighborhoods.

The Catholic Interracial Council

This study will focus on a group organized to bring about better relations between the races in the Church and the nation, the Catholic Interracial Council or CIC, and in particular its chapters in the San Francisco Bay Area. The CIC, from its beginnings in the 1930's in New York to its position as a nationwide group in the 1960's, existed to teach the Catholic community about racial issues and integration and to help educate the American public on Catholic views of the same. In doing so, the group faced the classic questions posed at the beginning of this introduction: how would its involvement in the civil rights movement change them as Catholics, and to what extent would its members allow themselves (and the Church) to be changed in seeking to implement the goals of the movement? Following a largely Protestant historical record of religiously-based social movements in the United States, the CIC had to incorporate in its quest for cultural and social transformation the need to achieve what Liston Pope termed "larger structural independence" from the institutional Church in order to be successful.[4] Yet that was very difficult for a group with ties to a religion that was, despite the contemporary reforms of Vatican II, largely hierarchical and with a centralized source of authority. For the CIC and its members, those questions would haunt the group's mission and help cast doubts on its *bona fides* among the hierarchy. Their experience is one in a long line of the

[4] Liston Pope, Millhands and Preachers. New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1942, p. 334

conflict over the roles and boundaries of political and religious entities - between the Church and the State, between lay and clerical, between Christ and culture. It helps to understand how the Church has helped to change America, and how America has helped change the Church.

Survey of Secondary Works

The primary subject of this work is the history of the Catholic Interracial Council in the Archdiocese of San Francisco, and as such relies upon original research largely carried out in the Chancery Archives of the archdiocese. However, several secondary themes are also represented in the work's citation of secondary sources, including: suburbanization in post-World War II America and its effect on religious practice; the civil rights movement during this same period; the political landscape in post-war America, and particularly the rise of the conservative movement; general San Francisco history, and the history of both African Americans and the Catholic Church in the area; and the history of black Catholics in the United States. The following is a brief survey of some of the secondary works used to provide background for these subjects; full references are available for these titles in the main body of the work and in the bibliography.

Taylor Branch's two volumes of civil rights history, Parting the Waters and Pillar of Fire, provide a detailed and thorough account of the movement on a national scale during what Branch terms "the [Martin Luther] King years," 1954-1965. James Cone's Martin and Malcolm and America, as well as Malcolm X's own Autobiography (written with Alex Haley), show how the rise of the black nationalist movement, the Nation of Islam, in the mid to later 1960's helped splinter

the national civil rights movement's supporters and goals. At the same time, these works also highlight how leaders Malcolm X and King respectively moved closer to embracing at least some aspects of each other's message before their deaths. Locally, African American history in the San Francisco Bay Area is the subject of Douglas Henry Daniel's Pioneer Urbanites and Albert Broussard's Black San Francisco, which details earlier interracial efforts in the city prior to the establishment of CIC chapters in the 1960's. Prophets of Rage by Daniel Crowe provides a history of black San Francisco's participation in civil rights and black power activities in the post-war period, with a particular focus on the Oakland-born Black Panther movement.

Black Catholics in the United States, though not nearly as prominent a subject in American Catholic studies as immigrant populations, have been the subject of some recent historical analyses, most notably in Cyprian Davis' seminal work The History of Black Catholics in the United States. Davis' work is essential for establishing the fact that Catholic African Americans are not simply latecomers to a mostly white Church in America but instead form a vital part of the history of Catholicism in the United States. Another notable work, focusing on the development of the black clergy in the United States, is Stephen Ochs' Desegregating the Altar. Marilyn Nickel's Black Catholic Protest and the Federated Colored Catholics provides the essential history of Thomas Wyatt Turner, the early twentieth-century leader of the first national association of black Catholics. A fairly

recent work by David Southern, John La Farge and the Limits of Catholic Interracialism, picks up on Turner's story and chronicles the life of the Jesuit priest who founded the CIC after Turner's organization split apart.

The historiography of the Catholic Church in the Western United States generally is not matched by that of the East. Yet as a city with strong Catholic roots, San Francisco does provide an excellent model for discerning both the similarities and differences with the Eastern cities so well covered in Catholic and general urban American history. Northern, urban Catholicism and its socio-cultural identity is the subject of Parish Boundaries by John McGreevy. This work shows the strong identification of Catholics in the area with territorial (mostly Irish) and other ethnic parishes. McGreevy states that this attachment to the parish boundaries and neighborhoods they encompassed led many Catholics to see the increasing numbers of inner-city African Americans in the later decades of the twentieth century as a threat, even more so than did other white, non-Catholic neighbors.

San Francisco's Catholic history bears some resemblances to this attachment to parish boundaries, yet the comparative "newness" of the Western city and its much lower population of African Americans contribute to important differences. Jeffrey Burn's three-volume history of the Archdiocese of San Francisco is the most comprehensive in periodization, spanning from the archdiocese's Gold Rush beginnings to the present time. A few other works also provide useful studies on particular aspects of San Francisco's urban and Catholic history. Catholic

immigration in the area is represented by R.A. Burchell's The San Francisco Irish and Dino Cinel's From Italy to San Francisco. James Gaffey's biographical work on San Francisco Archbishop Patrick Riordan, City of No Mean City, provides the Catholic history of the city in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. San Francisco, 1865-1932 by William Issel and Robert Cherny provides an urban history of the city during this period that also focuses on the role of organized labor. The growth and development of Bay Area counties are subjects of Mel Scott's University of California monograph The San Francisco Bay Area. This out-of-print work contains a great deal of detail regarding the development of San Francisco's first "streetcar" suburbs in the early twentieth century, the growth of the suburbs following the completion of the Bay and Golden Gate Bridges in the 1930's, and the explosive suburban development that followed World War II.

Suburbanization as a social and religious phenomenon helps provide another piece of the historical framework for the civil rights movement and social activism in the post-war period in general. Kenneth Jackson's Crabgrass Frontier examines the roots of the suburban phenomenon and posits them in two necessary conditions, population growth and the ideal of suburban life, and in two fundamental causes, cheap housing and racial prejudice. Jackson does, however, place an overall greater priority on the economic causes behind suburbanization rather than race. The Origins of the Urban Crisis by Thomas Sugrue expands on this theme by stating that the exodus of mostly white Americans for the suburbs was not so much a response

to deteriorating urban conditions as a cause, detrimentally affecting the economies of Northern cities like Detroit and creating the conditions for the urban unrest of the 1960's. Sugrue's work also agrees with McGreevy in highlighting a strong reaction against integration from lay urban Catholics in post-war Detroit.

The politicization of moral issues is a crucial theme in any history of the civil rights movement, particularly one in which the subject is a "faith-based" organization such as the CIC. The post-war conservative movement has its roots in California, Southern California in particular, and the architects of this movement successfully combined growing unease with the goals of the civil rights movement, continuingly fierce anti-communism and concern over moral issues such as abortion into a political force that continues to dominate the American political landscape to this day. Lisa McGirr's Suburban Warriors and Kurt Schuparra's Triumph of the Right delineate the rise of the California-based conservative movement that led to Barry Goldwater's nomination to the Republican ticket in 1964. Despite Goldwater's defeat that year, the movement's remarkable success eventually propelled Californian Ronald Reagan to the presidency as the more affable standard-bearer of the new conservatism. As McGirr shows, the right's activism and mobilization in white suburban enclaves such as Orange County matched that of the civil rights movement, yet has been largely overshadowed in the historiography of the period by the activities of the left. However, the lasting effects of the conservative movement emerging from what historian Richard Hofstadter had

famously characterized as the “paranoid style” of American politics proved to be the end of the liberal consensus in America, which had reached its culmination in the civil rights movement’s successes.

Chapter I

Post-War San Francisco

The myth of the West, that the frontier yields a continuing renewal of American idealism and spirit, is a particularly strong and enduring one in American history. It was perhaps most famously expressed by Frederick Jackson Turner, whose "Frontier Thesis" has helped contribute to characterizations of the American West as a beacon of new hope against the crowded, bleak and corrupt Eastern establishment. Turner highlighted the importance of the frontier in the cycle of reinvention occurring throughout American history, noting the frontier's "perennial rebirth, this fluidity of American life, this expansion westward with its new opportunities."[5] Within this mindset the West, and its crowning jewel California in particular, has been imagined as the last best hope for America. But despite the romanticism, not to mention boosterism, inherent in such an idea, there was and is an undeniable attraction by Americans for the myth of the West, if not the West itself.

It was that attraction that founded California during the Gold Rush, and it was the same dream that brought so many more to the state during what has been

[5] Turner, The Frontier in American History, New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1920, p.3.

termed a "second Gold Rush," the period during and immediately after World War II, when a large influx of Americans serving in the armed forces and their families brought tremendous change to California and to San Francisco. Even before this large increase in population, San Francisco was the metropolis of record on the West Coast. Despite the rapid growth of Los Angeles, San Francisco remained throughout much of the twentieth century "the City" in California's imagination. Like its sister cities on the East Coast, the turbulent years following the war brought enormous change to San Francisco. Urban decay led to urban renewal, and large groups of San Franciscans fled the city proper for the burgeoning suburbs. A great many of those moving were Catholics, and the increasing suburbanization of the Catholic population of the Bay Area left an urban Church after World War II that differed markedly from its nineteenth-century predecessor.

The war succeeded in mobilizing an unprecedented number of Americans into a vast and mobile work force, both in the armed services and in the military complex at home. One of the cultural changes that came about from this mobilization was an increase in the number of Americans who would willingly relocate, leaving behind areas where family had resided for generations. The mobile armed forces were certainly more conditioned to being uprooted, and more comfortable with the idea of "putting down roots" in a new place. Even the domestic wartime work force became more conditioned to the idea, as new notions and new opportunities for marginalized groups such as women and African Americans were

brought about by the need for massive employment in the factories. California proved to be a perfect place for the reinvented American of the World War II generation, a land that had offered the promise of new life for almost a century. San Francisco became the point of departure and return for most of the service personnel in the Pacific front. And, through such major industries as Kaiser shipping, the Bay Area became an important center of industry during the war as well.[6]

San Francisco remained in the 1940's the center of commerce and culture for the state. It was already true by 1940 that Los Angeles had overtaken San Francisco in population, a trend that continued to grow exponentially throughout the rest of the twentieth century. Los Angeles was not without its own homegrown industry and culture as well; Hollywood and the motion picture industry had become a vital part of America by this time. Southern California also boasted a growing farm industry that would supply not just the state but also the nation with fruits and vegetables all year round as the trucking industry began to make this possible. But still, "the City" of San Francisco held on to its rank in the state by holding on to its position as the financial center of the West Coast, with all the benefits that followed. Major banking institutions (like Bank of America, originally founded by Italian American A.P. Giannini as the Bank of Italy), the Pacific Stock Exchange and attending brokerage firms were all located in the city. Major financial titans connected with these institutions contributed their wealth and taxes to the area,

[6] Scott, p. 248.

helping San Francisco establish public buildings, housing, urban conveniences and cultural institutions that rivaled those on the East Coast.[7] The wind may have been at the back of the sleepy, sprawled-out metropolis to the south, but in the first half of the twentieth century San Francisco was still the capital of the West Coast.

In simple terms the "second gold rush" can be explained as a major population explosion, which census data show very clearly. But the 22 percent increase in population in San Francisco from 1940 to 1950 would prove to be the last increase from one decade to the next until the year 2000. Between 1950 and 2000, the population of the city of San Francisco actually declined steadily. However, the counties surrounding San Francisco practically tripled in population from 1940-1960.[8] The story behind those numbers is suburbanization, the rapid movement of residents, services and eventually industry from the city core to outlying suburban areas. San Francisco residents flocked to the suburbs in huge numbers, seeking open spaces and bigger homes for a better quality of life, yet still depending on the city core for much of the suburban industrial and cultural life. The suburbanization of San Francisco was a process that had begun well before World War II. Even before the great earthquake of 1906, the cramped and expensive lifestyle that was the rule for inhabitants of the small 49 square mile city forced increasing numbers to find housing outside the city, particularly in the suburbs of

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[7] See Starr, Embattled Dreams.

[8] The Bay Area is defined statistically as San Francisco (city and county) and the following eight counties surrounding it: Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano and Sonoma. The population for these surrounding counties went from 1,099,772 in 1940 to 2,898,623 in 1960.

Alameda County or the "East Bay" across the water. The earthquake, which almost completely destroyed San Francisco, forced thousands to flee across the Bay, and many never did return to the city even after its quick reconstruction. At this time, however, living outside the city limits required a great amount of commitment and travel on the part of the early twentieth-century "suburbanite." The city was surrounded on three sides by water and the residents to the north and east did not yet have the convenience of bridges connecting them to the city. At that time, commuters relied on ferries to get back and forth from San Francisco to Alameda County on the east and Marin County to the north. Though the ferry system was extensive and efficient for its day, the cost in fares and travel time took their toll. To the south, residents of San Mateo County were connected to the city by rail, which also cost time and money.

Of all these suburban counties, Alameda was by far the most developed in the decades before World War II. Its commercial center was Oakland, a city in its own right that throughout the twentieth century vied for trade, business and prestige with its neighbor to the west. The county also boasted several smaller but thriving townships, including the home of the flagship University of California campus in Berkeley. Oakland's excellent port increasingly attracted industrial commerce at a time when the Port of San Francisco began to decline and industry had no room in

the city to expand. Oakland also served as the terminus for rail service from all across the nation to the Bay Area.[9]

By the 1930's, the East Bay and its urban center of Oakland had established itself as a second urban and industrial powerhouse in the San Francisco Bay Area. Efficient and quick means of transportation had become so important to the two cities that the great engineering feat of building a bridge across the Bay was finally realized. For years the idea had been entertained and studied, but was dismissed as impossible, or at least far too complicated and expensive. But the boosters of California pushed ahead with the plans, and by the outbreak of World War II both the northern and eastern spans of the San Francisco Bay were graced with two of the most famous bridges in the world, the Golden Gate and Bay Bridges. Though certainly amazing feats of engineering and public works, the real impact of the bridges on residents of the Bay was in their ability to get into and out of the city in minutes by car or public transportation across the bridges. Now a resident of the Oakland suburb of Richmond, for example, could board a streetcar near his or her home and travel all the way into the city on the "Key" system, without transferring to a time-consuming ferry. Similar transportation innovations in the Eastern cities had already created societies based on the ideals of "mobility and change."[10] With cheaper costs and rents, healthier air and quality of life, and now with quick and efficient transportation to the city, the areas outside of San Francisco were poised to

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[9] Scott, pp. 169-187.
[10] Kenneth Jackson, Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States, New York: Oxford University Press, 1985, p. 42.

become a home for thousands of new suburban dwellers based upon the same ideals.[11]

Still, the type of phenomenal growth that did occur in the decades after the 1930's might have developed rather differently had it not been for the war. Though World War II had profound and lasting effects on the political and military situation worldwide, its role in almost completely changing the culture and course of American life was equally important. The war greatly increased the black population in San Francisco, and gave minorities and women better chances for employment in the area with so many of the area's white males in the armed forces. Another great shift in American culture occurred after the war, when thousands of veterans became eligible for college tuition scholarships thanks to the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, commonly known as the "GI Bill." This bill provided returning World War II veterans with a unique opportunity to take advantage of government subsidies for higher education, which Congress hoped would delay the reentry of many servicemen into the workforce and avoid a spike in unemployment following the end of the war. This widespread educational subsidy was unprecedented, and gave millions of Americans who most likely would not have otherwise attended college the opportunity to better themselves. The bill provided for funds to cover tuition, books and fees as well as a small monthly stipend for each veteran. By 1947, the program's success could be measured by the fact that 49

[11] Scott., p. 234.

percent of new college enrollees were former GIs. The government expanded the program in 1952 to cover veterans of the Korean War, adding over two million more new college students. The GI Bill represented a great step forward in the "democratization" of American post-secondary education and the expansion of increased opportunity in the post-war world. GIs taking advantage of the bill found better jobs with better pay following a college education, giving them more resources to pursue the American suburban dream of owning their own homes.[12]

Yet suburbanization only hastened the decline of the city proper and fundamentally altered the landscape of the Bay Area. San Francisco, whose "eastern" sensibilities and advantages had made it the premier Western city, now suffered the same fate as the great urban centers it had emulated. In contrast, the Los Angeles area practically began in a process of suburbanization and continues it to this very day, lacking from the beginning the traditional urban "core" of the East Coast model. Angelinos moved onward and outward in the 1940's, pressing the city eastward into valleys that had once been bucolic farmland and orchards. But Los Angeles and other parts of southern California, particularly Orange County, were designed for such expansion and served as models for the post-war American "centerless city."[13] San Francisco, meanwhile, traded its own eastward and southward expansion for a decline in its urban center, which had not substantially changed since being rebuilt after the 1906 earthquake. Decaying Victorian-style row

[12] National Archives and Records Administration, "Our Documents: Servicemen's Readjustment Act" [Online version, March, 2004, at www.ourdocuments.gov]
[13] Jackson, p. 265.

houses, increasing crime and an urban malaise settled over the city as its population declined after the war. While San Francisco retained its important financial base, suburban residents were catered to in public policy with an extensive new freeway system designed, according to former mayor Joe Alioto, to "zip people right through this beautiful city without having to stop."[14] Automobiles, once the plaything of the rich, became items of necessity rather than luxury in post-war America. For Bay Area residents, even those who worked in the city, the car made it possible to have the least amount of contact with the urban center.

At the same time, the suburbs themselves began to become not just rows of houses and yards but centers of financial and cultural life as well. Entertainment and leisure, increasingly available to and important for the growing middle class, became centered on the living room rather than downtown. Americans who had welcomed the radio into their homes now also began embracing the new television. Between 1947 and 1950 the number of televisions in United States households exploded from 44,000 to over eight million.[15] Movies were still widely popular, but the old movie houses of the city began to lose customers to new suburban theaters, built as a convenience for the growing suburban population. "Drive-ins," a perfect combination of the suburban elements of space and the automobile, became increasingly popular. As more of America moved to the suburbs, merchants, developers and financial planners pounced on the opportunity to cater to the new

[14] Video, "Transportation in America," National Building Museum, Washington, D.C., Fall 2002.
[15] Museum of Television and Radio [Online version, February, 2003, www.mtr.org].

population where they lived. The new watchword was "convenience." The Union Square retail district in downtown San Francisco gave way to the suburban shopping mall; restaurants and theaters would be built minutes away from suburban homes along with "drive-through" banks and other services. Hospitals and doctors joined the exodus, moving their practices closer to the population growth.[16] Nothing, it seemed, could not be uprooted from the city center and moved to the pleasant suburbs.

And as it turned out, even God caught on and moved to the suburbs as well. American Protestantism saw a fundamental shift between the years 1870 and 1950 in its membership and the location of new churches. During this time, Protestant denominations gradually saw a decline in new members from rural areas and the urban working class. But these losses were offset by tremendous gains in new members from the suburban areas, which led to the continued growth of mainline Protestant denominations at a time when many had expected a decline. The character of these new members also brought a shift in the cultural makeup of American Protestantism. Disengagement from the urban working classes and the embrace of suburbia brought a "wholesale identification with the new middle class" to American Protestantism.[17] And this was not unique to Protestantism; American Catholics saw fundamental changes to their Church and its culture during the same period. A steady increase in the number of Catholics in the managerial and

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[16] Scott, p. 283.
[17] Gibson Winter, The Suburban Captivity of the Churches, New York: Macmillan, 1962, p.56.

professional classes, the very same middle class moving to the suburbs, changed the image of Catholics in the United States and helped contribute to the emerging view of Catholics as "good Americans."[18]

By 1950, the great "Immigrant Church" of the nineteenth century was in decline in cities such as San Francisco, thanks to suburbanization. The decline began with the process of assimilation and "Americanization" that was pressed upon immigrant Catholics by the culture at large and even by many within the Church. Not to be confused with Leo XIII's philosophical "Americanism," this movement encouraged Catholic immigrants to embrace American customs and culture, thereby helping to remove the stigma of foreign "otherness" that non-Catholics often associated with the Church in America. Nineteenth-century hierarchs like John Ireland pursued an agenda of "Americanizing" the Church's new immigrant groups, particularly as the newcomers increasingly came from non-English speaking areas of the world. Ireland's campaign for cultural Americanization in the Church in the United States eventually led him into conflict with fellow Catholics such as those of the Byzantine-Slavic rite, in which by agreement with Rome the clergy was allowed to marry. Ireland and other American bishops refused to allow these clergy to engage in their ministry, holding out for a "uniformity of discipline" over cultural accommodation.[19] By the first half of the twentieth century, the pressure to

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[18] James Hudnut-Beumler, Looking for God in the Suburbs, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1994, p. 68.

[19] Hennesey, p. 193. Cultural clashes between the established hierarchy in America and non-English speaking Catholic immigrants sometimes even led to schism, such as that which produced separate Polish and Lithuanian churches in early twentieth-century Chicago; p. 209.

acclimate led to a rapid decline in use of the native tongue, which by the third generation was often not even heard in the home. At the same time, the numbers of the traditional "second wave" of largely Catholic immigrants continued to fall into the earlier twentieth century. That period of immigration brought mostly Italians and Eastern Europeans to the United States. In San Francisco between the turn of the twentieth century and World War II a burgeoning Italian community became centered in the North Beach area. Italians quickly became the second-largest ethnic group of Catholic San Franciscans after the Irish, and census figures tell the story of their assimilation into the surrounding culture. Between 1940 and 1960, the percentage of San Franciscans born in Italy declined from 18.5 to 12.7, while the percentages of these immigrants in surrounding counties began to exceed the figure in the city.[20] This suggests that Italians, like other San Franciscans, were leaving the city for the suburbs. As they did they brought their spirituality with them, and asked the archdiocese to accommodate them by assigning Italian priests to parishes outside the city.[21]

But Americanization was not just about foreign languages and exotic cultures. Archbishop Ireland, for instance, was as desirous to "Americanize" his namesake's fellow countrymen as he was to see Italians, Germans, Poles and Czechs assimilate. Americanization was a process that attempted to bring the immigrant

[20] In 1950, the percentage of foreign-born Italians was higher in Contra Costa (20.5), Marin (17.6) and San Mateo (21.4) counties than in San Francisco (16.6), even before the overall population of the city began to decline after the war.
[21] AASF, Italians, Gramacci to Mitty, June 9, 1951

into the mainstream of American culture, thoughts and ideas, an American way of life shared with the Protestant, Anglo population, even if their religion was different. Temperance, a hallmark of American Protestant culture, was avidly preached by the Americanist wing in the Catholic Church, for example.[22] For many in the East, where the Anglo-Protestant establishment held sway, Americanization was seen as the only way Catholics could break into society, get decent jobs and keep the suspicions of non-Catholics at bay. In San Francisco the urban Irish Catholic establishment, along with the later immigrant groups, could be said to have participated in a second wave of "Americanization" by moving to the suburbs along with their non-Catholic neighbors, and the Church eagerly followed its flock there. In the Archdiocese of San Francisco, Catholicism flourished during the 1950's according to the official mass attendance numbers. Recorded annually during the month of October, the number nearly doubled (from 269,915 to 464,399) between 1949 and 1959.[23] Parish records show that the growth was concentrated in localities such as the East Bay and San Mateo County, to the south of the city. In the city proper, only three new territorial parishes were established during the immediate post-war period (1945-62), in the relatively newer western portion of San Francisco, along with two other special parishes for Ukrainian and Russian Catholics.[24] Meanwhile, the burgeoning suburban county of San Mateo saw thirteen new

[22] Hennesey, p. 231.
[23] AASF, Statistics, Mass Attendance, 1935-60.
[24] AASF, New Parishes, 1945-1962, San Francisco County.

territorial parishes during the same period.[25] The counties of Marin and San Mateo also surpassed San Francisco during this period in the building of new elementary parochial schools, with 17 new schools in the suburbs as opposed to 10 in the city, while the one new high school in both Marin and San Mateo matched the two new high schools in San Francisco during this period. The archdiocese also began purchasing large tracks of land in the suburban areas at this time as sites for future building projects.[26]

Within the city limits, the desertion of Catholics for the suburbs left inner-city parishes in decline, but also opened them up to growth in a different direction. Like the surrounding neighborhoods, the parishes of San Francisco became more ethnic and African-American as whites left the city. "Americanized" Catholics, the Irish and by this point Italians and Poles, were living side by side with non-Catholics in the suburbs, while newer Catholic immigrants congregated in the old neighborhoods of the city. These newer immigrants were largely Latino. In New York, immigration from Puerto Rico changed the face of the Church in the inner city, while in San Francisco immigrants from Mexico and Central America turned the formerly Irish Mission District into a center of Latino culture. But not all of the new immigrants lived in the Mission; neighborhoods north of Market Street like the Western Addition, also mainly Irish at the turn of the century, saw an influx of new immigrants as well. One parish in that section of the city, Sacred Heart, provides a

[25] AASF, New Parishes, 1945-1962, San Mateo County.
[26] ibid.; see also AASF, Proposed Sites for Schools.

snapshot of how the city and the Church were changing in the post-war era. As early as 1947 the pastor of Sacred Heart, Fr. John Cullen, began to note in his annual reports to the archdiocese that the number of African Americans in the neighborhood was increasing dramatically. A decade later, the new pastor continued to note the increase in this "predominately non-Catholic population," tying it in with an accompanying decrease in mass attendance at Sacred Heart of 30 persons every Sunday.[27] By 1968, Sacred Heart consisted of 1700 families (100 of which were listed as African American) and its Sunday mass attendance averaged 600, down dramatically from 2000 just five years earlier. [28]

The changing face of San Francisco presented a challenge to the Church, not just in adopting the call for a more missionary approach to the growing number of black San Franciscans but a pastoral approach to the deteriorating urban situation as well. Because the Bay Area did not have a particularly large population of African Americans before World War II the challenge was in many ways new for the archdiocese. But, as will be seen, there was precedent in the city in the history of the archdiocese's mission to its own black Catholic members, few in number though they were. Unlike the large numbers of oversees immigrants, black Catholics in the United States held a peculiar status. Many of them came from a long line of Catholics (and families with roots in the United States stretching back to the days of slavery), yet they were constantly reminded of their "outsider" status both within

[27] AASF, Parish Files, Chancery Office, January 19, 1956. It is worth noting that the pastor, Fr. John Mills, also called for "a more missionary approach" to the new neighborhood residents.
[28] ibid., January 20, 1969.

the Church and the surrounding Protestant culture. Like other dioceses in the United States, San Francisco struggled to balance the needs of black Catholics with the pressures of attending to an overwhelmingly white flock. Its early attempts in reaching out to African Americans, both Catholic and non-Catholic, would help set the Church in San Francisco on a course towards greater social action in the future.

Chapter II

Mission

California's reputation as having a more tolerant racial atmosphere than many other parts of the nation began in the nineteenth century, and by the twentieth the state and the city of San Francisco were mostly free of the kinds of segregation laws that prevailed in the South. Yet the population of African Americans remained small in the wider San Francisco Bay Area before mid-century, and the number of black Catholics within that population was smaller still. Before the major population changes that took place in the area following World War II, efforts to minister to this small group of black Catholics constituted the archdiocese's first real efforts at reaching out to African Americans. Following a tradition of evangelization to the black community that had been established in the American Church in other locations, San Francisco's first black mission was an important step in the development of a relationship between the Church and black San Franciscans, fostering both a sense of community for African Americans and the beginnings of religiously-based interracial efforts in the Bay Area. As such, its history forms an important link to the civil rights era in San Francisco.

In other parts of the nation, Catholic evangelization of African Americans had a long but mixed history. In the South, religious orders like the Josephites, the Holy Ghost Fathers (Spiritans) and the Society of the Divine Word were well known for their work in the black community. Katherine Drexel, a Philadelphia heiress, established the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament in the late nineteenth century specifically for the purpose of working with African and Native Americans. Her tireless missionary work helped to establish educational facilities throughout the southern United States, run by her own and other like-minded orders. The culmination of Drexel's work was the establishment of the first college for African American Catholics in the United States—Xavier University in New Orleans.[29] However, the work of these dedicated clergy and religious was hampered in its progress by the widespread apathy, and occasional hostility, of the wider laity and hierarchy of the American Church. The problems the Church had in its outreach to African Americans began with its phlegmatic approach to the question of slavery. Though condemning the slave trade, the Church's silence on the issue of slavery put it in a position of having no credible moral authority on the most important social issue in America during the nineteenth century.[30] Contrasted with the position of many Protestant denominations, which became the moral and religious foundation for a vigorous abolitionist movement, the Catholic Church found itself in a position

[29] See Nicole Farmer Hurd, The Master Art of a Saint: Katherine Drexel and her Theology of Education, doctoral dissertation, University of Virginia, 2002, p. 168.
[30] Cyprian Davis, The History of Black Catholics in the United States, New York: Crossroad, 1990, p. 117.

of not having the same options available. One issue behind the Church's reticence was the anti-Catholic sentiment readily apparent in the American abolitionist movement. Abolitionists frequently tied slavery and Catholicism together as "being alike founded and supported on the basis of ignorance and tyranny; and being, therefore, natural allies in every warfare against liberty and enlightenment."[31] The abolitionist movement and its eventual success also became tied into a sense of the ultimate superiority and triumph of white Protestantism, despite the movement's obvious basis in helping to free African Americans from slavery. As sociologist Robert Bellah has stated, "Far from shaking white Anglo-Saxon self-confidence, the Civil War merely confirmed it."[32]

The Church's lack of engagement with the abolitionist movement put Catholicism in a difficult position following the Civil War in terms of evangelization to the former slaves. Despite that history, the Church did make some attempts to reach out to African Americans following the war. The Second Plenary Council of 1866 addressed the question by calling for work among the former slaves. But the national Church's response was essentially to leave the question to local dioceses and allow bishops to work together in each province where African Americans resided to come up with solutions. In other words, "nothing new was

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[31] From a resolution passed at a "Know-Nothing" party convention in Massachusetts, quoted in Ray Allen Billington, The Protestant Crusade, 1800-1860: A Study of the Origins of American Nativism, Gloucester, MA: the Macmillan Co., 1938, p. 425.
[32] Robert Bellah, The Broken Covenant: American Civil Religion in Time of Trial, Seabury Press: New York, 1975, p. 55.

created" to help further the Church's outreach to the former slaves, putting Catholicism into yet another position of near silence on an important American social and political question.[33] Some of the hierarchy did rise to the occasion in the decades following the end of the war. In such Southern dioceses as Savannah, Charleston, Richmond and Little Rock the bishops there worked with religious orders to establish black Catholic parishes and "industrial schools" to teach the former slaves new skills.[34]

The Third Plenary Council of 1884 established an ongoing Mission to this population, tied together with Native Americans. The council also set up a special collection in 1884 for the "Negro and Indian Missions," to be taken up once a year. Despite these efforts the Church's late start kept the mission from achieving very much in the way of African American conversions to Catholicism, and the apathy on the part of white Catholics kept the collections for the effort to merely a "pittance."[35] In fact, the mission seemed to get in the way of the efforts of some of the religious orders working among African Americans by making it seem that the work of evangelization would be taken care of through its auspices. The Josephites reported that Catholics often "took offense" and refused to contribute financially to their work because they had already given to the mission.[36] Rome did continue to

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[33] Davis, p. 120.
[34] Davis, p. 123, and Gerald Fogarty, Commonwealth Catholicism: A History of the Catholic Church in Virginia, Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001.
[35] Commonwealth Catholicism, p. 320.
[36] Mary Oates, The Catholic Philanthropic Tradition in America, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995, p. 117.

exhort the American Church to continue evangelization efforts to African Americans into the twentieth century. Pius XII's 1939 encyclical *Sertum Laetitiae*, which celebrated the sesquicentennial of the establishment of the American hierarchy, mentioned the Negro mission while imparting a "special paternal affection…for the Negro people dwelling among you; for in the field of religion and education We know that they need special care and comfort." As Southern African Americans began to move away into other parts of the nation in search of better opportunities, the "special care and comfort" called for by the pope took on a broader scope.

In the early twentieth century, African Americans lived overwhelmingly in the South. Traditionally, they still occupied the jobs they had performed as slaves, working the land of white owners, but now as low-paid sharecroppers. With the advent of increased mechanization of the agricultural industry, much of the work formerly done by manual labor was no longer needed on the farms of the South. Around the time of World War I a great exodus took place in which a large number of black Southerners moved north to such industrial centers as Chicago and Detroit, where jobs were more readily available and the southern segregation laws were not in force.[37] San Francisco also was free from Jim Crow, and was an industrial center in its own right, but African Americans did not come to the Bay Area in any great numbers before World War II as they did to the Northeast and Midwest during this

[37] See Milton Sernett, Bound for the Promised Land: African American Religion and the Great Migration, Raleigh-Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997.

time. In 1900 there were 1,654 African Americans in San Francisco while in 1940 there were 4,846, representing an increase from .5 percent of the population to only .75 percent.[38] While black San Franciscans of that era did not face the kind of legalized prejudice that held sway in the South, they were still kept out of many of the better professions in the city. That, coupled with the high cost of housing in San Francisco, had led to a steady migration of African Americans in the early decades of the 1900's out of San Francisco to Oakland and Los Angeles, where they found more job opportunities and cheaper housing. In the early decades of the twentieth century that migration helped to keep the black population within the city limits quite small.

