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A Controversial Personality in the Press: A Descriptive Study of the Milwaukee Press' Treatment of Father James E. Groppi at the Height of the Open Housing Demonstrations August 28-September 8, 1967

William E. Gulas
Marquette University

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A CONTROVERSIAL PERSONALITY IN THE PRESS
A Descriptive Study of the Milwaukee Press' Treatment
of Father James E. Groppi at the Height
of the Open Housing Demonstrations
August 28-September 8, 1967

by

William E. Gulas, B.A.

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate School, Marquette University, in
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PREFACE

When I was preparing for ordination to the priesthood, the heroes of my seminary generation were the labor priests of the 1930s, the liturgical avant-garde of the 1940s, and the scripture scholars of the 1950s. During the years of my priesthood, in the 1960s, a new kind of priest came to the fore--the protest priest. Father James Edward Groppi of Milwaukee was, by far, the most publicized of this new breed of social action priests.

At the very time when I sat under library lights studying the processes and functions of the news press, Father Groppi was walking the streets of Milwaukee and its suburbs. I had the good fortune of witnessing his gradual emergence as a news personality.

My admiration for Groppi and his work in the black community made me even more interested and aware of the process by which the press covers a major news event and personality. This thesis is a case study of how the Milwaukee Sentinel and Milwaukee Journal treated Father Groppi in their coverage of the 1967 open housing demonstrations in Milwaukee. Hopefully its findings will throw light on how the local press operates in covering a controversial news personality.

The press had a difficult task remaining objective in the midst of a highly inflammable atmosphere. Father Groppi was not an easy man to cover. One reporter described him, and perhaps rightly so, as a mixture of irreverence, nerve,

dedication, and a disorganized kind of determination that kept people, even those close to him, wondering what he was going to do next. It would not be surprising if the Milwaukee press, in trying to keep on top of fast-moving events, failed in accuracy and tone at times. Since it has depended almost exclusively on news reports for its information, this thesis has taken the risk of also not capturing the real Father Groppi. Future studies will certainly allow the truth to come to the fore.

Many people have had a hand in my pursuit of a journalism career. I extend gratitude to the Marquette University College of Journalism faculty for sharpening my writing skills and opening to me a whole new world of journalism philosophy. I am especially grateful to my adviser, Professor James Arnold, for the patience and confidence he proffered to me while this thesis went through its long gestation period. Professors Warren Bovee and Clifford Helbert have been most helpful as readers. Their constructive criticism has been instrumental in the production of a much more readable thesis than would have appeared without their help.

I thank, also, my Franciscan superiors who invited me to launch a journalism career soon after my ordination to the priesthood. By appointing me editor of Franciscan Message, they gave me the opportunity to meet and work with many dedicated writers in the Catholic press. Lastly, I acknowledge my debt to my many friends, especially W. Whelan,

who insisted that this thesis could be written notwithstanding the distractions and demands of a busy life.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

One of the functions of a newspaper is to present accurately and objectively reports of events which might have an effect on the welfare of its readership. A cursory glance at the headlines and news articles of a specific newspaper should reveal the news items of interest and concern on the local, national, and international level. An item which is given major display and extended coverage can rightly be considered a major news event.

One such news event in late summer 1967 was open housing demonstrations in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. During the first two weeks of the demonstrations, August 28 to September 8, the city's two daily newspapers, the Sentinel and the Journal, without doubt considered the demonstrations of especial public importance. The major headlines¹ of each of the newspapers during that two-week span, except for the Septem-

¹The Sentinel's major headline was an across the page banner head on page one. It was either two lines or one line with a kicker in smaller type. The Journal's largest headline was five column spread head in two lines.

ber 6th Journal,² were devoted to the demonstrations and related news items. Not counting Sundays and Labor Day, 133 articles and 81 photographs appeared in the two newspapers to inform the public of what was happening on the open housing scene.

Because of the effect of the open housing protest on the emergence of Father James E. Groppi as a local and national news personality, we have turned our attention in this thesis to the Milwaukee press' coverage of that event with the intent of deriving an understanding of how the news press covers a major local news personality.

The open housing demonstrations continued for over 200 days in one form or another, and the Milwaukee newspapers made almost daily notice of the events, small and uneventful as many of the later ones were. The height of newspaper interest was during the first two weeks of the demonstrations, from August 28, when the first march to the south side of Milwaukee occurred, to September 8, when civil rights leaders attempted to increase the size and support of the protest in order to offset the ill will generated by the youths who vandalized the mayor's office the day before.

²The Journal had no first page coverage of the protests on this day, the only time during the two weeks. Nonetheless, it carried six news articles and three photographs related to open housing on other pages.

Father James E. Groppi, adviser of the youth council of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peoples (NAACP), emerged as the focus of attention and core of controversy in relation to the demonstrations more than any other individual. Miss Bernice Buresh, a Sentinel reporter, attested to Father Groppi's position in the open housing protest movement when she wrote in a review of the Wauwatosa demonstrations of 1966:

On the south side, which long has been considered a stronghold of racial conservatism, the focal point, as in Wauwatosa, was Father James E. Groppi, the controversial adviser to the youth council.³

The Reverend Christopher G. Raible, pastor of Unitarian Church West, Brookfield, explained to some extent Groppi's importance in the open housing protest movement. He envisioned Groppi as a bridge between the white and black communities. No other metropolis in America, he said in a sermon, had such a link between the militant black community and the white, Christian community. He warned against either side destroying the tremendously important link.⁴

³"Opposition on South Side more Intense Than in Tosa," Milwaukee Sentinel, Aug. 29, 1967, p.5. For brevity sake, hereinafter the Milwaukee Sentinel and Milwaukee Journal will be referred to simply as Sentinel and Journal. Likewise, all dates will be presumed to be 1967 unless otherwise indicated.

⁴"White, Negro Bridge Seen as Groppi Role," Sentinel, Sept. 11, p. 11.

Since Father Groppi figured so heavily as the leader of the open housing demonstrations, we have focused our study of the demonstrations on him and have attempted to review the demonstrations and related events to the extent that he was a part of them.

Father Groppi is a significant personality to study because he stands out unique at a period in the history of the black protest movement in America, when the principles of black power insisted on black leadership and black self-determination.⁵ Being a white, Roman Catholic priest, Groppi held a singular position in the civil rights movement. Few blacks are Roman Catholic, and Groppi's home base, St. Boniface Church in the inner core at N. 11th and W. Clarke Streets, lost hundreds of parishioners as it changed from a predominantly German ethnic parish to almost all black.

Groppi was a man who incited conflict and controversy. It was natural for the press to single him out. Walter Lippman's statement that the major news of the day is, in overwhelming measure, the news of trouble and conflict⁶

⁵It was this same black power movement which led Groppi to be hurt by the hesitant support of Milwaukee youth council members who had been told at a black convention in Washington, D.C., in late September to reject Groppi as a leader because he was white. Accepting the thrust of the black power sentiment in the black community, Groppi the next year resigned as adviser to the youth council, making room for the choice of a black adviser. He was also instrumental in having a black priest assigned as pastor of St. Boniface Church in 1970.

⁶Walter Lippmann, "Some Notes on the Press (1915)," in Clinton Rossiter and James Lare (eds.), The Essential Lippmann (N.Y.: Random House, 1963), p. 398.

was exemplified clearly in the Milwaukee press' coverage of Father Groppi and the open housing protests which he spearheaded. The reporting of such social conflict, according to Mitchell V. Charnley, is essential for the development of informed public opinion.⁷

To what extent, however, did the press build Father Groppi's reputation? Journalism scholars attest that the press has an effect on the reputation of news personalities. James B. Lenert claims that although we know very little about the process of status conferral, nonetheless, there is ample evidence that press coverage confers status.⁸ He defines status conferral as the process by which the press gives legitimacy or status to an individual. His study presents some insights on the status conferral process and its relationship to the credibility of the press. His studies give evidence that the sheer act of giving coverage to an individual affects his credibility and that the press itself provides that credibility. He points out, also, that the extent of status conferral varies directly with the credibility of the news agency.

Other writers agree that the simple fact of being covered by the press, even apart from the content of the

⁷ Reporting (N.Y.: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1959), p. 15.

⁸ "Two Studies of Status Conferral," Journalism Quarterly, XLIII (1966), pp. 25-33.

the coverage, enhances the status of a person. Paul F. Laz-
erfield and Robert K. Melton have done some of the clearest
thinking on the subject. They say:

The mass media confer status on public issues, per-
sons, organizations and social movements. . . . En-
hanced status accrues to those who merely receive at-
tention in the media, quite apart from any editorial
support. The mass media bestow prestige and enhance
the authority of individuals and groups by legitimiz-
ing their status. Recognition by the press or radio
or magazines or newsreels testifies that one has ar-
rived . . . that one's behavior or opinions are signi-
ficant enough to require public notice . . . The au-
diences of mass media apparently subscribe to the cir-
cular belief: "If you really matter, you will be at
the focus of attention and, if you are at the focus of
mass attention, then surely you must really matter."⁹

It is our hope that this thesis, which is essentially
a case study of how the Milwaukee daily newspapers treated
Father Groppi's role in the open housing protests, will shed
some light on the status conferral process. We have not
made any specific study of the process itself, as Lenert had,
but the raw news material which we offer can be inducement
for a study by other researchers.

In studying Father Groppi's open housing protest
activities, we have had to plow new ground. Five years after
the events, no major study or biography has appeared analyz-
ing the events and personalities of the protest. Frank A.
Aukofer, Journal reporter, in his City With a Chance,¹⁰

⁹"Mass Communication, Popular Taste and Organized
Social Action," in Guy Swanson, Theodore Newcomb and Eu-
gene Hartley (eds.), Readings in Social Psychology, rev. ed.
(N.Y.: Henry Holt and Company, 1952), pp. 74-85.

¹⁰(Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1968).

presents some material on Groppi and the open housing protests; but he draws attention to a wider area of concern and focuses on the Milwaukee civil rights movement as a whole, not primarily on the open housing protests. Phil Tracy presents a personality profile of Groppi in The Critic, a Catholic literary magazine with broad social concerns.¹¹ Groppi also has been the subject of several articles in newspapers and magazines, but nothing of a scholarly nature has appeared.

Journalism research on Groppi and the open housing question also is lacking. In fact, there is a dearth of journalism research on civil rights topics in general. Researchers seem to find politics to be a more vital aspect of newspress performance to study.¹²

A review of research projects reported in Journalism Quarterly, Columbia Journalism Review, sources from 1960 to date revealed several studies on the riots of the late 1960s but none on open housing protests. Some statistical content analysis had been undertaken by the President's Advisory

¹¹(March-April, 1971), pp. 12-24.

¹²The prestige press studies of Stempel are representative of a long line of similar research projects on political news coverage, E.G., Guido H. Stempel III, "The Prestige Press Covers the 1960 Presidential Campaign," Journalism Quarterly, XXXVIII (1961), pp. 157-63; "The Prestige Press in Two Presidential Elections," Journalism Quarterly, XLII (1965), pp. 15-21; and subsequent similar studies.