Undoubtedly due to their small numbers, serious efforts by the Catholic Church to establish an ongoing mission to African Americans in San Francisco did not begin until the 1920's. In 1928, the Sisters of the Helpers of the Holy Souls established St. Benedict the Moor Mission to Colored Catholics in a former residence at 1565 O'Farrell Street. Although at the time this area of the Western Addition neighborhood was not yet predominately black, African Americans had already begun to settle around Fillmore Street. A black community center named after Booker T. Washington was located nearby at 1433 Divisadero St., and along Fillmore some black-owned businesses had appeared. The mission was staffed by the sisters and run by Mother Mary of St. Felix. While the enterprise had the

[38] United States Census Bureau.

blessing of Archbishop Edward Hanna, the problems it encountered inevitably had to do with funding. The archdiocese had not yet left the "Immigrant Church" era, and other groups such as the Italians still occupied much of the Church's time, energy and resources in San Francisco.

Still, in its first years the mission developed a small but fairly vibrant following. In a six-month period in 1930, attendance at Sunday mass averaged between sixty and seventy, with four marriages and nine confirmations. About sixty children attended the mission for classes, at a time when African American children still often did not feel welcome in parochial schools.[39] A Dominican priest is on record as celebrating Mass at the mission until his departure after Easter of 1930.[40] During this period, the archdiocese made a concerted effort to help bring some regularity to the mission by calling on an outside order specializing in work among African Americans to come help the San Francisco mission. Thomas Millett, secretary to Archbishop Hanna, began corresponding with the Society of the Divine Word motherhouse in Illinois in the late 1920's, urging them to take on the mission to black Catholics in San Francisco. Archbishop Hanna also felt that the Divine Word fathers should come to the rescue sooner rather than later. As Father Millett reported, "His Grace feels that their [the black Catholics] present condition warrants

[39]AASF, Correspondence Files, Unsigned Memo, 1930. African Americans were not legally barred from attending public or private schools in San Francisco, but the memo makes clear that black children felt ostracized in the mostly white parochial schools of the city.
[40] The records do not list the priest's full name but refer to him as "Father Palmer."

some action, and we are waiting to hear from you."[41] Unfortunately, without an immediate response from the Divine Word fathers and despite the mission's initial success, the expense of the extra building could not be justified by the archdiocese. The Sisters were forced to leave the O'Farrell address after 1930 and continue the mission from their own house on Haight Street.

Despite this economy, financial problems continued to plague the enterprise. One of the sisters' chief concerns was providing transportation for black Catholic children to attend classes and mass on Haight St. Thanking a supporter for his contribution to that effort, Mother Mary confessed that she was "...not sure we will be able to keep it up."[42] She appealed to Archbishop Hanna to help her order keep their chapel "open to the Colored," and accentuated the need by pointing out the consequences otherwise: "Many have told us, 'What is the use of becoming Catholics, because they do not want us.'"[43] This intriguing revelation suggests that the sisters had expanded their mission to black non-Catholics in the area. If so the problems the sisters encountered were not new to the experience of black Catholics in the United States. Throughout the nineteenth century, most Protestants had been able to resolve their racial problems due to their own ecclesiology. Black members of the major Protestant denominations simply formed their own "Colored" branches of the mother church. They were free to establish their own regulations and elect

[41] AASF, Archbishop's Letters Book #91, Millet to the Very Rev. Bruno Hagspiel, April 24, 1930, p. 590.
[42] AASF, Correspondence File, Mother Mary to Mr. Lalley, February 4, 1932.
[43] AASF, Correspondence File, Mother Mary to Hanna, August 5, 1931.

clergy from their own numbers. No such option was available for black Catholics, who often found the white American Catholic establishment indifferent to their concerns or at best unable to accommodate them as attentively as the Church accommodated its often disparate immigrant groups. Mother Mary knew the attractions that Protestantism offered to the black residents of the Western Addition, and warned the archdiocese that the Church had to move aggressively to counteract the structural freedom other denominations could offer.[44] But convincing non-Catholic African Americans to give up the separate and independent structure of traditional black churches for a Church that was unified but still largely segregated made the work of the mission that much more difficult.

Archbishop Hanna, though sympathetic to the plight of St. Benedict's (he sent his own contribution to the bus fund), had greater financial priorities in the archdiocese.[45] By 1933 those problems were compounded by the very success of the sisters' efforts. Mother Mary reported, "The parishes are beginning to send the colored here for help. . . As they are not accepted in the Catholic schools it seems more than ever important to keep in touch with them."[46] It seems that, though parishes were of course open to African Americans, many did not feel comfortable in the white churches of San Francisco and sought both help and a sense of community at the mission. As much as Mother Mary tried to make St. Benedict the Moor a success, she knew that ultimately the mission was an inadequate means of

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[44] ibid.
[45] AASF, Archbishop's Letters Book #95, Millett to Mother Mary, November 27, 1931, p. 175.
[46] AASF, General Correspondence, Mother Mary to Monsignor Millett, March 3, 1933.

keeping black Catholics within the fold, much less of increasing their numbers in the archdiocese. Her advice to Archbishop Hanna on the desires of the black Catholics coming to the mission was blunt and clear: "They want a Church."[47]

In 1938 black Catholics got their wish with the founding of the Chapel of St. Benedict the Moor at 2896 Bush St. On December 11 Archbishop John Mitty, who had replaced Hanna three years earlier, presided over the dedication of the church building, a converted residence like the older mission. Black Catholics took part in the ceremonies as acolytes and as choir members under the direction of the sisters. In his sermon, Mitty noted that the chapel marked "an epoch, small perhaps in its way," in the history of the Church's mission to African Americans.[48] He also had particular praise for the sisters who had done so much to make the chapel possible, saying, "I am aware of their ceaseless interest in this work and of how they have labored for you."[49] The new mission, however, was run by the Society of the Divine Word fathers, bringing to fruition the efforts begun a decade earlier to bring this order to the archdiocese. Henry Marusa, SVD, was the celebrant at the dedication and John Berman, SVD, became the first pastor. This order had already been successful in setting up black parishes in the American South. Bruno Drescher, the second pastor of St. Benedict's, had previously been pastor of the black parish of St. Peter in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, where one of the American Church's first black

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[47] Mother Mary to Hanna
[48] The Monitor (Official journal of the Archdiocese of San Francisco), December 17, 1938, p. 1
[49] ibid.

priests, John Dorsey, had served at the turn of the twentieth century.[50] After opening a seminary in Mississippi in 1923 specifically to train African Americans for the priesthood, the first black Divine Word Fathers were ordained in 1934, and went on to serve black communities in America as well as in the West Indies and Africa.[51] However, the fact that Marusa and Drescher, along with the vast majority of priests serving in black parishes at the time, were themselves white highlights the continuing problem the Church had in attracting African Americans to the clergy. Once the fathers had settled into the new chapel the mission to black Catholics in the city became regularized and the congregation grew. In 1940 there were two hundred and ninety-eight members with an additional fifty-five taking catechism classes.[52] World events, however, soon drastically altered the face of the black community in San Francisco and the direction of the mission chapel that served it.

Several months after the dedication of St. Benedict's, World War II began in Europe, and the United States was drawn into the war after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December of 1941. The attack on American territory rattled the nerves of Californians in particular due to the state's proximity to Japan. Almost overnight, the California coastline was prepared to defend the state by air and sea, while the port cities became powerhouses for the burgeoning defense industry.

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[50] John Dorsey was appointed to St. Peter's in 1902; Clay O'Dell, An American Catholic: Edward Fitzgerald, Second Bishop of Little Rock, unpublished thesis, 1992, p. 82.
[51] Ernest Brandewie, "Divine Word Missionaries," in The Encyclopedia of American Catholic History. Ed. Michael Glazier and Thomas J. Shelley. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1997, p. 436.
[52] There was no parochial school attached to the parish.

Conscription severely depleted the American work force needed to operate the defense plants. Women and African Americans, traditionally kept out of the skilled labor professions, were welcomed in with urging from the federal government in the form of an executive order.[53] A second great migration of southern African Americans took place, not to the industrial North this time but to the West. Henry Kaiser, one of the most successful of the defense industry titans, employed thousands of African Americans in his Bay Area shipyards. One East Bay resident recalled that Kaiser "brought blacks from all over the south . . . one to three train loads every day for six months."[54] The African American population in San Francisco exploded; by 1950 it had grown to 43, 460, an increase of 800 percent from 1940. As a consequence the Western Addition neighborhood in San Francisco, adjacent to St. Benedict's, became a predominately black district. This area west of Van Ness Avenue was above the "fire line" in the 1906 great fire that destroyed much of the city. The residences there were older than the rebuilt districts, not to mention the newer suburban areas, and before the war many Asians had settled there, particularly Japanese Americans. During the war, by order of the United States government, Japanese Americans were relocated to camps in the interior

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[53] See Gretchen Lemke-Santangelo, Abiding Courage: African American Migrant Women and the East Bay Community, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996, for a discussion of the African American women who came to work in the defense industries of the East Bay. In a sample of the religious affiliation of these migrants to the East Bay the author found that 12 percent were Catholic, slightly above the A.M.E. affiliates (10 percent) and slightly less than C.M.E. affiliates (14 percent), p. 43.

[54] Quoted in Douglas Daniels, Pioneer Urbanites: A Social and Cultural History of Black San Francisco, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991, p. 165. Kaiser encouraged southern blacks to work in his shipyards by paying for their transportation to the Bay Area.

areas of the country. As those residents left African Americans moved in, and the area even became known as a "Harlem of the West" for its music and nightlife.[55] But one of the most pressing issues for all San Franciscans in the 40's, housing, affected African Americans even more acutely. While a few black San Franciscans were able to move into the newer areas, many had to stay in the Western Addition on account of poverty and prejudice. The older residences, built as single-family dwellings, were further subdivided into small and cramped apartments to accommodate the larger black population. Even before the population explosion during the war, San Francisco's black households were described as being in "poor condition and more congested than homes occupied by white families."[56] The end of the war brought no relief; even in 1950, Bruno Drescher reported that the greatest concern of his congregation at St. Benedict's was the "scarcity of housing."[57] Drescher even took the unusual step of assembling a group of volunteers to contribute towards the purchase of an apartment house on California Street for African Americans, which became a kind of showplace for the successful integration of blacks into the crowded and mostly white city.[58] But Fr. Drescher's extraordinary effort was not enough to solve the housing problem for the entire congregation.

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[55] Chamberland, p. 273.
[56] Albert Broussard, Black San Francisco: The Struggle for Racial Equality in the West, Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 1993, p.31.
[57] AASF, Parish Records, St. Benedict the Moor, January 19, 1950.
[58] Casserly, Survey Answers & Interviews, #11.

Still, St. Benedict's brought black Catholics some prominence in the postwar Church in San Francisco. Paul Gopaul, a resident of the parish, became the first native black San Franciscan to enter the priesthood when he was ordained on May 10, 1952. Gopaul joined the Society of St. Edmund (Edmundites), an order of priests that was founded in nineteenth-century France but had become established in Vermont by way of Canada in the early twentieth century, and which had founded the first Catholic college in the diocese of Burlington. By the 1930's the order had become interested in missionary work with African Americans, and established a mission in Alabama.[59] The same year that Gopaul joined the Edmundites, the first effort in San Francisco to establish ongoing communication between black and white Catholics was started at St. Benedict's. In February of 1952 auxiliary Bishop Hugh Donohoe informed Thomas Horn, a white Catholic from San Mateo that Archbishop Mitty had granted permission for the formation of the Interracial Communion League at St. Benedict's. Donohoe, later Bishop of the diocese of Stockton, was one of the most progressive Catholics in the archdiocese in terms of race relations, and he became the unofficial spokesman for such matters. While Mitty granted permission for the group to form, he seems to have been somewhat cautious in his decision. In a letter to Horn, Donohoe stated, "[The archbishop] favors the effort but does not think any official recognition need be taken at this time."[60] The bishop kept abreast of the group's activities through reports from Horn.

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[59] Gregory Hite, The Hottest Places in Hell: The Catholic Church and Civil Rights in Selma, Alabama, 1937-1965, PhD Dissertation, University of Virginia, 2002, p. 93.
[60] AASF, Social Justice Commission Papers, Donohoe to Horn, February 8, 1952

The group held shared liturgies, forums on racial matters and attempted to breach the divide in the lives of black and white Catholics through dialogue. Yet Horn was not satisfied with the slow pace of the League and in his reports he suggested that an expansion of the group's activities outside of St. Benedict's would be beneficial. Through Donohoe, Mitty conveyed his still-cautious attitude towards the enterprise to Horn: "For the present, the Most Reverend Archbishop believes that it would be most satisfactory to continue your activities in the manner in which you are presently operating."[61] It is unclear from the records how long the group lasted at St. Benedict's. The last mention of the League is from 1954, and Thomas Horn also disappears from the records after that year. This could reflect the general conditions at St. Benedict's, which began to suffer from the effects of the trend towards desegregation in the 1950's and even from the improved conditions for African Americans in San Francisco.

Although the housing situation remained critical throughout the 1950's, some black San Franciscans began to enjoy a small but perceptible improvement in their economic situation. That decade is famous for the prosperity it brought to white America, but for most African Americans their economic status remained what it had been before the war. Still, some were able to take advantage of the GI Bill and go to college, becoming the first in their families to do so. A study by the University of California in 1948 mentioned that after the war a greater percentage of the

[61] AASF, Social Justice Commission Papers, Donohoe to Horn, December 6, 1952.

African Americans relocating to San Francisco were college-educated.[62] Also, the very nature of the work that brought the influx of African Americans to San Francisco prepared them to become more skilled than their counterparts in other areas of the country. While prejudice continued to hamper the prosperity of black San Franciscans the area was known at the time as one of the more tolerant in terms of race relations, and more families began to leave the Western Addition for better housing elsewhere. Members of the congregation of St. Benedict's in particular seem to have been able to move to better lives outside the Western Addition.

In 1951 Drescher reported, "Many families, former members of the mission, moved far away, forced by lack of dwelling space in our neighborhood."[63] Ironically, the dream of an earlier generation, their own church, fell victim to better opportunity for black Catholics in the 1950's. In late 1956 Father Louis Benoit, SVD, replaced Father Drescher as pastor of St. Benedict's. He inherited a parish in full-scale decline, and in his first month at St. Benedict's reported that a peculiar shift in viewing the role of a black parish was contributing to the situation. Noting the further "decline in numbers," he attributed it to rumors of closing and the opinion of his congregation that the existence of St. Benedict's "indicated that segregation was being upheld."[64] As black Catholics became comfortable in other, predominately white parishes, it seems that for the archdiocese to continue

[62] Quoted in Daniels, p.68.
[63] AASF, Parish Records, St. Benedict the Moor, January 18, 1951.
[64] AASF, Parish Records, St. Benedict the Moor, January 18, 1957.

operating a specifically "colored" mission church said something quite different to African Americans of the 1950's than it had just twenty years before.

Another step forward in Catholic race relations also contributed to the problems at St. Benedict's - school integration. San Francisco had moved forward with public school integration in the nineteenth century, when the Board of Education voted to abolish separate schools in 1875. The state of California outlawed segregated schools five years later, so that by the twentieth century all public schools and most private ones were theoretically open to African Americans. But both public and private schools were still attended by the children in the surrounding neighborhoods; with black children living in black neighborhoods, there was in fact not much integration in the classroom. While the de jure segregation of the South differed from the Catholic school system of San Francisco, de facto segregation had kept the schools overwhelmingly white for many years before World War II. After the war, the schools gradually began to accept the few African American Catholics who applied to parochial schools, and as the number grew Archbishop Mitty took steps to ensure that no archdiocesan institution practiced de facto segregation. In February of 1950 he asked William Flanagan, secretary of Catholic Social Services, to check and see whether blacks were being excluded from the parochial schools and to correct the situation if he found any evidence of such.[65] As more black Catholic children were welcomed into the

[65] AASF, Catholic Social Services File, 1946-52. In a letter of February 13, 1950, Flanagan informed Mitty that he had received assurances from the schools that no blacks were being excluded.

parochial school system, the benefits of leaving St. Benedict's became even clearer as the parish had no school attached to it. In 1959 Father Benoit reported that his dwindling congregation was comprised of mostly childless couples and the elderly, noting that the young families "must attend the church which has a school for their children."[66] This proved to be the death knell for St. Benedict's; the parish was closed the following year and the building converted to an archdiocesan center for the deaf. The postwar years had proved to be as much of an opportunity for the black Catholics of St. Benedict's as they were a detriment to the parish itself.

In the wider context of the 1950's, the shift in the attitude of the parishioners of St. Benedict's towards the existence of a black parish becomes clearer. In December of 1955 the NAACP found a long-sought test case in their fight against segregation after Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a Montgomery, Alabama, bus, setting into motion the boycott that brought Martin Luther King to fame. Throughout 1956, as the case wended its way towards ultimate success before the Supreme Court, the entire nation became aware through increased press coverage of the black movement for civil rights in the South. In 1957 Congress passed the first civil rights legislation since Reconstruction, though civil rights leaders criticized the final version of the bill as too weak. That same year the struggle to integrate schools that had followed the *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling in 1954 took a dramatic turn in Little Rock. After the governor of Arkansas

[66] AASF, Parish Records, St. Benedict the Moor, January 16, 1959.

and segregationist sympathizers kept nine black students from integrating Central High School with the help of the National Guard, President Eisenhower federalized the troops and ushered in a new era of government involvement in civil rights by forcing school integration. On the West Coast, San Franciscans were apt to give themselves credit for the generally progressive race relations in their city, particularly when compared to the violent images they saw nightly on television. With officially integrated schools, parishes and other archdiocesan facilities, it is not surprising that black Catholics in San Francisco would see St. Benedict's as a relic of less enlightened times. But while the closing of St. Benedict's ended an important chapter in the history of black San Francisco, it also paved the way to an even more promising future for African Americans in the area. The parish's early success as a center of black culture in the city had extended even beyond the boundaries of its black Catholic members, and St. Benedict's was a crucial institution in the larger black culture of the Western Addition. As that culture began to fade, thanks in part to better conditions for African Americans, the focus of the community turned towards efforts to make sure that black and white San Franciscans could live together in an increasingly more integrated society. Those early efforts, both at St. Benedict's and in the wider community, helped prepare the city and the Church to engage the new era ushered in by the civil rights movement.

Chapter III

Interracialism

The change in the nature of the mission to black Catholics in the archdiocese mirrored the changes happening throughout the country. In the southern states, African Americans and sympathetic activists of all races began to organize what became the demonstrable "civil rights movement." Earlier, and what many considered somewhat patronizing, efforts to "take care of the colored" gave way to a new activism that ranged from forcing test cases in court to outlaw segregation to aggressive federal involvement, particularly in the integration of the nation's schools. Leaders like Martin Luther King and organizations such as the Southern Christian Leadership Conference helped rally activists to a new level of involvement in racial matters. Though San Francisco was out of the traditional sphere of the movement's southern roots, the local black community in particular saw that the world was changing and was determined to change with it. Those becoming increasingly involved in the issue built upon some earlier efforts to support racial justice in San Francisco and nationwide as well. Between the efforts of the Church to bring African Americans into the fold and the full-fledged "civil rights movement," some Catholics both black and white tried to address the issues

of how differing races could understand each other better and become more integrated within the Church. As those efforts to achieve "interracialism" within the Church grew, they naturally began to point towards larger problems in society as a whole, and formed an important step in the struggle to achieve full equality for African Americans.

One of the earlier black Catholic organizations to attempt to engage the Church in bettering the lives of African Americans was the Federated Colored Catholics (FCC). The group began as a gathering of black Catholics in the 1920's, culminating in the formation of the FCC in 1925 with an African American named Thomas Wyatt Turner as its president and under the spiritual direction of Archbishop Michael Curley of Baltimore. Turner had been one of the earliest black students at The Catholic University in Washington, D.C. at the turn of the twentieth century, before the onset of Jim Crow laws barred other African Americans from attending.[67] He also had taught science at Tuskegee Institute with George Washington Carver, at the invitation of Booker T. Washington.[68] Turner envisioned the FCC as a means of rallying black Catholics to pressure the Church to engage in a movement towards greater integration and opportunity for African Americans, beginning with the Church's own institutions. One of the FCC's efforts involved attempts to force Catholic University to admit black students in the early 1930's.[69]

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[67] Marilyn Nickels, "Thomas Wyatt Turner and the Federated Colored Catholics," in U.S. Catholic Historian, Spring/Summer, 1988, p. 215.
[68] ibid.
[69] Nickels, Black Catholic Protest and the Federated Colored Catholics, 1917-1933, New York: Garland, 1988.

Turner had a rocky relationship with the larger Church and the hierarchy, due to his willingness to highlight the segregated nature of many of the Church's institutions, including seminaries and organizations like the Knights of Columbus. At the same time, the FCC and Turner fought continuously against the impression that in largely confining the FCC's membership to African Americans the group was only contributing to racial isolation and was itself a "Jim Crow organization."[70]

Despite the charge, the FCC was not exclusively African American and attracted a few pioneering white Catholics to the field of interracialism. One of these was John La Farge, S.J., whose interest in race relations began while doing pastoral work among the black Catholics of Maryland in the early twentieth century. La Farge became involved with the Federated Colored Catholics in the 1920's. Both La Farge and William Markoe, a fellow Jesuit from Missouri who also had become involved with the FCC, saw their mission as moving the group and its president towards a broader goal of bringing black and white Catholics together in partnership. La Farge's thought stressed the importance of "rightly directed education" as a means of helping the black Catholic community to cultivate leaders who could take the interracial movement further.[71] Turner, however, was more concerned with bettering the condition of African Americans and opposed what he believed was a "takeover of the organization by Markoe and a fundamental shift in its goals."[72] Relations between Turner and Markoe became particularly embittered

[70] ibid., p. 9.
[71] ibid., p. 222.
[72] Davis, p. 227

as Markoe and La Farge sought to move the FCC towards a greater acceptance of white leadership, which the Jesuits felt would offer the group a greater opportunity to engage the whole Church. Turner and his allies resented the notion that "anything headed by Negroes is inferior to that which whites direct," but their struggle to keep the FCC united under Turner's leadership ultimately failed.[73] Turner was ousted as president in 1932, and the group split into two factions.

La Farge, determined to continue interracial efforts in the Church, left the FCC and founded the Catholic Interracial Council (CIC) of New York in 1934. The movement spread to other cities in the following decades, and there were over twenty such councils by 1954. La Farge served as the intellectual leader of interracialism in the American Church, both as an editor of the Jesuit journal *America* and in publishing a journal on race relations called the *Interracial Review*, which had begun as a journal founded by Markoe under the name *St. Elizabeth's Chronicle*.[74] La Farge believed strongly that racism was inherently un-Catholic, and felt that the Church could provide the only real solution to the race problems in the United States. The New York CIC became a focal point of bettering race relations among Catholics, working together with such groups as the Clergy Conference on Negro Welfare and the De Porres Interracial Center on Vesey Street in Manhattan. La Farge also was instrumental in urging Church leaders to take a more active role

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[73] Nickels, p. 129.
[74] Richard G. Smith, "Markow, William Morgan (1892-1969," in The Encyclopedia of American Catholic History. Ed. Michael Glazier and Thomas J. Shelley. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1997, p. 843.

in condemning racism. At the time, Rome was obviously concerned with the racist ideology of Nazi Germany, and in 1937 Pope Pius XI issued an encyclical denying the theory of racial superiority. *Mit brennender Sorge* provided La Farge with a weapon to use against segregationist philosophy in the United States, which he called the "pale but venomous older cousin" of Nazism.[75] The Pope, desiring to speak out even more forcefully on the issue, asked La Farge during a private audience in 1938 to contribute to a draft encyclical on racial issues. La Farge spent much of that year working with another Jesuit from Germany, Gustav Gundlach, to prepare the document, *Humani Generis Unitas*. Pius XI's death the following year kept the encyclical from being published. His successor Pius XII, preferring a "less combative document," issued a different letter (*Summi Pontificatus*) condemning Nazism and racial superiority in 1939.[76]

The Church's increasing efforts in speaking out against racism marked a turning point in the historically meager record of the Catholic response to discrimination and helped provide some momentum to the Catholic interracial movement. At the beginning of the 1940's La Farge himself believed that the movement had "Taken fire through the country," and the *Interracial Review* documented a remarkable increase during the period of the amount of space devoted to racial matters in the Catholic press.[77] The American hierarchy also spoke up on

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[75] John McGreevy, Parish Boundaries: The Catholic Encounter with Race in the Twentieth-Century Urban North, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996, p. 50.
[76] ibid., p. 51.
[77] David Southern, John La Farge and the Limits of Catholic Interracialism, 1911-1963, Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996, p. 209.

the race issue as the nation fought against the Nazis, issuing a pastoral letter in 1943 that condemned racism and called on the nation to deal fairly with African Americans, calling them "fellow citizens" who had a Constitutional right to economic and educational opportunity, public welfare and good housing. The bishops also pointedly made reference to the need to deal fairly with black Americans lest they fall prey to "agitators whose real objective is not to improve but to destroy our way of living."[78] The events of the 1950's brought further reaction from the bishops, who issued another pastoral in 1958 entitled "Discrimination and Christian Conscience." The bishops declared that the very heart of the race issue was "moral and religious," asserting that racism was incompatible with true Christian doctrine. Though condemning "rash impetuosity" in those who fought for racial justice, the bishops opposed segregation as incompatible with the natural law. Despite a continuing reticence to participate in activities with other religious groups due to the prohibitions established by Rome, some Catholics began to see the problem of civil rights as a struggle that could only be won with the help of non-Catholics. La Farge began to widen his scope in the 1950's beyond strictly Catholic circles, despite a long history of suspicion towards Protestants and Jews on his part. While La Farge continued to believe that the Catholic Church had a better moral and intellectual underpinning to address the race problem, he also became more amenable to ecumenical efforts during the 1950's as a more useful method of

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[78] United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Pastoral Letters of the United States, Vol. II, Hugh Nolan (ed.), Washington, DC: 1983.

working in an "intrinsically pluralistic" society.[79] He issued a joint declaration with Protestant theologian Reinhold Niebuhr on racial tolerance in 1957 that was widely accepted by religious leaders from several different faiths. The Church in the United States was beginning to make clear that racism and discrimination were not issues confined to the small number of black Catholics or even just to Catholics generally, but were issues in which all Americans had a moral and religious stake.

One issue that hampered much of the interracial and integrationist impulse of this period was anti-Communism. The fear and hatred of Communism had gripped the American conservative conscience for decades. Following the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, the United States Department of Justice undertook a campaign to root out what some believed was the growing threat of Communism in America. Known as the "Palmer Raids" after Attorney General Mitchell Palmer, the post-World War I activity helped set the precedent for occasional "Red scares" that would grip the nation throughout the twentieth century. In addition to fighting against actual Communist influences, anti-Communist adherents also battled any philosophy that was deemed "foreign" and suspected of providing a bridge to Communist tendencies. Interracialism was a prime target for charges of being "un-American" and undoubtedly pro-Communist. This was despite the fact that some interracialists like La Farge had initially used the fear of Communism to help further their cause. In 1935 he urged Jesuits to work against segregation by saying,

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[79] Southern, p. 299.

"It is merely a question of time till all the Negroes go communist unless we do something."[80] His admonition was not necessarily alarmist. During the 1930's the Communist Party was active in black areas like New York's Harlem, and succeeded in gaining some adherents such as Bayard Rustin, who would later become an important figure in the civil rights movement.[81] American Catholics were not only comfortable with anti-Communism, they became in many ways particularly associated with it. Intellectually armed with years of official Church teaching on the evils of European Communism and socialism, American Catholic anti-Communists in the 1950's found a hospitable atmosphere as the nation moved from fighting alongside the Soviet Union during World War II to fighting against it in the Cold War. Even Red-baiting Sen. Joseph McCarthy, who would later be utterly disgraced, was fiercely defended by some fellow Catholics for his efforts to expose Communists in the government. As McCarthy geared up for his famous hearings, the editor of the archdiocesan journal in San Francisco, *The Monitor*, opined that any liberal objection to what would later be termed McCarthyism "makes the work of Stalin and his espionage agents that much easier."[82] It did not matter that, officially, Moscow was uninterested in the civil rights movement, which it saw as only an incremental approach to the perfect and just Communist society. Efforts to bring about more tolerant race relations, in the Bay Area and elsewhere, would still

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[80] McGreevy, p. 65.
[81] Taylor Branch, Parting The Waters: America In The King Years, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1989, p.170.
[82] The Monitor, May 26, 1950, p.1.

be stymied not only by the hostility of ardent racists but the taint of "Communist sympathizers" as well.

San Francisco had seen its share of groups working to better racial relations in the area. The NAACP was not surprisingly the most prominent, but a local group called the Bay Area Council Against Discrimination also was established during World War II and attracted a multiracial following. Despite initial enthusiasm for the group, its role as the leading interracial organization in the city was taken over in 1944 by the San Francisco Council for Civic Unity (CCU). This was a chapter of a national group that was formed during the war to address the racial issues arising from wartime migration of African Americans. Unlike the local NAACP, in which white membership was "primarily symbolic," the CCU promoted active white membership to work with African Americans in developing strategy and determining the direction of the group.[83] The desire to make such groups truly "interracial" mirrored the goals of the initial chapters of the CIC and helped establish a foundation in the Bay Area for black and white community leaders working together for racial justice.

Interestingly, the CIC had made inroads into the Bay Area before events at the end of the 1950's finally ushered in a San Francisco chapter. Thomas Horn, the layperson who had requested the formation of an "Interracial Communion League" at St. Benedict's parish, apparently had other ideas for San Francisco's first Catholic

[83] Broussard, p. 197.

interracial organization. In response to a letter from Horn, secretary of the New York CIC George Hunton wrote to him in December of 1951 that he "would be very much interested in having a CIC started in San Francisco."[84] This was a few months before Horn received permission to form the Interracial Communion League, and suggests that his original request was to start a San Francisco CIC, which was not granted. This might clarify Donohoe's statement to him later that year that the League should continue as "presently operating." But Horn did not give up on his idea, and in 1954 he explicitly asked that the League be allowed to reorganize as a CIC.[85] Horn directed his request to the archbishop himself, including with it a pamphlet sent to him by the New York CIC explaining the group's history and purpose, but there is no direct response from Mitty. Confusion reigned regarding Horn's request, which was passed on to several persons before being forwarded to Donohoe. The bishop once again asked to be informed of the League's activities, but as it would take another six years before a local CIC was founded it seems that there was some distrust of that organization in the archdiocese of San Francisco.

Archbishop Mitty's wariness of the CIC movement speaks to his general nature. On the one hand, his efforts to desegregate the schools and other facilities in the archdiocese, as well as his public display of support for integration by including an African American altar server in ceremonies at the cathedral, put Mitty squarely on the side of integrationists. He also was concerned with outreach to the small but

[84] AASF, Social Justice Commission Papers, Hunton to Horn, December 4, 1951.
[85] AASF, Social Justice Commission Papers, Horn to Mitty, March 23, 1954.

growing Latino community in the area, instituting the "Spanish Mission Band" in 1950 to minister to the migrant workers in the area. The Mission Band, originally four diocesan priests appointed by Mitty, also was allowed to inform the workers of the Church's social teachings regarding labor rights. By the end of the 1950's the initiative had become controversial for its efforts to organize the workers, but Mitty continued to support the effort.[86]

Yet Mitty also was a cautious and conservative man, not one to push the limits of a controversial political issue.[87] One clue to the archdiocese's reservations about establishing a CIC chapter may be found in an incident involving the group in 1951, at the time Horn was attempting to establish the first council chapter on the West Coast. In 1948, the Supreme Court in the decision *Shelley v. Kraemer* ruled against state enforcement of restrictive covenants in housing. Such covenants were popular traditions in the world of de facto segregation. While minorities were legally segregated in the South, in other areas they were theoretically allowed to live anywhere and, therefore, without legal school segregation, attend the local white schools or churches. To keep minorities out, realtors and homeowners established the covenants, or agreements, stating that the buyer would not sell the house to non-whites. Their use was widespread and even had been encouraged by the Federal Housing Administration prior to the Supreme Court decision as a means to

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[86] Burns, Volume III, p. 17.

[87] In 1958, for example, conservatives in California proposed an "open shop" ballot initiative that would have restricted the power of labor unions. Mitty himself did not oppose the proposition, and adamantly refused to give the Church's endorsement to either side, despite the important ties between organized labor and the Catholic Church at the time.

"maintain stability."[88] In seemingly progressive San Francisco, restrictive covenants were common in upscale white neighborhoods until the state eventually passed a fair housing act.