Commission on Civil Disorders.¹³ The commission tried to determine how the news media, newspapers and television, dealt with racial news and civil disorders. It offers its findings in a special chapter on the news media and presents several recommendations for future implement. Here, as with other studies, the emphasis is on overall racial news coverage and not on open housing.

Several academic studies have appeared in recent years which were concerned about one or another aspect of the racial situatuion in America as reported by the press. Margaret A. Breen rates the ten leading newspapers for coverage of the 1967 Detroit riots.¹⁴ She found that the newspapers under study gave reasonably similar accounts of the riots. Sheldon G. Levy, studying the flow of information during the same Detroit riots, discovered that, in spite of a news curfew, information about the riots spread quickly through the riot area.¹⁵ Woody Klein reports on a series of journalism forums at which black leaders gave their frank

¹³Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, with a special introduction by Tom Wicker of the New York Times (N.Y.: Bantam Books, 1968). The entire Chapter 15, pages 362-389, is devoted to "The News Media and the Disorders."

¹⁴"Ten Leading Newspapers Rated for Coverage of 1967 Detroit Riots," Journalism Quarterly, XLV (1968), pp. 544-46.

¹⁵"Communications During the Detroit Riot," Journalism Quarterly, XLVIII (1971), pp. 339-343.

criticisms of the press' coverage of black news.¹⁶ The participants of the forums agreed that the white press "created" Negro leaders, that the news media lacked trained specialists in black history, and that the press generally went along with the police in disputes involving police brutality or conflicts between police and blacks. Walter Gieber focuses his attention on how five California gatekeepers view local civil liberties.¹⁷ He examined the judgments and perceptions of newsmen involved in the transmission of news to the local community. And James Allen Flannery devotes his doctoral dissertation to the Chicago newspapers' coverage of the city's major civil disorders.¹⁸

The Sentinel and Journal have been subjects of Journalism research, but not in reference to their presentation of racial news. Several journalism graduates of Marquette

¹⁶ "The Racial Crisis in America; the News Media Respond to the New Challenge," Quill, LVII (January, 1969), pp. 8-12. Klein also conducted a survey among press executives which revealed that the press is beginning to recognize its shortcomings in the quest for better race relations. "News Media and Race Relations: A Self-Portrait," Columbia Journalism Review, VII (Fall 1968), pp. 42-49.

¹⁷ "How the 'Gatekeepers' View Local Civil Liberties News," Journalism Quarterly, XXXVII (1960), pp. 199-205.

¹⁸ "Chicago Newspapers' Coverage of the City's Major Civil Disorders of 1968 (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1971).

University have studied the two newspapers.¹⁹ None of these, however, addresses itself to the newspapers' coverage of the open housing protests, nor to Father Groppi's involvement in them.

Because this study is the first to focus on the subject, its methodology will be a descriptive analysis, presenting a case study of how the Sentinel and Journal actually covered Father Groppi and the open housing protests. We have given a detailed description of how, when, and where Father Groppi figured in the news reports of the two Milwaukee dailies during the first two weeks of the protests. Statistically, we have shown the amount and degree of attention and display he received. Analytically, we have attempted to determine in what terms the newspapers envisioned Groppi's role and position in the open housing protest movement.

Many of the instances in which Groppi was mentioned in news articles, the reports presented others' opinions and comments about the civil rights priest. In this study, a clear distinction is maintained between such comments and the strictly straight reporting of the newspaper.

¹⁹Eleven Marquette University thesis have studied the Milwaukee newspapers since 1933. Most have been content analyses of specific news events. Only two studies had been undertaken in the 1960s: Jean Berres, "The Daily Press as a Channel of Information: A Study of the Milwaukee Journal and Sentinel news coverage of the speeches of Mayor Henry W. Maier, April, 1963-March, 1964 (1969); and Jane da Silva, "An Analysis of the Milwaukee Journal's coverage of Indian Affairs from June 1, 1959 to December 31, 1959 (1961).

News coverage of several other individuals and groups prominent in the open housing situations also warranted inclusion in this study by their frequency and intensity. We have compared the coverage given Father Groppi with that given to the others, especially, Mayor Maier, the police, individual black leaders, the protesters, the spectators, and public officials. We have, when applicable, shown the assessment each of these made of Groppi's role in the open housing demonstrations and how they reacted to him. We have studied news articles, headlines, news pictures, and editorials.

We divided the news articles and editorials into paragraphs to determine the number and percentage that mentioned Groppi and others. In addition to the grammatically-accepted paragraphs, which in newspaper usage is usually one or two sentences, we have counted as a separate paragraph each set of words which were preceded by an indentation. In most instances, these were words introducing a quotation or an enumerated list.

We have also quantified the news pictures, measuring their width in columns and their depth in inches, and determined the number and size of those featuring Father Groppi. We have made comparisons with the picture coverage of other personalities.

We have also counted the headlines, giving separate attention to jump headlines. Those featuring Father Groppi have been singled out and compared with the subject matter

of the others.

The major thrust of our study is presented in Chapters IV and V. Chapter IV presents our description of Father Groppi's role as reported in the two newspapers. Chapter V presents our observations and conclusions derived from the study.

To put the study in proper perspective, however, we have prepared two chapters as background information. Chapter II reviews Father Groppi's gradual involvement in the Milwaukee black movement up to the open housing demonstrations. Chapter III is a resume of the events which occurred at the height of the demonstrations, from August 28 to September 8.

We have limited our study to the Milwaukee Sentinel and Milwaukee Journal for three reasons:

1. Coverage by newspapers from other cities which sent reporters to the demonstration scene might be of interest, but coverage by the Sentinel and Journal in situ clearly rests on the value of local coverage.²⁰ Preliminary study has indicated, moreover, that newspapers which sent staff reporters to Milwaukee often used UPI and AP wire service news copy instead of their own correspondents', even

²⁰ Rev. Michael Neuberger, an associate of Father Groppi at St. Boniface Church, reported in a personal interview that he remembered reporters from the Chicago newspapers, the New York Times, the London Observer, the London Times, the Cleveland, Australian and Canadian newspapers, in addition to original AP reports.

at the height of the demonstrations.²¹

2. Many newspapers across the country relied on UPI and AP news stories to report on the demonstrations; but both wire services used copy obtained from the Sentinel and Journal newsrooms, some to the extent of carrying Milwaukee reporters' bylines.²² Since this study is not concerned with information flow processes, it has not concerned itself with newspapers from cities other than Milwaukee.

3. Preliminary study has also indicated descriptions of Father Groppi's activities and quotes from him and about him rarely differ from those appearing more extensively in

²¹The UPI Log for September 2 reported that 113 newspapers (69 morning; 44 afternoon) used the UPI copy datelined from Milwaukee. The AP Log of the same date reported that AP copy from Milwaukee was used by 59 newspapers (27 morning; 32 afternoon).

²²The Milwaukee AP Bureau Chief, in a private interview, claimed that 69 per cent of the members of AP used copy originating from his office on September 2. He also reported that his office routinely received carbon copies of all Sentinel and Journal reports on the demonstrations and that these were sent on the wire in addition to original AP reports.

the Milwaukee newspapers.²³

We have limited our study to the first two weeks of the open housing demonstrations. This coincides with the newspapers dated August 29 to September 9. Many news items did not appear in both newspapers under the same date because the Sentinel is published in the morning and the Journal in the afternoon. To keep the days in proper focus, we have approached Chapters III and IV on a chronological basis. Events are dated according to their occurrence and not their appearance in a particular newspaper.

In addition, to give equal treatment to the Sentinel and Journal in our figures, we have omitted two dates: Sunday, September 3, and Labor Day, September 4. The Sentinel does not publish a Sunday edition, and the Journal's staff does not work on national holidays. As a result, our study encompasses ten complete editions of the Sentinel and Journal, from Tuesday to Saturday of each of the two weeks.

We have also eliminated several articles from this study which are only indirectly related to the demonstrations and Father Groppi and do not shed light on the purpose at hand.

²³None of the American newspapers perused by the author, except the Madison Capital Times and the Green Bay Press Gazette, came close to the depth and extent of coverage found in the Milwaukee dailies. And both of these Wisconsin newspapers carried many wire service credits over their stories.

Included among these are the articles which list the court appearances and fines of people arrested at the demonstrations and rallies, the lists of the injured, and the requests for funds for overtime pay for the police who kept order during the demonstrations.

We have included only those news articles which covered the demonstrations, the activities of Father Groppi, and the events related to the protests.

This included articles giving: (1) facts of the demonstrations and rallies; (2) reactions of spectators, public officials, religious leaders, and Milwaukee citizens to the protests and Father Groppi; and (3) the behind-the-scenes attempts to have the demonstrations and Father Groppi stopped.

Two major news events not planned as demonstrations, but very much a part of the news scene related to them, are included in our study. They are the burning of the youth council's Freedom House headquarters on August 30 and the disruptive behavior of a group of black youth in Mayor Maier's office on September 7. We have included reports of these two events along with others dealing directly with the protests.

CHAPTER II

FATHER GROPPI'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE MILWAUKEE BLACK PROTEST MOVEMENT

Ever since the German brewmasters settled in Milwaukee many years ago, the city has been known as the beer capital of America. The city fathers and citizens of the "big city with the small town mentality" haven't found the title detrimental to the image of the city. But in 1967, like many other American urban centers, Milwaukee experienced the pains of racial unrest. Its turn for an inner city riot came and brought it national attention when Mayor Henry W. Maier took swift action to quell the riots by proclaiming a total curfew, which virtually closed down the whole city.

Milwaukee hardly had time to recover from its unwanted national publicity when a new problem thrust its name into the headlines again. Father James E. Groppi and the Milwaukee youth council began a campaign for open housing which aroused the ire of many whites. Through the publicity he gained as leader of the open housing demonstrations that summer, Groppi's name became a new household word. Milwaukee's status as beer capital gave way to being known as the battleground where Father Groppi and the Milwaukee youth council fought the white establishment. Youth Council members began calling Groppi, "the man who made Milwaukee fa-

mous."

Early Life

James Edward Groppi, 37 years old in 1967, was born in Milwaukee's Italian ghetto on the southeast side. He was one of ten children of Italian immigrants. He attended parochial and public grade schools and was captain of the basketball team at Bay View High School. He worked for a year in his father's grocery store before beginning eight years of study for the Roman Catholic priesthood. He studied first at St. Lawrence Seminary, Mt. Calvary, Wisconsin, and then at St. Francis Seminary, Milwaukee.

Already as a seminarian, Groppi became involved with the black community and its problems. He directed a summer day camp for inner core children during the three summers before his ordination. After being ordained a priest in June 1959, he was assigned to St. Veronica Church, a white parish on the south side. In 1963, he was transferred to St. Boniface Church in the inner core. His style of ministry increasingly took him out of the church and rectory office into the streets. In 1965, he was chosen as adviser to the youth council of the Milwaukee chapter of the NAACP.¹

It was in conjunction with his work with the youth council that Groppi came to national prominence. His civil rights activities extend from 1964, however, when he made

¹Phil Tracy, "Groppi," The Critic (March-April 1971), pp. 12-24.

several trips to Mississippi with clothing and food for the black poor. That same year he joined the Walk for Poverty in Washington, D.C.²

In spring 1965, Groppi was among the thousands of civil rights advocates and clergymen who descended on Selma, Alabama, for the famous march on Montgomery. He returned to Milwaukee with a new spirit of militancy for the cause of the blacks, and his name began to be increasingly associated with civil rights activities in the Milwaukee area.³

A summary of the events leading up to the open housing demonstrations of 1967 helps to put Father Groppi's actions in the demonstrations in perspective.

Public School Boycotts

In the mid 1960s, one of the first major efforts on the part of various black organizations in Milwaukee to protest the segregation situation through public demonstrations came from the Milwaukee United School Integration Committee (MUSIC). This volunteer organization of about 200 blacks and whites was formed in March 1964 to promote the integration of Milwaukee's public schools. It spearheaded boycotts of public schools three times in 1964 and 1965.

The first public test of MUSIC's influence among the black community was on May 18, 1964, when it led a one-day

²Ibid., p. 18.

³Frank A. Aukofer, "Groppi: Low Posture, High Court," Journal, Dec. 13, 1970, Pt. 5, p. 1.

boycott of public schools. The effort resulted in 11,500 absentees, according to probably conservative figures of school officials.⁴ Shortly after the boycott, the Milwaukee school board adopted an open enrollment system under which pupils could transfer to any school that had room for them without giving a reason for the transfer.

The following May, MUSIC protested the busing of black students to predominantly white schools. It objected that the transfer students were not integrated with the regular student body. Black State Assemblyman Lloyd Barbee, chairman of MUSIC, and other demonstrators were arrested during a three-week period from May 25 to June 17. Groppi was among several clergymen who were arrested on June 4.⁵ The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) joined the protest by holding daily sit-ins at the school superintendent's office. And the NAACP backed a suit of 41 white and black parents to pressure the school board to change its busing policy.

MUSIC's next major thrust was on October 18-20, 1965, when it co-ordinated a three-day boycott of public schools. Father Groppi was actively involved in the boycott as vice chairman of Music.⁶ The committee set up "freedom schools"

⁴ "11,500 Boycott Public Schools to Protest de Facto Segregation," Journal, May 18, 1964, p. 1.

⁵ "Clerics Arrested for Blocking Bus," Journal, June 4, 1965, Pt. 2, p. 1.

⁶ Frank A. Aukofer, "Civil Rights Groups to Start 2nd School Boycott Monday," Journal, Oct. 17, 1965, p. 4.

in churches and other locations in order not to interrupt the education of the boycotting students. It made demands of the Milwaukee school board which fell into three general categories:

1. Adoption by the school board of an overall policy to alleviate racial imbalance in the public schools.
2. Immediate integration into host schools of classes transported from schools that were overcrowded or undergoing remodeling.
3. Judicious selection of school sites so new schools would not become predominantly black.⁷

The boycott lasted only three days; and, except for bringing the complaints of the black community to public mind, it displayed few concrete results. On the first day, when the boycott hit its peak, only 12,654 students were absent from a total student body of 122,000.⁸

Closing of Catholic Facilities to Protest Activities

A side issue which generated as much news coverage as the boycott itself was a series of events which followed a statement by Most Reverend Roman Atkielski, auxiliary bishop of the Milwaukee Catholic Archdiocese. He forbade Catholic pastors to allow the use of parish facilities for freedom schools during the boycott.

⁷Ibid.

⁸"Boycott of Schools Begins; DA Pledges Prosecutions," Journal, Oct. 18, 1965, p. 1.

The pastors of five north side Catholic parishes, St. Boniface, St. Gall, St. Benedict the Moor, St. Elizabeth, and St. Francis, had aligned themselves with the advocates of the boycott and had offered parish facilities and teachers for the freedom schools. Four days before the scheduled boycott, Msgr. Edmund J. Goebel, superintendent of Milwaukee Catholic Schools, sent special delivery letters to the priests and principals of the five inner core parishes, again forbidding them to permit the use of their parish facilities for freedom schools. He said he had consulted with District Attorney Hugh O'Connell and considered the boycott illegal. Therefore, he said:

I am obliged hereby to issue an order to you . . . not to participate in the boycott . . . I personally have the obligation to perscribe the curriculum for our schools, therefore, each teacher will follow the archdiocesan handbook, which is filed with the department of public instrucion.⁹

At press interviews, Father Groppi and other inner core priests said that they interpreted the letter to apply only to school facilities and not personal participation. Bishop Atkielski, who was running the archdiocese in the absence of Archbishop William Cousins who was in Rome at the time, clarified his stand the next day when he commanded that no priests, nuns or brothers were to participate in any way in the schduled public school boycott.¹⁰

⁹"Catholic Pastors Told Not to Join in Boycott," Journal, Oct. 15, 1965, p. 18.

¹⁰"Chancellor Calls, Priests Obey," Journal, Oct. 18, 1965, p. 1.

In the confusion of memoranda and press reports surrounding the exchange of view, the priests still considered themselves free to offer aid to the boycott forces. On the Saturday before the boycott deadline, 20 inner core priests and 35 nuns issued a statement declaring in conscience that they could not turn students away who came to their doors.

The group said:

We respect him (Atkielski) as holding an office from the hand of Christ. But it is with sorrow and regret that we declare we do not think he understands the facts of the situation as they are. Accordingly, in our own consciences, we do not see his directions, based upon legal opinion, as morally binding with the force of Christ's words.¹¹

The group emphasized that Bishop Atkielski based his order on an opinion of District Attorney O'Connell, and that the bishop had personally admitted to one of the priests that he was not making a moral judgment. Atkielski scheduled a meeting with the priests that Saturday, but when the day came told them it would not pay to talk over the matter.

On the eve of the boycott, Atkielski reiterated his ban. The next day, instead of participating in the boycott, the pastors of the five inner core parishes purchased advertising space in the Milwaukee newspapers to apologize to their people. They explained:

We have been informed through inadequate communication lines by our local curial officials that we are forbidden to allow the parish property and facilities to be used for the freedom schools. As priest servants of our parishes, we were faced with the choice of

¹¹"Priests and Nuns Barred from Joining in Boycott," Journal, Oct. 16, 1965, p. 1.

obeying the Bishop, in which case we feel that our Church fails to give its full Christian witness here. On the other hand, should we disobey the Bishop, we feel that at this time in our Church many would not be able to understand our actions, and so would suffer some spiritual harm because they are not yet ready to receive the full impact of Vatican II. With every protest short of direct disobedience, and with the conviction that we are substantially betraying our people, but with the hope that we have not done so, we revert to the basic training we have been given and reluctantly closed our parish facilities to the use of the freedom schools.¹²

The boycott and the confrontation with Bishop Atkielski were the setting for the beginning of the local press' focus on Father Groppi. He was quoted frequently as spokesman of the inner core clergy, and several pictures featured him with boycotting students at St. Boniface Church.¹³ Most of the news coverage of Father Groppi concerned his organizing activity at St. Boniface Church; but as the confrontation with Bishop Atkielski moved toward a climax, his visibility in the newspapers became more evident. On October 19, the Journal ran two articles which singled out Groppi for attention. One was sidebar reporting the unending activity of the weary priest.¹⁴ The second, featured on page one, revealed that church authorities also had singled out Groppi as more

¹² Frank A. Aukofer, "Fewer Pupils are Absent as School Boycott Goes on," Journal, Oct. 19, 1965, p. 2.

¹³ Among the pictures which featured Groppi were three in the Oct. 18, Journal, p. 1 and p. 7.

¹⁴ Alicia Armstrong, "Priest Wearying for Rights Cause," Journal, Oct. 19, 1965, Pt. 1, p. 1.

active in the boycott than others and ordered him to desist from his activities.¹⁵ In most instances, he was referred to as a Catholic priest and associate pastor of St. Boniface Church.

Protest Against de Facto Segregation

Late in 1965, MUSIC directed its protests against de facto school segregation. It claimed that the building of public schools in the predominantly black inner core served to perpetuate the separation of black and white children. A group of people demonstrated at the site of the half-completed McDowell Elementary School on December 5-17. Eleven persons, including Father Groppi, were arrested on December 6.¹⁶

Groppi played a major role in the demonstrations. The Milwaukee newspapers began to mention his name with increased frequency. It was rare for priests to put themselves forward on such controversial questions like segregation, and the white community was disturbed. Milwaukee civic leaders and citizens pressured Archbishop William Cousins, who had returned from Rome, to discipline Groppi. Cousins refused to act under pressure. In the middle of the month he met with priests and nuns of the inner core parishes to discuss

¹⁵"Church Tells Groppi to Desist," Journal, Oct. 19, 1965, p. 1.

¹⁶"11 Seized in School Site Protest," Journal, Dec. 6, 1965, p. 1.

the role of Catholic clergy in the Milwaukee public school integration dispute. The archbishop called Father Groppi "a little immature" but "an honest, dedicated and sincere priest who has a lot of guts and is doing things maybe others of us don't have the courage to do."¹⁷ But he also defended Bishop Atkielski's stand against clerical intervention in the school dispute and the use of church facilities for the support of illegal activities.

The Wauwatosa Marches

In August 1966, the youth council, with Father Groppi in the lead, set out to protest the membership of public officials in segregated private clubs. They singled out the Eagles Club, which excluded all non-Caucasians from its membership. Several Milwaukee-area judges and public officials belonged to the Eagles Club, and the youth council asked them to resign from the club in protest of the exclusionary clause in its constitution.

The youth council directed the brunt of its early demonstrations at Circuit Judge Robert C. Cannon who lived in suburban Wauwatosa. Cannon was known for his liberal attitude toward civil rights, and the council calculated that he would easily accede to their demands. He did not, and the council began a round of marches in Wauwatosa which

¹⁷ "Archbishop Hopes to Solve Dispute," New York Times, Dec. 19, 1965, p. 47.

ran from August 19 to September 3.¹⁸

At first, the nightly demonstrations, which centered around Cannon's house, were quiet and uneventful; but with each march large crowds of whites lined the streets yelling insults and throwing bottles, stones, and eggs at the protesters. On August 28, Wisconsin Governor Warren P. Knowles, fearing an escalation of the violence, ordered 500 national guardsmen to the village. It was the first time since 1934 that the national guard had been mobilized to quell a civic disturbance in Wisconsin.¹⁹

On September 1, the youth council entered into an agreement with Wisconsin Attorney General Bronson LaFollette to curb the Wauwatosa marches.²⁰ The protesters then turned their attention to Milwaukee officials and, on successive nights, demonstrated at the homes of County Judge Christ R. Seraphim and Congressman Clement J. Zablocki, who also were members of the Eagles Club. Before any violent local reaction had a chance to materialize, Professor Nathan Feinsinger of the University of Wisconsin Law School mediated an agreement with the youth council. The council promised not to march for a week to give Feinsinger time to talk with

¹⁸"Rights Group Pickets Judge Cannon's Home," Journal, Aug. 20, 1966, p. 9.

¹⁹"Guard Restrains White Hecklers," Journal, Aug. 29, 1966. p. 1.

²⁰"LaFollette Announces Picket Curb," Journal, Sept. 1, 1966, p. 1.

Eagles Club officials.²¹ Nothing came of the discussions, and no public official announced his resignation from the club. A few days later, the council directed its attention to another cause.