La Farge strongly supported the *Shelley v. Kraemer* decision, and in 1951 the ruling was put to the test in Cicero, IL, when a black family moved into a white suburb, sparking a terrible string of race riots. The suburb in question was not only white but predominately Catholic, and La Farge as editor of the Jesuit periodical *America* allowed a lay member of the Chicago CIC to publish an article in the journal denouncing the local Catholics, "clerical and lay," for bigotry.[89] La Farge was reprimanded by Vincent McCormick, the American assistant to the Jesuit general in Rome, not only for accusing Catholics of racism but even more specifically for allowing a layperson to criticize the clergy.[90] This was unheard of in 1951, and Mitty was no exception to the general belief among the hierarchy that laypersons were not to criticize the Church openly in such a manner. As the incident became one of some notoriety, it is entirely possible that Mitty's wariness of the CIC was due at least in some part to the perception that it allowed its lay members too much control. The group continued to gain notoriety throughout the decade with aggressive efforts to integrate white, predominantly Catholic neighborhoods. Such efforts once again erupted in riots in 1953 and 1954, in the Trumball Park area of Chicago. The CIC's active involvement led segregationists there to warn Catholics

[88] Jackson, p. 208.
[89] Southern, p. 255.
[90] ibid.

that the group was only trying to "hide behind the beautiful name of Catholicism to deceive people into thinking they have the approval of the Catholic church [sic]."[91] As this incident suggests, one of the most controversial aspects of the CIC as far as other Catholics were concerned was the group's willingness to engage in social action outside of the officially sanctioned activities of the Church in concert with the hierarchy, giving the impression that its members were loose cannons. Even supporters of greater integration efforts very well could have been worried that such a group would cause more harm than good in that cautious and conservative decade.

Regardless of Archbishop Mitty's wariness towards Catholic interracialism in the early 1950's, by the end of the decade events seemed to conspire favorably towards the establishment of a chapter in San Francisco. In 1958 La Farge himself sent several sermons on racial matters to Mitty, who thanked him personally.[92] In the next few years, Mitty grew weaker from illness and much of the responsibilities of running the archdiocese fell on auxiliaries like Donohoe. In early 1960, an African American Catholic of St. Anne's parish in San Francisco began corresponding with Donohoe regarding the establishment of a local CIC chapter. Terry Francois was a member of the San Francisco Commission on Equal Employment Opportunity, and in 1964 he became the first black supervisor in San Francisco.[93] Francois was a native Louisianan, one of the college-educated African

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[91] McGreevy, p. 100.
[92] AASF, Social Justice Commission Papers, Mitty to LeFarge, January 8, 1958.
[93] Because San Francisco is both a city and county, its legislative body is known as a Board of Supervisors rather than the usual City Council.

Americans to move to San Francisco after the war.[94] He then attended Hastings Law School of the University of California and earned his degree from there in 1949. Throughout the 1950's he became increasingly involved in the civil rights movement and instigated a lawsuit in 1952 that challenged segregation in public housing. In 1960, the same year he became president of the local chapter of the NAACP, he wrote Donohoe saying, "We will make every effort to bring an effective CIC into existence and thus justify your confidence in us."[95]

In July of that year the San Francisco CIC held its founding meeting at St. Mary's Cathedral, becoming the thirty-sixth CIC in the country. Dr. James Carey of Golden Gate University in San Francisco was elected President with Francois as Vice President. John Delury of the State Fair Employment Division was elected second Vice President, while another Catholic from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, director John Riordan, was elected third Vice President. A press release noted that the council would work both "within the Catholic community" and with "other human relations organizations."[96] Several chapters of the CIC were subsequently established under the auspices of the archdiocese, including ones for San Francisco; the East and South Bay areas; the suburbs south of the city, known as the "Midpeninsula;" and Marin County. Two years following the establishment of the SFCIC in 1960, the archdiocese was split and the area

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[94] He received a bachelor's degree from Xavier University in New Orleans in 1940.
[95] AASF, Social Justice Commission Papers, Francois to Donohoe, April 28, 1960.
[96] The Monitor, July 8, 1960, p. 1.

known as the East Bay was restructured as the new Diocese of Oakland. To the south the area known as the South Bay, including the city of San Jose, was a part of the archdiocese until 1981, when the Diocese of San Jose was created. A Santa Clara chapter was organized for the San Jose area, taking its name from the surrounding county, while an Oakland chapter was established for the areas including that city and Berkeley to the immediate north. Within the archdiocesan boundaries, the San Francisco and Midpeninsula chapters were by far the most vocal.[97] The Santa Clara chapter was fairly active itself and continued to exist under the direction of the archdiocese throughout the civil rights era, while the Oakland chapter was under the direction of that diocese following its creation in 1962. Local chapters allowed the group to concentrate on issues closer to home and engage other Catholics on a more personal basis.

Carey noted at the founding of the SFCIC that the priority of the group would be the very issue that had already brought trouble for the national organization throughout the 1950's: "A major part of the Council's work will be supporting efforts for open occupancy legislation."[98] His statement moved right to the heart of the matter with his use of the word "legislation." Proponents of fair housing practices in the San Francisco Area such as Carey knew that civil rights groups could not just hope that San Franciscans would do the right thing without

[97] The chapter serving San Mateo County was initially known as the San Mateo County Chapter until 1964, when the name was changed to Midpeninsula.
[98] The Monitor, July 8, 1960, p.2.

any legal pressure. The city's tacit acceptance of restrictive housing covenants had become an embarrassing public issue just two years before, in 1958. Following the relocation of the New York Giants baseball team to San Francisco, star player Willie Mays found he was unable to buy a home in the city's Forest Hills neighborhood because he was black. Only the personal intervention of then Mayor George Christopher got Mays his home. However, less famous black San Franciscans were still shut out of the city's newer neighborhoods, and the CIC founders seemed to be making it absolutely clear that they would challenge not just the hearts and minds of Catholics but the legal structure in the Bay Area as well. It is telling that several of the founding officers for the group were also employees of the government's civil rights organizations. Clearly the CIC from its very beginnings did not intend to shy away from future political battles for racial justice. Building on the tradition of Catholic interracialism, the formation of the SFCIC suggested that in the 1960's the Church in San Francisco would become engaged in the civil rights struggle in a way that would differ markedly from the past.

Chapter IV

Movement

The upbeat nature of the CIC's establishment in San Francisco and the promise of Catholic action on civil rights soon came face to face with the realities of Catholic culture in the Bay Area. The largely conservative nature of Catholics in the area frustrated the CIC and contributed to a sense of inertia in local civil rights activism. One SFCIC member, originally from Texas, recalled the Catholics of San Francisco as "more prejudiced, passive and unaware of the teachings of Jesus" than the segregated culture she had left behind.[99] The new group, however, was determined to move their fellow Catholics forward in the cause, and set out to engage the Church in efforts to root out the underlying prejudice.

Yet the engagement would prove to be difficult. Catholic participants in the civil rights movement found themselves working closely with members of other religious bodies, which reflected a major shift in Catholic life and culture. In the United States, where Catholics and other religious groups coexisted under a system that legally favored none of them, how and when Catholics might participate with non-Catholics had long been a tricky question. Catholics were definitely forbidden

[99] Gleason, Survey Answers & Interviews, #10.

from participating in specifically religious activities with non-Catholic entities, but in other areas the limits of cooperation were less clear. Pius XI had specifically called on all Christians to collaborate in rebuilding society during World War II, and the National Catholic Welfare Conference in 1943 adopted proposals that cautiously allowed participation with non-Catholic groups in non-religious organizations. Cooperation was possible, outside of activities which touched on matters of faith or participation in non-Catholic religious rites. However, despite a further clarification from the Vatican in 1948 on collaboration with non-Catholics, there was a continuing fear among American Catholics of being "misunderstood in Rome" as to the exact limits of such activities.[100] Catholics that had grown up in a church with such restrictions found the Vatican II era much more conducive to joint efforts with non-Catholics. This was essential for Catholic participation in the civil rights struggle, which was very much an ecumenical movement. At the same time, activists in the Church increasingly found themselves estranged from some of their fellow Catholics, who viewed the movement with suspicion and saw it as a corrupting influence. In many ways, the civil rights movement helped highlight the barrier between the "new" and "old" Church.

In 1960 the Church stood at the cusp between old and new, with events in Europe and America hinting at a renewal of Catholicism. The era became known as the "reign of the two Johns." In the United States, John Kennedy became the first

[100] Fogarty, The Vatican and the American Hierarchy, p. 358.

Catholic elected to the presidency, while Pope John XXIII continued to generate excitement in Rome with preparations for the upcoming ecumenical council. American Catholics exuded a new confidence about their place in American society. As an editorial in San Francisco's Catholic weekly stated after Kennedy's election, "It should be evident that Catholics can tear up their second class citizenship cards. They've arrived."[101] Yet with greater engagement in the American culture came greater awareness of its faults as well. While San Francisco Catholics celebrated their "arrival" in 1960, some among them began the hard work of making sure that the 1960's would see as well the "arrival" of African Americans and other minorities.

At the same time, events in Rome during the early 60's energized American Catholics with the prospect of ushering a new era into the Church after nearly two centuries of battle between Rome and the "modern world." While Kennedy broke the highest political barrier for Catholics in the United States, the reforming spirit leading up to the Second Vatican Council led to a realignment within the Church's hierarchical structure of the relationship between laypersons and the clergy, the clergy and hierarchy, and between lay and religious persons. To some extent, although eventually not fully realized, the Catholic Church experienced a degree of decentralization in the Vatican II era, with such concepts as greater local control and episcopal "collegiality" coming out of the Council's final work. On a practical level,

[101] The Monitor, November 11, 1960, p. 16.

these developments helped empower the American hierarchy and clergy to move forward on racial issues as Americans and Catholics in good graces, while giving laypersons a greater stake in how their parish, diocese and national Church responded to the civil rights movement. Greater democratization within religious orders also led to profound changes, allowing the congregations of women religious particularly to break out of the mold which had cast them as obedient teachers and caregivers, and become agents for social change. But despite these real advances brought about by reform in Rome, the question of authority would continue to plague the efforts of Catholic social activists throughout the decade. As events unfolded in Rome and the United States, American Catholics would increasingly face a "staggering reality of dissent, change, and diversity at the highest levels of the church they had grown up believing was 'the same all over the world.'"[102]

The newly formed SFCIC had much to accomplish in terms of enlightening and inspiring their fellow Catholics throughout the Bay Area. Despite an increasingly tolerant reputation and atmosphere, San Francisco in 1960 was a generally conservative town and slow to change. Certainly the Catholic establishment was in no hurry to shake up the status quo, particularly if that meant challenging the hierarchy and calling the laity to action. In the spring of that year, Cardinal Pro-Prefect Agagianian of the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith, which oversaw the Church's missionary efforts, addressed Catholic

[102] Hennesey, p. 314.

members of the press in Washington, D.C. The Cardinal exhorted them to concern themselves with the whole Church in fighting for social justice, condemning the focus on running local affairs as "parochialism."[103] In San Francisco, however, the *Monitor* mused, "How about a word for the parochialists?"[104] The difficulty faced by the civil rights activists, in California and throughout the country, was sometimes not the outright hostility and hatred of virulent segregationists but the lack of interest and concern from so many who tacitly agreed with their goals but were more concerned with running the affairs of the local diocese smoothly than in engaging in broad social reform.

Given the generally conservative nature of the nation in the early 1960's, CIC members were undoubtedly not shocked to find fellow Americans and even Catholics who defended the racial status quo. What does seem to have taken many CIC members by surprise was the amount of resistance to their message that they received from the institutional Church, despite the fact that the archdiocese had finally given its blessing to the establishment of the CIC. Civil rights activists in the Catholic Church seemed to be hearing two different messages, depending upon who was doing the speaking. In their first annual mass of October 1960, CIC members heard a sermon which condemned racism as a "sacramental lie," based on the idea that communion meant "not so much our union with Christ as our union with one another."[105] Such language reflected the new thinking in the Catholic Church that

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[103] The Monitor, May 20, 1960, p.6.
[104] ibid.
[105] AASF, Social Justice Commission Papers, Sermon of Fr. Joseph Munier, October 16, 1960.

had been put forth by the liturgical movement since the 1930's and leading up to the Second Vatican Council, emphasizing the communal nature of the Church over a more personalized religion and culminating in the depiction of the Church as the "people of God." But in that era, such new thinking was often unwelcome in local parishes as the CIC soon found out. In one of their first ventures to educate Catholics about fair housing issues, CIC members planned to distribute pamphlets to parishes throughout the Bay Area on that subject. One member wrote to Bishop Donohoe and registered his "disgust with the way we were received by the pastors of the churches we visited," after half of the priests ordered the CIC to leave the premises.[106] Such treatment, by the clergy especially, forced CIC members to question their Church and wonder, "must we exercise our belief in Christ through organizations sponsored by other faiths"?[107] One former CIC member attributed the problem to the fact that the group was operating outside the official church structure while at the same time trying to target their fellow Catholics. Although the CIC had the approval of the archdiocese and was allowed to call itself a "Catholic" organization, it was still a lay group that could not claim to be representative of the archdiocese. As such, the clergy were free to ignore its efforts or even to throw roadblocks in the way of the group's work. The lack of an official partnership between the CIC and diocesan clergy led to an often hostile relationship between the

[106] AASF, Social Justice Commission Papers, Cachere to Donohoe, February 13, 1961.
[107] ibid.

two. In that atmosphere, recalls a CIC member, "not many seeds were sown, and there was a lot of stony ground out there."[108]

In addition to beginning local educational campaigns, the new leaders of the CIC also hoped to make good on their pledge to address the issue of desegregation with direct action. In May of 1961, the attention of the federal government and the nation turned to the South, in Alabama and Mississippi specifically, as the "Freedom Rides" took place. Black and white activists attempted to travel throughout the South to advocate integrated busses and bus terminals. They were met by angry mobs, and, after violence erupted in Alabama, Attorney General Robert Kennedy stepped in to try and quell the disturbance. The Freedom Riders were undeterred, and during the summer of 1961 continued their activities in Mississippi while the police and state officials continued to fill the jails with their numbers. Eight Bay Area residents, including SFCIC President James Carey, were arrested in Jackson that July for attempting to integrate a coffee shop. The group, which included two black clergymen, had been prevented from sitting together in the restaurant together and was arrested after refusing to leave.[109]

Back in San Francisco, CIC members were still organizing and working largely through the official auspices of the Church. The death of Archbishop Mitty in October of 1961 was itself another indicator of the strength and power of Catholicism in San Francisco, with most of the city shut down in mourning. The

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[108] Lundy, Survey Answers & Interviews, #11
[109] "Four Bay Area Riders on Way Home," San Francisco Chronicle, undated clipping (July 1964).

newly appointed archbishop, Joseph McGucken, had been Bishop of Sacramento, the state capital. He was a native of Los Angeles and had attended St. Patrick's Seminary in Menlo Park before completing his studies in Rome.[110] He served as auxiliary bishop of Los Angeles until his appointment to Sacramento. McGucken was known as an affable man, a good storyteller and a good administrator. Like many other bishops in the United States, though, he would find his upbringing and experience not quite suited to what would happen in San Francisco in the 1960's. As the southern part of the state was politically conservative, the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and its archbishop, James McIntyre, had a similar reputation. McIntyre had come to the see from New York, where he had been auxiliary bishop and coadjutor under Cardinal Francis Spellman. His appointment to Los Angeles at Spellman's instigation represented a rare power play in the West by the cardinal, whose influence was typically confined to the East.[111] Having served under McIntyre from 1948 to 1955, McGucken upon his arrival in San Francisco was thought of as McIntyre's protégé, and he would begin an almost immediate battle with some CIC members who viewed the new archbishop with some suspicion.

As the group's various chapters became established and attracted new members, a "schism" of sorts developed very soon between those who saw the group as a conduit of direct action and those who saw it as mostly an educational group.[112] Certainly, the archdiocese had considered the group to be the latter and

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[110] Burns, Volume III, p. 12.
[111] Gerald Fogarty, The Vatican and the American Hierarchy from 1870 to 1965, p.314.
[112] Ash, Survey Answers & Interviews, #10.

was uncomfortable with any attempts by the CIC to become directly involved in protest actions, which could give the impression of the Church's endorsement. For those involved in the groups, the differences between a direct action and an educational model went to the heart of what the CIC's mission would be. Was this an "insider" group, attempting to enlighten fellow Catholics, or was this a means of taking the Church's social teaching into the streets and neighborhoods of the Bay Area? The divergence in these views colored individual chapters of the CIC as well. The chapter in the city of San Francisco was increasingly looked on by the chapter in suburban San Mateo County (or the Midpeninsula) as "too middle-of-the-road," while the Midpeninsula chapter gained a reputation for being "angry and confrontational."[113] Activists tended to see their mission, bringing the Church's social justice thought into action, as giving them a "high moral ground amongst our fellow Catholics."[114]

The CIC afforded lay Catholics who were concerned with the Church's social responsibility in regard to race relations with a new forum for expressing their views. Efforts by the clergy and hierarchy to address the issues raised by the civil rights movement had brought decidedly mixed results. An inherent tension existed in such efforts between the more radical lay activists and a cautious (if not conservative) clergy and hierarchy. This was not to say that the wider Church did

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[113] Colwell, Survey Answers & Interviews, #12. It is interesting that the suburban chapter was more radicalized than the city one. Several factors seem to have contributed to that distinction, including the connection between the Midpeninsula chapter and local Stanford University as well as the proximity of the San Francisco chapter to the watchful eyes of the archdiocese.

[114] Maier, Survey Answers & Interviews, #10.

not speak out against racism and at least embrace the ideals of the civil rights movement. The 1958 Pastoral Letter on Discrimination and the Christian Conscience had done so, with individual clergy and bishops echoing its call in sermons and public statements as the movement gained steam. In San Francisco, McGucken often seemed exasperated by the constant charges from civil rights activists that the Church was doing nothing to educate its own flock about racial prejudice. He wrote, "The Catholic teaching on racial justice has been stressed strongly in our schools, study clubs, talks by the Council of Catholic Men and the Council of Catholic Women, and I believe, in most if not practically all of our parishes. It is hard for me to see, then, how we can be accused of being silent."[115]

But Church leaders were often seriously concerned with the tactics of even the mainstream civil rights groups, preferring instead to work with official Church organizations. In 1960 the bishops' conference set up the National Catholic Conference on Interracial Justice (NCCIJ) as the "civil rights advocacy arm" of the Catholic Church. In addition to providing oversight for the various CIC chapters in the country, the NCCIJ was charged with ensuring that the Church was in line with equal employment practices and encouraged purchasing from minority-owned businesses. But despite attempts by Catholics and other religious groups to establish sound civil rights policies in their own affairs, and despite even the religious background of the civil rights movement itself, there was a growing divide between

[115] AASF, Social Justice Commission Papers, McGucken to Dolan, March 26, 1964.

religious-based civil rights organizations and the often more activist secular civil rights groups by the early 1960's. In January 1963 Catholic, Protestant and Jewish civil rights activists organized the "National Conference on Religion and Race" in Chicago. The conference featured addresses from Martin Luther King and Sargeant Shriver, a member of the Kennedy family and then Director of the Peace Corps, and attracted a wide range of civil rights activists from across the country, including some CIC members from the various Bay Area chapters. The group hoped to energize attendees through the gathering to return and form local conferences in their own communities, working with other civil rights groups in the process. But the conference soon became open to accusations of being "all talk and no action." Its most famous moment occurred when the civil rights activist and lawyer William Stringfellow called the gathering "too little, too late, and too lily white."[116] The Chairman of the conference, Arthur Walmsley, also seemed resigned to seeing it fade away in importance when he wrote to Steering Committee members after the conference ended. He reported that the effort had "failed to impress militant, younger leadership" both black and white, and that even in his opinion the conference had failed to demonstrate it could do "anything but talk."[117] Walmsley recommended jumpstarting the conference by meeting together with representatives from the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, the Southern Christian

[116] William Wylie-Kellerman, "Exorcising an American Demon," Sojourners Magazine, March-April 1998.
[117] AASF, Social Justice Commission Papers, May 28, 1963. Walmsley, an Episcopal priest, later became Bishop of Connecticut.

Leadership Conference and the Congress on Racial Equality. Barring that development, he recommended that the group simply disband.[118] His acknowledgement of the conference's staid reputation, and desire to collaborate with activist secular organizations, pointed to the challenges that religious civil rights groups would continue to have.

One aspect of the activist wing of the CIC that was destined to bring the group into conflict with the archdiocese was its willingness to challenge even the Church as a racist institution. Despite the official Catholic social teachings on race, dismissed by some as a "paper record," activists believed the church had a much spottier record in "walking the walk."[119] Attempts to expose the Church's inconsistencies were a means by which CIC activists hoped to push the institution, with its vast resources, to change. One such campaign involved the SFCIC, which sent out black and white couples to look at apartments available in buildings owned by the Church. The group found that the black couple was "usually given the runaround while the white couple got the apartment, or at least received papers, a few hours later."[120] Such actions only reinforced many of the archdiocese's earlier impressions of the group as potential troublemakers and a source of potential embarrassment to the Church. With some notable exceptions, many of the clergy also did not take kindly to the CIC's attempts to expose racist elements within their

[118] ibid.
[119] Lundin, Survey Answers & Interviews, #10.
[120] Post, Survey Answers & Interviews, #11.

ranks. To CIC members, it felt like many of the Bay Area clergy "would like to have drowned us."[121]

The CIC became aligned early on with fair housing issues and an up-and-coming young African American who would later become a powerful force in California politics. In 1961, the CIC participated in efforts to call attention to the refusal of the builders of the new Forest Knolls housing development to allow San Francisco attorney Willie Brown to view a "model home." Brown, a law partner of CIC founder Terry Francois, would later serve in the state Assembly as Speaker and become Mayor of San Francisco. The CIC joined with other political and religious activists, including the NAACP and the Western Christian Leadership Conference, in picketing the development company, Standard Building. The picketing attracted several local civil rights groups, including the NAACP, the Council for Civic Unity, and the Western Christian Leadership Conference.[122] The participation of CIC activists further alienated their fellow Catholics. Despite the local and national reputation of the other civil rights groups that picketed, a CIC participant recalls that some Catholics saw these groups as "Marxist leftists."[123] He noted, "As Catholics this was uncomfortable and this is the *main* reason more Catholics would not get involved."[124] The willingness of CIC members to march with secular

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[121] Strong, Survey Answers & Interviews, #11.
[122] "Civil Rights Groups Target Developer," San Francisco Chronicle, June 3, 1961, p. 1.
[123] Gleason, Edward, Survey Answers & Interviews, #11.
[124] ibid.

activists added to the impression, strongly held by many Catholics in the continuing atmosphere of the Red Scare, that they were simply "Communist dupes."[125]

Not all CIC activities fell under the heading of direct activism. The group also continued activities that were more educational in nature, targeting fellow Catholics and particularly those in positions of power in City Hall and among the leaders of local unions. Various CIC chapters attempted to bring the movement to local parishes through "bookmobiles" and distributing literature before and after Mass, although even this seemingly harmless activity still brought down the wrath of some pastors.[126] The Bay Area chapters also participated in a campaign organized by the NCCIJ and the Chicago Friendship House called "National Home Visit Day." CIC members joined other Catholics from their local parishes in arranging to visit the homes of African Americans to establish more personal connections. "A bit artificial," remembers one white CIC participant, "but effective nonetheless."[127] An African American CIC member remembers the visits as well, and credits them for helping to create lasting friendships.[128]

As the civil rights movement heated up across the country, the CIC in San Francisco became an active presence in the area's response to events. In May of 1963 the SFCIC joined together with other civil rights and religious groups to

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[125] idem., #12.
[126] AASF, Social Justice Commission Papers, shows the contents for one bookmobile in San Mateo County as containing The Other America by Michael Harrington and Black Like Me by John Howard Griffen, which engendered an anonymous complaint to McGucken of a book containing "dirty language [being] sold within a few yards of the Blessed Sacrament."
[127] Post, Survey Answers & Interviews, #11.
[128] Bryant, Survey Answers & Interviews, #11.

sponsor a "Human Rights Day" following events in Birmingham. Earlier that year, Martin Luther King had announced his intention to lead marches in support of desegregation in the Alabama city. After being thrown in prison, where he wrote his famous *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*, King and his supporters got the chance to march on May 2. The Birmingham police chief, Eugene "Bull" Conner, became enraged after his plan to conduct mass arrests of the marchers was halted upon discovering that many in the crowd were school children. Conner was only briefly deterred, and returned the following day to turn water hoses and vicious police dogs on the marchers. Americans were horrified to see on their televisions peaceful marchers, many of them school-age, being attacked by the police. These events galvanized civil rights supporters throughout the nation, who turned out in their local communities in solidarity with the Birmingham marchers. In San Francisco, organizers including the CIC rallied 20,000 participants for a march and rally at the Civic Center on May 26. McGucken endorsed this venture, and later was congratulated by state legislator Ed Gaffney for his part in effecting the "spontaneous expression of goodwill and deep concern for all people evidenced by the thousands of San Francisco marchers."[129]

In the beginning years of the decade both the local CIC in the Bay Area and the nationwide civil rights movement could claim to have been in many ways very successful. The violent events in the South had served to turn the nation's

[129] AASF, Civil Rights, Gaffney to McGucken, May 26, 1963.

sympathies towards the movement, and made real progress possible. Catholic leaders also had been emboldened to move ahead with civil rights as Rome became increasingly more vocal on the issue. John XXIII's 1963 encyclical *Pacem in Terris*, calling for a greater attention to the "rights and duties" of people worldwide, had given the Church in America even more of a doctrinal framework to work for racial justice.[130] In delineating a remarkably warmer view of modern society than previous papal documents, the encyclical called for the "reconciliation and protection of the rights and duties of individuals" in varying societies, and once again condemned racial discrimination by upholding that "all men are equal in natural dignity."

The year 1964 opened with another meeting of the National Conference on Religion and Race in Chicago. Matt Ahmann, Executive Director of the National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice and the liaison between the NCCIJ and the various CIC chapters, served as a principal organizer of the conference. Despite its rocky start the year before, the National Conference did help further cooperation between civil rights activists of differing faiths, and, as Ahmann's position shows, Catholics were becoming more comfortable in working with non-Catholics, in the words of *Pacem in Terris*, "to achieve some external good." Before the year's end, the arguably greatest achievement of the civil rights struggle, a federal Civil Rights bill, was signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson. But in this election year, local and national activists would have many reminders of the difficulties still

[130] Fogarty, Commonwealth Catholicism, p. 533.

ahead. One of the major presidential candidates, Sen. Barry Goldwater, would tap into the fear and anxiety of those who were not supportive or openly hostile to the struggle. And in California, civil rights opponents mounted a campaign of their own that would mobilize the CIC while further contributing to a growing divide among Catholics.

Chapter V

The Church and Prop 14

In 1963, the California legislature passed the Fair Employment & Housing Act, which was subsequently signed into law by Governor Pat Brown. As the national civil rights movement lobbied the Kennedy Administration for legislation that would expressly outlaw discrimination in housing, the slow pace of that effort put pressure on civil rights activists throughout the nation to enact such laws at the state and local levels. The California legislation included a Fair Housing Law making it illegal to deny sale, lease or rental of property in California on the basis of race, creed or color.[131] It was popularly known, after its sponsor William Byron Rumford, as the Rumford Act. Although the United States Supreme Court had ruled against covenants in 1948, the problem of fair housing had persisted. The court did not find racially restrictive covenants illegal *per se*; instead, it had ruled against state enforcement of such agreements, rendering them legally indefensible. However, when some minorities had attempted to buy new homes in areas restricted

[131] The statute exempted owner-occupied, single family housing rented to one boarder, and allowed religious organizations to restrict rentals, sales and occupancy for non-commercial housing by religion, but not by race. ["California State Housing Discrimination Laws," March, 2004, http://mcfhousing.org/California2001.pdf]

by such covenants, real estate agents developed other elaborate methods of discouraging the buyer, including missed phone calls and messages, making "no-show" appointments and outright lying about the prices and interest rates to discourage them. All that ended with Rumford, which outlawed the covenant agreements and gave redress to minorities who dealt with recalcitrant brokers.

This triumph for the civil rights movement in California, however, was short lived. Not even a year had passed before a state proposition, spearheaded by the California Real Estate Association, had been placed on the ballot for the repeal of the Rumford Act. Using a tool developed in the early twentieth century as a part of the Progressive movement, anti-Rumford groups organized a drive to place a proposition on the statewide ballot for 1964 that repealed fair housing legislation. While the ballot initiative had been originally conceived as a tool for liberal causes against a conservative legislature, since World War II the initiative had been increasingly co-opted by California conservatives as a tool of the right, as with the 1958 ballot proposition in favor of a "right-to-work" law that would diminish the power of unions by allowing employees at unionized companies the option of not joining. The trend has continued, making the tools of Progressive Governor Hiram Johnson such as the ballot initiative and recall practically synonymous with conservative activism in contemporary California, most notably with the anti-tax "Prop 13" in 1978 and the gubernatorial recall election of 2003. Facing a generally

liberal legislature and Democratic governor, conservatives in 1964 saw the ballot initiative as the only way to get rid of the Rumford Act.

Garnering enough support in the form of petition signatures to place it on the ballot, "Prop 14" (as it was popularly known) helped to mobilize conservatives, outright racists and a vast middle with grave reservations about the civil rights movement into a powerful voting bloc. Because the proposition was a political matter, it provided the activist wing of the CIC with an opportunity to position the group as a more activist than educational organization. The issues raised by the proposition also helped push Archbishop McGucken to take a stronger, more public stand on the side of civil rights. However, far from bringing the CIC and McGucken closer together, the events surrounding Prop 14 brought about serious disagreements between them. The relationship of the group to the archdiocese would become further strained after a new archdiocesan structure, the Social Justice Commission, was created during the campaign to help channel civil rights activities back under the control of the archdiocese and away from the CIC.

With the right arguing that discrimination in housing was a private matter, and the left arguing that it was a matter of basic civil rights rights, the political sides of the debate were firmly in place well before the actual election. Still uncertain, and vitally important, was the aspect of fair housing as a *moral* issue. The mainstream liberal and African American churches were vociferously opposed to Prop 14 from the beginning. Civil rights activists and opponents as well knew that a

strong moral condemnation of the proposition by the Catholic Church in California would probably sink its prospects. Catholic conservatives sought to prevent this by returning to their original political argument, that fair housing was a private issue within domain of the individual conscience and that the Church, despite having spoken out against discrimination, should not be involved in a purely political struggle. In the conservative rhetoric around Prop 14, morality, however admirable, cannot or at least should not be legislated. One high-ranking Catholic official in the state agreed. Cardinal James McIntyre of Los Angeles declared that the issue was purely political and therefore it was inappropriate for the Church to endorse or condemn the proposition. Only six years before, McIntyre had campaigned vigorously against an attempt to tax parochial schools in the state. McIntyre's choice of when and where the Church should intervene in political matters angered supporters of fair housing, who accused him of practicing a double standard. McIntyre's stance on Prop 14, however, was not much of a surprise for his contemporaries. As chancellor of the Archdiocese of New York he had already displayed hostility to the work of La Farge in the CIC's early days.[132] He also would become one of the few supporters of Bishop Thomas Toolen of Mobile-Birmingham, AL, who in 1965 opposed Catholic participation in the events in Selma. McIntyre shared with Toolen an unwillingness to tolerate the chaos and

[132] Hite, p. 389.

inherent challenge to authority brought on by political protest and the struggle for civil rights.[133]

In San Francisco, McGucken's political views were actually not too far removed from that of Cardinal McIntyre, whom he had much admired since his days as an auxiliary bishop under him. Their central area of disagreement concerning Prop 14 ended up being whether the issue was essentially moral or political. For his part, McGucken was not enthusiastic about getting into the trenches with the civil rights activists in San Francisco. As a moral issue, McGucken saw that the Church's social teaching clearly stated that discrimination, to paraphrase the 1958 pastoral, was "incompatible" with the Christian conscience. Therefore, any political issue like Prop 14 that clearly contradicted the moral teachings of the Catholic Church was an issue in which the Church was appropriately involved. But McGucken's private opinions on the matter were far more complicated. The most fair and accurate assessment of the archbishop's true feelings about Prop 14 is that he sincerely wished the whole thing would just go away. In April of 1964, McGucken confided, "I do hope that the action to declare the forthcoming initiative 'unconstitutional' may be successful, so that we can avoid the heat and strife that will surely come if this matter is put to a vote."[134]

McGucken tended to avoid "heat and strife" at all costs. Despite his principled stand against the proposition, that position clearly made him

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[133] ibid., p. 378.
[134] AASF, Social Justice Commission Papers, McGucken to Mitchell, April 29, 1964.

uncomfortable. The archbishop was generally a conservative man and most definitely not an "activist" for either the left or the right. In his caution he tended to sympathize with both civil rights activists and outraged conservatives, though to be fair he did stick to his basic position on the proposition throughout the controversy. As with all those in power who try to please both sides, McGucken pleased neither and often angered both. To an ardent opponent of and protester against Prop 14, McGucken advised caution: "I am afraid that some of the unwise demonstrations have already created hostility for the Rumford Act and that it will be difficult to undo that damage."[135] On the other hand, again shying away from controversy, he informed an angry Prop 14 supporter that he had forbidden CIC chaplain Eugene Boyle from attending a demonstration against the real estate lobby. McGucken called the demonstration "out of order, because the real estate people were simply making use of one of the democratic processes."[136]

McGucken's response, however, does not quite square with the Church's position on church involvement in political issues. If a political position contradicts church teaching, it does not matter whether the political position arises out of "democratic processes" or not. The archbishop also seemed to ignore the fact that Father Boyle as well would be making use of the "democratic process" in protesting the realtors' position. Indeed, McGucken's general refusal to condemn those in favor of the proposition upset those Catholics working against it. One opponent

[135] AASF, Civil Rights, McGucken to Huttlinger, June 12, 1964.
[136] AASF, Social Justice Commission Papers, McGucken to Murphy, April 9, 1964.

wrote: "We [the Mid-Peninsula Citizens for Fair Housing] have also been painfully humiliated that you should publicly state that you believe there is room for a legitimate difference of opinion with regard to the initiative."[137] In response, McGucken steadfastly refused to resort to condemnation, saying, "I cannot in truth say that it would be objectively, morally wrong to vote one way or the other."[138] McGucken's tacit support for fair housing and his rather tepid disapproval of Prop 14 earned him no points with the civil rights activists in his archdiocese. One Catholic summed up his opinion of McGucken this way: "To someone who is actively engaged in working for equal rights it is clear that, while you are not in the enemy camp, you are not going to be much help either. You are neutral. You are lukewarm."[139]

Meanwhile, the CIC had no intention of following McGucken's cautious lead. In addition to the activities of individual chapters, CIC members joined together with other Catholics and formed a group called Catholics Against Proposition 14, which became a committee of the National Catholic Conference on Interracial Justice (NCCIJ).[140] A pamphlet published by the group unequivocally stated, "A Catholic who votes for Prop 14, which will deny the fundamental right of redress in cases of racial and religious discrimination in housing, will be doing so

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[137] AASF, Civil Rights, Antush to McGucken, June 23, 1964.
[138] AASF, Civil Rights, McGucken to Antush, June 26, 1964.
[139] AASF, Civil Rights, Balch to McGucken, June 4, 1964. One former CIC member used the same term ("lukewarm") to describe the archdiocese's support for the group. Post, Survey Answers & Interviews, #12.
[140] The NCCIJ continued to exercise oversight of the various CIC chapters throughout the country as well.