During the Wauwatosa marches Father Groppi was presented on occasion as the spokesman and leader of the protesters, but for the most part the local press played down his role. The Journal, for one, refrained from mentioning the priest's name. Both Milwaukee newspapers considered the youth council to be the leader of the marches and presented it as such.

Other Minor Protest Events

September 6, 1966

Father Groppi complained that the police were harrasing the youth council by putting its headquarters on a 24-hour watch. In reporting the complaint, the Journal reviewed Groppi's role in the youth council's protest strategy.²²

October 9, 1966

The youth council announced that it was forming an elite group called the commandos. Its function would be to protect marchers in civil rights demonstrations. Speaking for the youth council, Father Groppi reported that the com-

²¹"Negroes OK Week's Halt in Picketing," Journal, Sept. 4, 1966, p. 1.

²²"Groppi Says Rights Unit is Harassed," Journal, Sept. 6, 1966, p. 1.

mandos would serve as an unarmed police force and would wear uniforms so they could be recognized.²³ A few days later, two of the commandos were arrested while picketing a Marquette University dance at the Eagles Club. The commandos also began a program of nightly watches at the home of Police Chief Harold A. Breier and other officials in response to the police watch on the youth council headquarters.

May 5, 1967

Father Groppi and three black youths were arrested and charged with obstructing the police and resisting arrest during a disturbance following a meeting of the youth council. The four were found guilty of the charge and fined.²⁴ The police accused Groppi of trying to incite a riot. The priest denied the charge and again complained about the police "blood hounding" him and the youth council.

May 13, 1967

Groppi led about 450 demonstrators to police headquarters to protest police harassment of Milwaukee blacks. He had a conference with Police Chief Breier, but the meeting was unsuccessful in resolving the issue. Breier complained to newsmen that it was impossible to reason with

²³Thomas G. Lubenow, "Commando Group Formed by NAACP," Journal, Aug. 5, 1966, p. 1.

²⁴"Groppi Accused of Seeking Riot," Journal, May 6, p. 1.

Groppi.²⁵

The demonstrators taped a resolution to one of the doors of the safety building, which stated:

The Black people of Milwaukee are controlled by a police force that is alien to them, that did not arise out of their community, that has little relation to the needs or desires of the community.²⁶

June 19, 1967

The Milwaukee Common Council rejected an open housing bill introduced for the fourth time by Alderman Vel R. Phillips. In responding to the rejection, Father Groppi warned of large scale protests as a result of the council's refusal to enact an open housing ordinance. He announced that the youth council would begin demonstrating for an open housing ordinance. That evening, 85 pickets marched to the home of Common Council President Martin E. Schreiber.²⁷

Groppi threatened: "Either we are going to get what we want in this city, or we're going to turn this city upside down. If it takes the national guard out all summer, that's what the youth council's going to do."²⁸ The following week the youth council picketed the home of Alderman Francis E.

²⁵"450 March to Safety Building, Post Note," Journal, May 14, p. 1.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Frank A. Aukofer, "Open Housing Pickets Protest Alderman's Vote," Journal, Aug. 20, Pt. 2, p. 1.

²⁸"Groppi Vows to March into Suburbs," Journal, June 22, Pt. 2, p. 1.

Dineen, of the First Ward.²⁹ Like Schreiber, Dineen invited the protesters into his house and discussed his open housing vote with them, but there was no meeting of minds.

During the rest of the summer, Mayor Maier, Father Groppi, and aldermen exchanged accusations, blaming each other for tension in the black community. Alderman Robert A. Anderson called for Groppi's removal from the scene. Groppi, in his turn, predicted that if the common council didn't move immediately on the open housing question, the city could expect trouble.

The Milwaukee Riots

The trouble was not long in coming. It came on the night of July 29--the very day which President Lyndon B. Johnson had set aside as a day of prayer for racial peace. The disorder started late Sunday evening along N. 3rd Street. Bands of black youths went up and down the street, from Cherry Street to Burleigh Street. They broke shop windows, started a number of small fires, and confronted the police with shouts and thrown objects. The police called out 1,000 men and set up command posts in the riot area. They wore riot helmets and carried pump shotguns, rifles, and sub-machine guns. The disturbance flared up until shortly after 2 A.M. when a rain storm dispersed the mobs. In the course of the night, over 180 persons were arrested, 68 persons

²⁹Frank A. Aukofer, "Negroes Picket 2nd Alderman's House," Journal, June 27, Pt. 2, p. 1.

were injured, and two died.³⁰

Mayor Maier responded quickly to the disorder by asking Governor Knowles to mobilize the national guard. By the next day, 4,800 guardsmen were in Milwaukee. They joined the police, patrolling the streets, breaking up gatherings of blacks, and closing off the riot area. The first day, they sealed off 840 square blocks.³¹

Maier also reacted to the disturbance by proclaiming a total curfew on the city. For 26 hours, the curfew virtually ordered all citizens off the streets under the threat of arrest. Many of the suburbs follow suit, but limited their curfew from 7 P.M. to 7 A.M.³²

On July 31, Father Groppi and six blacks were arrested for breaking the curfew when they attempted to join a meeting of black leaders. There was tension when the police took Groppi into custody but the priest was released shortly after being booked. Maier accused Groppi of stimulating resentment among the blacks.³³

All taverns, liquor stores and gas stations were ordered closed as part of the curfew. They remained so for

³⁰"180 Seized; Guardsmen Called Out," Journal, July 30, p. 1.

³¹Ibid

³²Patrick Graham, "No Coddling of Criminals, Mayor Vows," Journal, July 30, p. 1.

³³"Curfew Lifted After Quiet Night; It Goes Back on at 7 Tonight," Journal, Aug. 1, p. 1.

most of the week. Once the violence of the first night subsided, the police and guardsmen encountered only sporadic sniper fire, looting, and minor fires. Each day Maier decreased the hours of the curfew, eventually lifting it entirely on August 9th.³⁴ By the weekend the guardsmen began to demobilize, and the city returned to business as usual.

³⁴ "Tonight's Curfew Is Last; Mayor Will Talk on TV," Journal, Aug. 8, p. 1.

CHAPTER III

OPEN HOUSING EVENTS--AUGUST 28-SEPTEMBER 8, 1967

Monday--August 28

Milwaukee hardly had time to assess the damage and implications of its riots when the youth council announced that it would begin demonstrations in earnest for the enactment of an open housing ordinance. The evening of Monday, August 28, about 200 council members and sympathizers gathered at the 16th Street viaduct. They carried with them a permit to hold a picnic in Kosciuszko Park, located not too deeply into Milwaukee's south side, at 10th Street and Lincoln Avenue. The viaduct which they had to cross is one of several which span the industrial Menomonee Valley separating Milwaukee's north and south sides. Most of the marchers were black. About a third were white, many of whom were nuns and priests. Father James E. Groppi was among them.¹

As the demonstrators moved down 16th Street, they

¹"8,000 Taunt Rights Marchers on S. Side," Sentinel, Aug. 29, p. 1; "Crowds Harass Groppi Marchers," Journal, Aug. 29, p. 1.

were escorted by eight policemen. It was 6:25 P.M. Three hours later, when the marchers returned to the viaduct, 125 policemen were on the scene. About 3,000 spectators lined Lincoln Avenue, shouting insults at the marchers and occasionally throwing bottles, rocks, and chunks of wood. A policeman and black woman were injured.

The marchers were met at the park by over 5,000 additional spectators. Police cordoned off a part of the park for the marchers. Father Groppi stood on top of a picnic table and displayed signs reading, "Fair Housing," "Black Power," and "We South Siders Welcome Negroes." He attempted to speak, but the heckling and shouting of the two groups drowned out his voice. A district park supervisor warned the priest that the picnic permit did not allow speeches. Groppi told him he would comply with the conditions if the police would clear the area of spectators.

Groppi continued to shout to those who could hear him that Governor Warren Knowles was remiss in his duty in not calling out the national guard to protect the marchers. He promised that the group would come back to the park the next day.

After only 15 minutes in the park, the demonstrators re-grouped for the return march. Police had to clear a path through the crowd of spectators. The surge of the spectators forced the police and marchers into the street. A few scuffles between marchers and spectators were quickly broken

up by police. The crowd thinned by the time the marchers turned north on 16th Street, but about 500 white youths continued to follow the marchers, shouting obscenities and anti-black slogans. Several scuffled with the police and were arrested. The police donned tear gas masks and took tear gas guns from squad cars but did not use them. Sixteen persons were arrested, most of them white hecklers.

At the end of the march, Father Groppi said that the marchers decided to walk across the 16th Street viaduct because it symbolized Milwaukee's "Mason-Dixon line"--the division between the city's black north side and the white south side.²

Tuesday--August 29

The night of the first march, Mayor Henry Maier could not be reached for comment; but the next day, Tuesday, he issued a statement on the march. He called for a voluntary curfew during the demonstration planned for that night. He asked all south siders to stay off the streets. Maier focused his remarks on Father Groppi and accused him of "looking for noise and adulation, along with the national attention that he thinks will result from it"³ He said that the people of Milwaukee will only advance Groppi's "unworthy cause

²Journal, ibid., p. 12.

³"Maier Urges Curfew on Voluntary Basis," Journal, Aug. 29, p. 1.

by allowing themselves to be used for this purpose."⁴

Maier indicated that black leaders were trying to dissuade Father Groppi from marching Tuesday night, but that he could not get any of them to say so publicly.

In the morning, the youth council held a press conference at their Freedom House headquarters, 1316 N. 15th Street. They announced that in the evening they would take the same route to Kosciuszko Park that they had taken the night before. Father Groppi also announced that the group would march to St. Josaphat's Basilica, on S. 6th Street, where, as he said, "we hope to pray with our brothers from the south side."⁵

The Wednesday morning Sentinel caused a stir when it reported that Roy Wilkins, executive director of the NAACP, had criticized the Milwaukee youth council for marching on the south side. Bernice Buresh, Sentinel reporter, and Guy Mainella, news and public affairs director for radio station WRIT, substantially agreed that in an impromptu interview Wilkins said that the south side demonstrations would not educate the people on open housing but rather would make them afraid that someone was trying to take their

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ "Crowds Harass Groppi Marchers," Journal, Aug. 29, p. 12. The march to the basilica never materialized.

houses away.⁶

Wilkins was reported to have said that the national office of the NAACP had been having nothing but trouble with the Milwaukee youth council and that he had not talked to them because they would consider it interference on his part and that demonstrations were an approved NAACP method.

Wilkins was in Milwaukee with four other members of the President's National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders to talk with leaders and citizens on the causes and cures of riots.

The next day's Journal carried a denial by Roy Wilkins that he had criticized the youth council's protest strategy.⁷ When the Journal phoned him in New York, he denied that he had given an interview to the reporters who quoted his criticism of the demonstrations and Father Groppi. To attest to his support of the youth council's efforts for open housing, Wilkins said that he would have marched with the council Tuesday night had he not had to return to a previous commitment in New York. The Journal reported that the Sentinel stuck to its report and presented background information on how the reporters came to quote Wilkins.

Early Tuesday evening, 200 demonstrators met again

⁶"Wilkins Raps Youth Council for Marching on South Side." Sentinel, Aug. 30, p. 7.