IN ERROR OF CONSCIENCE [*sic*]."[141] Such language, of which McGucken strongly disapproved, antagonized supporters of the proposition, particularly when CIC members passed out their literature in parishes. McGucken's opposition to the initiative marked him as unofficial spokesman for the CIC, and letters from Southern California as well as his own archdiocese flooded in to protest the use of church property for political activities. A Catholic from the Los Angeles area wrote to McGucken stating that he had received the Catholics Against Prop 14 literature, sponsored by the SFCIC, in his parish and wanted to know if it was "recognized or approved in your archdiocese."[142] McGucken's response is somewhat disingenuous, and clearly displays his exasperation with the outspoken tactics of the CIC: "Lay organizations speak for themselves alone. The CIC of San Francisco is a lay organization. By and large, I believe that it has performed a useful and good work."[143] Of course, the SFCIC really did not have the complete autonomy that the archbishop implied in his response, and in fact his own archdiocese had become the center of anti-Prop 14 activity. But McGucken wished that he and others in the archdiocese would be allowed to work against the proposition quietly, and he also believed that would be the more effective manner. He did contribute funds to the campaign against the proposition. And his administrator, Thomas Bowe, informed opponents of Prop 14 that interested pastors could contribute to the campaign against it with money from parish general funds, though "it would be well to do the

[141] AASF, Mary Connaughton Papers, Catholics Against Prop 14 pamphlet, 1964.
[142] AASF, Civil Rights, Goyette to McGucken, August 17, 1964.
[143] AASF, Civil Rights, McGucken to Goyette, August 19, 1964.

thing as quietly as possible."[144] In such matters as these, archdiocesan officials felt that discretion was essential to the cause and that the tactics of the CIC would only antagonize Prop 14 supporters.

Such quiet discretion was not to be found across the bay in the Diocese of Oakland, which had been separated from San Francisco and created as its own diocese in 1962. The sponsor of the state's fair housing law, William Rumford, represented the area in the State Assembly. Oakland also was able to call on its substantial African American population and its religious communities to fight against Prop 14. The religious coalition against the proposition included the strong support of Oakland's first bishop, Floyd Begin. Begin was a native of Cleveland, OH, and after his ordination to the priesthood there in 1949 he became pastor of the largely African American parish of St. Agnes. As pastor he implemented an evangelization program to the surrounding neighborhood, and he supported other efforts against discrimination such as trying to integrate the Knights of Columbus. After becoming Bishop of Oakland, Begin directed the clergy of his diocese in 1963 to preach a "solid sermon on the subject of racial justice based on the truths of faith and true Americanism."[145] Bishop Begin's fight against discrimination in the East Bay was supported by the Berkeley-Oakland chapter of the CIC, which was centered around the political and social atmosphere at the University of California. A noted

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[144] AASF, Rumford Fair Housing 1963-64, Msgr. Bowe to Rev. Eugene Boyle, September 28, 1964.
[145] Burns, We Are the Church: A History of the Diocese of Oakland, Strasbourg: Editions du Signe, 2002

Berkeley history professor and Catholic layman, Dr. Raymond Sontag, had been influential in getting the East Bay's CIC chapter off the ground in 1963. Drawing upon the diocese's firm commitment to civil rights, Bishop Begin came out early and strong against Prop 14, issuing a pastoral letter in June of 1964 that said the measure "contradict[s] what is clear and universal Catholic teaching on the rights and duties of those who own property," and clearly labeled the fight against Prop 14 a "moral issue." Begin's strong opposition to Prop 14, the "most forthright of any bishop in California" according to California historian Jeffrey Burns, stood in clear contrast not just to the archdiocese of Los Angeles but to San Francisco and its hesitant archbishop as well.[146]

On one matter, though, opponents of the proposition would not allow Archbishop McGucken to err on the side of caution. Although McGucken's opposition to Prop 14 was common knowledge, by the summer of 1964 he still had not made a public and official pronouncement against it. While CIC members and other opponents urged McGucken to clarify publicly his position on Prop 14, the archbishop preferred to wait. McGucken also looked forward to finding relative safety in numbers, anticipating a joint statement from all California bishops on the subject of racial discrimination. Once it came, however, it had nothing to say

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[146] ibid. Begin also was known for his liberal views on other matters besides racial justice, becoming the first American bishop to renovate his cathedral according to the liturgical reforms of Vatican II and the first bishop to condemn the American invasion of Cambodia in 1970. Christine Krosel, "Begin, Floyd Lawrence (1902-1977)," in The Encyclopedia of American Catholic History. Ed. Michael Glazier and Thomas J. Shelley. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1997, p. 134.

specifically regarding Prop 14. Echoing the United States bishops' pastorals on discrimination, the August 1964 "Prayerful Admonition on Race" reminded Catholics that discrimination was incompatible with social justice, and was of such a general nature that both opponents of Prop 14 as well as McIntyre could all be cosigners.[147]

But with McIntyre refusing to come out against the proposition, Catholic opponents knew that having the other of California's two archbishops publicly endorse their cause was essential. Some CIC members believed that to get McGucken to campaign against the proposition a new organization, under closer archdiocesan control, would have to be used to channel the effort. Chaplain Eugene Boyle enlisted past and present CIC figures such as James McDonald, the President of the SFCIC at that time, and CIC founder John Delury to help engage the archdiocese. Boyle pitched the idea of establishing a "Social Justice Commission" under the auspices of the Chancery Office, which he had heard of in other dioceses around the nation.[148] But in getting McGucken to agree, it was also clear to the proponents that some outside heavy hitters would need to be enlisted. They settled on San Francisco Mayor Jack Shelley and James P. Mitchell, the former Secretary of Labor under President Eisenhower. Mitchell, a Catholic, had recently moved to Atherton in San Mateo County after retiring. During his tenure as Labor secretary he had become known as the "social conscience of the Republican party," and was

[147] AASF, Social Justice Commission Papers, undated clipping.
[148] AASF, Boyle memoirs, p.15.

instrumental in getting the Eisenhower administration to intervene during the school integration crisis in Little Rock.[149] Mitchell immediately agreed to assist, and in a meeting with McGucken helped persuade the archbishop to oppose the proposition publicly.[150] McGucken also agreed to the idea of a Social Justice Commission, which was founded in July of 1964. The archdiocese was now moving firmly into the camp of opposition to Prop 14.

But McGucken was even yet willing to wait. He was due to return to Rome for the reconvening of the Second Vatican Council that fall, and the election was in November. In response to another request to speak out, McGucken replied, "Since the election will occur in November the timing of the sermons and statements will be very important. The best advice I can get is that the middle of October would be the most effective time for a pastoral letter."[151] His reticence to speak out caused friction with some of the more radical members of the CIC, particularly in the Midpeninsula chapter. In August of that year the archdiocese officially had expelled the chapter for calling for McIntyre's removal over Prop 14. The chapter had accused McIntyre of being "guilty by default" for the passage of Prop 14, and once again its willingness to express such thoughts to the press brought trouble with the archdiocese, although the group was reinstated by December of 1964.[152] The

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[149] Henry Guzda, "James P. Mitchell: Social Conscience of the Cabinet." Monthly Labor Review: August, 1991, p.27.
[150] McDonald, Survey Answers & Interviews. Mitchell also appeared at later CIC seminars and was remembered as "sincerely dedicated" to the cause of civil rights.
[151] AASF, Civil Rights, McGucken to Costello, June 29, 1964.
[152] AASF, Social Justice Commission Papers, August 10 and December 11, 1964 (Newspaper clippings: San Francisco Chronicle and Palo Alto Times).

willingness of the archdiocese's own officially sanctioned groups to criticize the Church so strongly led McGucken to try and take back some control over the Catholic civil rights agenda in San Francisco. Once the Social Justice Commission was established he immediately began to steer control of the Church's civil rights agenda to the Commission, rather than allow the CIC to set the pace. He departed for Rome that September, just as the campaign began in earnest.

The Catholics of California continued to argue the proposition to the very last minute, with each side seeming to redefine continuously the thin line between religion and politics while attacking their opponents as hypocrites. Leon Auburg, director of a local group entitled Catholics United for Racial Equality (CURE), took McIntyre to task over his interpretation of separation of church and state: "The Cardinal did not take such a 'hands-off politics' position in 1958 when taxation of Catholic schools was on the ballot. Apparently, discrimination against Catholics is a moral issue, but discrimination against Negroes is purely political."[153] Despite the moral imperative so many Catholics saw in the civil rights movement, it did not quite compare to the education issue for many Catholics in the United States and particularly in Europe. Liberal republics there at various times had attacked the Catholic school system and attempted to abolish it or take it over, leaving even American Catholics wary of any government attempts to alter the status of Catholic schools. Regarding the 1958 proposal to tax parochial schools, the dependence of

[153] AASF, Civil Rights, July 28, 1964.

the Catholic Church on its vast and well-organized parochial school system left no doubt as to who the target was. The initiative was defeated, and every Catholic official from every conceivable political persuasion in California denounced the proposition. McIntyre's willingness to speak out against the initiative in 1958 was in harmony with the Church's understanding of the proper balance between secular and religious power. In criticizing the cardinal for his reticence to condemn Prop 14, and equating the two issues of Catholic education and civil rights, activists helped to cast doubts about McIntyre's own racial views. Opponents of Prop 14 did not escape the same scrutiny of their motives. In a letter to McIntyre, copied to McGucken, a Bay Area Catholic couple wrote:

> This letter is to commend you on the stand that you recently took with regard to the involvement of the clergy in the civil rights issue. It is a pity that those of the ministry who, only one year ago under the guise of separation of church and state, were supporting the Supreme Court decision eliminating God and prayer from our schools, should now be so earnest about Caesar's business agitating for the civil rights bill.[154]

There is no record of McGucken supporting that Supreme Court decision, nor of any other overt support for the decision among area clergy. But McGucken's opposition to Prop 14 identified him with liberal activists, a situation that only galled the conservative archbishop. Yet he was true to his word, and while in Rome he published the pastoral letter he had promised that summer in the archdiocesan weekly in October of 1964. McGucken

[154] AASF, Civil Rights, Smith to McIntyre, July 1, 1964.

hewed closely to the language of the 1958 pastoral on racial discrimination, saying that it and Christian love "cannot abide together in the Christian heart."[155] He also acknowledged the efforts of Catholic civil rights activists and called them "sincerely dedicated groups of our co-religionists."[156] But despite asserting the "right and duty" of the Church to criticize Prop 14 and expressing the hope that Californians would "vote according to an enlightened conscience," McGucken still believed that he could not forbid Catholics to vote for the proposition. His failure to do so further deepened the rift between the archbishop and the more impassioned CIC activists.

In the end, the conservative tide was too much to bear. Prop 14 passed by a margin of 2-1 throughout the state, even in San Francisco. Only three areas voted in a majority against the measure, two of them in the Bay Area: Berkeley and San Mateo County. Despite the conservative victory, this particular battle served almost no practical purpose. The proposition was immediately attacked as unconstitutional and opponents brought lawsuits that kept the issue in the court system for the next two years. In 1966, the California Supreme Court declared Prop 14 unconstitutional, with the United States Supreme Court eventually upholding the decision. But change was clearly coming, and as Governor Brown remarked to the director of Catholics

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[155] "Archbishop's Letter on Christian Justice and Love," Archbishop Joseph McGucken, October 25, 1964.
[156] ibid.

Against Prop 14, even defeat could bring eventual victory: "We have lost a battle - but the war against discrimination is not over and is still ours to win. Because your group enlisted so much support for democratic practices in the campaign, we are stronger in terms of active grassroots support than ever before."[157]

The true and lasting effects of Prop 14 were in the bitter divisions that had been drawn between Californians, Catholics and others on opposing sides. The blatant attempt to circumvent civil rights progress on the federal level inflamed racial tensions in the state and helped create a toxic atmosphere that eventually led to such civil unrest as the Watts riots in 1965. Divisions among civil rights supporters, which grew during and after 1964, seeped into the Catholic community as well. Far from unifying the goals of the archdiocese and Catholic activists, the fight over Prop 14 and its aftermath helped widen a growing breach between the CIC and the rest of the Church, even those who at least tacitly supported the aims of the group. The 1964 election itself pointed towards an unraveling of the liberal consensus in the nation, and sharpened the political divisions among Americans. It would also highlight divisions within the Catholic community, furthering a growing split between liberals and conservatives and between the hierarchy and the

[157] AASF, Mary Connaughton Papers, Brown to Hull, undated. The governor also thanked the archbishop for his stand against the proposition, and McGucken filed a brief on behalf of the archdiocese to have the proposition declared unconstitutional.

laity. Upon closer examination, the opposing sides in the battle over prop 14 were not just engaging in politics as usual. Their positions on this civil rights issue marked the early stages of a burgeoning “culture war” among fellow Catholics, one which would become a defining characteristic of the American Church for the next several decades.

Chapter VI

Growing Divisions

The enormous political stakes in the election of 1964 made it a watershed year in the history of the civil rights movement. In California particularly, the presence of Prop 14 on the ballot signaled a resurgent conservative mood in a state that had a tradition of progressive politics. Despite continuing progress against racial discrimination in California and the rest of the nation, the 1964 election signaled difficult days ahead for the liberal consensus that gave rise to the civil rights movement. Equally as important to the political ramifications of that election were the effects that Prop 14 had on the course of the CIC and on California's Catholic hierarchy and laity. The divisions between Catholics, and all Americans, over civil rights issues were moving outside the realm of traditional political arguments. In fact, America and American Catholics were drifting into clearly and irreconcilably opposed sides of a political, cultural and eventually spiritual divide. Prop 14 and the election of 1964 had done much to further that process.

The issue of fair housing had become a lightening rod for the backlash movement against civil rights in California, even though many in the state had

praised the tolerant virtues and (as they saw it) peaceful race relations there. San Francisco's archdiocesan journal had noted this in 1963, asserting that black San Franciscans were not "turned away from churches, schools, colleges, universities, museums, concerts or theaters." [158] With no "Jim Crow" laws, with no nightly newscasts of police dogs, Ku Klux Klan rallies and police brutality, it seemed California would have been ready for such a reasonable and tolerant step forward. But it was one thing going to a museum or theater, even a church or school, with minorities. It was quite another to have them living in neighborhoods that by accident or design had been reserved for whites. In pushing for the enshrinement of fair housing into the state law, civil rights activists had challenged the unspoken agreement on race in California. Conservatives, backed by the real estate lobby, railed against the government telling them who should live in their neighborhoods. Not surprisingly, reaction against the Rumford Act was strongest in the suburbs, whose residents warned of a "there goes the neighborhood" scenario should minorities be allowed to move in. But apart from conservatives (who opposed any government activism in what they saw as a personal issue) and outright racists, support for the repeal of Rumford depended heavily on those in the middle. How did middle-of-the-road Californians react to this struggle? Did they represent a tolerant majority or did they agree that discrimination was a personal and private matter?

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[158] Val King, The Monitor, May 24, 1963, p.22

Essential to that question, especially in San Francisco, would also be where individual Catholics lined up in determining the fate of fair housing in California.

While the Rumford Act's passage in 1963 was met with approval by Archbishop McGucken, many of his flock in the archdiocese reacted against it strongly. A study of the contemporary Irish Catholic community in San Francisco identified them as "homeowners, concerned with taxes and property values, feeling threatened in house and person by the rise of blacks."[159] One letter writer to McGucken denounced it as an "evil" and "dangerous" bill, undoubtedly the work of the Communist Party.[160] While some of the conservative far right would obviously never accept Rumford, more mainstream voters also shared the right's dislike for the bill. In particular, the powerful real estate lobby worked hard to overturn it. California, still in the throes of "boosterism," was in a real estate boom that promised to help fulfill the American dream of owning one's own home. But as new suburban homes sprang up all over the state, it became clear to minorities that they were not welcome to this particular dream in certain neighborhoods. New suburbs and subdivisions had successfully utilized covenant agreements to keep undesirable minorities from these neighborhoods. This way, the decision not to sell to a prospective minority homebuyer was a personal decision on the part of the homeowner, rather than a legal issue. This kind of agreement fit in with the

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[159] Frederick Wirt, Power in the City: Decision Making in San Francisco, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974, p.225.
[160] AASF, Civil Rights, Carr to McGucken, June 2, 1963.

contemporary conservative rhetoric that, although one may not have anything against minorities or wish them harm, who lives in the neighborhood is simply a personal matter for the residents. But civil rights activists argued that fair housing was a basic civil right, and that the same opportunity to own a home in any neighborhood held by white Americans should finally be extended to minorities and backed by law. These arguments helped define the fight over fair housing as a struggle between legislative and judicial activism and laissez faire conservatism. Those Catholics who lined up on either side of the issue became increasingly more comfortable in seeing the other side as not merely misguided but fundamentally, even dangerously, in error.

Prop 14 was by no means the only divisive issue faced by Californians that fall of 1964. In the presidential race, President Lyndon Johnson faced a son of the West, Republican Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona. Goldwater's influence in the Golden State was strong, and he had inspired and nurtured such California politicians as Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan. But the Republican Party in California was still in shambles after the defeats of its gubernatorial candidates in 1958 and 1962. Nationally, President Johnson had successfully portrayed Goldwater as a frightening, far-right ideologue who was too dangerous a man to lead the country. It seemed as if in California at least, the prospects were good for the defeat of the conservative Prop 14 and the further implementation of the civil rights agenda. But California was actually in the process of shoring up its conservative

base, despite the Republican Party's state of affairs in 1964. Governor Brown, the standard bearer of the liberal and labor causes, had high negative ratings among the voters. By 1966 his performance would ultimately doom his and his party's chances of keeping power in California. As a Catholic, Brown's liberal sympathies were an inspiration to the CIC and he wholeheartedly supported their cause. But the writing on the wall pointed to a backlash against civil rights and its liberal sponsors. Though Goldwater was soundly defeated in 1964, California exported its first president of the United States only four years later in the conservative Richard Nixon, and as conservatives rallied around the initiative process as a means of furthering their agenda the path was set for decades of conservative propositions. In many ways, the battle over Prop 14 heralded the coming right turn in American politics.

While Goldwater's candidacy was not destined to go far in a Democratic stronghold like San Francisco, the city nevertheless hosted the Republican convention that nominated the senator from Arizona. The presence of the convention helped inject even more political dissension into the civil rights debate, and fomented more trouble between the archdiocese and the CIC. Although the Catholic Church by the twentieth century had become identified in the American mind as practically a subsidiary of the Democratic Party, the official Church of course remained as non-partisan as possible. Catholics in San Francisco were overwhelmingly Irish and overwhelmingly Democrats, but also displayed a wider

spectrum of political affiliation than just the stereotype of the Catholic Democratic political machine. Italian Catholics in San Francisco, like their fellow Italians back east, tended to vote Republican. They did so even in 1960, the year a Catholic Democrat was on the ticket, so strong was their political affiliation.[161] African Americans, in California and the rest of the nation, had previously been identified with the Republican Party following the Civil War due to the GOP platform against slavery and in favor of desegregation during Reconstruction. That support began to erode in the 1920's and 30's, particularly during the Depression and the New Deal era. In California, some prominent African Americans had become disenchanted with the GOP as early as 1928, having "no intention or desire" to be affiliated with the campaign of Herbert Hoover.[162] Roosevelt's economic policies helped continue to foster a stronger relationship between African Americans and the Democratic Party, even though Southern Democrats were the main obstructionists to integration during the civil rights movement. But given the post-Johnson identification of the Democratic Party with the cause of civil rights and the gradual exodus of the Southern segregationist "Dixiecrats" from the Party, there was not surprisingly a growing affiliation between the increasingly conservative Republican Party and those opposed to civil rights. Goldwater's campaign in 1964, with its emphasis on "state's rights," helped to cement that affiliation for some. But even Goldwater's reputation as an extremist did not deter Archbishop McGucken, who was asked to

[161] Wirt, p.235. In 1960, 48 percent of San Francisco's Italian Americans voted Republican for Nixon, as opposed to 27 percent of its Irish.
[162] Broussard, p. 101.

give a benediction at the Republican convention that summer. He accepted the invitation and welcomed the opportunity to put the Church into the spotlight – the CIC, needless to say, was appalled. MPCIC President Henry Organ sent a telegram to the archbishop inviting him to join in protesting the Republican convention, and tried to rally the CIC to picket the convention. Despite their confrontational reputation, several MPCIC members balked at the suggestion, fearing that such an action with McGucken literally giving the gathering his blessing would "risk much of what we had worked for."[163]

Goldwater's eventual defeat at the hands of a master politician like Johnson was not necessarily the "big story" to come out of the election of 1964. Johnson's political prowess and access to resources only available to a President whose party controlled both houses of Congress made the largely inept Goldwater campaign seem doomed from the very start. What was more interesting, and telling, about the 1964 election was Goldwater's presence on the Republican ticket at all. He had outmaneuvered more polished and experiences politicians like Nelson Rockefeller to grab the nomination, despite the power and support at that time held by "Rockefeller Republicans." Goldwater's campaign changed the Republican Party in the United States for decades to come, and despite his loss tapped into a growing conservative anger and frustration at the direction of the country. The liberal consensus, forged under FDR and firmly in place since the New Deal (even under

[163] Herte, Survey Answers & Interviews.

the Republican administration of Eisenhower), was challenged in 1964 as never before.[164] And the civil rights movement had grown out of that consensus. The movement, of course, shared many of the same characteristics as its direct predecessor, the abolitionist movement. It was based upon a theological framework that appealed to the "better angels" of the American nature. That is, the movement continued a long line of Social Gospel efforts that had as its goal, if not actually bringing the Kingdom of God into being, at least moving America a little closer to it. But the success of the civil rights movement also depended upon the political and cultural consensus forged during the New Deal and continuing through the post-war era. The continuing occurrence of religiously-based social movements in America notwithstanding, the political and socio-economic climate has much to do with the success of such movements, and whether Americans feel they are being lifted up to a higher plane or just scolded by annoying preachers. The largely successful New Deal, the post-war economic boom, and the leadership of liberal politicians had given Americans confidence in the liberal vision of a strong and prosperous America that could afford to reach out and ensure equality to its own citizens. Yet after 1964, that confidence was on the wane in California. Goldwater had challenged the liberal, Eastern establishment in the Republican Party. His success in capturing the nomination helped pave the way for a new breed of conservative Western Republicans to take power, first in California and then the nation. Packaged

[164] See Perlstein, Before the Storm: Barry Goldwater and the Unmaking of the American Consensus, New York: Hill and Wang, 2001.

together with the conservative use of the proposition to challenge civil rights, 1964 helped make conservative ideology respectful in California and foreshadowed a successful national strategy to defeat the liberal consensus once and for all. It was a conservative Californian, Richard Nixon, who successfully implemented that strategy (the "Southern Strategy") on a national scale and used civil rights as a wedge to drive conservative white voters away from the New Deal consensus and into the Republican Party. But its roots were clearly found in the early battles over civil rights in California, and the connection between those battles, the Goldwater campaign and the Republican Party under Nixon point to the beginnings of a watershed political realignment in the United States with Prop 14.

At the same time the liberal political consensus was being challenged, another American consensual ideal's unity was also coming under fire. While religious groups like Catholics had long suffered "outsider" status under America's traditional Protestant establishment, Catholics even before Kennedy had entered into mainstream American culture although their religion was still considered by many Americans to be "foreign." One avenue for these outsider groups to participate in the American culture was what Robert Bellah has termed the American "civil religion." Bellah defined this term as the "religious dimension, found…in the life of every people, through which it interprets its historical experience in the light of transcendent reality."[165] Unlike sectarian religion, the American civil religion

[165] Bellah, p. 3.

employed common themes, such as the biblical heritage, to view America in terms of its religious significance. Stretching back to John Winthrop's sermon on board the Arabella, the notion of the United States as a "city on the hill," chosen by God for greatness, was perhaps the main underlying theme of this civil religion. It also stepped in to support and strengthen America in times of stress and grief. As late as 1963, though President Kennedy was buried with the rites of his Catholic faith, his internment at Arlington and the national mourning following his death brought Americans of many different denominations together in a communal act of grief. The civil religion was a vital and singular means of uniting all Americans, despite their own religious affiliation, into "one nation under God."

But as the political spectrum began to become irreconcilably opposed, it seeped into the very notion of a single civil religion as well. Of course, there were always differences between one American's religion and political affiliation and another's, just as within churches there were political differences existing within the same communion. But that reality depended on a common notion, to paraphrase John Courtney Murray, of the truths we hold together. Murray was an American Catholic political and social thinker who helped lay the intellectual framework for a greater acceptance of republican democracy by Rome at the Second Vatican Council, despite the record of suspicion exhibited in the late nineteenth-century papal pronouncements *Testem Benevolentiae* and *Longinqua Oceani*. Rome's underlying problem was that a political authority could only be morally legitimate if

it were informed by Catholic teaching. The Church also harbored a continuing suspicion of republican government since the revolutions in Europe of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which were often accompanied by a wave of anticlericalism. As such, Church leaders in Europe were often unable to discern much difference between the French model of an ideal republic and the American model. The American model, in which Catholics were a minority within a nation that was very religious but also mostly Protestant, presented a problem to Rome. Wholesale acceptance of the American model could be seen as tolerating error (i.e., the beliefs and philosophies of non-Catholics) and therefore lead to relativism. By the time Murray began to challenge this notion in the post-World War II period, Rome had settled into a position that viewed the American political system as merely a "tolerable hypothesis" rather than an "acceptable thesis."[166] In order to move Catholic thought to a greater acceptance of the American system, Murray had to emphasize that it was possible to have a truly moral society that did not become such by uniting Church (the Catholic Church) and State. Instead, he appealed to a mutual understanding of the moral "truths" a nation recognizes, despite its political and religious plurality. Murray styled such truths as "consensus", "public philosophy" and as "natural law." Their legitimacy was based in common historical agreement and existed outside of the majority or minority opinion on a given

[166] Fogarty, The Vatican and the American Hierarchy, p. 369.

particular issue. In Murray's thought, the "American Proposition" was based on the following conviction:

> [T]hat there are truths; that they can be known; that they must be held; for, if they are not held, assented, consented to, worked into the texture of institutions, there can be no hope of founding a true City, in which men may dwell in dignity, peace, unity, justice, well-being, freedom.[167]

Yet such issues as civil rights helped contribute to that situation in which "truths" were not held, assented, or consented to. After all, just a few words after “we hold these truths” Jefferson had written that “all men are created equal.” To what extent, then, could the assertion of “inalienable rights” (granted by the Creator) enshrined by the Declaration of Independence be reconciled with continuing racial prejudice and such legislative initiatives as Prop 14? To those fighting Prop 14, the civil religion could not possibly contain those for and against such a measure – that would make a mockery of the appeal to any religiously-based “consensus.” Indeed, the fact that racial discrimination could have existed side by side with any American “moral consensus” made that very consensus suspect in the minds of many civil rights supporters. Once the legitimacy of the consensus was questioned, its very ability to continue to exist was no longer guaranteed.

Further complicating the question was another division brought about by issues like Prop 14. Under the idea of a moral consensus, there also exists a distinction between “sin” and “crime” among those tenets held by particular

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[167] John Courtney Murray, We Hold These Truths: Catholic Reflections on the American Proposition, Sheed and Ward: Kansas City, MO, p. ix.

religious traditions and differing (even opposing) views held by others within a democracy. Murder, abhorred by all religious traditions, is considered by most Americans to be both a sin and a crime. Birth control, practiced by some (and even recommended on moral grounds) but not others (Catholics in particular), may be a sin to some but not necessarily a crime. In Murray's words, "the law must countenance many evils that morality forbids."[168] Yet much of the religious and political tension in American history revolves around the blurring of this distinction, from the tradition of keeping the Sabbath holy by observing "blue laws," referred to by Murray as "positive divine law,"[169] to the current controversies around the legality of abortion and non-traditional marriage. Therefore, what were Catholics in favor of Prop 14 supposed to think when its opponents, who had long spoken of the "sin" of racial discrimination, now proposed it to be criminal as well? As the letters of those Catholics generally opposed to aggressive civil rights action suggest, they usually were able to draw a distinction between what the Church had said against racial discrimination and their own personal behavior. Few, if any, would ever have considered themselves "racist." Many of the letters to Archbishop McGucken protesting CIC activities or in favor of Prop 14 profess in one way or another to be sympathetic to the "plight of the Negro," but go on either to criticize the CIC and other civil rights groups as "extremist organization[s]" or criticize the Church over

[168] Quoted by Tim Rutten, "Regarding Media," in the Los Angeles Times, May 22, 2004.
[169] Murray, p. 110.

Prop 14 for stepping beyond the bounds of religion and "meddling" with property rights.[170]

But by moving the argument into the political sphere, CIC opponents of Prop 14 were viewed as upping the ante. Having already questioned Prop 14 supporters' ability to be good Catholics, they also were challenging their status as good Americans. Of course, Americans had long disagreed over many social, cultural and religious issues; sometimes, as in the case of slavery and the Civil War, even violently. But the main issue was not that under a commonly held moral consensus all Americans would agree all the time. Rather, it was how much dissent and disagreement society could tolerate and still be viewed as cohesive. As Murray had written at the outset of the 1960's:

> The 'open society' today faces the question, how open can it afford to be, and still remain a society; how many barbarians can it tolerate, and still remain civil; how many 'idiots' can it include (in the classical Greek sense of the 'private person' who does not share in the public thought of the City), and still have a public life; how many idioms, alien to one another, can it admit, and still allow the possibility of civil conversation?[171]

Murray had done much to help reconcile the divide between Rome and non-Catholic America, to help convince both that they were not necessarily "idioms, alien to one another." Yet just when Murray and his supporters had finally succeeded in getting Rome to come to a greater appreciation of the American moral

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[170] For examples, see AASF, Civil Rights, Gurries to McGucken, July 21, 1964, and AASF, Civil Rights, Ellison to McGucken, July 22, 1964.
[171] Murray, p. 117.

consensus, that very consensus was unraveling in the aftermath of the social movements of the 1960s.

Even in this religious debate of over thirty years ago, one can see here how political liberals and conservatives within the same church are lining up on their respective sides, each accusing the other in terms that would become familiar in future political-religious debate. Liberals accused the old guard of being ever-vigilant when it came to the power and economic health of the Church, yet unresponsive to the poor and minorities. Conservatives portrayed liberals as destroyers of traditional religion and morality, and each accused the other of being the first to bring a "political agenda" into the sphere of religion. While Catholics had voted differently before, and had also considered each other as too liberal or conservative in both the pew and the ballot box, the experience of Prop 14 helped to harden political stances in a way that left Bay Area Catholics on seemingly opposing and irreconcilable sides of the debate. Even as the liberal consensus was being increasingly challenged in the political sphere, consensus in the Church among Catholics was also becoming harder to maintain. Prop 14, and the entire civil rights movement, helped usher in an era in which "social issues" increasingly divided Catholics. Friends and acquaintances who had attended the same parish for years would no longer speak to each other. Opposing sides not only disagreed but considered each other as "un-American," and as bad Catholics. It also raised new questions about the Church and politics in America, which after several decades in a

kind of détente relationship had begun to clash with each other. Those Catholics in favor of Prop 14 had scored a temporary victory at the ballot box, but the battle lines that were drawn in 1964 were not erased or forgotten after the election.

At the same time, divisions in other areas helped to exacerbate the situation. The reforms coming out of Vatican II were beginning to have a profound effect on American Catholics, particularly changes to the liturgy. Liturgical reform had occurred many times throughout the Church's history, and the changes of the 1960's built upon a liturgical movement that had been growing for several decades. In 1904, Pope Pius X specifically had called for "active participation in the sacred mysteries and in the public and solemn prayer of the Church."[172] The twentieth-century liturgical movement received more encouragement from Rome during the pontificate of Pius XII. His 1947 encyclical *Mediator Dei* spoke approvingly of revived scholarly interest in the liturgy, and his reforms of the Easter Week liturgies in the 1950's paved the way for the reforms of Vatican II.[173] But even though the stage was set for greater reform by the 1960's, the results of the council's *Constitution on the Liturgy* were far-reaching and sometimes controversial. In the Bay Area, just as Prop 14 was causing political trouble, liturgical reform also was "tearing parishes apart."[174] The political divide also was reflected in the liturgical one, with Cardinal McIntyre of Los Angeles

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[172] Society for the Renewal of the Sacred Liturgy [Online bulletin, January, 2004, www.adoremus.org/1203PiusX.html]
[173] Papal Encyclicals [Online version, May, 2004, www.papalencyclicals.net/Pius12/P12MEDIA.HTM]
[174] Strong, Appendix, #11

arguing against reforms during the council while Bishop Begin of Oakland became one of the first prelates to institute the reforms in his diocese.[175]

Such divisions only helped further a split within America's religious culture that exists to this day. Americans increasingly left behind old denominational struggles and began to draw battle lines over socio-cultural issues between even members of the same religious group. The conservative and liberal labels that become more and more opposed in the political sphere entered the religious as well. The issues around the civil rights struggle helped lay the groundwork for a division that would exist even among coreligionists between competing visions of what America was and should be. Other developments, such as the landmark 1962 U.S. Supreme Court decision outlawing prayer in public schools, created even more opportunities for religious conservatives of many faiths to unite together against what they saw as an attempt to create an "atheistic United States of America."[176] Despite the official pronouncements and stated beliefs of any given denomination, the divisions among individuals exposed by social movements helped provide further support to the idea that "theological views and party preference are both reflections of an underlying ideology or world view."[177] As in the past, most strikingly with the issue of slavery, these "underlying ideologies" could not possibly

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[175] Krosel, p. 135, and Francis Weber, "McIntyre, James Francis Cardinal (1886-1979)," in The Encyclopedia of American Catholic History. Ed. Michael Glazier and Thomas J. Shelley. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1997, p. 889.
[176] Lisa McGirr, Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001, p. 159.
[177] Jeffrey Hadden, The Gathering Storm in the Churches, Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1969, p. 88.

coexist peacefully within the same type of social or moral consensus on which the nation relied for its unity. America's civil religion, traditionally a source of unity in a pluralistic society, became during and after the 1960's a "confusion of tongues."[178] Catholics in particular, coming from a tradition that despite the Vatican II reforms still had questions about the proper role of civil authority in a democracy, were destined to become mired in the emerging confusion. On the one hand, the strong social teaching of the Church became increasingly identified as "liberal," while other social issues that became political flashpoints as the 1960's wore on cast the Church's position as "conservative." Catholics who were consistent in upholding all of the Church's social teachings would be increasingly caught in a crossfire within the context of the larger movement of social liberalism in the United States. Allied with liberals on such issues as poverty, racial justice and immigrant rights, Catholics were often on the opposing side when it came to issues like contraception and abortion.

As Catholics on both sides of the issue emerged from the election of 1964, one thing was clear: the battle had just begun. The repercussions of that year reverberated throughout the continuing existence of the CIC and contributed to an irreversible deterioration between many of its members and the California hierarchy. Catholics who had fought to defeat the initiative were stunned that it would pass with Catholic support, leaving the impression either that the Church's

[178] Robert Wuthnow, "Divided We Fall: America's Two Civil Religions," in The Christian Century, April 20, 1988, p.395.

efforts had been insufficient or, perhaps worse, ineffective. More importantly, divisions within California's Catholic community in the face of Prop 14 pointed towards a continuing political and social divide that would remain a problem for the American Church, indeed for all of American religion, for decades to come.

Chapter VII

Action and Reaction

The growing split between American Catholics with different views on civil rights helped change the nature of the CIC and mobilized members to address the political arena of civil rights in California with direct action. Following political defeat on Prop 14, some CIC members made concerted efforts to move the group forcefully towards more activist positions and strategies, rather than continuing in any capacity as an educational resource for the archdiocese. Throughout the nation as the 1960's progressed, civil rights groups became increasingly more radical, while establishment figures such as Martin Luther King took bolder and more controversial positions on matters like opposition to the Vietnam War and the economic transformation of the black community. In moving themselves closer to some of the positions and tactics taken in the wider movement, CIC members invariably brought elements of the radical left into the Church, a move not at all welcomed by their archbishop. But as one CIC newsletter stated, "there is more danger of the Church becoming irrelevant than radical."[179]

[179] AASF, Social Justice Files, Santa Clara, 1962-67, October 1, 1966.

McGucken attempted to walk a very thin line in the wake of the controversy of Prop 14 between the increasingly radical pro-civil rights element in the archdiocese and an increasingly alarmed faction of conservatives. Although his opposition had not won him the support of many civil rights activists in the Church, his position had at the same time alienated the more conservative Catholics in the archdiocese. Looked on with suspicion by both sides, McGucken desperately wanted affairs in the archdiocese to get back to normal. But the energized and mobilized civil rights activists, and the CIC in particular, had no intention of letting the archbishop get his way. The Midpeninsula chapter of the group went so far as to release a statement after the election that McGucken was "guilty by default" for the passage of the proposition.[180] Such tactics only helped to widen the breach between the group and the archbishop.

His stance against the proposition also earned McGucken some notoriety outside San Francisco, and he received letters from conservative Catholics as far away as Arizona and Oregon urging him to be vigilant against "subversive elements" in the Church. As with the national civil rights movement, local groups were under the constant suspicion of harboring Communists or of being fronts for Communism. McGucken was careful to inform the writers about the importance of moving the Church forward in racial matters, and supported the "education of our people to make a real Christian judgment on matters that affect civil rights." [181] But

[180] AASF, Social Justice Files, November 10, 1964.
[181] AASF, Civil Rights, McGucken to Lynch, June 17, 1964.

he also at least provided lip service to the anti-Communist sentiments expressed by the letter writers, and promised several that he would do all he could to root out extremists from any legitimate Catholic civil rights groups. He also became increasingly suspicious of strategies and events involving groups outside the Church's control. Even while McGucken continued to fight against Prop 14, he passed up opportunities that he felt would make him and the Church more politically involved than was necessary. In 1964 the archbishop had been invited by a local Methodist pastor to take place in a Second Human Rights Day in San Francisco, featuring Ralph Abernathy and CORE President James Leonard Farmer. Although the appeal was made to McGucken that the rally would provide a forum for those united against Proposition 14, he declined to attend citing "certain political overtones to the demonstration." [182]

In May of the same year, Martin Luther King had visited San Francisco for a rally sponsored by the local committee of SCLC known as the "Religious Witness for Human Dignity." Coming only six months before Californians would vote on the proposition, the various local CIC chapters were enthusiastic supporters of the event as were many other local Catholics. Organizers asked McGucken to pronounce his blessing on the rally both literally and figuratively by giving his endorsement and delivering the invocation for the event. McGucken's response was typical of his hot-cold relationship with the movement. He sent Fr. Eugene Boyle in his place to give

[182] AASF, Civil Rights, McGucken to Boswell, July 1, 1964.

the invocation, although he did issue a statement endorsing the rally and inviting Catholics to attend. King himself had sent a letter to McGucken welcoming his support and offering language for a joint statement from both of them. However, McGucken signed on to the joint statement only after toning down the language. He altered the phrase "let the nation know that the Wallaces and Russells do not represent a consensus of the American people's attitude on civil rights" by striking out the proper names and replacing them with "segregationists." [183] The rally was very successful, and apparently the civil rights leader was impressed by the Catholic participation. King later remarked to Father Thomas Fry, chaplain of the Santa Clara CIC chapter, that he was "pleased with the turnout of clergy and sisters" at the rally.[184]

Once the issue of Prop 14 had been voted on, McGucken was determined to take control of the civil rights issue and put it back firmly under the auspices of the archdiocese. As previously noted, in the heat of the battle he had agreed to the creation of the Commission for Social Justice for the Archdiocese of San Francisco. As with many other dioceses in the nation, its creation was a sign of the times and offered the local churches a means of harnessing the great energy being expended by committed Catholics to the social issues of the day. The Commission included many of those associated with the CIC, including Father Eugene Boyle and SFCIC cofounder John Delury. But the archbishop's initial address to the new group left

[183] AASF, Civil Rights, McGucken to King, May 22, 1964.
[184] AASF, Social Justice Files, Santa Clara, 1962-67, July 1, 1964.

little doubt that the Commission would be under much stricter control than any CIC chapter:

> The archbishop emphasized that the activities of Catholic organizations in this field must be positive – not negative. He also stated that the function of the Commission would be to exercise authority over all interracial activities, all literature put out under the auspices of a Catholic organization, and to pass on any participation with other groups that might be suggested.[185]

Other records from the Commission suggest that its purpose was specifically to "assume the role" previously taken by the CIC; within a few years, the group had joined the National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice.[186] At the beginning of its existence, the Commission was top-heavy with clergy and religious, and the group began to call for the appointment of more laypersons. Lay representation gradually increased as the Commission became more active, and members even began to pitch the idea of opening the Commission to non-Catholics, which sparked some angry protests to McGucken. With the Commission blatantly taking over the role formerly held by the CIC, that group began to express deep resentment over the Commission and the fact that some CIC members who had become Commission members were dividing their loyalties. The president of the Santa Clara CIC chapter eventually declared that the CIC had "every right to kill the Commission for Social

[185] AASF, Social Justice Commission Papers, Executive Committee Minutes, August 3, 1964.
[186] AASF, Social Justice Commission Papers, September 15, 1965, and June 15, 1966.

Justice. Since its inception two years ago it has detracted from the CIC and pulled membership away from us."[187]

The CIC also was becoming more active in confronting other Catholic institutions over their residual racism. On the heels of the Prop 14 campaign, the Midpeninsula chapter undertook one of its more famous, or infamous, campaigns when it set out to determine whether Catholic hospitals in the San Francisco area would accommodate the wishes of white patients to be separate from black ones. Earlier efforts to desegregate San Francisco city hospitals in the 1940's had revealed such problems as denial of privileges to black doctors and the existence of segregated wards. Even though a concerted interracial effort to fix the problems had been largely successful, civic groups like the Council for Civic Unity had uncovered a prevailing racism that was "deeply rooted within San Francisco's white medical community."[188] The Midpeninsula group, suspecting that this attitude had prevailed into the 1960's among Catholic hospitals, phoned individual facilities posing as concerned potential patients and asked if they would have to share a room or other semi-private area with black patients. The Midpeninsula CIC said employees at four out of five Bay Area Catholic hospitals told the callers that they would be accommodated, and would not have to share facilities with those of a different race.[189] The group then called on the archdiocese to establish a "firm policy

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[187] AASF, Social Justice Files, Santa Clara, 1962-67, Dupre to McGucken, August 14, 1966
[188] Broussard, p. 199.
[189] Lundin, Survey Answers & Interviews, #11

prohibiting discrimination" in Catholic hospitals, and was once again more than willing to highlight the situation in the press.[190] The archdiocese and the hospitals dismissed the charge as based on a hypothetical question and called the CIC's actions "irresponsible."[191] Yet for many members of the MPCIC, this experiment was extremely telling and important. Far from highlighting what some might see as a rather obscure situation, the willingness of their fellow Catholics to accede to such requests--after all the marches, all the sermons and all the legislation--showed that the Church was not yet there when it came to full integration.

As the Midpeninsula group became much bolder and more vocal in its criticism of the Church and the archbishop, McGucken accelerated his efforts to put civil rights firmly in control of his own Social Justice Commission and reign in the authority of the CIC. By the end of 1964, the group was in trouble again for criticizing the archbishop in the press, and was threatened with another expulsion by the Commission. The chapter had no intention of holding back from its confrontational tactics, however, and throughout the following year became a source of increasing concern for the Commission. McGucken even solicited the professional opinion of a professor of psychology from the University of San Francisco, who had been attending the meetings.[192] By the end of 1965 the group

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[190] "Catholic Hospitals Are Discriminating," San Jose Mercury, November 10, 1964, p.B1.
[191] "Hospital Says Discrimination Claim Untrue," San Jose Mercury, November 11, 1964, p.B1. No record was found of any other local CIC chapter participating in this action.
[192] The professor, Dr. James Colwell, said the MPCIC represented an "adolescent stage" of spiritual development as evidenced by its "demand" for action. AASF, Social Justice Commission Papers, February 9, 1965.

had attracted the enmity of some of the local clergy. Fr. Ed Moss, a pastor in Mountain View, asked McGucken to do something to "curb this branch of the CIC, or at least keep its activities out of the press."[193] Unlike the San Francisco chapter, which worked closely with the Social Justice Commission and shared many of the same members, the Midpeninsula chapter was perfectly willing to thumb its nose at the Commission and decry what they viewed as its authoritarian nature. In fact, the commission expressly intended to take over those activities that had been carried out by the MPCIC in the past, such as the group's controversial parish outreach efforts. The minutes of a Social Justice Commission meeting of September, 1965 mentioned the continuation of activities by CIC members to engage involvement in racial issues among the parishes, and expressed the "likelihood" that the commission would "increasingly assume this role."[194] The Midpeninsula group had no intention of ceding its role, however. In what the group termed a "Declaration of Independence," the group already had announced in the press it would "not seek the approval of the Social Justice Commission" in planning any civil rights activities, which the members said should be decided through "democratic processes."[195] The Midpeninsula group's ability and desire to flout the authority of official archdiocesan structures, not to mention its ability to attract media attention, had made it a thorn in the side of the archdiocese.

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[193] idem., November 15, 1965.
[194] AASF, Social Justice Commission Papers, meeting minutes, Sept. 15, 1965.
[195] "CIC Issues Independence Declaration," Palo Alto Times, June 2, 1965, page unknown (clipping).

But if the archdiocese was in any way reassured that its problems with civil rights action were confined to one group of troublemakers, it was soon proven wrong. A new controversy—the building of a grand new cathedral in San Francisco—helped unify the various local CIC chapters into a common headache for the archbishop. In 1962, the cathedral of St. Mary on Van Ness Street had burned to the ground. It is safe to say that McGucken's reaction to the news was undoubtedly mixed. His dislike of the building was so well known that some jokingly speculated he might have burned it down himself. The cathedral had been built in the late nineteenth century under Archbishop Patrick Riordan, who desired a more impressive edifice and "respectable location" than the existing small edifice known as St. Mary's.[196] That building, California's first cathedral, had been eclipsed by the rapid growth of the city and at the end of the nineteenth century stood at the edge of Chinatown, away from the growing areas of the city. Riordan galvanized the Catholic community and organized an impressive drive to build the new cathedral ("New" St. Mary's) further west from downtown on Van Ness Avenue, near fashionable Nob Hill. Despite the obvious pride behind this effort in how far the Church had come in San Francisco, local reaction to the neo-Romanesque cathedral was less than impressive. Some wags even referred to it as "Chicago Gothic," in reference to Riordan's home town.[197] By the 1960's, church architecture and the

[196] Jeffrey Burns, A History of the Archdiocese of San Francisco, Vol. 2: Glory, Ruin, and Resurrection, 1885-1945, Strasbourg: Editions du Signe, 2001, p.3
[197] James Gaffey, Citizen of No Mean City: Archbishop Patrick Riordan of San Francisco (1841-1914), Wilmington, DE: Consortium Books, 1976, p. 86.

theology behind it had moved far beyond neo-Romanesque. With buildings such as Old St. Mary's and St. Vibiana's Cathedral in Los Angeles representing the Church's past, some San Francisco Catholics envisioned a new cathedral pointing towards the Church's future, one that embraced the modern architecture movement and helped give the spirit of renewal in the Vatican Council a public face. The fire at St. Mary's gave them the perfect opportunity to do something very new and daring for the Church in California. Proponents of the new architecture persuaded McGucken, and he hired two architects from the modern school to help design the cathedral -- Pietro Belluschi, dean of the School of Architecture of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Pier-Luigi Nervi, a structural engineer from Rome.

Architecturally, the plan for the new cathedral was strikingly bold and represented the cutting edge in modern church design. The newest St. Mary's would not compete with the Gothic spires and towers of San Francisco's other churches, but would instead dominate the skyline with a soaring and strikingly different approach. Its design is based upon the geometric principle of a "hyperbolic parabaloid," in which four wings curve upward and meet in the form of a cross. The cathedral measured 255 square feet, was 190 feet high and was crowned with a 55 foot golden cross. An open plaza surrounded the new structure, which boasted large plate glass windows that flooded the interior with light. The space was designed not only to project a modern, unmistakable Catholic presence to the San Francisco

skyline but also to convey a welcoming openness through the public spaces surrounding the church building. It was a bold statement on the future of the Catholic Church in America, and gave the archdiocese the distinction of building the first modern Catholic cathedral in the nation to be in line with the liturgical reforms emanating from the Council, one Nervi called "truly of our time."[198]

Unfortunately, McGucken's modern cathedral did not just rankle some traditionalists and architectural purists. The site chosen by the Church for the new building was in an area bordering the old African American neighborhood, and in fact was chosen because the neighborhood previously had been targeted for "urban renewal." This program had been enacted by Congress in 1949 in the National Housing Act, which provided federal funds for the eradication of slums and subsequent building projects. But the program was controversial from the start. Residents of the targeted areas were mostly black, prompting some to dub the program "Negro removal." The program's central function in tearing down dilapidated housing in "slum" areas was also seen as removing what was often the only housing affordable for poor urban dwellers. What the program offered in return, new projects like the cathedral in place of substandard housing, was an insufficient trade-off for some activists. The CIC, this time including members of the San Francisco chapter as well as the Midpeninsula group, wasted little time in highlighting the imagery of the archdiocese's shiny new cathedral being built on the

[198] Jeffrey Burns, A History of the Archdiocese of San Francisco: Vol. 3, A Journey of Hope, 1945-2000, Strasbourg: Editions du Signe, 2001, p.23

ruins of the former dwellings for black families, and charged the archbishop and the Church with being insensitive to the plight of African Americans. The CIC also took issue with the scope and expense of the project itself, saying that a more modest building would free up resources to help the disadvantaged. McGucken was not swayed, and was particularly irked that some in his own flock would criticize his efforts to make such a strong statement on the Catholic presence in the community. He was neither the first nor the last prelate to be criticized for building a grand cathedral instead of steering the funds to the poor or some other more worthy cause. Stretching back to the nineteenth century, when Archbishop John Hughes of New York made his own statement about Catholicism in America by planning for the lavish new St. Patrick's Cathedral on Fifth Avenue, critics often have asked whether such extravagance is truly necessary.[199] But the powerful symbolism of the grand, new cathedral has proved to be enduring.

A perhaps more serious issue raised by the CIC against the archdiocese concerned who was building the cathedral, and whether or not they adhered to open hiring practices. Even after the passage of important civil rights legislation under President Johnson, discrimination did not disappear overnight, particularly in such conservative trades as carpentry and construction. While McGucken was largely able to ignore the charge of extravagance from the CIC, he was concerned enough with the employment discrimination issue to announce a plan in which all firms

[199] Charles Morris, American Catholic, New York: Random House, 1997.

doing business with the archdiocese on the cathedral would have to take "positive action" to hire minorities.[200] However, the CIC soon pointed out that the trade unions were simply hiring African Americans as temporary laborers while retaining their "lily white membership."[201] Some CIC members saw the cathedral hiring issue as a means of finally putting civil rights at the forefront of the archdiocesan agenda. It was, as one San Francisco member recalls, the CIC's "biggest struggle" yet.[202] Despite McGucken's concessions in the hiring question, the CIC believed that his actions were simply a sop to the movement, however sincere the archbishop's wishes were in making sure that African Americans who wished to labor on the cathedral were not being discriminated against. What CIC members wanted was for the archdiocese to use its full power, influence and clout to change the very nature of the way the construction industry operated in San Francisco. After all, the building of St. Mary's was just the latest example of how influential the Church was in the city, particularly in terms of hiring and construction projects. If the archdiocese refused to scale back the project, some in the CIC reasoned, at least it could leverage the construction project as a means of permanently desegregating the building trade and its unions. The failure of the archdiocese to do this, said one member, only deepened the suspicion that the Church was "not fully committed" to the civil rights movement, and the protests continued.[203]

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[200] "Catholic Job Drive For Minorities," San Francisco Chronicle, December 21, 1965, p.17.
[201] Survey Answers & Interviews, Ash, #10.
[202] Survey Answers & Interviews, Colwell, #11.
[203] Survey Answers & Interviews, Morris, #12.

McGucken summed up his view of the various protests against the new cathedral as "perhaps the most irritating experience of all."[204] He also noted that those criticizing the Church over the new cathedral included a mix of priests, students from Berkeley and non-Catholics as well as CIC members. CIC members and others formed an "Aggiornamento Committee," using the watchword of the Second Vatican Council, to register their protest to the archdiocese. In 1966 the Committee sent a petition to McGucken protesting the building of this "cathedral of shame…high above one of the worst ghetto areas in America." Using the same type of language employed in the earlier CIC protest, the petition called on the archdiocese to opt for a smaller structure and devote the remainder of the funds for works of "social justice."[205] A few months later McGucken was both surprised and annoyed to find CIC members picketing outside of the Holy Name of Jesus Church in San Francisco. Led by Midpeninsula President Mary Ash, the protesters gathered on the day McGucken was celebrating ordinations to protest the "idolatry of structures."[206]

The year's end saw the group stage another made-for-the-media event that had come to bedevil the archdiocese so successfully. Members gathered at the site of the new cathedral on Christmas Eve to protest the lack of black membership in the trade unions building the cathedral. The next day, Christmas Day, the *San*

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[204] AASF, McGucken Interview, November 8, 1979, p.24.
[205] AASF, Social Justice Commission Papers, April 28, 1966. As McGucken had charged, most of the signatures were from UC Berkeley students.
[206] idem, June 5, 1966.

Francisco Chronicle ran a front-page story accompanied by a picture of Catholics protesting the building of their own new cathedral.[207] The group kept up its protest against the newest St. Mary's throughout the years it was being built – they were there to picket the laying of the cornerstone, and continued right up to the building's completion. In 1971, when the Apostolic Delegate came to the dedication of the finished St. Mary's, McGucken was horrified to find several protesters picketing on the cathedral plaza. That clergy and fellow Catholics would mix with non-Catholics and the usual "agitators" was an immense embarrassment to the archbishop on a day that should have been a triumph for the Church in San Francisco, and he felt personally betrayed by the actions of the protesters. [208]

Despite the many instances of friction between the archdiocese and the CIC that had arisen during the group's earlier years, the cathedral protest marked a dramatic break in relations. Differences of opinion and strategic tactics were nothing compared to the anger McGucken felt when members of his own flock freely challenged his vision for the Church, even accusing it and, by extension, the archbishop himself of being racist. While it is surely misguided to imagine that no Catholic dared criticize his or her own Church before the 1960's, such actions by the CIC did represent some new territory in Catholic dissent. The use of the press in particular, as well as a willingness to engage non-Catholics in protesting Church

[207] Morris, Survey Answers & Interviews, #11.
[208] AASF, McGucken Interview, November 8, 1979, p.24.

actions, seemed to have been activities that crossed the line for Archbishop McGucken. As the CIC moved into uncharted waters, both in their tactics and in the nature of the issues the group would take up, the rift between this Catholic organization and the archdiocese that still officially sponsored it would continue to grow.

Chapter VIII

Branching Out

The CIC did not limit its political activism to ballot propositions and presidential contests, and along with other civil rights activists became increasingly vocal on differing local and national issues as the 1960's progressed. Passage of civil rights legislation in Washington did not slow the movement. There was still much to be done, particularly in the area of ensuring voting rights in the South. And as the nature of racial discrimination took on a broader dimension than just "black and white," activists began to focus on other racial and ethnic minorities and their struggles in the United States. One overriding concern in particular also cast a pall over liberal activism in the decade and captured the attention of the nation – the escalating war in Southeast Asia. CIC members continued their march towards a more radical engagement with society and would challenge the Church in even more provocative ways.

But as the movement progressed, and branched out into new areas of interest, the momentum that had been with civil rights activists in the early 1960's began to wane. Two factors drastically changed the direction of the civil rights movement in

the middle to later years of the decade: its willingness to address issues not specifically related to its original mission and new organizations and ideologies that competed for adherents. In the year before his 1968 assassination, Martin Luther King announced his "Poor People's Campaign." This marked a turn from his earlier focus on segregation and racial issues to economic ones, and also widened the scope of the movement to an issue affecting all races. While many in the civil rights movement did see a connection between economic prosperity and racial justice, the switch in tactics led some to believe that movement was beginning to become unfocused and seemed destined to splinter. Still, racial justice groups including the CIC did not hesitate to connect what they viewed as the twin plagues of poverty and racism. The National Catholic Conference on Interracial Justice (NCCIJ) and the National Catholic Social Action Conference held a symposium on poverty for their members in 1965, helping to bring that issue to attention of the nation's CIC chapters.

In turning their attention to the economic situation of black America, civil rights activists increasingly began to echo the rhetoric of new and more controversial black activist groups that had begun to take the attention away from the southern, Christian roots of the movement. The most famous of these was the Nation of Islam, a quasi-Islamic sect that had begin during the Depression in Detroit and spread to other urban areas by the 1960's. Its leader, Elijah Mohammed, mingled Christian and Islamic prophetic traditions to preach a message of black

social and economic empowerment, and generally eschewed the civil rights movement as a bargain with the (white) Devil. His protégé Malcolm X continued to preach the separatist message of the Nation, but after converting to orthodox Islam he began to moderate his message before his assassination in 1965.[209] While King and other traditional movement leaders did not embrace the black nationalism and separatism of groups like the Nation, their new focus on economic conditions emphasized black self-sufficiency and also led to a more harsh assessment of white America. But even as movement's focus began to change from 1965 onward, groups like the CIC still had a few battles left to fight in the realm of the "traditional" civil rights struggle.

In 1965 the civil rights movement undertook a great push for voting rights with the marches in Selma, Alabama. Following the murder of a voter registration drive worker, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) enlisted the help of Martin Luther King to organize a protest march from Selma to the state capital of Montgomery. In March of that year, state troopers attacked marchers as television cameras recorded the violence. President Johnson stepped in to offer federal protection to the protesters, and later that year signed the Voting Rights Act to remove the right of states to impose voting restrictions. Like much of the rest of the nation, the Bay Area was shocked by the hatred and violence of the repression of the Selma demonstrators. King came to the city soon after the violence to deliver a

[209] Malcolm X, The Autobiography of Malcolm X, p. 340.

sermon at Grace Episcopal Cathedral and urged the nation to participate in an economic boycott against Alabama.

King also invited clergy of all denominations from around the nation to come help his efforts in Selma. Catholics answered with an "enormous response," and marching nuns and priests hoping to add a special visual image for the cameras.[210] Nationwide, the NCCIJ helped galvanize Catholic participation by coordinating with local CIC chapters. Matt Ahmann, Executive Director of the NCCIJ, saw Selma as being the first real opportunity for CIC members to become "full-fledged members of the movement."[211] Several dioceses across the country gave permission for their residents, clerical and lay, to join the protest in Selma, while others were more cautious. McGucken did give permission, and the NCCIJ records list a delegation of three CIC members from the Bay Area as going to Selma: Gertrude Behan, Mary Connoughton and Rev. Timothy Monohan.[212] As will be seen, the records in San Francisco also suggest other local Catholics went to Selma, including at least one woman religious. However important the contributions of laypersons and even clerics were to the Selma protest, the prevailing image of Catholic participation in the event was the presence of women religious. March leaders even purposely positioned sisters in habits on the front lines, not only to make a visual statement for the cameras but also because the presence of the sisters was credited with helping to

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[210] Davis, p. 256.
[211] Hite, p. 282.
[212] ibid., p. 290. Monohan's going to Selma also is mentioned in a letter of Frances Newell to McGucken, AASF, Social Justice Commission Papers, March 28, 1965.

minimize the potential for violence.[213] Their presence combined with that of CIC members and others helped position the Church as an institution in favor of direct social action on civil rights in the American public's imagination.

Despite that, and despite the widespread revulsion at the tactics of the segregationists, not all Catholics were in favor of having the Church involved with the marchers. As mentioned previously, Bishop Toolen disapproved of outside Catholic participation in the marches, and the Catholics of Selma were comfortable with a local church community that was still "strictly segregated, with African Americans and whites worshiping at separate parishes."[214] Attempts to change the status quo had been met with fierce resistance, and supporters of civil rights were often shocked at the vitriol displayed by detractors. Bay Area participant Mary Connoughton reported such incidents as a Selma laywoman who refused Communion from a priest supportive of the marchers and then remarked, "Why don't you go to hell?"[215] But as even outside visitors to Selma were shocked to find fellow Catholics who disapproved of the Church's involvement, CIC members in the Bay Area also found that reaction against participation in Selma was not confined to the Deep South. In the Bay Area, several parishes did contribute funds to send participants to Selma. But one CIC member recalled how her parish priest gave permission and financial help to send one of the parish sisters to Selma: "Talk about

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[213] ibid., p. 315.
[214] McGreevey, p. 155.
[215] AASF, Mary Connaughton Papers. Such an incident shows that anticlericalism (or at the very least antiauthoritarianism) would not prove to be the sole province of the left in the American Church.

a reaction – wow! People were angry – really got nasty. Msgr. stood his ground."[216] McGucken also heard from those in the archdiocese who, following the events in Selma, resisted the notion of the "Holy Catholic Church being used as an instrument of social agitation and reform."[217]

CIC members Behan and Connoughton also joined three pastors from the Archdiocese of San Francisco and other laypersons in Selma that year, where they met local black families through the First Baptist Church in Selma.[218] Letters to one of the Bay Area participants testify that the group continued their relationship with the people of Selma, contributing financially to one struggling black family there after the marches had ended.[219] The archdiocese also contributed to helping the people of Selma by establishing the Selma Hospital Fund Committee. Members included SFCIC founder Terry Francois as well as Archbishop McGucken.[220] Connaughton eventually returned to Selma to work as a registered nurse in Good Samaritan Hospital. It was run by the Edmundite Fathers, the same order which had ordained San Francisco's first black priest. In the end, participation in the events in Selma, despite the controversy in some parishes, proved to be one of the few times the CIC and the archdiocese would act in relative harmony with each other.

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[216] Strong, Survey Answers & Interviews, #12.
[217] AASF, Civil Rights, 1953-, Martin to McGucken, May 25, 1965.
[218] "Life Among Anguished," The Monitor, April 1, 1965, p.1.
[219] AASF, Mary Connaughton Papers, Webb to Hull, May 5, 1965.
[220] AASF, Mary Connaughton Papers.

In the summer of that same year, following run-ins with the archdiocese and expulsion, MPCIC President Henry Organ staged a final parting shot in the media by publicly "quitting" the Catholic Church. Organ, an African-American, did not spare the archdiocese or the archbishop in his comments to the press, and criticized McGucken for his "phlegmatic, cowardly role" in the civil rights movement.[221] He also called on Catholics dissatisfied with the church's civil rights activities to withdraw financial support from the Church and Catholic schools. While Organ's move was fairly extreme, such actions did signify a growing dissatisfaction with the institutional Church on the part of civil rights activists. Others expressed their protest not by quitting but withdrawing from the official institution and forming what Peter Steinfels has called an "underground church."[222] Protesting Catholics celebrated liturgies in their homes with a greater spirit of "informality and spontaneity" than they found in their own parishes.[223]

Organ's call produced no exodus from the Catholic Church, but his action did some notoriety among more secular circles. In Palo Alto, the home of Stanford University and the center of the confrontational MPCIC, another Catholic enterprise was undergoing a radical transformation. *Ramparts* had been established as a literary journal by a group of Catholic laypersons in 1962. But as the decade

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[221] "Organ 'Quits' Catholic Church," Palo Alto Times, August 31, 1965, p.2.
[222] Peter Steinfels, A People Adrift: The Crisis of the Roman Catholic Church in America, New York: Simon and Schuster, 2003, p. 175.