⁷"Wilkins Denies Criticizing March Here," Journal, Aug. 30, Pt. 2, p. 1.

at the 16th Street viaduct for the second march to Kosciuszko Park.⁸ They took the same route as the night before, south from the viaduct to W. Lincoln Avenue and then east to the park. The crowd of 6,000-8,000 spectators which lined the streets was more unfriendly than Monday night. Up to 500 policemen were on the scene to contain the spectators.

The marchers were advised by the police to turn back because of the danger of violence. Frequently the spectators surged against the marchers and police. They shouted insults and threw bottles and rocks at the marchers. Dozens of persons were injured in the course of the evening, including 11 policemen.

White teenagers were especially provocative in their insults and bating of police and marchers. They hung Father Groppi in effigy with swastikas painted on his chest. They blared music from a loudspeaker and waved a Confederate flag and signs saying, "Groppi--Black God," "Work, Don't March," and "Trained Nigger."

When the march was less than 45 minutes old, shotguns and rifles were passed out to the policemen. They had carried only sidearms before then. At 11th and Lincoln a large group of the white youths surged on the marchers and police. They rocked a squad car and threw eggs and other debris at the marchers. The police blasted a volley of shotgun shots

²²"22 Hurt in South Side Melee, Tear Gas Used, 45 Arrested," Sentinel, Aug. 30, p. 1; "Maier Orders 30 Day Ban on Night Demonstrations," Journal, Aug. 30, p. 1.

into the air. Other policemen fired tear gas into the crowd. The mob dispersed and the police guided the marchers forward.

The march finally reached Kosciuszko Park at 8:26, an hour and a half after it began. The demonstrators sat in a large grassy picnic area which had been cordoned off by police. Groppi spoke to the group but was interrupted when a spectator threw a firecracker into the crowd. Three persons were injured by the blast.

After the protesters had been in the park only nine minutes, the police began directing them out onto the street again. The march back to the viaduct was accompanied by screams and shouts from the spectators as before. The police several times urged the marchers into a run with heads down in order to avoid a barrage of thrown objects. At a used car lot on 16th Street a mob of youths was dispersed with tear gas when they rained scores of bottles on the marchers and the police. At National Avenue police set up a picket line to prevent spectators from following the marchers to the viaduct.

By the time the march ended, at close to 9:30, dozens of persons were injured and 45 arrested. As he walked across the viaduct, Groppi criticized Mayor Maier for not calling out the national guard. Colonel Hugh Simonson of the Wisconsin National Guard was present during the march and conferred with police officials, but he had no comment on whether the guard would be sent in to help the police to

keep order. Groppi, usually critical of the police, complimented them for doing a fine job but remarked that they were shorthanded.

Two squad cars of police escorted the protester's bus back to Freedom House.⁹ The demonstrators gathered on the street in front of the youth council headquarters, shouting complaints at the police for inadequate protection during the march on the south side. In the confusion, someone threw some bottles at a squad car, smashing its windshield. Shots rang out from a neighboring vacant house, but the police could find no sniper. They fired tear gas to disperse the crowd and began firing shotguns into the vacant house. Shortly thereafter, police said they saw a fire bomb being thrown at the Freedom House from a speeding car. The police immediately blocked off the area. Firemen were unable to extinguish the fire because the youth council bus blocked the street. Police also were unwilling to allow the firemen to come near the house for fear of sniper fire.

As a result, the building was gutted. It was an old house, eventually slated for demolition, still damage to it was estimated at \$2,000. Father Groppi later accused the police of starting the fire with a tear gas cannister. The true cause of the fire was never determined, and the car from which police said they saw the firebomb thrown was

⁹"Freedom House Fire Bombed, Gutted," Sentinel, Aug. 30, p. 1.

never located.

Wednesday--August 30

The next morning, Mayor Maier reacted to the violence precipitated by the south side marches by proclaiming a state of emergency. He prohibited marches, demonstrations, and parades for 30 days on all city streets and sidewalks from 4 P.M. to 9 A.M.¹⁰ The proclamation had been drafted by City Attorney John J. Fleming after consultation with police and city officials. Much attention was given to the proclamation; but there were several legal questions about its power, including the need for confirmation by the Milwaukee Common Council.

Community leaders were busy during the day appealing to all sides to bring order back to the city. Mayor Maier summoned about 30 clergymen from the north and south sides to his office to discuss the civil rights controversy.¹¹ He tried to win their support for a 39-point program to help the poor and halt the spread of urban decay. The group endorsed Maier's call for an open housing law covering the suburbs as well as the city and planned a meeting for Friday of the Greater Milwaukee Conference on Religion and Race to discuss the mayor's program.

¹⁰ Journal, *ibid.*

¹¹ "Maier's Open Housing Bid Backed by 30 Clergymen," Journal, Aug. 31, Pt. 2, p. 1.

Maier asked the clergymen to support: (1) his program which called for federal, state, county, and local action against poverty, prejudice, and decay; (2) his proposal for a grass-roots biracial council to improve communication between different social groups, such a council including tavern owners, union stewards, barbers and similar persons; (3) recruitment of citizens in prominent positions to the community relations commission; and (4) his efforts to enlarge the commission.

The same day, another group of Protestant and Catholic clergymen from the south side, members of the South Side Interfaith Clergy, issued a statement saying that they were "concerned and ashamed of the hatred and bigotry exhibited toward the open housing demonstrations."¹² The group of 35 called on Maier and Governor Knowles to call out the national guard to provide adequate protection for marchers. They also requested the youth council to cancel future marches. They pledged themselves to meet with Father Groppi and the youth council to discuss inner core problems.

The acceptance of the statement was not unanimous. Four south side pastors expressed disapproval of the statement. Two of them did not agree with the wording, and two others denied that the statement was representative of the

¹² James M. Johnston, "Clergy Group 'Ashamed of Bigotry,'" Sentinel, Aug. 31, p. 5.

opinion of the bulk of south side clergymen.

The chairman of the city commission on human relations, Paul J. Moynihan, met with Archbishop William E. Cousins, Catholic Archbishop of Milwaukee, in an attempt to have Cousins limit the civil rights activities of Father Groppi.¹³ Moynihan met with the archbishop at the behest of Mayor Maier. Moynihan was not successful in getting the archbishop to silence Groppi, but he got a promise from Cousins that he would cooperate with the mayor and civil authorities to prevent a tragedy.

Later in the day, Cousins issued a statement taped for viewing on Milwaukee television channels.¹⁴ He called for an end to the demonstrations, pointing out that the marchers had already achieved their desire of public attention to the open housing plight. On the other hand, he said, some of the reactions to the marches were hard to condone. He said:

Unquestionably, many of the thousands gathered were engaged in a dangerous satisfying of curiosity. But there were others, all too large in numbers, whose earlier jeering and verbal abuses turned into bottle throwing and physical threat. Emotions ran high and latent prejudices provided all the elements for serious mob violence. Credit must be given to the great majority of residents who minded their own business and refused to be drawn into regrettable action.¹⁵

¹³"Cousins Urged to Step in," Journal, Aug. 30, p. 1.

¹⁴"End Racial Unrest Right Now--Cousins," Sentinel, Aug. 31, p. 1; "Cousins Advises Action on Unrest," Journal, Aug. 31, Pt. 2, p. 1.

¹⁵Journal, ibid.

Archbishop Cousins called for cooperation on the part of all groups in the city to solve the open housing situation and emphasized that the time for action was now and not after the expiration of the mayor's ban. Cousins avoided mention of Father Groppi's name.

The same day, Mayor Maier met with six south side aldermen in a closed meeting.¹⁶ He was highly critical of Father Groppi. He accused him of "Exuding hatred" and insisted that "he does not love Negroes; he hates whites." He accused Groppi of attracting "bigots from across the state to get the national publicity he craves."¹⁷

Congressman Clement J. Zablocki also spoke out on the situation. In a press conference, he advised south siders to stay away from future youth council marches. He defended the bulk of his south side constituency, claiming that they "recognize and respect the right of peaceful demonstration" but "that the type of demonstrations now being led by Father Groppi do not accomplish any useful purpose."¹⁸

Zablocki denied that all the march hecklers were south siders. He gave his endorsement of Maier's 30-day march ban. The congressman, whose home had been picketed by

¹⁶"Cousins Urged to Step In," Journal, Aug. 30, p. 26.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸"Zablocki Urges Residents: 'Stay away from Marches,'" Sentinel, Aug, 31, p. 7.

the youth council the previous year, had no kind words for Father Groppi. He pinpointed the reaction to the south side demonstrations as being not anti-Negro, but anti-Father Groppi. He accused the priest of inflaming the south side residents by his critical remarks about them.

In a statement issued to the press the executive committee of the Young Democrats at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee recommended that the mayor's march ban be ignored. They charged that Maier's proclamation was "a blatant, political, discriminatory and unconstitutional act" against Milwaukee Negroes. They accused the mayor of playing "politics with human rights while at the same time calling himself a Democrat."¹⁹ The committee also urged the removal of County Judge Christ T. Seraphim from the bench, charging that Seraphim had "consistently displayed his personal bias" on the bench.²⁰

(On Friday, the leaders of non-college Young Democrats in Milwaukee advised the opposite. They urged all youth to honor the ban.²¹ The non-college group, which tends to be more conservative than the college group, reiterated its support of the democratic process of law and order.

¹⁹ "Students Ask Public Not to Obey Mayor," Journal, Aug. 31, p. 12.

²¹ Ibid.

²² "Democrats Split over Maier Ban," Journal, Sept. 1, Pt. 2, p. 2.

Over the weekend, the executive board of the Young Democratic Clubs of Wisconsin went along with the college group's estimation of the Milwaukee racial situation and condemned what it called a racist attitude and brutality on the part of Milwaukee Police.²²⁾

At the advice of its lawyers who were still seeking a clarification on the constitutionality of the mayor's ban on demonstrations, the youth council cancelled a march to the south side Wednesday evening.²³ Instead they staged a rally in front of the burned-out Freedom House. The rally began at 6:30. About 100 helmeted policemen arrived on the scene about 45 minutes later. A police captain told the more than 200 persons at the rally that they were engaged in an unlawful assembly in violation of the mayor's proclamation. Scuffling broke out as police began to make arrests. Approximately 50 persons were taken into custody, and two policemen were injured.

Father Groppi advised the people at the rally that the police could not arrest them as long as they stayed on the private property of the Freedom House. One of the youth council commandos introduced Alderman Vel Phillips, who decried the brutality of the police. Later, the police rushed

²²"Police Called Brutal by Young Democrats, Journal, Sept. 5, p. 12.

²³"Police Arrest Vel Phillips, Groppi as March is Foiled," Sentinel, Sept. 1, p. 1; "Maier Lifts March Curbs, Vows Police Will Do Duty," Journal, Sept. 1, p. 1.

onto the porch of the Freedom House to arrest people who had run there after stepping on the street in defiance of the police. Groppi and Phillips escaped arrest; but another clergyman and his wife, Reverend and Mrs. Leo Champion, were among those arrested. Rev. Champion was a former head of the Milwaukee CORE.