[223] ibid.

progressed, the journal took on an increasingly political bent and eventually became a leading intellectual outlet of the left wing. Beginning with editor Warren Hinckle, and with other controversial figures such as *Black Like Me* author John Howard Griffin and activist David Horowitz joining *Ramparts*, it became a mouthpiece for 1960's radicalism. In the heat of the incidents in Selma, *Ramparts* editor Edward Keating also filed a $2.5 million libel suit against Alabama Gov. George Wallace after Wallace criticized the magazine as "pro-Communist."[224] Organ was a friend of Keating, who saw reports of Organ's decision to leave the Church in the local press. Keating wrote Organ to congratulate him on his move, wondering how "so many Negroes can become Catholics and, once Catholic, remain Catholic in view of all the betrayals made by the so-called leaders of the Church."[225]

Others associated with the CIC had even more controversial connections with the radical left. In 1966 in Oakland, black activists Bobby Seale and Huey P. Newton founded the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense. The Black Panthers were a radical response to the violence that had been done to African Americans throughout the country during the civil rights struggle, and espoused black self-determination and the use of any means necessary, including violence, to achieve it. The party also attracted the support of white leftists like Horowitz as it became established in the Bay Area and throughout the nation. Their violent rhetoric, and some mysterious murders among the membership, would eventually turn supporters

[224] "Selma," The Monitor, April 1, 1965, p.2.
[225] Keating to Organ (Provided by Henry Organ), September 3, 1965.

like Horowitz against them. But they also had others in the Bay Area community who supported their other, more peaceful efforts to help the black community, including CIC chaplain Fr. Eugene Boyle. He had become the pastor of Sacred Heart parish in the Western Addition in 1968. One of the Panther's most well-known social programs was providing free breakfasts to poor children. Boyle agreed to let the Panthers run the program from Sacred Heart's basement in 1969. Needless to say, the decision was controversial. In response to the rise of black militant movements, the FBI launched a covert operations team known as COINTELPRO to try and keep the militants from gaining influence in the black community. Soon after the Panthers had moved into Sacred Heart, the parish became the center of controversy after a coloring book was found there in which cartoons praised cop-killers and depicted "dead pigs."[226] Boyle was widely condemned, and lost his teaching position in the archdiocesan seminary. Only later would an investigation of the FBI find that the coloring book had been planted to discredit the relationship between the Panthers and Sacred Heart.

After civil rights, no other issue inflamed passions so much during that era as America's involvement in Vietnam. At first a little-known conflict in a far-off land, Vietnam ignited a firestorm of protest in the country as the United States became more deeply involved. The hero of liberals after shepherding through the

[226] AASF, Boyle Memoirs. Boyle also recalled harassment by the San Francisco police before the coloring book incident. During the breakfast program hours, police would congregate around the parish and brandish nightsticks.

Civil Rights Act, President Johnson soon became the scourge of anti-war activists and eventually declined to run for another term in 1968, largely due to dismay at his conduct of the war. Vietnam was not just an issue of peace versus war. Activists who had fought for civil rights could not fail to point out that many of the draftees fighting and dying in Vietnam were African American, and that many of them did not have the resources to opt out of service like white draftees. Martin Luther King became increasingly vocal against the war, and by 1967 publicly questioned how the United States could send black and white off to die together when the nation could not successfully integrate its schools and neighborhoods.

Despite an almost automatic identification between activists of all stripes in the 1960's and the antiwar movement, many civil rights activists were hesitant at first to protest Vietnam, particularly while troops were still in combat. Another complication was the ever-present charge from the right of being Communist or at least sympathetic to Communism. Protesting the United States government's efforts to defeat the Viet Cong could only add fuel to the fire. At the time the war began to escalate around 1965, the Social Justice Commission was unwilling to get involved. While Catholics would "reluctantly" tolerate civil rights activities, Commission members believed "involvement in the peace movement would have been perceived as subversive."[227] Even Henry Organ, not one to shy away from controversy, recalls his own initial unease with protesting the war.[228]

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[227] ibid.
[228] Organ, Survey Answers & Interviews, interview notes.

Still, several prominent Catholic figures in the 1960's took the lead in raising questions about the war and adding a Catholic voice to the growing opposition in America. On the moderate end of the spectrum, Archbishop Paul Hallinan of Atlanta became one of the first in the American hierarchy to address the war publicly. In 1966, Hallinan and his auxiliary bishop Joseph Bernardin issue a pastoral letter that, while not condemning American intervention, insisted that political leaders "fully inform us of the facts and issues."[229] On the more radical end, perhaps the most famous names in the Catholic anti-war movement of the time were the Berrigan brothers, Daniel and Philip. Both Berrigans were ordained priests, and had become active in the civil rights movement. Philip Berrigan had worked with African Americans as a Josephite, an experience that strongly impressed him with the call to fight for social justice in the United States.[230] They achieved national prominence in 1968 after organizing the "Catonsville Nine" protest. Wearing clerical collars, the brothers led a group into the Knights of Columbus hall in Catonsville, Maryland, a suburb of Baltimore where the local Selective Service office was located, and seized draft board records, subsequently burning them. The Berrigans would go on to participate in several anti-war protests, and served time in prison for their efforts. Their position as priests made them heroic to many in the anti-war movement, and at the same time earned them the enmity of fellow Catholics who considered them to

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[229] Thomas Shelley, "Hallinan, Paul J.," in The Encyclopedia of American Catholic History. Ed. Michael Glazier and Thomas J. Shelley. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1997, p 613.

[230] William Au, The Cross, The Flag, and The Bomb: American Catholics Debate War and Peace, 1960-1983. Greenwood Press: Westport, CT, 1985, p. 142.

be simply "troublemakers."[231] While the Berrigans had much in common with the emerging radical anti-war movement during the Vietnam era, their pacifist stance drew upon Church social teachings and the "worker priest" movement in Europe. But in combining these two strains of intellectual though—the radical critique of the New Left against the United States and the long social teaching tradition of the Church—the Berrigans exemplified a Catholic criticism of American society that went beyond the more usual call of social activists for the United States to live up to its ideals. For the Berrigans, and other radical Catholic pacifists such as Thomas Merton, America's history of racism, expansionism and war in fact represented truly American "ideals."[232] Their criticism was based on a view of America as a force wholly motivated by the capitalist system, in which individualism, greed and economic domination trumped concern for humanity or social justice.[233] While such a view may seem to have more in common with contemporary leftist thought than with Catholicism, it is important to remember that even historical papal pronouncements such as the 1891 encyclical *Rerum Novarum* had criticized *laissez faire* capitalism for engendering the "greed of unchecked competition."[234]

The Berrigans were not alone in bringing the tradition of Catholic intellectual and social thought to anti-war activism. That tradition had become exemplified in

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[231] Cline, Francis X. "Catonsville Journal: Keeping Alive the Spirit of Vietnam War Protest." The New York Times: May 3, 2001.
[232] Au, p. 144.
[233] ibid.
[234] Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII on Capital and Labor [The Vatican, online version, May 2004, www.vatican.va/holy_father/leo_xiii/encyclicals]

the United States by the Catholic Worker movement. Drawing on European Catholic intellectual thought through co-founder Peter Maurin, the *Catholic Worker* newspaper and the movement behind it represented an attempt by Maurin and his partner Dorothy Day to temper unfettered capitalism in the United States with economic and social justice. Embedded within the movement's signature philosophy of "personalism" was a tradition of pacifism, one that made the *Catholic Worker* infamous during World War II and split the movement's volunteers into two camps. Day was an ardent and absolute pacifist, even in the face of the Nazi threat and in the wake of the attack on Pearl Harbor. Such doctrinaire pacifism did not sit well with most Americans, and even some Catholic Worker members and chapters left the group over what they saw as at best an unreasonable attachment to strict pacifism, and at worst cooperation in activities that would allow the Nazi evil to spread unchecked. But the Catholic Worker movement's pacifist tradition came into its own during the Vietnam era, when anti-war sentiment became much more acceptable and widespread. The movement still proved to be controversial, beginning a tradition of protest against United States involvement even in the earliest years under President John Kennedy when most of the nation was unaware and unconcerned with the administration's policy in Southeast Asia. Catholic Worker volunteers later garnered headlines by burning their draft cards, which was illegal, and even by one volunteer's extreme action of setting himself on fire at the United Nations in imitation of the actions of some Vietnamese Buddhist monks.

Daniel Berrigan eventually ran afoul of his Jesuit superiors for comparing the volunteer to Christ, and when the order suggested he would be sent away to South America nearly 1,000 supporters wrote the *New York Times* in protest.[235] Berrigan was allowed to stay in the United States.

Despite their initial uneasiness with directly criticizing the United States role in Vietnam, Bay Area Catholics mirrored the rest of the nation in displaying a growing willingness as the decade progressed to adopt an anti-war stance. Following on the heels of earlier Catholic pacifist action to protest the war, the CIC finally entered the fray in 1966. And once again, the Midpeninsula chapter led the way. In July of that year, the group received some local publicity for a letter the chapter sent to President Johnson calling the war "immoral."[236] Despite the increasing opposition to United States involvement in the war, the use of such language in describing America's foreign policy still inflamed the passions of the war's supporters and Catholic anti-Communists, including the archbishop. In a letter to Burlingame resident Ed Arnold complaining of the CIC war protests, McGucken called it "strange" that those protesting United States involvement "never bother to condemn the atrocities of the North Vietnamese Communists." [237] Of course, McGucken was undoubtedly incensed by the CIC's continuing habit of seeking the media spotlight, probably more so than for their stand against the war. In fact, as the

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[235] Hennessey, p. 319.
[236] AASF, Social Justice Commission Papers, San Mateo Times, July 30, 1966.
[237] AASF, Social Justice Commission Papers, McGucken to Arnold, August 2, 1966.

war dragged on opposition to United States involvement in Vietnam seems to have become the general position among San Francisco Catholics. Despite their earlier reservations, Social Justice Commission members also had begun to address the issue by 1966. Commission member John Delury was invited in June to join the American Friends Service/Peace Education Committee, which he did.[238] Later that year, the committee ran advertisements in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* affirming the right of Americans "not to go to Vietnam to kill or be killed" and called for "immediate cessation of U.S. bombing and the beginning of a clearly stated and swiftly phased withdrawal."[239] The Commission also participated in a candlelight vigil in Union Square calling for peace negotiations in 1967, subsequently organizing "peace caravans" and other vigils calling for the cessation of hostilities. The Commission's increasing willingness to get involved was reflective of Catholic anti-war groups and activists throughout the nation, who as the war escalated were becoming increasingly frustrated by the lack of an official condemnation from the Church.[240] No record exists of McGucken either publicly or privately condemning the Commission's efforts, which could suggest once again that the archbishop was much more tolerant of dissent when he had some control over it. The fact that his letter to Arnold, mentioned above, was written even as the

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[238] AASF, Social Justice Commission Papers, Stevenson to Delury, June 6, 1966. Delury's presence on the committee seems to have tacitly made the Social Justice Commission a participant, which is suggested by the presence of committee meeting notes in the official records of the Social Justice Commission.
[239] AASF, Social Justice Commission Papers, October 11, 1966.
[240] Au, p. 142.

Social Justice Commission became increasingly involved in criticizing the war signifies McGucken's caution in being seen as too much on the side of the protesters.

In addition to Vietnam, the CIC began to expand its focus to other social justice issues in the second half of the 1960s. One growing concern among liberal activists in this period, and particularly for Catholics, was the plight of Latino immigrants in the United States. Immigrants, both legal and illegal, had been crossing the border in increasing numbers, particularly in California, over the past several decades. Seeking work, they often engaged in temporary and seasonal tasks harvesting the agricultural bounty of the Golden State for very little money. But they were more often than not overworked and vastly underpaid. Large growers advocated the continuation of government efforts to encourage Mexican migrant laborers or *braceros* to work on California farms. While they argued that competition with native and naturalized workers would drive up wages, critics charged that the *braceros* only made conditions worse by offering a constant supply of cheap labor. The plight of these farm workers had been brought into the living rooms of the nation on Thanksgiving Day of 1960 after the documentary *Harvest of Shame*, produced by journalist Edward R. Murrow to expose the origins of the food on America's dinner tables, was televised.

The movement for better working conditions and higher wages picked up steam after finding a new voice in Cesar Chavez. Chavez was introduced early in his

career to Catholic social thought by San Francisco priests working in the barrio of neighboring San Jose. His combination of political action such as strikes with the Catholic symbolism of fasting and veneration of Our Lady of Guadalupe made him the "most explicitly religious labor leader in American history."[241] Chavez had been involved in several political campaigns among the Latinos of California throughout the 1950's, organizing voter registration drives and battling racial discrimination. In 1962 he founded the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA) in Delano, California. The NFWA struck against the area's table and wine grape growers in 1965, which led to a successful five-year boycott of grapes nationwide. In 1966 the NFWA merged with a coalition of other interest groups to form the United Farm Workers. Eugene Boyle had become involved after organizers asked the Social Justice Commission to send clergy to help the farm workers. According to Boyle, the labor movement was initially wary of being identified with the farm workers, and he had to enlist the help of Monsignor George Higgins, Director of the Social Action Department for the National Catholic Welfare Conference (later renamed the National Conference of Catholic Bishops/United States Catholic Conference), in getting recognition from organized labor for the farm workers.[242]

Catholic activists quickly became involved with the UFW and helped bring its issues to the forefront. Unlike some earlier issues, the farm workers' movement attracted the full support of both the more moderate Social Justice Commission as

[241] Hennesey, p. 326.
[242] AASF, Boyle Memoirs.

well as the CIC. McGucken seems to have been fully supportive of efforts to help the farm workers, and through the Commission approved archdiocesan financial support for the UFW soon after its founding. The archdiocese also sent Bishop Hugh Donohoe to testify after Sen. Robert Kennedy scheduled a hearing on the farm workers' efforts before the Senate Subcommittee on Migratory Labor in March of 1966. CIC chapters and members did their part throughout the strike by collecting food and clothing for the workers and driving the supplies into the valley for distribution, often in tandem with archdiocesan efforts. The rare synergy between the CIC and the archdiocese on this issue was a remarkable achievement, and also contrasted sharply with some other religious involvement in the farm workers' movement. On the Protestant side of the issue, some of those involved invoked the well-worn dichotomy between "moral" and strictly "political" issues in condemning religious participation in the strikes. The Delano Ministerial Association condemned outside clergy for coming to the area and declared that there was no "moral issue involved. The clergy have no business being involved."[243]

Yet unlike some previous controversies involving religious involvement in labor disputes, the Delano strikes did not pit the prevailing Protestantism of the owners against the prevailing Catholicism of the workers. Many of the growers in the area were also Catholics, and in addition to the ministers' association were joined by the Catholic bishop of Monterey-Fresno, Aloysius Joseph Willinger, in

[243] Hadden, p. 185.

criticizing the strikers.[244] Given that, the fact that the CIC and the archdiocese were largely working together on UFW issues was a remarkable achievement. But the harmonious efforts of the archdiocese and the CIC on behalf of farm workers did not last forever. In April of 1966, MPCIC President Mary Ash wrote to McGucken and accused the archdiocese of being "slow to react [to the farm workers] until pressed by the Senate subcommittee investigation."[245] Still, in the end, the Church as a whole became so closely identified with the farm workers' movement that clergy and religious were a common sight on the picket lines as the 1960's progressed. Their presence served to give the movement a moral legitimacy that was difficult to counteract. A former CIC member recalled one large farm owner who hired an outside group to come in and break up a strike on his property. Asked by a television reporter if he were not ashamed to be using such violent tactics against the farm workers and their supporters, the owner replied, "Hell no, they had all those nuns and priests!"[246]

The rare agreement between the CIC and the archdiocese on efforts to assist the marchers in Selma and the farm workers in California had become by 1966 the exception to the rule in their relationship. The seemingly constant struggle over authority, arguments for action over caution and the willingness of the group to point fingers at the Church strained relations between CIC members and Catholic

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[244] Hennesey, p. 327.
[245] AASF, Social Justice Commission Papers, Ash to McGucken, April 28, 1966.
[246] Breen, Survey Answers & Interviews, #11.

officials and contributed to a decline in the group's activities. Following the UFW strikes of 1966, the CIC with the exception of the sporadic Cathedral protests gradually faded from the headlines, while the Social Justice Commission continued to take control over the archdiocese's agenda. CIC members also increasingly found other outlets for their efforts, and were in many cases better able to find a match between their interests and temperaments with other organizations. Meanwhile, the continuing resistance of many in the Bay Area, including Catholics, to fundamental change in the racial atmosphere helped contribute to a growing feeling that the movement had essentially run out of steam. For the CIC this perception would soon prove to be true.

Chapter IX

The Movement Splinters

As the sixties came to a close, the CIC chapters in the Bay Area continued to decline as members became more involved with groups that offered direct action and the archdiocese replaced the role of the group with its Social Justice Commission. Racial attitudes began to harden in the Bay Area as well as the rest of the country, leading to violent demonstrations and riots. Even before the devastating riots nationwide that followed the death of Martin Luther King, San Francisco would see its worst racial incident in 1966. In the predominately black Hunters Point neighborhood as will be seen, nearly 400 people were arrested and 51 injured in violent actions following the shooting death of a black suspect by a white policeman. However, the CIC did not just abruptly die out. Its scholarship fund would continue for decades to come, and its former members took their activism and commitments to other groups such as CORE and the NAACP. They also continued their mission in various careers, even in elected office, and with other liberal activists of the era helped change forever the political nature of the Bay Area.

By 1966 the backlash against the civil rights movement and liberalism in general was in full swing. In California, two years after Prop 14 was overwhelmingly approved, the Democratic Party lost its hold on the statehouse to a former Democrat and actor who had become one of the state's leading conservatives. Ronald Reagan campaigned in 1966 against what he and many other California conservatives saw as the excesses of liberal activism. During his administration, he was particularly keen on curbing the radical "Free Speech" student movement at Berkeley. In 1968, Reagan's fellow southern Californian Richard Nixon, who had lost the California governor's race in 1962, was elected President on a platform that promised to restore law and order to a nation torn by violent protests. Clearly, the tide was turning in favor of conservatives, who had succeeded in persuading the political middle that activists had gone too far. Their cause was helped by the splintering of the left. The unity of the civil rights movement had masked vast differences among activists on other political and social issues. The emergence of those issues, and the expanded view of the racial question from its black and white focus, diffused the energy and single-minded purpose of the earlier civil rights movement.

By the mid 1960's splits within civil rights groups between black and white, and confrontational and cautious, had already laid the groundwork for a splintering of the movement. Some of the more radical activists also began to see civil rights as a diversion from the real struggle for social transformation of American society.

Philip Berrigan eventually rejected the civil rights movement as an attempt to "buy off black people with laws that would not fundamentally change their status in society."[247] But even with these widening differences, the movement was still able in certain instances to rally its adherents as the decade progressed around issues that galvanized activists. The growing resentment among the left against involvement in Vietnam continued to provide a focus for liberal activism. Lyndon Johnson's refusal to run again for President in 1968 also ushered in the promise of a new Kennedy era, after former Attorney General and then Senator Robert Kennedy quickly jumped to the lead in the Democratic primaries. Kennedy had long been a favorite of civil rights activists, more so even than his brother the president, and his campaign became a unifying event for the American left after the disillusionment of the Johnson era and Vietnam. But it was also, arguably, the last such unifying event. Kennedy's assassination in June of 1968 threw the Democratic left into disarray and helped lay the groundwork for Nixon's election that fall.

Even before 1968, another more serious split was widening within the black community itself, which threatened the unity necessary to continue the civil rights struggle. The black pride and black power movement, headed by groups like the Black Panthers, had begun to infuse a kind of "us vs. them" mentality within the black community itself that threatened to divide it, even as black and white America continued to be divided from each other in many ways. The shift of civil rights

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[247] Au, p. 146.

leaders in the later 1960's to economic justice issues reflected the stubborn continuation of terrible poverty within the black community. Many of the earlier civil rights victories in places like San Francisco had betrayed a decidedly middle class air – Willie Mays and Willie Brown had fought to purchase homes in neighborhoods too expensive for many black residents of the Bay Area. Having fought together to remove the legal trappings of segregation, the more upwardly mobile within the black community were seen by poorer African Americans as entering into a white American society that was still closed off to the poor. Residents of predominantly black neighborhoods, often un- or underemployed, viewed middle class blacks in desegregated neighborhoods as "Uncle Toms" who had sold out their heritage and culture. In the early days of the movement, well-educated and relatively well-off African Americans such as King on the national scale and Terry Francois in San Francisco were often perceived as perfect spokespersons for civil rights. Less than a decade later, such "white" attributes rendered them unfit to speak on behalf of the black community, as far as many younger and more militant African Americans were concerned.

Helping to contribute to that split within the black community and the civil rights movement was the civil unrest that swept the nation from the mid 1960's onward. California suffered a sever setback in race relations in 1965 in Los Angeles. That August, in the predominately black neighborhood of Watts, one of the worst racial riots in American history led to the deaths of 34 people with over 1,000

injured. The riot stunned supporters of civil rights with its violence and hatred, born not only of anger against racism but against crushing poverty and an utter loss of hope in the future as well. The rioting helped mark a turning point in the civil rights movement, between a focus on strictly political victories and the realization that the plight of African Americans in the United States involved much more than voting rights and fair housing laws. Those mired in poverty and cynicism had no interest in voting, and the right to buy a house in a white, middle class neighborhood was almost laughably cruel to the residents of areas like Watts. Perhaps even a newly resurgent conservative movement may not have been able to change the political course in California had the liberal base remained united. But in the aftermath of Watts, the roles of civil rights supporters began to be recast. The tensions already seen between the more "activist" wings of groups like the CIC and those opposed to rocking the boat too much became more permanent divisions. Those who supported the civil rights movement in general, and opposed such efforts as Prop 14, still had to draw the line following the eruption of violence in Watts. President Johnson acknowledged the underlying issues of poverty and hopelessness behind the rioting, but he also forcefully condemned "snipers and looters," saying "neither old wrongs nor new fears can ever justify arson or murder."[248]

Civil unrest and its attending divisions came to San Francisco the following year during the Hunters Point riot. Hunters Point was a predominantly black

[248] Lyndon B. Johnson Library and Museum, Selected Speeches of Lyndon Baines Johnson, "Statement Following the Watts Riots," August, 1965.

neighborhood in the southeastern section of the city, located near the remaining dockyards on the San Francisco side of the bay. Though much of the maritime activity and commerce and moved to the larger Port of Oakland during the twentieth century, some shipping activity remained in San Francisco areas like Hunters Point. Even as late as 1966 some residents still lived in the decaying "temporary housing" that had been erected in the area during World War II to house black workers. Since the war, while African Americans increasingly left other largely black neighborhoods like the Western Addition, the black population of Hunters Point grew. The residents were largely poverty stricken, and the area was under the control of the San Francisco Housing Authority. Hunters Point was San Francisco's version of the classic American ghetto of the 1960s. Residents were policed by officers employed by the Housing Authority under the supervision of the San Francisco police station in nearby Potrero Hill. However, officers rarely responded to anything less than murder or serious assaults, attributing the petty theft, fighting and gambling that occurred in Hunters Point every day to the proclivity of its residents.[249]

On September 27, 1966, a white officer shot and killed a sixteen year old African American who was fleeing from a stolen car. Within a few hours angry residents had gathered and demanded that the officer be charged with murder.

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[249]Arthur Hippler, "The Game of Black and White at Hunters Point," in Culture and Civility in San Francisco (Howard Becker, ed.). San Francisco: Transaction Books, 1971.

Following a firefight the next day that was started by the police, black residents rioted for several days, finally ending the violence on October 1. While not on the scale of the Watts riot, the Hunters Point riot served as yet another reminder that despite its reputation, San Francisco continued to have the same racial problems that many other cities and towns across America were facing. Black anger at the police force, inflamed by decades of neglect, economic depravation and racist attitudes, fueled the riot and exposed a serious rift in the city's social fabric. The overwhelmingly white and mainly Irish Catholic police force had treated Hunters Point residents with contempt for decades. The relationship between the black and Irish communities had a long and rocky history throughout American history. Over one hundred years before the Hunters Point riot, the Draft Riots in New York City had exposed a deep division between the Irish and African Americans there.[250] And despite a century of Church social teachings to the contrary, the relationship had not improved much well into the twentieth century. The police were reported to be mostly unconcerned with whatever damage the black residents of Hunters Point did to themselves or their own neighborhoods. Their job was to contain the violence from spilling over into the city's white neighborhoods. Like other incidents of black civil unrest, from Watts to the riot in South Central Los Angeles in 1991, the Hunters Point riot was not an incident in which African Americans took out their

[250] While the Draft Riots, which were put down by Irish troops, did expose racial tensions between white Irish Catholics and African Americans, Charles Morris notes that economic issues (blacks were not subject to conscription and stood ready to enter the labor market) also fueled the tension, pp. 76-78.

frustration against the white power structure with violence against whites in the well-off neighborhoods of the city. Instead, the violence was confined to areas of the city that were already devastated from poverty and neglect.

Yet while the rift certainly existed between black and white, rich and poor, and the citizenry and police, it also existed among African Americans themselves. In order to help quell the burgeoning riot, Mayor Jack Shelley went to Hunters Point within hours of the shooting. He and the police brought along black members of the city's Human Rights Commission, including black City Supervisor and founding CIC member Terry Francois. Shelley and the police undoubtedly hoped that the city's black leaders could speak to the Hunters Point residents in a way the mayor could not, and expected their presence to help diffuse the situation. Instead, Hunters Point African Americans were insulted and enraged at the attempt, holding as much if not more resentment towards these representatives of the black middle class within the city's power structure as they held towards the white police officers. Francois was booed, and pelted with rocks during his attempt to calm the crowd. A Hunters Point resident later expressed his thoughts towards Francois to a reporter. He summed up in harshly coarse language the hostility some felt towards fellow African Americans who they thought had become part of the problem rather than the solution: "[Francois] forgot he's black, but when we put them fuckers on the run, they sure let him know at City Hall right away. Sheeit man, who the fuck he think

he's foolin?" [sic][251] To some of the city's poorest African Americans, Francois' trailblazing efforts to found the CIC, his work with the Human Rights Commission and the NAACP, and even his breakthrough election as the first black supervisor counted for nothing in the face of the overwhelming and crushing poverty and neglect in areas like Hunters Point. Simply being black was no longer adequate to act as a spokesperson for the black community – now it mattered what *kind* of black person one was.

Equally important to the splintering of the civil rights movement was the increasing focus outside the black and white spectrum of the early days. The CIC had already widened its focus to efforts on behalf of Hispanic migrant workers, and in San Francisco the presence of other minority communities begged the question of whether civil rights was a movement that would encompass all non-whites in America. However, the CIC's willingness to branch out to other activities outside the traditional realm of "civil rights" and African-American issues also helped, as one member recalls, to "muddy" its goals: "[The CIC] got involved in cultural parity questions (i.e., not civil rights,) esp[ecially] since many Asian and S[outh] Am[erican] immigrants brought other issues of varied ethnic, racial and cultural norms to the fore."[252] The Bay Area also was changing rapidly, and its new racial and social dimensions did not fit the old "black and white" model. Asians, having been a significant ethnic presence in San Francisco since the nineteenth century,

[251] ibid., p. 67.
[252] Barth, Survey Answers & Interviews, #10.

began to outnumber other, more traditional immigrant groups, and by 1960 represented the largest percentage of foreign-born residents in San Francisco.[253] As the issue of race became more diffuse, groups like the CIC lost much of their original focus.

Catholic advocates of racial justice continued their struggle in the second half of the 1960's, but they also struggled with a growing disparity between their goals and the focus of the Church hierarchy, particularly in Rome. While many Catholics both clergy and lay, from CIC members all the way to the Pope, had proclaimed a common mission to fight discrimination in the earlier years of the civil rights movement, the mainstream of the Church had viewed such legislative victories as the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts as largely accomplishing the goal. Once the reforming atmosphere of the Vatican II era had begun to fade after the council's closure, the hierarchy and new Pope Paul VI began to confront the question of how much renewal and reform was *too* much. The issue of the Church continuing to engage itself in America's racial struggle began to be taken up among the CIC chapters in the later 1960's. In August of 1967, at the annual NCCIJ meeting in Kansas City, the group voted to petition Pope Paul to issue an encyclical against racial discrimination. Local chapters of the CIC took up the call. In the Bay Area, the Santa Clara County group also wrote to the pope to back up the NCCIJ request. The group said that, due to the continuing refusal of some Catholics to view

[253] To the north and south of the city, Italians were still the largest foreign-born group in Marin and San Mateo Counties in 1960.

discrimination as a moral issue, "the definitive action of Your Holiness in the form of an encyclical" was needed.[254]

The call for an encyclical on discrimination was never answered by the pope. In fact, the next thing to come out of Rome was an encyclical, but not the one most reform-minded American Catholics had hoped for. In 1968 Paul VI issued the landmark document *Humanae Vitae*, which upheld the ban on the use of artificial means of birth control for Catholics. The encyclical stunned liberal Catholics on two different levels. To begin with, American Catholics in particular had become increasingly ambivalent about the use of artificial birth control, and many found no moral impediment to its use. In the heady days of the Vatican Council American Catholics had many reasons to suspect that Rome would eventually soften its opposition on this issue, and the decision to reaffirm traditional teaching came as quite a shock. That in itself was a second cause of uneasiness for liberal reformers in the Church.

In issuing *Humanae Vitae*, Paul VI seemed to be closing the window somewhat on the attempts by his predecessor to change the Church. As one author recently stated the encyclical became a sort of "Vietnam War" for the Church, marking a definitive turning point for many Catholics in how they viewed the legitimacy of Rome's moral authority.[255] By laying down a marker on contraception, Rome had begun to express a fear of change after several years of almost dizzying

[254] AASF, Social Justice Files Santa Clara, 1962-1967, August, 1967.
[255] Steinfels, p. 257.

reform. But if the Vatican had thought the encyclical would be an end to the discussion, or would stifle any further dissent, it was mistaken. Just a few days after *Humanae Vitae* was promulgated, a group of American Catholic theologians led by Charles Curran of Catholic University in Washington, DC, registering strong dissent to the encyclical and the belief that Catholics could determine with their individual conscience the appropriate circumstances under which use of artificial contraception would be permissible.[256] The fact that this dissent was registered quite publicly at a press conference in a downtown Washington hotel was another sign of the willingness of some American Catholics who disagreed with Rome to make appeals outside of the normal ecclesiastical channels and speak directly to the larger American public.

Rome's endorsement of traditional teaching on contraception also put the Church at odds with other religious groups and politicians who had been allied with Catholics in fighting for civil rights. To varying degrees, most Protestants by the 1960's did not have such a rigid view of artificial contraception. As early as 1930, the bishops of the Anglican Communion, meeting for their decennial Lambeth Conference, gave permission for its use in some circumstances, which eventually led to widespread Protestant tolerance of artificial contraception. Non-Catholics who sought to work with Catholic individuals and groups on the issues of poverty

[256] Kristine LaLonde, "Transformations of Authority: Reform, Rebellion, and Resistance in the Catholic Church of the 1960's," p. 324. LaLonde also notes on p. 328 that a subsequent public statement of dissent among members of the clergy in the Archdiocese of Washington included the signature of three priests who had been given permission by the archdiocese to march at Selma.

and civil rights did not have the luxury of simply agreeing to disagree once Rome had reiterated its position. In fact, the issue of contraception was central to much of the social thought on these problems. Lyndon Johnson became the first president to make access to birth control a government policy, considering family planning an "essential part of his antipoverty program."[257] That put him at odds with the Catholic bishops, who criticized his position in 1966. According to his former aide Joseph Califano, Johnson decided to try and compromise with the bishops because "before long they may be the only allies we have on Negro rights and the poverty program."[258] Califano helped negotiate a compromise in which the administration did not use such terms as "birth" or "population control," but the uneasy truce was a signal that social issues would become increasingly divisive among Catholics as the 1960's progressed.[259]

Frustration with Rome among the more radical civil rights and anti-war activists also would eventually help to sever Catholic participants from the roots of Church social teaching, particularly as Rome continued to refuse to make official

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[257] Joseph Califano Jr., "The Bishops and Me," in The Washington Post, June 27, 2004.
[258] ibid.
[259] Johnson, a Protestant, remained firm in his commitment to providing contraceptives while avoiding any requirement that would offend religious beliefs. It is interesting to wonder how this issue might have arisen had Kennedy remained alive and was president. He might very well have presided over the end of his own "Kennedy model" on the separation of church and state when it came to birth control policies. At any rate, this controversy foreshadows the breakdown of that model in the questions surrounding Catholic politicians and abortion rights that would arise in the future. It is also interesting to note the role reversal in examining the debates over civil rights and abortion rights, with pro-choice Catholic politicians echoing the rhetoric of the conservatives of the 1960's by insisting that their position is a matter of personal belief or individual conscience in which the Church should not intrude.

pronouncements on these issues. The fear of conservative prelates and laypersons at the beginning of the movement, that such social activism would eventually lead participants away from the Church's sphere of influence, largely turned out to be true. As Catholic social activism increasingly showed an inability to retain a clear Catholic identity, it showed its greater affinity to the wider and more secular movement for revolution in the United States.[260] While some Catholic activists, particularly those in the Catholic Worker movement, did retain a specifically Catholic identity, others found that their growing emphasis on direct social action and resistance was more easily and logically channeled through other organizations. The separation of Catholic activism from its ecclesiastical roots, therefore, eventually led to the fading away of a demonstrable "Catholic movement."[261]

The continuing controversies of the decade eventually took their toll on the CIC and its members. Their activities continued to alienate the group, and to some extent its cause, from moderate Catholics and the hierarchy. Beginning in the mid-1960's and continuing for the next several years, some CIC members took aim at a contemporary industrial giant and paper company, the Crown Zellerbach Corporation, for what they charged were its discriminatory hiring practices. Before leaving the Church, Midpeninsula President Henry Organ in particular was vocal on this subject, urging Archbishop McGucken to boycott the company. The archbishop

[260] Au, p. 151.
[261] ibid., p. 153.

refused, dismissing the idea as another futile attempt by the CIC to gain notoriety.[262] In addition, the company was an influential organization with roots in San Francisco. Its headquarters, built in downtown San Francisco in the 1950's, was a landmark in the development of glass "curtain wall" skyscrapers and represented the power of the city's financial base. But the issue did not die with McGucken's refusal. A CORE member and self-described SFCIC member later embarrassed the archdiocese with her attempts to protest a Crown Zellerbach facility in Bogalusa, LA, and in the words of a complaint lodged by the Archdiocese of New Orleans, to "integrate churches" there.[263] Despite assurances that she was not an official representative of the CIC and was essentially "well meaning," her activities only helped give the impression that the CIC was out of control and no longer useful. The archdiocese continued to curtail the official duties of the CIC chapters, and as their activities declined the group faded in importance. As one member puts it, "we just petered out."[264] The least controversial of the CIC's activities in the Bay Area, the scholarship fund for minority students, turned out to be the group's most enduring legacy. The fund continues today offering six new candidates per year $500 for college, with another $4,000 scholarship going to students of St. Elizabeth Seton Elementary School in San Mateo County.[265] At its end, the SFCIC's focus on education mirrored the intent of the original CIC in New York under La Farge to be

[262] AASF, Social Justice Commission Papers, McGucken to Organ, Aug. 15, 1965.
[263] AASF, Correspondence File, Civil Rights, 1953-, 1967.
[264] Strong, Survey Answers & Interviews, #10
[265] Ritson, Survey Answers & Interviews, #11

an educational institution, having come full circle from the CIC's founding through the turbulent 1960's.