Almost immediately after the rally, 10 attorneys for the youth council issued a writ demanding the release of all adults arrested at the rally.²⁴ The writ questioned the constitutional right of Mayor Maier to proclaim a state of emergency. They argued that the mayor exceeded his constitutional authority in issuing the proclamation and that the ban on demonstrations was illegal.

Also after the rally, Father Groppi and about 20 others drove to the safety building to confer with attorneys and arrange bail for those who had been arrested. Police detained the group for about 20 minutes with a solid line before it was allowed to proceed to the First District police station and the detective bureau. Later, the police ordered them out of the building.

Thursday-August 31

Thursday, County Judge Christ T. Seraphim ruled that the 31 adults arrested at Wednesday night rally had in all

²⁴Frank A. Aukofer, "New NAACP Rally Set After 48 Arrests," Journal, Aug. 31, p. 1.

probability committed an offence in violating the mayor's march band.²⁵ Attorneys for the city and the defendents agreed that the case should be tested in court. The case of one man-Ray Alexander, a planner for the Northtown Planning and Development Council-was chosen to test the legality of the mayor's order.

In a separate action, though, Attorney Leonard V. Brady, a court commissioner, ordered that the defendents be released without bail because of the uncertainly about the legality of their arrest.²⁶

In what seemed to have been a retrenchment on the interpretation of his ban, Mayor Maier clarified on Thursday that his ban did not prohibit peaceful assemblies. He said, however, that "we're going to hamstring the kind of mobility that existed before this, to preserve the public peace."²⁷

Clarifying the the mayor's statement, City Attorney Fleming said that there was a legal difference between an assembly and a demonstration. He said that it is the responsibility of law enforcement agents on the scene to de-

²⁵"Mayor's Ban to Be Tested by 1 Arrest," Journal, Aug. 31, p. 9.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷"Peaceful Assemblies Allowed, Mayor Says," Journal, Aug. 31, p. 1.

termine whether an activity was a demonstration or a peaceful assembly. He said:

If any situation develops within the area of parades, marches and demonstrations that indicates that they would incite danger to the public health, safety and welfare, then certainly the police department would have to act.²⁸

At the same news conference, Maier lashed out at major network television coverage of the three nights of disturbances in Milwaukee. He said that the network coverage had been "nothing but inflammatory reports."²⁹ He was disturbed that the reports were hurting the city's image nationally and were giving a lopsided report of what was happening in Milwaukee. Maier admitted, however, that he had not seen any of the reports himself.

During the day, two organizations came out in opposition to the mayor's march ban. The Milwaukee chapter of CORE announced that it would take legal action to have the ban lifted. It also reported that it would file complaints of police brutality.³⁰

The Milwaukee chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, in its turn, said that it was examining the possibility of initiating a lawsuit based on alleged police malprac-

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ "Police Arrest Vel Phillips, Groppi as March is Foiled," Sentinel, Sept. 1, p. 6.

³⁰ Ibid.

tice in connection with the arrests Wednesday night.³¹

In the evening, Father Groppi led a rally at St. Boniface Church to raise money to pay for the bail of those arrested the previous nights.³² The rally consisted of Freedom songs and speeches and was attended by 300-400 people. Groppi criticized the double standard of police enforcement in Milwaukee. He was greeted with shouts of approval when he suggested that the group march to city hall to protest.

The crowd lined up three abreast in the church. Squads of police and patrol wagons were outside waiting. As the group marched down the sidewalk, a line of helmeted policemen carrying riot sticks and tear gas guns walked alongside them. When the marchers moved east on North Avenue between 9th and 10th Streets, Deputy Inspector Roy Ullius, using a bull horn, read part of the mayor's proclamation. He then gave orders to the police to arrest the marchers.

Father Groppi, first in line, was one of the first arrested. He was later charged with violating the mayor's proclamation, disorderly conduct, resisting arrest, and battery. Alderman Vel Phillips, who had also been in front, moved to the middle of the line. She told an officer that she was returning home in obedience to the order, but she was arrested nonetheless.

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid, p. 1; "Maier Lifts March Curbs, Vows Police Will Do Duty," Journal, Sept. 1, p. 1.

About 134 marchers were arrested that night. To insure that their arrests would hold up in court they were charged not only with violating the march ban but also with disorderly conduct.

Earlier in the day, Joseph C. Fagan, chairman of the State Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations, accused Mayor Maier of suspending the Bill of Rights in Milwaukee. "What kind of mayor do we have," he said, "who would condone (chants of kill) and suspend the Bill of Rights at the same time for the marchers."³³ Fagan, a Republican, added that it is

the clear duty of public officials to protect the constitutional rights of people against the violence of hoodlums . . . All Father Groppi is doing is protesting the bigotry and hatred of some Milwaukee people who don't seem to realize that people should be allowed to be free and to find their place of residence--based on their ability to find their status in life.³⁴

Maier was quick to retort with: "He can send the guard in here any damn time the governor wants to. If he wanted additional protection for Father Groppi all he had to do was go to the governor."³⁵

FRIDAY--SEPTEMBER 1

In a surprise move, Mayor Maier announced Friday

³³"Fagan Accuses Mayor Maier of 'Suspending Bill of Rights,'" Sentinel, Sept. 1, p. 1.

³⁴"Maier, Fagan Trade BARbs on Civil Rights," Journal, Sept. 1, Pt. 1, p. 1.

³⁵Sentinel, ibid., p. 6.

afternoon that his ban on night marches, demonstrations, and parades would be lifted as of 9 A.M. Saturday. In lifting the ban, Maier appealed to "the vast, overwhelming majority of Milwaukeeans who hate violence" to work for common sense and the cause of justice and tolerance.³⁶

The mayor gave no reason for rescinding his order. He admitted that the proclamation was an extreme measure which was needed in face of an extreme danger to the city. He noted, however, that he would not hesitate to impose a general citywide curfew or request use of the national guard should Milwaukee police not be able to handle any new situation that arose. Questioned by reporters, he said he lifted the ban because he was willing to gamble on the good sense of the people of Milwaukee.³⁷

During the day, in one of his rare utterances about the Milwaukee situation, Governor Warren Knowles revealed about he was trying to find a group of business leaders to mediate the differences between the city administration and the open housing advocates. He wanted the group to bridge the communication between Maier and the open housing protesters.³⁸

³⁶"Maier Lifts March Curbs, Vows Police Will Do Duty," Journal, Sept. 1, p. 1.

³⁷"Maier 'Gambles' on Use of Sense," Journal, Sept. 2, p. 1.

³⁸"Maier Lifts March Curbs, Vows Police Will Do Duty," Journal, Sept. 1, p. 12.

In a telegram to the mayor, Roy Wilkins, executive director of the NAACP, deplored the "excessive force used by Milwaukee police in making arrests."³⁹ Wilkins said that "it is significant that while Negroes marching to protest employment discrimination in Louisiana are protected by police, Milwaukee appeases violent whites."⁴⁰

Later in the day, attorneys for the youth council filed a suit in federal court seeking to enjoin the county courts from prosecuting persons arrested for violating the mayor's proclamation against demonstrations.⁴¹ The complaint alleged that the proclamation violated the rights of the youth council, Father Groppi, and others. The complaint also asked that a three-judge court be appointed to declare the proclamation unconstitutional.

Criticism of the demonstration ban and police brutality also came from a group of about 45 clergymen who met to discuss the racial situation.⁴² They represented the Conference on Religion and Race, the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance, and a south side clergy group. The

³⁹"Groppi Arrested, 13 Hurt in 5th Night of Violence," Sentinel, Sept. 2, p. 18.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹"NAACP Files Suit to Block Prosecution," Journal, Sept. 2, p. 9.

⁴²Bernice Buresh, "US Study on City Police Urged," Sentinel, Sept. 2, P. 1; "Drop Rally Arrest, Clergy Ask." Journal, Sept. 2, p. 9.

clergymen asked the mayor to lift his ban Friday afternoon instead of Saturday. They also called for an investigation of the alleged police brutality.

A resolution, which was released the following day by a task force of the clergy groups, called on the courts to dismiss all charges against persons arrested in connection with the civil rights protests Wednesday night. The resolution pointed out especially that the clergymen strongly objected "to the fact that the majority of those detained were arrested during an invasion of private (Freedom House) property by the police and that these same citizens, as a result of their moral and human concerns, now have police records."⁴³

Some of the accusations of police brutality came out of claims that a television cameraman had been clubbed by police Thursday night.⁴⁴ The injured cameraman, from WISN-TV, was treated at a hospital for a slight concussion. Police Chief Breier agreed Friday afternoon at a meeting with newsmen to investigate the incident. Police and news media men aired their complaints in Breier's office. Out of the meeting came an agreement by cameramen to limit the use of television camera lights in future coverage of nighttime disturbances.

⁴³ Journal, ibid.

⁴⁴ "Police Arrest Vel Phillips, Groppi as March is Foiled," Sentinel, SEpt. 1, p. 1.

The evening brought tension to the city again. The youth council led a rally at St. Boniface Church at six o'clock with plans to march afterward.⁴⁵ The rally was extended for four and a half hours while attorneys attempted to have the courts issue an injunction against the mayor's ban on marches. The 500 persons at the rally sang songs until Groppi announced at 10:30 that a federal judge had refused the injunction.

In the interval, Police Chief Breier offered to meet with the leaders of the demonstrations. Intermediaries were unsuccessful in getting the two parties to agree on where to meet. Negotiations broke down when Breier insisted that the meeting be held in his office and Groppi insisted that all the people in the rally be allowed to march to Breier's office.⁴⁶

About 400 of the people who had been at the rally gathered in St. Boniface's school yard, where Father Groppi told them to line up four abreast in preparation for a march to the Freedom House.⁴⁷ The marchers had walked only about half a block before they were met by helmeted police carrying riot sticks, rifles, shotguns, and tear gas guns. A

⁴⁵"Groppi Arrested, 13 Hurt in 5th Night of Violence," Sentinel, Sept. 2, p. 1; Frank A. Aukofer, "NAACP to March Again in Wake of New Violence," Journal, Sept, p. 1.

⁴⁶Journal, ibid. p. 17.

⁴⁷Ibid.

police captain warned the crowd that it was violating the mayor's ban on marches. His voice was drowned out by the shouts of the demonstrators. Police then shoved the line of marchers back. They grabbed Father Groppi, who was in the front line, and arrested him. The line of marchers broke up and re-grouped on the lawn of North Division High School.

Amid thrown bottles and other debris, the marchers walked back toward St. Boniface's school yard, where they stood to face the police across the sidewalk. When someone in the front line threw a bottle at the police, the officers ducked and rushed the group to arrest the person who had thrown the bottle. The demonstrators broke rank and rushed back to the school yard with the police in pursuit. As the demonstrators started scattering in the school yard, the police fired at least a dozen tear gas shells in their midst. While the gas was still in the air, the demonstrators shouted at the police and told them to get off private property. They refused to allow a police ambulance into the yard to help an injured youth. Priests from St. Boniface tried to calm the crowd, but with no success.

The police confronted segments of the demonstrators several times in areas near St. Boniface. They shot tear gas at a shouting group at a nearby gas station and rushed a group of youths at 11th and Center Streets. Firemen later had to be brought in to ventilate the St. Boniface convent and rectory from tear gas.