That such a non-controversial effort would be the sole surviving activity of the CIC may belie its more radical later history, but makes sense in light of the hardening attitudes of Americans in the later 1960's. Despite all the efforts to secure fair housing, a slim majority of Americans (52 percent) still reported in a Harris poll of 1966 that they would be "upset if Negroes moved into their neighborhoods."[266] The continuing opposition to integrated neighborhoods and growing resistance to civil rights activism of any kind were closely related, according to the poll. While continuing to assert platitudes about the positive influence of the civil rights movement, a growing number of Americans in the later 1960's saw integration as moving too fast and bringing the issues of the civil rights movement from a more vague, national concept (focused in the South) to one affecting their own neighborhoods, and who was allowed to live in them. As the issue related to the Church, a bare majority (50 percent) of Catholics at the time agreed that the clergy should "not concern themselves with social, economic, and political questions," with a much larger number felt the clergy should not participate in demonstrations (63 percent).[267] Despite the earlier success, as the decade progressed groups like the CIC were confronted by almost as many challenges to transforming the racial attitudes of American Catholics as they had been at the beginning of the civil rights

[266] Hadden, p. 130.
[267] ibid., pp. 134-135.

movement. Much as they had found at the beginning of their struggle, CIC members in the Bay Area faced a bewildering and enervating racial atmosphere in the Bay Area as the group declined in importance. The long history of successful integration in public accommodations and schools was tempered by a continuing, and in some cases growing, backlash against full integration in housing and employment, the top priorities of the CIC during its existence. That reality left many racial activists with the impression that, "despite the efforts of interracial leaders and the civility of whites, the Golden Gate City's race relations represented a striking ambiguity."[268]

In the end, the question of how "successful" the CIC was in its efforts throughout the 1960's is not a simple one to answer. Members tended to split on the question, with those advocating greater action and more controversial tactics tending to see the group as less successful than those who tended towards pointing out the value in "raising awareness." But while the CIC in the Bay Area may certainly have never "solved" the race problem, or even moved the Church to the type of action some members wanted, it did seem to provide an outlet for social thought and action at a particularly important moment. On a larger scale, the San Francisco Bay Area at the time the CIC was established there was on the cusp of a great experiment in political and social protest that extended from the very radical to those who might normally not be expected to "rock the boat." The CIC offered some Catholics a means of engaging in the larger protest movement of the area

[268] Broussard, p. 240.

while still remaining at least somewhat grounded in the Church, despite the friction that followed. It also would eventually become an outlet for some Catholics to challenge the racial record of Church itself and its institutions, continuing a tradition stretching back to Thomas Wyatt Turner that gained new momentum following the reforms of Vatican II. One incontrovertible fact that can be pointed out is, the Archdiocese of San Francisco in the 1960's most certainly was made more aware of the many facets of the civil rights movement because of the CIC. The Church in the Bay Area also had a taste of many other issues and battles to come from the days of the CIC's activity. That was particularly true as some of the CIC members moved on to new issues and new struggles, taking with them a commitment to social justice that would inform a new generation. Though many of the issues to come would be more controversial than perhaps even the CIC could have imagined, much of the group's history contributed to the unique nature of religion and politics in the San Francisco area that developed following the civil rights movement. In that sense, the seeds that had fallen on stony ground also could be looked at from the perspective of another parable: "Truly, truly I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit." (John 12:21)

Epilogue

The Liberal Ascendancy in San Francisco

While the CIC and similar groups failed to achieve the totality of their various agendas, they helped contribute to the direction of the social-political development of San Francisco culture and history during and after the 1960's. The civil rights movement mobilized activists and trained an entire generation in the tactics and goals of direct social action. As the upheavals of the 1960's began to subside into the next decade, San Francisco and its new generation of leaders continued to carry the torch of liberal activism. The issues would certainly change; in fact, few of those involved in the CIC at the beginning could have predicted the direction of the liberal movement in the nation or in San Francisco. Those new issues also were increasingly at odds with the Church and Catholic teaching, and helped to bring about even more alienation between the American religious establishment and the social movement it had helped to inspire. But while the rift between contemporary liberalism and the Church grew wider in San Francisco during the 1970's, there was little doubt that the seeds of activism during that

decade had been sown when the Church was a more comfortable partner in social action.

As the seventies dawned in San Francisco, the city swam against the tide of events in Sacramento and Washington. Far from embracing the triumph of a new conservatism at the state and national levels, San Francisco's legacy of social action and free thinking in the 1960's continued and gradually swept away the older, more conservative power structure in City Hall. Although the chasm between the "old" and "new" persisted in the local church, Catholics still held sway when it came to the running of the city. However, something had fundamentally changed in the past decade of upheavals. The failure of the archdiocese to defeat Prop 14 foreshadowed the end of Catholic control of the political machinery, while the Church's constant struggles with internal groups like the CIC helped diminish its focus. At the same time, Catholics who had been involved in the civil rights movement and other social justice campaigns began to take the reins of political power. In San Francisco, the conservative backlash of the Reagan years was followed by a return to liberalism, but unlike the earlier generation of Democratic leaders the new generation was imbued with the activism of the previous decade. Leo McCarthy, who had been a member of the CIC in San Francisco, became Speaker of the Assembly in 1974 and remained in that position throughout the decade. In the 1980's, he served three terms as lieutenant governor. The Democrats regained the statehouse in 1975 with another Brown, the son of former Governor

Pat Brown and a former Jesuit seminarian. Jerry Brown's administration would prove to be one of the most liberal in the state's history, indeed throughout the nation, and he became a liberal icon for decades to come. A new generation of Catholics also rose up to take the helm in San Francisco, and they would deal with new issues that threatened to tear the Church and the city apart in a way the civil rights movement could not have envisioned.

In 1970, a state senator wrote to McGucken and assured the archbishop he would oppose S.B. 544 to legalize abortion in California.[269] The senator, George Moscone, and the subject of his letter marked a turning point in the relationship between the Catholic Church and California politics. With the civil rights issue (in many minds, that is) largely settled, new political issues inflamed California Catholics. The state was moving towards a more sexually permissive society that tolerated contraception, abortion, gay rights and sex outside of marriage. Unlike the civil rights struggle, these new social issues of the 1970's were unequivocally and vociferously opposed by the Catholic Church, and would give Catholic conservatives discredited by their stand against civil rights a newly recovered voice.

The Church in San Francisco had begun to turn its attention to the issue of abortion in the 1960's. Conservative columnist Val King, writing in the archdiocesan paper, touched on the issue in 1966, saying, "No marches on the

[269] AASF, Abortion, Moscone to McGucken, September 23, 1970.

legislature, no fiery placards, though the ultimate civil right of the unborn child – the right to life – is clearly at stake."[270] The implication, that liberal Catholic activists were dropping the ball doctrinally, is unmistakable. But civil rights activists did not all turn a blind eye when it came to this issue, despite the charges otherwise. SFCIC founder John Delury organized a campaign in 1967 to keep abortion from being legalized in California. He asked Catholics through the Social Justice Commission to write letters to Moscone, the state senate Democratic floor leader, to oppose the legalization bill.[271] Moscone was quickly rising through the ranks of powerful politicians in the Bay Area, having served as city supervisor before moving on to the state legislature. He was born and raised in San Francisco, attending St. Ignatius High School, and came back to the city to attend Hastings Law School. As an attorney, he was active in the civil rights movement and went to Mississippi in 1965 to assist the Freedom Democratic Party in getting out the black vote. His activism drew on the social justice teachings of the Church, and Moscone participated in activities with the Social Justice Commission. In comments to Commission members on Prop 14, Moscone was harsh in his assessment of "good Catholics" that ignored social justice issues:

> Catholics who would never think of eating meat on Friday or missing Mass on Sunday thought nothing of coming out publicly against the teachings of

[270] King, The Monitor, August 14, 1966.
[271] AADSF, Social Justice Commission Papers, Executive Committee Minutes, April 11, 1967. Moscone opposed it but voted to allow exceptions for rape, incest and the life of the mother, a position shared by then Gov. Ronald Reagan.

> the Church [concerning Prop 14]. As far as they were concerned, morality stopped when they considered their economic good was threatened.[272]

His election as mayor in 1977 by fewer than 2,000 votes ushered in a period of ultra-liberal political rule in the city. In the tradition of the CIC and other liberal activists, he became known for his opposition to grand construction projects made possible by urban renewal. The left had increasingly come to criticize the pro-business attitude of earlier Democratic mayors and accused them of conspiring with business leaders and developers to ruin the unique character of the city by enforcing what they called "Manhattanization." Moscone was closely aligned with Willie Brown (now a powerful state assemblyman) and Joe Freitas, a former CIC member who became San Francisco District Attorney in 1977.[273] Despite the similarity in party affiliation, the city's new power structure was remarkably more progressive than its predecessors of only a decade before.

Just before change came to San Francisco's City Hall, it had also come to the archdiocese the year before in the form of a new head. Following McGucken's retirement in 1977, John Quinn became the new archbishop. Quinn represented the moderate-to-liberal wing of the American hierarchy, and during his episcopate questioned the church's commitment to openness and collegiality as well as

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[272] "Ambition, Economics Block Social Justice," The Monitor, December 2, 1965. As the "old" and "new" Church took sides on these issues, they increasing used the same charge against one another – that the other side was not fully in compliance with Catholic thought and doctrine, be it social justice (fair housing) or social issues (abortion).

[273] Moscone also named a charismatic religious leader to head his Housing Commission, Jim Jones. Jones' close affiliation with Moscone, Brown and Freitas would come to haunt them after Jones, who was very successful in attracting urban African Americans to his congregation in the Western Addition, moved the "People's Temple" to Guyana and led them in a mass suicide in 1978.

controversial social doctrine like the opposition to contraception. Yet while this new breed of Catholic archbishop and politician temporarily came into its own, the liberal ascendancy engendered deep resentment among the old (and also largely Catholic) establishment. The police and fire departments in particular were staffed with "old guard" Catholics who viewed Moscone and his political affiliates as destroying San Francisco with their liberal policies. In a bit of foreshadowing, Moscone's last move in the state senate had been to secure passage of the state's gay rights bill. The year Moscone became mayor, San Francisco made history by electing an openly gay man as supervisor. Harvey Milk would align himself politically with the mayor, and together their policies continued to alienate the old guard, one of whom was Supervisor Dan White. White, an Irish Catholic native San Franciscan and former policeman who portrayed himself as the "great white hope for the conservative, old-line real San Franciscans," quit the Board of Supervisors in 1978 after clashing with Moscone and Milk.[274] Just two weeks later he returned to City Hall and shot Moscone and Milk dead, shocking the city and the nation. White went to St. Mary's Cathedral before turning himself in to his former police colleagues.

The aftermath of the Moscone and Milk assassinations caused a permanent rupture between the old Catholic culture of San Francisco and the city's newer reputation as a bastion of liberal tolerance. Conservative police rallied around

[274] San Francisco Examiner, November 8, 1998, p.C2.

White, and were reported to whistle "Danny Boy" and the Notre Dame fight song over the police radio following the shootings.[275] As District Attorney, Freitas' prosecution of the case became notorious after White's lawyers successfully argued the "Twinkie defense," claiming White was not responsible for his actions because of a reaction to eating too many sweets, which led to a lowered conviction of manslaughter. Liberal San Franciscans felt that the old-boy Catholic culture had made a last-ditch effort and closed around one of its own. The city erupted in rioting, with outraged residents burning squad cars and forcing the police to retreat.

Less than fifteen years before, San Francisco had been a town where the archbishop's blessing was actively sought before any major decisions were made. A conservative culture imbued the centers of power, from City Hall to the police and fire departments. The city had voted against fair housing, its residents often clashing with the "radical" tactics of civil rights activists. After the events of 1978, that San Francisco was officially gone.

[275] ibid.

The Catholic Interracial Council in the Archdiocese of San Francisco
Surveys and Interviews

In the fall of 1999 a survey was sent to former members of the various CIC chapters in the San Francisco Bay Area who responded to a notice in the archdiocesan newspaper, or who had heard of the survey through someone else. Twenty-six former members returned those surveys, and the results (one is a joint response from a husband and wife) are both summarized here and provided in full in alphabetical order, according to last name. Most responses followed the general pattern of the survey, which contained twelve questions, although some respondents chose to submit responses in their own format. The results are listed with as much effort to harmonize the responses as possible for easier reading. In those cases where a different style was used, the response contains a note identifying the entry as such. In cases where a question was left blank, it has been left out of the full response. In some cases other material such as personal interviews and memoirs are also included, and have been identified as such with notes.

Of the twenty six respondents, eight held some official position in their CIC chapter (5 men, 3 women). Only two of those surveyed are African American. While other African Americans who belonged to the CIC in the Bay Area are mentioned in the survey, the group was predominantly white. Male respondents slightly outnumbered female (16 men, 11 women), although the responses overwhelmingly

affirmed that the CIC chapters in the Bay Area were not known to practice any kind of gender discrimination. The response group is geared more towards the professional class, including attorneys and various management levels from other industries, and a few involved in academia. The geographical mix of the respondents is fairly representational of the original chapters. The two largest, the Midpeninsula and San Francisco groups, form the vast majority of responses (13 Midpeninsula and 10 San Francisco). Two respondents were involved in the East Bay CIC, and one other in the Santa Clara chapter.

As for the differences between the natures of the differing chapters, some respondents attributed the more confrontational nature of the Midpeninsula group to its leadership, particularly under presidents Henry Organ and Mary Ash. The proximity of two major universities to the outlying chapters, the University of California at Berkeley (East Bay) and Stanford University in Palo Alto (Midpeninsula), also helped provide an intellectual framework for the CIC chapters there and connected them with the larger movement of activism on college campuses in the 1960's.

In general, most viewed their experience with the CIC as positive, though they differ in views of its effectiveness. Some saw the group as almost completely ineffective, while others saw value in its educational and discussion activities. That difference in opinion is almost identical to the split between the "activists" and the discussion group model that existed during the years the CIC operated. Most felt

that at the least the CIC helped push fellow Catholics to a greater awareness of the civil rights struggle. Still, several respondents mentioned that other groups (NAACP and CORE in particular) and other religious bodies (Presbyterian and Jewish groups) were much more active and effective in the movement.

The majority of the respondents remain involved in the Catholic Church. Only one had joined another Christian denomination (Society of Friends), while two listed themselves as religiously unaffiliated (one of whom was the only non-Catholic at the time he participated in the CIC to answer the survey). One member, the former pastor of St. Ann's parish in Palo Alto, was excommunicated for marrying while in the priesthood. Another member who had left the church during the civil rights period had returned as of 1999. Despite the continuing self-identification of the majority of respondents as practicing Catholics, most of them professed varying degrees of frustration with the Church, particularly the hierarchy, and provide a good example of a group of American Catholics who remain within the Church even as they continue to disagree with some of its actions and policies.

Survey of Former CIC Members

1. Name

2. Address

3. Occupation (present)

4. Occupation (at time of participation in the CIC)

5. Are you presently an active communicant in the Catholic Church?

   If not, are you involved with any other religious body?

6. When were you involved with the CIC, and which chapter?

7. Were you ever elected to any official position in your group?

   If so, what was the position?

8. Were you involved in any other civil rights and/or racial identity groups?

   If so, which ones and at what times?

9. Discuss, if you wish, how you viewed your own race and/or gender as a factor in your participation in the CIC – in other words, what was it like to be a black or white member, or a woman? Did you think the group, in general, treated all its members equally? In your opinion, was the group evenhanded in its approach to women, particularly when it came to electing officers, planning events, etc.?

10. Discuss the church aspect of the CIC – did you see the Catholic Church as a force for change in civil rights, and did your opinion remain the same over time? How was the CIC a different civil rights group than other secular organizations? How was a Catholic approach to civil rights different from that of other religious groups, in your experience?

11. Please reflect on your experience with the CIC – did you find it, for instance, to be an effective force in the civil rights movement? Can you relate a particular incident or recollection that might help me better understand what the CIC was all about?

12. What are your recollections of the reactions of fellow Catholics to your involvement with the CIC – were others generally supportive or critical of your interests? How did the clergy and hierarchy react to your involvement, and

generally speaking did you find the archdiocese to be fully committed to supporting the civil rights movement in the Bay Area?

Survey Answers and Interviews

Ash, Mary

Occupation Now: Attorney

Occupation Previous: Housewife and Mother

Church Affiliation: Catholic

CIC Involvement: MPCIC, 1963-68

Position: President

Other Groups: CORE, NAACP

#9: "If those of us who belonged to the CIC had been asked this question at the time we would have undoubtedly found it baffling. For one thing, the concept of 'gender bias' had yet to be invented. Neither I nor, to my knowledge, any other women in the group felt disadvantaged because of our sex, or, at least, had much concern about it. More importantly, 'equality of treatment' was never an issue, because leadership of this purely voluntary, powerless organization conferred no status or prestige. None of us either desired or derived any economic or political advantages from our participation. I succeeded Henry Organ as president, solely because no one else was willing to serve and I was prevailed upon to do so."

#10: "I think most people joined the CIC because they believed that the Church should be in the forefront of the movement for racial equality. I doubt that most of us thought that it was, nor do I really think it became so. At the same time, I feel

sure that our belief that it is wrong to treat people differently because of the color of their skin was attributable to the basic teaching of the Church that we are all children of God. In my case, I'm sure it was. I grew up in San Mateo Co. in the 'forties and 'fifties and knew almost no blacks. None were in the Catholic grammar and high schools I attended. I can recall no discussions about the issue, in church, school or in my (white, middle class) family. I first became aware of racial injustice during high school when, on my own, I read about apartheid, then newly instituted in South Africa and was filled with indignation. Not until 1959 when I met a Jewish woman in a Red Cross baby-care class – we were both expecting our first children – who had been involved in CORE in Cincinnati did I become aware of the civil rights movement in the United States. The CORE chapter she established in San Francisco was the first civil rights group to which I belonged. The real division in the early days of the CIC, which I joined in the early 'sixties, was between those who, including myself, wanted the CIC to become an activist civil rights organization and those who preferred that it remain more of a discussion/educational group. In 1964 Henry Organ was elected president on a militant platform, whose planks included picketing the nomination of Barry Goldwater because of his opposition to the then-pending Civil Rights Bill. Hank had agreed to run, but only if the group adopted his platform. Those of us backing him spent many hours on the phone lobbying the membership and our efforts paid off. Most of the non-activists stopped coming to meetings but some continued to participate in fund raising activities for the

chapter's Scholarship Fund which continued well into the 'eighties. However, I don't recall any being bitter and some were at Louise Maier's. Under Hank's leadership, the CIC became essentially a civil rights organization, engaged in direct-action tactics such as picketing. We cooperated on various projects with the local chapters of CORE and the NAACP. The principal difference was that the CIC sought also to foster change in the institutional church, e.g., by urging it to use its purchasing power to increase black employment. We also went to the press when we found evidence suggesting that church institutions were complicit in discrimination, e.g., Catholic hospitals who assured callers posing as prospective patients that they would not have to room with blacks. Because of our militancy, the chapter found itself in conflict with the Chancery Office and other chapters in the Archdiocesan CIC, as your archival research has no doubt disclosed. One of our big issues was having blacks employed in the higher skilled trades on the construction workforce for the new St. Mary's Cathedral. Given the lily-white membership of the skilled trades unions and the utter inconceivability that the Archdiocese in so historically pro-union a town as San Francisco would employ a non-union contractor the effort was doomed to failure. After it became clear that the only blacks on the workforce would be laborers, we decided to picket the laying of the cornerstone, in what was a purely symbolic protest."

Epilogue:

Like several other 1960's activists (including P.J. O'Rourke and David Horowitz), Ash is now a conservative. Through her fellow MPCIC alumnus Henry Organ, Ash met and married Thomas Sowell after he became a fellow at Stanford's Hoover Institute in the 1980's. Sowell is one of the nation's foremost black conservatives, and currently has a nationwide syndicated newspaper column.

Barth, Ellen

Occupation Now: retired

Occupation Previous: Home Manager, Volunteer

Church Affiliation: Catholic

CIC Involvement: Berkeley/Oakland

Other Groups: NAACP; UFW; Coop-Nursery School: Integration Program

Other Information: "I knew CIC in New York City – my dad worked with Fr. La Farge and others."

#9: " I was involved in CIC in registering voters (East Oakland), passing out fair housing flyers to churches/at churches, meetings at our home – but busy w[ith] 3 young children and didn't get administratively involved – i.e., wasn't aware of race-attitude-role, etc., issues."

#10: "1) Initially, yes: a clear-cut morality issue. But many Catholics didn't feel that way – as they made clear when fair housing proposition came up. 2) To some

extent, the issue [is] 'muddied'; got involved in cultural parity questions (i.e., not civil rights) esp[ecially] since many Asian and S[outh] Am[erican] immigrants brought other issues of varied ethnic, racial [and] cultural norms to the fore. 3) and 4) I didn't belong (actively) to other organizations in a way that these were apparent to me."

#11: "Thanks to Bob Brauer, Tom and (forgot his wife's name) Fike there was good dedication, cohesiveness in acting to further civil rights in the local community in the way our religion clearly intended we should."

#12: "Don't know – I was only involved as a piecemeal worker."

Breen, Molly

Occupation Now: Retired

Occupation Previous: Librarian

Church Affiliation: Catholic

CIC Involvement: MPCIC

#9: "My interest in joining the group initially was to be involved in what was an ongoing social struggle. I had never known any black persons and was particularly anxious to. I had grown up in Butte, MT in a largely ethnic environment, all of whom seemed to get along probably due to the fact they were all unionized to protect the individual from the influence of the Anaconda Copper Mining Co. that dominated the city (and for that matter the whole state). So I guess I was influenced

by that experience and hoped if we all joined the same similar organization, it would result in better conditions for all! No, I never felt any favoritism among the members. Frankly, as I recall, it was the women who most often took the lead in planning events."

#10: "Yes, I hoped the Church would be a social force, but except for our little CIC group, made up mainly of parishioners of St. Ann's, it never seemed to materialize elsewhere in the parish. In fact, I think we were often looked at askance by other Church members as being just too radical, and furthermore, I don't think we got much support from other parishes."

#11: "When [the] civil rights movement is mentioned, I know most often it would be the black struggle. However, my main recollection of our efforts was toward the Calif. Farm Workers. At one of the earliest meetings I remember one woman asking for someone to go with her as she had a truck full of food and was driving over to the Valley to give it to the UFW. We had drives for donations, etc. and I still donate to them. Altho' [sic] there was and still is a mainly black population in nearby E.P.A. I felt our participation there was minimal, altho' I did take a cause sponsored by the CIC that involved our going to evening meetings of lectures by blacks who lived there. It also sponsored a tour of black churches and neighborhoods in San Francisco. After living in Palo Alto for 50 years, I don't have the feeling of our being a bi-racial community. At Mass, I never see more than 3 or 5 black persons. However, there are many in evidence in employment, schools, etc. but somehow I

don't feel the Catholic Church ever did all it could to foster 'civil rights.' Tho [sic], to add a lighter note: I recall watching a TV interview between a reporter and a large farm owner who had contracted with a group in Los Angeles to come and break up a farm workers' strike in his area. The reporter asked him if he wasn't ashamed to have hired thugs to come and help break up the strike. The farmer replied forcefully 'Hell no, they (the UFW) had all those nuns and priests!'"

Bruton, John

Occupation Now: Casino Employee

Occupation Previous: Student

Church Affiliation: None

CIC Involvement: SFCIC, early 1960's

Other Groups: NAACP

#9: "While Caucasian men were in all the key posts, everyone was treated very evenhandedly."

#10: "I saw the Church as a possible source for change, but they certainly were not in the forefront at the time. The CIC was mainly educational and social, whereas the mainline groups were more into action. The group did meet in a Catholic high school cafeteria, but it seemed to be a private organization mostly on its own without any influence from the Archdiocese."

#11: "Some Negro and Caucasian members were brought together for the first time, in a social setting, as fellow Christians."

#12: "I had recently left the Archdiocesan seminary, and one of the reasons I left was that I saw the Church from the inside as being almost hopelessly in the Dark Ages regarding matters of social justice. Most fellow Catholics, and my own family, were aghast when they realized I had joined the NAACP Youth Council (as the only Caucasian). There was a wonderful man named John Delury, who, if he wasn't the founder, was at least the initial president and driving force; and the moderator was a priest, Father Eugene Boyle – and he may have been seen as something of a renegade by the Archdiocese getting involved with an experimental group. I tried to get other Catholics to become active in civil rights, but most of them seemed to think it was kind of weird."

Bryant, Clarence

Occupation Now: Senior Electronic Engineer

Occupation Previous: Electronics Specialist

Church Affiliation: Catholic

CIC Involvement: SFCIC

Other Groups: Black Leadership Forum, Black Catholic Apostolate

#9: "The Council was an attempt (in many ways successful) to integrate the culture, mores and customs of the total community into the fabric of the Catholic Church. It

brought together the social, ethnic and racial diversity of the community and sought to infuse that diversity into the liturgy of the church. As a black Catholic family my wife and I participated in exchange home visits where as a group we shared experiences."

#10: "The Church, in itself, was not the force as I saw it. However, churches within the archdiocese (moreover throughout the world) were involved and responsible at different levels. Within my own there were groups supported the CIC and there were groups violently opposed to its operation. In answer to the questions 'The Church' as an established leader was in a position to make great changes. Those changes most reflective of that 'Church leader.' The overall civil rights movement was broad based and the CIC was a more narrow focus. The Catholic approach to the issues seemed more individualized."

#11: "For sure any group that exerts a positive effort provides a certain amount of effective force. The CIC brought to light many issues that were hidden in the depth of some minds. We, as Catholics, were in some ways and areas uninformed about the injustices heaped upon others, being so consumed with what we perceived as injustices to 'our' group (whatever that group may be). There were many instances during the various home visits where I am sure gaps were bridged and lasting relationships formed. I'm still very close to friends we met during our involvement."

#12: "During that particular phase and development of my life I was involved in many areas of my community. I worked hard to try and reflect for my children the importance of involvement to help control your own destiny. I was very active in the local and national political area (Mayor Alioto's Crime Commission, Senator Cranston's Committee, Supervisorial elections, etc.). I was at various times elected to community and church offices. The Bay Area was sort of a hot bed then, as it is today, with the advent of Vatican II and the kind of reformation it produced. There were patches within the church that both supported and criticized the movement. In some parishes the "Black Panther" Party was embraced (Sacred Heart) while 2 miles away the air was electric with hostility. Change is a very difficult thing for some so therefore had both support for the movement as well as outright disdain. Over all, the period was exciting and produced benefits for the Catholic Church as well as the people within the Church."

Bucher, Charles Sr.

Occupation Now: Retired

Occupation Previous: Civil Engineer

Church Affiliation: Catholic

CIC Involvement: Berkeley chapter, early 1960's

Other Groups: NAACP

#9: "I don't recall any elections or special events, other than joining in a sympathy march on Market Street in San Francisco at the time of the Selma, Alabama march in 1963." **#10**: "I did not see the Church as a force for change at that time. The Church in our diocese was very conservative. Also our chapter of the CIC was not militant – we met for discussions and were all sympathetic to civil rights causes and contributed money, but I don't recall anyone getting involved to any great extent. It may have been largely because we had families of young children and were struggling to support them."

#11: "I can't say that the CIC, at least here, was a very effective force. We were all sympathetic and supportive, but felt that there was little in the Bay Area that we could directly get involved with at that time."

#12: "Fellow Catholics were generally supportive at least the ones who were our close friends. Others may have been privately critical but did not express this to us. I don't recall our diocese having any commitment to civil rights action because Bishop Floyd Begin was very conservative, and most of the clergy were also (as to be expected, because the bishop would never have allowed any clergy to get deeply involved in civil rights activities)."

Callahan, Gene

CIC Involvement: Santa Clara CIC

An excerpt from the memoirs of Gene Callahan, who with his wife Doreen was active in the Santa Clara CIC: "Our lives changed a great deal when a handsome black couple with a little girl moved into a house down the street from us in Gregory Gardens. A couple we were very friendly with had sold them their house. The husband had been studying for years to get his PhD from Cal [The University of California at Berkeley]. When he finally graduated, he became a professor there and moved to a big old house in Berkeley. The black couple were their friends. Immediately our little enclave became a seething cauldron of fear and hate. Property values would fall! More blacks would move in! We would be driven out by crime and disease! It was a Communist plot! Meetings were called. These invaders must be driven out – no matter how! This was the time of the Montgomery bus boycott by Martin Luther King. Berkeley was the California center of his supporters. I realized soon that our Berkeley professor and his black friends were doing some experimental pioneering in our community. The subject of race had never come up between Doreen and me. We were from different backgrounds, different parts of the country. But somehow, we were of the same mind. This uproar was ridiculous! So what if blacks moved in? We let our feelings be known to our friends and neighbors. Instantly we were the enemy. We were shocked. Old friends shouted insults at us. They chased our little children home. We got anonymous threatening calls.

Teenagers threw rocks at our house. This was too much for me; I threatened their parents angrily. I was known to be an expert marksman. The cowardly attacks stopped. We visited our new neighbors with our children in tow. They were a handsome couple with a cute little girl. They were well educated and the husband had a good job. We didn't ask them why they were in our neighborhood. Why should we? We apologized for our neighbors and offered our support. Michael wanted to stay and play with the little girl who was in his kindergarten class. We said we would come and get him in an hour. They walked together to kindergarten class after that and Doreen followed them. She was relieved that people glared but nobody bothered them. Our former best friends in the house across the street held a local neighbors' meeting in their home to discuss what action to take. Our neighbors were generally decent people, but highly upset. They didn't want blacks in their neighborhood, and believed that something had to be done to keep them out. They called for a show of hands by those wanting action. There was a roar of approval and every hand went up. Except Doreen's. She said that she heard a small voice saying, 'I think they have the right to live here,' and realized that it was hers. There were two couples who agreed with us. They were afraid to speak up. Our former friends angrily told her to leave. These people then organized a much larger meeting in the school auditorium for everybody in Gregory Gardens. We were there feeling very lonesome. Several speakers advocated action and recommended that a committee be appointed to decide what to do. The crowd shouted approval. An

Hispanic man stood up and asked whether they were intending to bother his family. The crowd seemed embarrassed by this question. A Jew asked what his status would be. Nobody wanted to answer these questions. Doreen and I stood up. I said that the committee had better not condone any unlawful actions or violence, or I would bring them before the law. Someone commented loudly that I would never get another job in Contra Costa County. The meeting ended and Doreen and I went home feeling very alone and fearful of the future. The next day several of our friends called us and said that they were on our side, but felt that it was dangerous to associate with us any more. Soon we found that we were heroes to the liberal activists of our area and Berkeley. Our professor friend asked me to join a panel discussion on KPFA, the Berkeley public radio station. I told the whole story to the Bay Area listeners and we became minor celebrities in liberal circles. New friends appeared and offered support. Reverend Carruthers, pastor of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Gregory Gardens, preached in our favor, and we suddenly had many supporters in that church. This was very courageous of the Reverend and his wife, because his position depended on the good will of his parishioners. Eagerly seeking more such help, I asked our Catholic pastor, Father Murray, to influence our fellow Catholics in our favor. To our shocked dismay, he refused to 'get involved.' He said that that he couldn't risk alienating his 'flock,' because he wanted to build a school next. We wrote to the Bishop, but received no reply. Thanks to Reverend Carruthers, my contracting prospered because Presbyterians all over Diablo Valley

called on me for additions. The 'radical left' also sent jobs my way and offered legal aid if I needed any. I got no Catholic jobs for about two years, until the Church belatedly decided to join the civil rights movement. Doreen then became a founder of the 'Catholic Interracial Council,' which tried to get Catholics of Contra Costa County, Berkeley and Oakland in civil rights causes."