Many of the demonstrators retreated to the school hall, eyes smarting from the gas and shouting for retaliation. About midnight, Father Groppi returned, having posted bond, and quieted the group by announcing that the youth council was trying to get four national black leaders to attend a rally in Milwaukee on Saturday. They were Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference; H. Rap Brown, of the Student Nonviolent Co-ordinating Committee; Floyd McKissick, national chairman of CORE; and Dick Gregory, a nationally-known comedian.⁴⁸

In the course of the evening, 15 persons were arrested and 19 injured. One demonstrator, a 64-year-old former army captain, collapsed during the march and died. A health officer reported that he had died from natural causes.

Saturday--September 2

Dick Gregory was the only national black leader who made it for the march on Saturday afternoon.⁴⁹ With Gregory and Father Groppi in the lead, about 1,400 protesters trekked 16 miles on a route which took them from St. Boniface Church to the city hall, through the Milwaukee downtown, across the

⁴⁸ "Four National Rights Leaders Due in City," Sentinel, Sept. 2, p. 1.

⁴⁹ Paul G. Hayes, "Gregory's Jokes Deadly Serious," Journal, Sept. 3, p. 6.

the 16th Street viaduct, and into the near south side. The tension of a week ago was not in evidence, and the marchers walked unhampered by spectators. Only a few minor skirmishes between marchers and spectators occurred. About 50 police on foot and in cars escorted the marchers.

Sunday--September 3

Sunday afternoon, about a thousand marchers walked a meandering 10 mile hike which took them through the inner core, into the downtown area, past the all-white Eagles Club on W. Wisconsin Avenue and 25th Street, further west to the archbishop's residence, then north to Garfield Park, at N. 3rd and W. Burleigh Streets, and finally back to St. Boniface Church. The group was in a relaxed mood and was led by Father Groppi and Alderman Vel Phillips. Unlike at other marches, the police who escorted the marchers were unarmed. They carried only riot sticks and frequently chatted and joked with the marchers.⁵⁰

Dick Gregory joined the marchers at Garfield Park where he spoke to them during an hour-long rally. He urged the group to continue its demonstrations. Over 1,300 people gathered later at St. Boniface, crowding the church to capacity. The crowd sang and chanted. Father Groppi reported that the Milwaukee cause was gaining support of civil rights leaders throughout the country and that several groups from

⁵⁰ "1,500 in City Stage Civil Rights March," Sentinel, Sept. 4, p. 1.

other cities had come to help with the demonstrations.

During Sunday religious services that day, many preachers directed their thoughts on the racial tension in Milwaukee.⁵¹ Several took stands for and against the demonstrations, but most counselled their congregations to stay away from the demonstrations and not to abet violence.

Late Sunday night, about 800 marchers walked through the north side for about two hours without incident.⁵²

Monday--September 4

September 4 was Labor Day. A rally of up to 600 people was held in the early afternoon for about an hour and a half at St. Boniface Church. Father Groppi stood behind the communion rail of the church with a group of commandos joining in the singing and clapping. Prentice McKinney, a youth council commando, gave a fiery speech telling the protesters that they should not throw bricks, but rather bombs. Dick Gregory quieted the crowd down, however, by saying that "anyone who throws a brick had better have his own lawyer and bail money."⁵³

At 2:30 the group left the church and marched toward the northern suburb of Shorewood and back. On the way, it

⁵¹James M. Johnston, "South Side Clergy Urge Repentance," Sentinel, Sept. 4, p. 5.

⁵²"1,500 in City Stage Civil Rights March," Sentinel, Sept. 4, p. 6.

⁵³"Rights Protestors Taunt Tosa REsidents," Sentinel, Sept. 4, p. 6.

passed County Judge Christ T. Seraphim's spacious white stucco house in the 3400 Block of N. Summit Avenue. The Judge was reading in a chaise lounge on his porch. He refused to talk to the marchers and told reporters that to him the march sounded like a disturbance of the peace.

A second rally was held in the evening at Calvary Baptist Church, 1727 N. 4th Street. The pastor of the church was the Reverend William B. Hoard, head of the Milwaukee and Wisconsin NAACP. At the rally, Reverend Hoard called Mayor Maier a hypocrite and political bigot. Vel Phillips and Father Groppi also spoke. Groppi told the youths in the gathering that "if you don't want to go to school, don't go to school."⁵⁴ He was answered with a resounding no when he asked if they should cool it off because of the start of the school year the next day.

At the two rallies, Dick Gregory reminded protesters that rock and bottle throwing would discredit the marchers. Both he and Father Groppi said the marches would continue until Milwaukee adopted an open housing ordinance. They hinted that the youth council might picket banks and call for national boycotts of beer brewed by Milwaukee companies to force big businessmen to pressure politicians for open housing.⁵⁵ This same thrust was repeated at several rallies

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵"Demonstrators March to 2 Suburbs," Journal, Sept. 5, p. 14.

the following days. No organized boycott materialized, however.

While the rally was still in progress at Calvary Church, about 500 demonstrators, with Dick Gregory and youth council president Fred Bronson in the lead, started marching south on 3rd Street to Wisconsin Avenue.⁵⁶ Shortly after nine o'clock, the rest of the protesters, about 800 in number, followed Father Groppi through the north side to the north end of the 16th Street viaduct to the south side. But after Groppi, Gregory, and Bronson consulted with each other, both groups headed west separately on Wisconsin Avenue. They met again in the western suburb of Wauwatosa. The youth council commandos kept the marchers on the sidewalk; and, although there was much noise from car horns and traffic jams, there were no major incidents. The groups walked along the eastern edges of Wauwatosa and an hour later re-entered the city limits of Milwaukee. Both groups snaked in and out of streets, frequently changing their courses and occasionally linking up with one another. Groppi's column returned to St. Boniface Church after one o'clock. Gregory's group returned much later, but after a two-hour rest began marching again at 5 A.M., but without Gregory. The group walked north side streets until dawn. By this time the group had dwindled to 55 marchers and was accompanied only by police and one news car.

⁵⁶Ibid., pp. 1, 14.

While the demonstrators were marching in the evening, Mayor Maier took advantage of a Labor Day band concert at Washington Park to denounce the press for its coverage of the Milwaukee civil disorders. He accused the news media of upsetting the fabric of society and wondered where the network cameras were now that the city had quieted down.⁵⁷

Tuesday--September 5

According to Milwaukee school officials, Father Groppi's suggestion that students stay out of school to march did not have a noticeable effect on the opening day enrollment. Only 2,350 students less than the previous year were enrolled. One high school principal said, "I would say we're a little below normal on enrollment, but whether it has any significance, I would doubt. For the first three days, we can never pin down our enrollment."⁵⁸

One alderman, however, took Groppi's truancy advice seriously and called for the priest arrest. Alderman Robert O. Ertl called upon the city council to charge Groppi with contributing to the delinquency of minors for directing youngsters to defy the law by staying away from school.⁵⁹ The alderman made his accusations at an informal caucus of

⁵⁷"Maier Raps Coverage of Disorder," Sentinel, Sept. 5, p. 1.

⁵⁸"Schools Can't Link Absences to Groppi," Journal, Sept. 5, p. 1.

⁵⁹"Demonstrators March to 2 Suburbs," Journal, Sept. 5, p. 14

the common council, which finally had gotten down to considering a resolution ratifying Mayor Maier's now lifted ban on night demonstrations.

In the morning, Father Groppi ate breakfast in his rectory while a delegation of state officials discussed the demonstrations with him. Among them was Joseph C. Fagan, the chairman of the State Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations. Groppi insisted that there would be no peace in Milwaukee until an open housing ordinance was passed.⁶⁰

For about four hours at midday, a dozen demonstrators staged a sit-in without incident on the floor of Alderman Francis E. Dineen's office in city hall. Dineen's First Ward was 40 per cent black. A spokesman for the group, which called itself POWER, said it was protesting Dineen's opposition to a fair housing ordinance.⁶¹

In the early afternoon, Father Groppi and about 85 others marched from St. Boniface Church to city hall. Joined by others who followed them in cars, they crowded into the aldermanic chambers and jeered, laughed at, and booed the aldermen as they considered approving Mayor Maier's ban on marches.

The aldermen voted, 18-1, to ratify the mayor's ban. Mrs. Vel Phillips was the only dissenter. She also lost by

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 1

⁶¹Ibid.

the same margin a motion to have the common council suspend its rules and reconsider the open housing ordinance which she had unsuccessfully introduced on four previous occasions.⁶²

During the day, the open housing advocates received support from the Priest Senate of the Milwaukee Archdiocese. The group of representatives of all the priests of the archdiocese issued a statement calling for immediate passage of an open housing ordinance. Justifying the right of the priests to speak out, the statement said: "The tensions which have developed during this past summer within the city have demonstrated clearly a need for the church to address itself more directly to the causes of social unrest."⁶³

In another development the youth council attorneys withdrew its federal suit which sought to prevent the prosecution of persons arrested for violating the mayor's ban on demonstrations. They said that they would file a new action in relation to the ban.⁶⁴

After an evening rally at St. Boniface Church, Father Groppi and Dick Gregory led the fourteenth open housing march

⁶²"Open Housing Put off, 18-1," Sentinel, Sept. 6, p. 1; "Aldermen Refuse to Act on Housing," Journal, Sept. 6, Pt. 2, p. 1.

⁶³"Priests Pledge to Help Open Housing Drive," Journal, Sept. 6, Pt. 2. p. 10.

⁶⁴"Suit on March Ban Dropped," Sentinel, Sept. 6, p. 7; "Suit to Fight Parade Ban Withdrawn," Journal, Sept. 6, Pt. 1, p. 10.

in nine consecutive days. The group was followed by a line of 20 cars. They arrived near the south side about 11 P.M. after winding through 63 inner core blocks and the downtown area.⁶⁵ It was one of the noisiest and most militant marches of the nine days. About 500 marched, and for the first time they refused to allow white newsmen to walk with them. No significant group of spectators turned out to heckle the marchers. A few marchers were arrested when they broke rank and hit onlooking spectators.

Wednesday--September 6

In the late morning and early afternoon, a group of 65 marchers surprised officials and workers as they marched downtown to four government buildings. Workers and shoppers stopped to watch the protesters as they visited, without incident, city hall, the state building, the safety building, and the courthouse. The group was led by Miss Jean Matthews, a 19 year-old member of the youth council.⁶⁶

At a press conference, Mayor Maier accused extremists in the civil rights movement of deliberately obscuring Milwaukee's positive action to solve the problems of the city.

⁶⁵ "500 Launch New March on Housing," Sentinel, Sept. 6, p. 1; "19 Year Old Girl Leads 50 in Rights March Downtown." Journal, Sept. 6, Pt. 2, p. 6

⁶⁶ Journal, ibid., Pt. 2, p. 1.

He drew attention to the more than 100 projects which he said he had initiated during his administration.⁶⁷

Maier reiterated his opposition to a city open housing ordinance and promised to veto such a law should it pass the common council. He insisted that a metropolitan or countywide ordinance was the only effective way to prevent the exit of the white population from the city to the suburbs.