Casserly, Mary

Occupation Now: Volunteer

Occupation Previous: Rehabilitation, Physically handicapped

Church Affiliation: Catholic

CIC Involvement: SFCIC

Other Groups: SF Interracial Communion League, 1950's

#9: "Enjoyed being a woman and white and meeting people (blacks) who I might help in some way. For equality, yes – treated equally – don't recall whether we had officers."

#10: "The people I met at CIC were all Catholics, from Terry Francois, President, to Gordon Koller whose house on 12th Ave. and Judah we all or most of us went to for further discussion – among whom were John Delury, Fred Whisman (attorney), Ron [blank], professor at St. Mary's College, Moraga, Gelinus (also a professor at St. Mary's College) and lots of others, I can't remember the names. At St. Benedict the Moor Church where Fr. Bruno Drescher and St. Francis Xavier (Japanese Catholic

church) Fr. Goodslaw and another padre were in charge of different parishes. Fr. Drescher had a once a month Communion breakfast where various people spoke to us re their work situation in the black community."

#11: "I am sure it helped – I cannot relate an incident of CIC but Fr. B. Drescher with the help of volunteers was able to buy an apt house on California Street for blacks, because he felt if they had good places to live they would maintain their prosperity. Each year they had open house and each person would show off their apartment. It was very successful."

#12: "No reaction – supportive I suppose. Clergy and hierarchy unaware of my involvement – can't speak for archdiocese."

Coll, Jack

Occupation Now: Retired

Occupation Previous: Librarian

Church Affiliation: Catholic

CIC Involvement: SFCIC

#9: "I saw it as logical that an Irish-American should be involved in such a group. My memories are that the group did treat all of its members equally."

#10: "The church played a somewhat mixed role with meaningful support from Father Eugene Boyle in particular. It is difficult to comment on other civil rights groups or other religious."

#11: "I am inclined to doubt that the CIC was an important force in the civil rights movement. I do feel that it was important because it moved the church into social action for the first time. It was somewhat limited in that its members were inclined to be highly educated people."

Colwell, Mary Anne

Occupation Now: Sociologist

Occupation Previous: Wife, Mother, Volunteer

Church Affiliation: Catholic

CIC Involvement: SFCIC

Position: President SFCIC, 1966

Other Groups: SNCC, CORE, NAACP

#9: "SFCIC was largely couples, single women and married men without their wives. Women did at least half and probably more of the organizational work. Elected officers – especially president, except for my term in 1966, represented the org[anization] to the public, interfaith groups, and media, etc. When we negotiated with the bishop both men and women were in the group."

#10: "We saw the church as a potential force. Lay Catholics in City Hall and union leadership were people who needed to be reached with [the] Catholic justice message. We hoped the local diocese would set the example by requiring unions who worked on the new cathedral to open membership to minorities. CIC was

different because we worked within the Catholic community with both black and white leadership – with a commitment to nonviolent actions. We cooperated extensively with other faith and civil rights groups – as most groups did."

#11: "A lot of SF people thought we were effective because we had a kind of credibility in the Catholic community no other group had – and we had the language to appeal to Catholics. At one time I was kind of a "poster Catholic mother-of-seven" on panels, etc. We lost our biggest struggle – to open the construction unions working on the cathedral – but the discussion and actions brought the issue very much to [the] attention of the chancery and the laity. 1966, when I was president, was probably our most active year because I was not a full-time employee and put in 20-40 hours a week in CIC work. So we were more effective then."

#12: "There were plenty of people who did not support the work of the CIC and a few hostile priests – but in the whole most people recognized our work as necessary. I would say most laity and clergy were passively supportive – and up to 200 were dues-paying members and 20-30 very active in organizing efforts, [illegible], etc. The peninsula CIC thought the SFCIC was too middle-of-the-road. They were much more angry and confrontational. Henry Organ (black) and a woman named Mary (white) whose last name I forgot were relatively scornful about what we tried to do in educating Catholics on the issues. Years later Henry and I talked about it and I think we each moved closer to the other's ideas. Bishop McGucken was fundamentally conservative but could not really oppose our ideas on racial justice.

He declined taking a leadership role in confronting the almost entirely lay Catholic leadership of the major construction company (Cahill, I think) and the major trade unions. He appointed a good priest (Boyle) to work with us but did not put any pressure on the clergy to cooperate."

Douglass, Earl

Occupation Now: Retired

Occupation Previous: Owner & Manager, Angelus, Catholic bookstore in Menlo Park **Church Affiliation**: Catholic

CIC Involvement: MPCIC, mid 1960's

Position: President

#9: "There was little in my background to lead me to become involved in an inter-racial group: all white, upper middle class, private schools. Even in the Marine Corps during WWII and in college after the war (Stanford) I had almost no contact with people of color. My 'conversion' came about through learning the social teachings of the Church, through the writings of Father John LaFarge, through being impressed by the theology of non-violence as preached (and practiced) by Martin Luther King, through my friendship with and respect for Father Eugene Boyle. As for our chapter of the CIC - I found it to be quite evenhanded re race and/or gender."

#10: “The 1960's were (obviously) an exciting and pivotal time, in society generally, but especially within the Catholic Church. There was a sense of opening and renewal within the Church inspired by the second Vatican Council, which coincided with the civil rights movement in the US. The Church began to take positions on critical social issues (Prop 14 here in CA was a benchmark) and it seemed important to be involved in some way to try to make things better, especially for those suffering from injustice and prejudice. I am not sure how different the CIC was from other religious or secular organizations, but I think the CIC can justly claim to be a relatively early and consistent voice for a better and more integrated society.”

#11: “I would like to think that the CIC in the US was a more or less effective force in the civil rights movement, although I might be hard pressed to find hard evidence to corroborate this. I certainly believe that most members of the CIC were genuine in their motivations and sincere in their efforts to strive towards a better society. Most of us became involved because we felt it was the right thing to do. Did we make any difference? I really don't know - but I hope so. My basic memory is that the people who became involved in the CIC came from different backgrounds (sometimes quite different) and different places, joining together to try and make a difference, in keeping with our understanding of the teachings of the Church.”

Duryea, John

Occupation Now: Pastor, Angelo Roncalli Community (unofficial Catholic group)

Occupation Previous: Pastor, St. Ann's Church, Palo Alto

Church Affiliation: Catholic, but excommunicated (after marrying)

CIC Involvement: MPCIC

#9: "We were mostly 'white liberals' – eager to increase black participation. Gender issue: not then aware."

#10: "Official church too little concerned then with race issue. This changed soon after and has continued to improve – especially with organization of black bishops."

#11: "It had a very limited effect – mainly just consciousness raising for the whites in it. There was no real 'activism,' although Henry Organ (black) *tried* to stir us up to push the archdiocese."

Gleason, Edward

Occupation Now: Retired

Occupation Previous: Account Representative, telephone company

Church Affiliation: Catholic

CIC Involvement: SFCIC, 1961-66

#9: "I am a white male. I thought that the group treated women, and blacks and whites, equally. I participated in actions and don't remember the internal politics."

#10: "We were members of the Christian Family Movement, which raised our awareness of social injustices. We had two black couples in the group, which was pre-hippie Haight-Ashbury section of SF. One of the few integrated, blue collar and middle class areas of SF. The main body of the Church or parishes were not active or could muster the courage to act on the race issue. Of course there were voices in the Church that called for justice but they were a small minority. Jews and some mainline Protestants had a finer take on the issues. I could *not* agree that the Church was a force for change in civil rights. At best it gave a few cover to act. When the telephone company management was unhappy with my participation the fact that I was Catholic gave me *some* cover and I was not fired."

#11: "When we picketed for open housing for Willie Brown in 1962 we were with Marxist leftists. As Catholics this was uncomfortable and this is the *main* reason more Catholics would not get involved. I remember attending a hearing where the Catholic Chief of the Fire Department said the reason there were no black firemen was they had a heightened fear of fire due to their poor living conditions (1963)."

#12: "Most of the other CFM members would not get involved including the black members. They were supportive but not willing to act. Other church-going Catholics were critical and thought we were Communist dupes. The clergy and hierarchy were not supportive except for a few priests and a few nuns. Catholic anti-Communism was the strongest force and leftist support of civil rights kept almost all Catholics on the sidelines. Remember this was the time when Catholic influence was at its apex

in San Francisco. It has been said that at this time the archbishop had a veto on who could be appointed the chief of police (maybe fire too). And no pressure was put to bear to bring open housing, jobs, advancement in civic affairs by the Catholic hierarchy. The French bishops collaborated with the Nazi regime in WWII so hierarchy have a preferential bias to collaborate with the power structure, so one ought not be surprised (same with sanctuary movement)."

Gleason, Peg

Occupation Now: Retired

Occupation Previous: Wife, Mother

Church Affiliation: Catholic

CIC Involvement: San Francisco, 1962-66

Other Groups: IFW

#9: "I'm a woman, never was I treated any way but kind. [The CIC] was a breath of fresh air! I was a young mom with two sons – I took them with me to walk the line on 19th Ave. They (CIC) helped me pull the wagon with the boys and calmed any fear I had when people yelled at us."

#10: "We belonged to Christian Family Movement and I was disappointed when the CFM members didn't join us in demonstrating. Having grown up in Texas during segregation and witnessed the strength of the bishop, nuns and priests there I guess I expected more of people in California, where the "laws" were against segregation

(ha!). However, I found the SF Catholic people to be more prejudiced, passive and unaware of the teachings of Jesus. My spirituality was formed by family – teachers and friends who saw the evil of segregation. We lived for justice and unity."

#11: "Yes! I think I answered that in #9. The people in CIC were concerned about living the gospel message. Many have been friends who were later to be in the farm workers, anti-war protest, sanctuary movement and now the homeless issues and East Timor, and jail. One big thing I really remember is this – Willie Brown was the young lawyer who wanted to see the house that was for sale. In all the days we were on the picket line we never saw *him*. My husband made a statement to the press about the injustice of the situation. I was on the news with our children. Ed worked for Pac Bell. The boss told him not to get involved. Another black lawyer (Terry Francois) called to thank us for our support, told me Ed could lose his job and said he would take the case free if this happened. I must say we were nervous but sure it was the right thing to do. Ed wasn't fired – but promotions were not plentiful for the 30 years he worked there. When times changed bosses had to let employees see their files – it was interesting to see the notations."

#12: "As I said – the Catholics in SF were a surprise to me. I grew up taking the Gospel message serious. CIC was the only Catholic group here in the 60's that understood the message. As the 60's changed so did *some* of the nuns and clergy. But it's sad to think that at that time the Catholic lay people were concerned about job promotions so wouldn't get involved. Priests were concerned about getting their

own parish so wouldn't 'rock the boat.' Fr. Eugene Boyle will always be our "hero." Even now most priests don't get involved. Fr. Peter Sammon and Fr. Kirk Ullery can always be counted on to be at demos for social justice. They stick their necks out. Sad but true – social justice office in this arch[diocese] is weak. The head of social concerns for [the archdiocese] won't even live in the city. We worked for [the archdiocese] for 9 years. A real eye opener!"

Halvorson, Donald and Doris

Occupation Now: Retired

Occupation Previous: Elementary Teacher/Housewife

Church Affiliation: Catholic

CIC Involvement: MPCIC

Position: Member, Executive Board (Don)

Other Groups: "Don was a member of the NAACP, living in East Palo Alto. He belonged to the Redwood City chapter and later the Palo Alto chapter. He was also a member of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) which had a chapter in East Palo Alto. Don was a member of the Advisory Council to the Sequoia Union High School District relative to integration proposals. Their recommendations to the Board, although unanimously approved by the Council, were rejected by the Board. The Advisory Council had equal representation from all areas of the Sequoia District. The failure of the Board to adopt a realistic plan resulted in closure of the

Ravenswood High Scholl which never had the curriculum promised at the time it was activated shortly after Woodside High School was built. A voluntary transfer plan was attempted, much too late to succeed. Ravenswood recently was demolished after many years of sporadic community use and gradual deterioration. East Palo Alto students now are bussed to schools west of Bayshore. Both Don and Doris were members of various East Palo Alto Community groups which were active in civil rights activities designed to foster better economic, educational, and social progress for minorities. Don was a member of the Bayshore Employment Service and was Chairman for a term. This group had modest success securing employment for minorities, particularly black, but not to any racial group. It was the first community group to actively generate employment and provide training workshops for minorities. For the most part, all of our associations with civil rights activities with the exception of the CIC began in the late fifties and terminated in the early seventies. Participation in the CIC was on a different level than most other groups with the exception of the Advisory Council to the Sequoia Union High School District. The CIC and Advisory Council had majority representation of whites and whites living in affluent areas of the Peninsula. These groups had fair-minded persons, but for the most part they were not well informed on local issues of social inequalities. Many had the idea that changes could be made through token interracial activities. Protest demonstrations, involving picketing and possible arrest

for civil disobedience were never considered. This attitude was pervasive in the Mid Peninsula CIC until Henry Organ became President."

#9: "As a white member of the CIC I was frustrated by the lack of meaningful activity by the group. My wife and I were the only members who lived in a black community. Consequently, we were kind of 'token whites' in an almost all white organization with poorly defined objectives as to taking action about a church structure in the Mid-Peninsula that was almost comically ill equipped to deal with the social inequalities in its midst. Pope John's writings on the subject were specific and called for immediate action. The priest of St. Francis of Assisi in East Palo Alto refused to let my wife and me display the Pope's teaching in front of the church before or after Mass. That same priest refused to baptize my child because my wife and I wanted to have our good friend, Henry Organ, serve as godparent. We had the baptism performed by father Duryea at St. Ann's in Palo Alto. I believe that members of the CIC treated women fairly and much of our effective leadership was provided by women. Black members probably found it difficult to assimilate into our group. Without intent, affluent white members tended towards patronizing black members. When the group became more active on a practical level, particularly in achieving some success at integrating Catholic schools, relationships within our group were improved."

#10: "To some extent, I have made reference in previous answers to this question. I have never been satisfied with the commitment of the Church to the movement for

social justice. In all fairness, I might add, they only reflect the other institutions in our society that retain the vestiges of racism. The mid-peninsula probably is far advanced in making meaningful progress for change, but effective leadership has never come from the Church, except for the activities of the CIC, particularly in education, and St. Ann's Church in Palo Alto when under the leadership of Father Duryea. I would add that Father Eugene Boyle has fought a gallant fight to change the institutional racism within the San Francisco Diocese. Unfortunately, as he so eloquently admits, he was late to the call. I have already suggested that the CIC was missing from active participation in providing 'bodies' for protest. How could the Rumford Fair Housing legislation fail? In part it failed because of the reluctance that made the need for such legislation to be implemented. I can't resist a personal anecdote here. When the Rumford bill was coming up for consideration, I personally had begged our local priest to support it and he had refused. I denounced him personally and the Church in general for their inactivity. At my next confession at another church, I made reference to my condemnation of the Church for its position. In turn, the priest in the confessional gave me a lecture on economics explaining that his mother maintained her support by renting apartments and that renting to blacks would be an economic disaster for her. What more can I say? I found that other churches were more enlightened as to the need for social justice. In my local community, the Presbyterian Church even provided for a Community House for the use of local civil rights groups."

#11: "Again I think I have reflected on this question previously. I would comment on the last part of the question. To my wife and me the CIC was about the possibility of using this Catholic organization as an institutional means to address the glaring racism which existed not only in society at large but within our local parish. Can you imagine white women checking on the adequate preparation of black children for Holy Communion? Does it seem inconceivable that a Catholic Church in a black community would resist the new liturgy which provided for the active participation of its members and the introduction of innovations like the music of Father Rivers? It is not that the CIC did not have some limited success. We did and for that my wife and I do not regret our participation. However, now that we have moved to the hills of El Dorado, we see that racism has longer roots here and that the Church still needs to do much more than it has in the past."

Herte, Larry

Church Affiliation: Catholic

CIC Involvement: MPCIC, 1961-1964

Other Groups: NAACP, Palo Alto Fair Play Council, Society of Friends and Congregationalists

N.B. Herte and about 20 other former members of the various CIC chapters in the Bay Area attended a reunion gathering at the home of former CIC member Louise Meier in 1999. He wrote the following "personal reflection" for that gathering:

"Considering the conditions and environment any participation in interracial relations was on an individual basis, without portfolio, and based on unsure ground (no clear church teaching, threats of Communists, excommunication, loss of security clearance, etc.). Having the inspirational Father Eugene Boyle as Chaplain gave us all confidence that the RC Church was involved. It was a joy to meet and work with Mrs. Gibbs of the NAACP, Ms. Alsberg and soon-to-be Congressman Pete McClosky of the Palo Alto Fair Play Council, and Mrs. Duveneck of the Society of Friends and the Congregationalists and encourage Mrs. Ritson with the Minority Scholarship Fund (these groups were established and accomplished great things). It was an honor to picket the Bank of America, Safeway, etc. for minority hiring and to aid in integrating St. Alban's School. The most significant event at a CIC meeting was when Mr. Henry Organ "demanded" to picket the SF Cow Palace Republican Convention nominating Sen. Barry Goldwater for president. It was to be done in the name of the Catholic Interracial Council and many knew it risked much of what we had worked for. He resigned as Council President, and in retrospect it was wrong that the Council let him resign and not follow his demand to picket, all that was risked was 'gradualism.' The closest parallel that comes to mind is that we were like Frederick Douglas and the 14th Amendment, where he politically jettisoned Women and insisted only on voting rights for Black Men (the women would have likely made the Amendment effective many years sooner). We were politically correct and

we missed an opportunity to let "fresh air" in, as Pope John XXIII said of Vatican II."

Kinderman, Edwin

Occupation Now: Retired

Occupation Previous: Research Scientist/Administrator

Church Affiliation: Protestant

CIC Involvement: MPCIC

#9: "My wife became interested in educational activities through her participation as a teacher's aide. She became aware of the grass roots educational activities involving many religious groups, including Catholic. Through these contacts she became involved with CIC. I supported her and her interests including those involving CIC. I was treated as an equal, welcomed although white and nominally Protestant (I did attend Notre Dame for graduate work, and taught at a CSC university). I may have integrated into the group – based in the Newman Center at Stanford – more easily than my wife. On the other hand, I was sometimes uncomfortable with the group's most strident activities."

#10: "Generally, yes. I saw the local CIC group as pushing harder than the Church to obtain equal educational opportunities for all."

Lundin, Walt

Occupation Now: Retired

Occupation Previous: Office Manager, Southern Pacific Transportation Co.

Church Affiliation: Catholic

CIC Involvement: MPCIC

Other Groups: NAACP, UFW and anti-Vietnam groups

#9: "Yes. I believe there were more women than men; women seemed more committed, more vocal"

#10: "The institutional church, armed with various encyclicals, had a paper record. In walking the walk their record was weaker and spottier. Dioceses, in civil rights matters, reflected the outlook of the bishops. With rare exceptions, parishes were nowhere. Pastors were timid or unconcerned and there was no intra-parochial structure or group to educate and rally support on issues. Protestant groups, less dependent on pastoral leadership, were more effective - when the congregation contained members with a liberal worldview - not always the case."

#11: "Not effective. We made a little stir, epateed [sic] a few of the bourgeois, left no mark in the end. CIC members, aware and energized, dispersed into other civil rights organizations, mostly secular, and thus carried on the good fight. I think our group was more critical and confrontational than exhortative. One memory: telephone calls to Catholic hospitals, explaining that a close relative, soon to be hospitalized, would be upset if in a room with a black patient. Was there assurance

this would not occur? 'No problem' was the reply. This was publicized I believe in 'Ramparts' magazine, but died after this. (My memory may be faulty, and I was not in the policy loop)"

#12: "Fellow Catholics were tolerant and polite, but I saw no rush to join (and no rush to stifle us). Clergy and hierarchy were the same. The CIC weakness was that we operated outside the diocesan/parish structure while our largest constituency was fellow Catholics. Without a clergy/CIC partnership not many seeds were sown and there was a lot of stony ground out there. Our diocese today is tolerant and permissive of civil rights activities. Our bishop is not 'active' or directive of parish efforts, so by and large, unless there is an enlightened pastor or an uppity laity, not much is done."

Maier, Louise

Occupation Now: Retired

Occupation Previous: Housewife

Church Affiliation: Catholic

CIC Involvement: MPCIC

Position: Treasurer

Other Groups: UFW, NAACP

#9: "Yes – women participated in many roles and planned much of the program."

#10: "We drew from the social doctrine of the church, which was the basis for our existence. It gave us a high moral ground amongst our fellow Catholics."

#11: "1) I met people who have been my friends for the last 30 years. 2) Enforced the notion that there was a purpose for the Catholic Church and if mobilized could be a great force for social justice. 3) Being Catholic is more than attending Mass on Sunday. We do have a purpose – even though it is at best obscured"

McDonald, James

Occupation Now: Retired

Occupation Previous: Attorney

Church Affiliation: Catholic

CIC Involvement: SFCIC

Position: President

Other Groups: SF Interfaith Council

#9 (excerpt): "I got a call from Gene Boyle. I was then the President of the CIC – it was a Saturday. I drove down to Vallambrosa where Fr. Boyle was assigned. It is in San Mateo, I think on the border of Atherton. Fr. Boyle told me it was imperative that the Archbishop come out publicly against Proposition 14. I said, can't we go see him. Fr. Boyle said we probably could not get an appointment, and even if we did, he would not go out on a limb for us, and we need someone higher up. I mentioned that in the morning paper there was an item about the recent Secretary of

Labor under Eisenhower, James P. Mitchell. He had been a labor leader. I think he was a native of Pennsylvania or some other East Coast state. The article said he had retired and moved to Atherton. We knew he was a Catholic. I think the only Catholic in the Eisenhower cabinet. If not a Democrat, he was a liberal Republican. Neither of us knew him, and I was talking about who we knew who might know someone who knew someone, when Gene picked up the phone, got his phone number, spoke to him on the phone telling him that it was urgent to see him right away on a matter critical to civil rights and the Catholic church in the Bay Area. He invited us to his house. We were there in minutes. Gene explained the situation and Secretary Mitchell immediately agreed to offer his help. I think that week, the three of us met with the Archbishop, and probably one of the Auxiliary Bishops. Secretary Mitchell did the talking. My perception was that the Archbishop considered Mitchell's rank relative to the President of the United States as about the same as the Archbishop's rank to the Pope. In other words they hit it off. The Archbishop agreed to make a public statement in opposition to the initiative. Fr. Boyle pulled every string he could to make sure it was a strong statement…Secretary Mitchell appeared at a series of seminars we that arranged. He was sincerely dedicated."

Morris, Richard

Occupation Now: Ranch Manager

Occupation Previous: Attorney

Church Affiliation: Catholic

CIC Involvement: SFCIC, 1964-68

Position: President

Other Groups: Bay Area Urban League, SF Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights

#9: "The group was mostly white, so no real test of racial feelings. 2) Yes. 3) Yes."

#10: "Yes, but not a very strong force. Religious personnel in churches in black/Hispanic neighborhoods were very well motivated and supportive of CIC work. Religious personnel outside these neighborhoods represented mainstream views, ranging from indifference to disagreement with the CIC. The Church is better today. Social justice principles, biblical precepts concerning 'neighbor, foreigners, poor and disadvantaged,' dominated the thinking and activity of all. These principles added strength the humanitarian views of [illegible], and opposition to arbitrary discrimination."

#11: "Yes. Its purposes including educating primarily Catholics about the Civil Rights issues associated with racial discrimination, and collaborating with other like-minded groups to educate the broader public, and to effect changes in attitudes and even laws regarding racial discrimination. I felt that the ministerial leadership particularly, i.e., priests and bishops, and other religious leaders such as officials

and educators at Catholic colleges, were impressed with the initiatives of the local CIC, and its case. Similarly, I believe that the CIC became an important ecumenical bridge tot hose of other faiths interested in overcoming historic discrimination. The primary event that I recall in respect of its impact was the coverage given by the Chronicle to a midnight vigil at the site of the Cathedral (to be built) on Christmas Eve – I believe that it was 1966, but it could have been 1967. A picture of those participating in the vigil – in the pouring rain, as it turned out – plus story appeared on the front page Christmas morning. This was purely a CIC activity, and its purpose was to call the Church and the labor unions connected with this major construction project to account for the lack of blacks in the building trades, and to take action to correct this fact. Ultimately, the key unions agreed to use the project as a way to recruit apprentices. The Church, unfortunately, in the meetings I attended, contended that the "law" made such affirmative action impossible. What the Church actually did to get blacks hired, if anything, I do not know, because I went on to other things."

#12: "Some of this has been answered above. I believe that most conscientious Catholics, liberal or conservative, supported CIC's positions, particularly within the clergy and active laity. CIC in San Francisco never got to the civil disobedience stage, so testing the local Church's views on civil disobedience never occurred. Outside the Church, I believe that other churches welcomed CIC collaboration, and in some respects its leadership. I believe that the archdiocese was committed to

supporting the civil rights movement, but not fully. It could, I believe, have influenced trade union and contractor practices with the moral and economic leverage of the Cathedral project."

Organ, Henry

Occupation Now: Retired

Occupation former: University Administration

Church status: Catholic

CIC involvement: MPCIC

Position: President

Other groups: CORE

#9: "It was interesting presiding over a multi-racial group; my first such role. There was definitely equality, by gender and race."

#10: "I did see the CIC as a force, but not with forthrightness and urgency. The members were generally in front of the hierarchy. The clergy in a few other denominations were more aggressive, e.g., Unitarians. (This is locally, and not including "black" churches)"

#11: "It was effective as an interracial, Catholic forum; as a mechanism for activating the faith; as a means of questioning and inciting Church authority; as an opportunity to be non-complacent; as a way of bringing one's Catholicism to address real social problems."

N.B. In August of 1999 the author spoke with Henry Organ about his involvement with the CIC and wrote this account:

Henry Organ converted to Catholicism in high school, and while in graduate school at Notre Dame began a lifelong struggle for equal rights by suing the local Knights of Columbus chapter to integrate. He moved to California in 1959 to work at Lockheed. In the Bay Area, as a member of St. Francis parish in Palo Alto, he became aware of the CIC and was able to interact with other black Catholics. He was also involved with the Congress of Racial Equality, which also attracted many other CIC members. CORE, said Organ, was "much younger and more involved," attracting many students and faculty from nearby Stanford University. He remembers his fellow MPCIC chapter as "gadflies," saying, "we were abrasive." Organ saw the church as responsible for pushing the largely-Catholic power structure in San Francisco to embrace racial equality, and believes it could have done much more. He says the church, in its various business dealings, was "financing racism." Organ recalls he "had some reservations" after Martin Luther King criticized the United States involvement in Vietnam, but he grew to adopt that position. On the success of the civil rights movement in general, Organ drew a difference between desegregation and integration. For him, the movement's focus was and should have been on legal issues, "that was it." Changing people's views on race was secondary for Organ.

Of all the respondents and interviewees in this work, Organ was the only one to leave and later become reconciled to the Catholic Church. He publicly "quit" the church in 1965, and returned only three months before this interview in 1999. He is once again a parishioner at St. Francis in Palo Alto.

Post, Polly Mansfield

Occupation Now: (Retired) Social Work Planner-Administrator

Occupation Previous: Community Organization Worker, United Community Services **Church Affiliation**: Society of Friends

CIC Involvement: SFCIC

Other Groups: SF Council for Civic Unity; NAACP, SF Chapter, Board of Directors

#9: "I don't think I viewed my gender as a factor in my participation in the CIC. Being a white woman in the group was perfectly comfortable. However, it is very possible that stereotypical roles were assigned to and accepted by the women at that time. Two of the chapter presidents I can remember were men but I'm not sure of others. There weren't all that many black Catholics in San Francisco at that time and I think we tried very hard to get them to join. We needed them."

#10: "I don't think the 'church aspect of the CIC' was of much importance to me. As a Catholic, it was the obvious structure through which to act on my concerns about racial justice. I don't believe I thought of the Church as a force for civil

rights. If anything, it seemed that the Catholic Church was behind other denominations we worked with in those days (especially Presbyterians and Jews) in speaking out on these issues and bringing their moral force to the cause. Individual clergy and lay leaders were certainly in the forefront at times, but not the Church, the American Church as a whole. I suppose Papal encyclicals on social justice, and certainly the writing of Fr. John La Farge, helped define the Catholic approach to civil rights, but in general I think the 'Catholic approach to civil rights' was more timid and conservative than other main-line churches. If anything, I think my opinion of 'my' church on these matters became more negative as we tried to get things done."

#11: "I suppose the CIC made a small dent in educating ourselves and our fellow-Catholics to the truths of discrimination and prejudice in our church and our communities. I particularly remember a project in which white members of our CIC chapter and from our parishes visited black families in their homes. It was a bit artificial but an effective way to help us overcome stereotypes and get to know blacks as individuals. Picketing automobile sales rooms on Van Ness Avenue in support of Fair Employment Practices is an activity I remember, but one in which we joined others who provided the leadership. The most effective thing I remember doing with CIC was participating in a housing discrimination project under which a black couple from CIC (or perhaps another church) tried to rent an apartment advertised by an agent for the Catholic parish which owned the building, followed

by a white couple. The blacks were usually given the runaround while the white couple got the apartment, or at least received papers, a few hours later. I think we wrote this up as 'research' and presented it to the pastor of the parish but I am not certain of the outcome. I do remember my own outrage at the injustice so it was a learning experience for us."

#12: "I think the CIC was thought of as a troublemaker by most San Francisco Catholics. My recollection is that the Archdiocese was lukewarm about our activities and not supportive – hardly 'fully committed to supporting the civil rights movement in the Bay Area.' I sometimes wonder where my sense of outrage at racial injustice came from – not from my conservative, subtly prejudiced parents and not from my Catholic convent education. I had been exposed to the liberal Catholic movement in France in the late 1940's and early 50's and perhaps the seeds for my concern were planted there."

Ritson, Edda

Occupation Now: Artist

Occupation Previous: Homekeeper

Church Affiliation: Catholic

CIC Involvement: MPCIC

Position: Co-chair for Education

Other Groups: Fair Housing Parish (St. Ann's) Council, Social Justice Commission

#9: "Yes – otherwise I would have left them."

#10: "The Church did not seem like very much of a force for change. At St. Ann's there were exceptional priests who were involved but I did not see too much leadership from the Social Justice Commission."

#11: "They were the only Catholic group that protested the building of a new cathedral. We started a scholarship fund in 1963 to help educate minority students. The fund continues with six new candidates every year receiving $500/annum to the college of their choice. Scholarships are also given to students of St. Elizabeth Seton elementary school ($4,000) since most of the white students have been replaced by black and Hispanic students from East Palo Alto and Menlo Park. All of these scholarships are given on the basis of financial need for as long as they are needed. The Church once gave $5,000 from a Martin Luther King Jr. dinner, and St. Ann's and the present parish has matched $2,000/annum."

Strong, Barbara

Occupation Now: Teacher (Retired)

Occupation Previous: Housewife

Church Affiliation: Catholic

CIC Involvement: MPCIC, 1964-65

Position: Program Chairman

Other Groups: Social Justice Commission

#9: "We participated in civil rights activities because we believed in them. As a woman I was treated like everyone else – never thought about it. The worst I was ever treated as a woman was in graduate school at UC."

#10: "I did see the Church as a force for change in civil rights, at least initially. The CIC, [Social Justice Commission] were different because we prayed a lot and had various past and present Catholics as role models. We felt a sense of urgency that the Church be there because we were followers of Christ. We had a real sense of mission. We surely had a lot of meetings – good for dialogue perhaps. We never developed a program, had a goal – e.g. eliminate discrimination in housing. We just petered out."

#11: "I feel the value of the CIC was the fact that it existed. We did promote some awareness. Did we accomplish anything? I feel there is always value in people sharing ideas. We sat down in the parish hall with others, got interfaith meetings together, got a lot of things about our community out in the open. We studied. *But*, there was so much going on in the Church. Liturgical reform was tearing parishes apart. I can recall more than one priest friend saying this was a time when people had to stand up and be counted. What happened was we did have efforts to revitalize the Catholic community (neighborhood groups, the Cursillo, etc.) and we talked about social issues that had previously been ignored."

#12: "My pastor Msgr. James Brown was a jewel. He was for lay involvement long before anyone else – he was also intent on trying to move the parish forward together, recognizing people were dropping out over various things. Yes – I had lots of support and encouragement from him and from one young assistant who subsequently left the priesthood. Also a priest in a neighboring parish I had been with at UC. I think the rest of the clergy would like to have drowned us. *If* they came to a meeting, they sat with legs crossed and arms folded across their chests. *Body language*! Most of my fellow Catholics except for my friends and cohorts found me amusing. Msgr. Brown gave permission – even help financially so one of our sisters could go on the Selma march. Talk about a reaction – wow! People were angry – really got nasty. Msgr. stood his ground. Bless that man! I enjoyed my contacts with the archdiocese – one big conference, really exciting until you got home and realized you were back in your lily-white suburb. The archdiocese was as supportive as the bishop felt it safe to be supportive. He allowed the Commission, but why was a housewife in San Mateo doing the newsletter? If Father Boyle could get enough material together he would print it."

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