Weighed down by the tension since the Milwaukee riots, Maier hinted that he might not seek re-election in 1968. He claimed that everyone was second guessing his office and were not coming up with alternate programs.⁶⁸

In the evening, over 450 marchers joined Dick Gregory on a 12-mile trek to the predominantly white northwest side of Milwaukee. Unlike the meandering routes of other marches, this one went straight northwest on Teutonia Avenue, a diagonal street, and back to St. Boniface Church again. Eleven people were arrested in minor incidents.⁶⁹ Father Groppi did not join the marchers. He was suffering from flu and had been advised by his doctor to rest.

⁶⁷ Richard Brandee, "Extremists Hide City Action: Maier," Sentinel, Sept. 7, p. 1; Lawrence C. Lohmann, "May Not Run in '68, Unhappy Maier Says," Journal, Sept. 7, p. 1

⁶⁸ Journal, ibid.

⁶⁹ "Over 450 March on Northwest Side." SENTINEL, Sept. 7, p. 5; "Chicagoans Urged to Join March Here," Journal, Sept. 7, Pt. 2, p. 1.

Thursday--September 7

Revived attention was given to the civil rights situation in Milwaukee Thursday afternoon when 75 protesters, mostly black teenagers, staged a sit-in and lie-in in the outer waiting room of Mayor Maier's city hall office. The protesters gathered gradually, reporting to the mayor's secretary that they had come to see the mayor to talk about open housing and police brutality. They occupied the waiting room for four hours, letting only police and the mayor pass through.⁷⁰

In the course of the afternoon, the protesters insulted and harassed policemen and newsmen. At one point, when two policemen tried to open a door to the waiting room, Prentice McKinney, a youth council commando, leaned against the door as if to rest. When the policemen attempted to open the door without touching McKinney, several other protesters pushed against the door and a scuffle broke out. It was the spark which precipitated a spree of destruction of the waiting room. When order was restored, the room was in shambles. Chairs were ripped apart, file cabinets emptied of their contents, books torn apart, desks ramsacked, and an aerial photo of the city defaced. The mayor's administrative

⁷⁰ "Maier's Office Torn Up," Sentinel, Sept. 8, p. 1; Kenneth C. Field, "NAACP Calls Mass Rally; Maier's Office Torn Apart," Journal, Sept. 8, p. 1

assistant estimated the damage at \$3,000.

The police arrested McKinney and four others. At the orders of the police the rest of the protesters left the mayor's office soon after five o'clock. Maier said he allowed the protesters in his office so that they would show the city and the nation their "bad manners and put the lie to the contention of police brutality and lack of police protection."⁷¹

Although the youth council adviser was not present for the sit-in, Maier charged that "Groppi directed the operation." Maier claimed that the destruction of his office was an act of desperation. "They were losing their steam," he said, "so they came down here hoping they would be arrested for blocking the doors. When they didn't get reaction, they decided to stage a minor riot of their own in the mayor's office."⁷²

At an evening rally, Charles Evers, a civil rights leader from Mississippi, cautioned the protesters against violence. Groppi, for his part, refused to publicly reprimand the rioters. He said he would not apologize until he received an apology from Maier for alleged police brutality

⁷¹ Mildred Freese, "Sit-in Commando Calls Maier a 'Nigger,'" Journal, Sept. 8, p. 16.

⁷² Marta Bender, "Maier: Protest Lost Steam, Needed Attention," Sentinel, Sept. 8, p. 10.

and lack of police protection on the south side.⁷³

Earlier in the day, County Board Chairman Eugene J. Grobschmidt, of South Milwaukee, announced that he would support a countywide open housing ordinance.⁷⁴ He said he would seek counsel to determine if the county had the authority to legislate such a law. He indicated he wanted to know what steps were necessary to adopt an open housing ordinance, whether cities and villages in the county would have to relinquish any of their powers, and whether the ordinance would interfere with control by cities and villages over building codes and zoning.

Miss Jeanette Strong of Gary, Ind., chairman of Region Three of the NAACP, said Thursday that she had sent telegrams to all the groups in her region to join in a gigantic mass rally in Milwaukee on Sunday, September 10.⁷⁵ The region includes Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. And, again, Groppi announced that there was a possibility that Martin Luther King, Jr. would join the demonstrations the next week.

In the evening, about 400 demonstrators marched along Milwaukee's northeast side, from St. Boniface Church to

⁷³Kenneth C. Field, *ibid.*, p. 16; "Marchers to Go into South Side," Sentinel, Sept. 9, p. 4.

⁷⁴"Grobschmidt Backs Open Housing Law," Journal, Sept. 8, p. 1.

⁷⁵Kenneth C. Field, *ibid.*, p. 1.

Shorewood and back.⁷⁶ On the way north, they passed Judge Seraphim's house. Some of the marchers shouted at the police guarding the house. Dick Gregory led the march. After eleven o'clock, he admonished the marchers to obey police orders to keep their noise subdued. The police had threatened to make arrests for disturbing the peace if quiet was not maintained.

Friday--September 8

In seeming response to an announcement at the previous night's rally, five motorists blocked the North-South Freeway near the North Avenue exit for about 35 minutes Friday morning. At about 7:30, they stopped their cars on the exit ramp and raised the hoods. Hundreds of cars were tied up by the apparently deliberate jam up. When police came on the scene, the motorists returned to their cars and drove away.⁷⁷

Support for open housing legislation began to snowball. Among the main groups supporting the cause were: the Milwaukee League of Women Voters, the Greater Milwaukee Conference on Religion and Race, the Milwaukee Citizens for Racial Opportunity, and organized labor.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.; "Marchers to Go into South Side," Sentinel Sept. 9, p. 4.

⁷⁸ "Open Housing Support Grows," Journal, Sept. 9. p. 1; "Open Housing Pushed," Sentinel, Sept. 9, p. 1.

The Milwaukee League of Women Voters planned a campaign to support a city ordinance. Over 150 representatives of a dozen major women groups and many small church organizations pledged united effort in the cause. They promised to wage an intensive campaign for a city open housing ordinance and to support open occupancy laws at all levels of government.

The executive board of the Greater Milwaukee Conference on Religion and Race announced an all-out drive by metropolitan area churchmen to gain open housing laws in the city and suburbs. Their tactics would include a petition campaign to convince the mayor and aldermen that a substantial number of citizens supported the principle of open housing.

The Milwaukee Citizens for Equal Opportunity threatened to work for the defeat of Mayor Maier and all aldermen who had opposed a city open housing ordinance.

On the labor scene, the Wisconsin state AFL-CIO announced it would support a countywide ordinance. The Milwaukee county labor council did likewise.

During the day, a group of 13 white and two black women were refused an appointment with Mayor Maier to discuss the open housing situation.⁷⁹

⁷⁹"Women Seek Talk with Maier on Open Housing, Told to Leave," Sentinel, Sept. 9, Pt. 2, p. 8.

Maier demanded that they present their request in writing. He exchanged verbal blows with them before insisting that they leave his office. He objected to a statement by the women which held him responsible for the vandalism of his office the day before.

Roy Wilkins, executive director of the NAACP, responded to a telegram sent to him by Maier during the height of Thursday's vandalism calling for condemnation of the youth council. Maier had asked Wilkins to attend a meeting with him and the youth council. In his response Wilkins said "the NAACP does not condone the destruction of property or the defacing of walls," however, he added, "we do support the endeavors of our youth council in Milwaukee to secure the enactment of open housing legislation."⁸⁰

Wilkins told the mayor that the issue was not between Groppi and the city hall but between city hall and the issues involving Negro life in the city. He suggested that

until Milwaukee addresses itself to these issues, tensions between groups of citizens are likely to remain and to flare up on occasion. While the times do not call for destruction of property or personal vilification, they do not call for yesterday's routines.⁸¹

This day was the first since August 28 that a protest march did not take place. At an evening rally at St. Boniface Church, Father Groppi announced that a march was sched-

⁸⁰ "Wilkins Backs Youths, but Not Vandalism," Sentinel, Sept. 9, p. 5.

⁸¹ Ibid.

uled after the rally. But later, Sydney Finley, a regional director of the NAACP, announced that the plans for the march had been called off to permit protesters to launch a telephone campaign to muster support for Saturday's march on the south side.⁸² There was some opposition to the announcement, but the commandos restored order. About 20 youths left the hall, however, and walked around the block. Father Groppi persuaded them to return to the rally. There the priest announced to the assembly that they would go deep into the south side Saturday afternoon.

⁸²"Marchers to Go into South Side," Sentinel, Sept. 9, p. 4.

CHAPTER IV

FATHER GROPPI AS PRESENTED BY THE MILWAUKEE PRESS

Father Groppi in the Sentinel

In the 10 issues under study, the Sentinel devoted 40 news articles, 32 pictures, and six editorials to news items related to the open housing demonstrations and the activities of Father James E. Groppi.¹

News Articles

Father Groppi was mentioned in 33 of the 40 news articles. None of them featured the priest exclusively. His name was brought up, for the most part, as a participant in actions being reported or as the subject of reactions and remarks of other personalities. Only one article focused on Groppi extensively.² But even then, the article is more con-

¹The Sentinel actually carried 72 news articles and 38 pictures which were generated by the open housing controversy. The articles comprised 1,243 column inches and the pictures, 765.25 column inches. The total space was 2008.25 column inches. We have not included a number of articles in our study because for the most part they are statistical listings of arrests, court fines, and injuries. Others are articles which would have appeared even if the open housing demonstrations had not been conducted. We also omitted reports on what other newspapers' editorials had to say about the demonstrations.

²In that article he is mentioned or quoted in 27 of its 47 paragraphs. "'I agree With Groppi Aims But--' Catholic Priests Say," Sept. 9, Pt. 3, p. 6.

cerned about the opinions of Milwaukee priests than about Father Groppi himself. It does, however, present some comments by Groppi which are not presented elsewhere. The quotes reflect the religious dimension within which Groppi operated during the open housing protests. The article reported in part:

None of the priests questioned Father Groppi's sincerity or accused him of self-seeking.

Father Groppi has repeatedly said his campaign in all its militancy follows the Christian banner. He has said he is being "true to his conscience and his ideal."

"I go to Christ and the gospel," he has said. "I find my ideal there. If Christ were living in my day and age, he'd be in the same situation I am."

He has also said Christ never preached noninvolvement. "He was involved. That's why he got crucified."

To some critics who argued that clergymen must be peacemakers, Father Groppi was quoted as saying:

"Christ was not a peaceful, meek type of individual. This was a radical man when He picked up a whip and drove the money changers from the temple."

Father Groppi also said Christ did not come to wipe away all the conflict on earth, but that "He caused a great deal of conflict."³

The 40 articles occupied 925 column inches of space, equal to 5.3 pages or 42.5 columns in a normal issue of the Sentinel. Father Groppi figured in 203 of the 1,201 paragraphs of which these articles were comprised. This was 16.9 per cent of the total. Discounting the article mentioned in footnote 2, the peak coverage came on August 30 and 31, when Groppi was mentioned in 26 and 30 paragraphs, respectively. The August 29th Sentinel, in contrast, mentioned the youth council adviser only eight times in its reports on the first

³Ibid.

march to the south side.

Father Groppi was under exposed in comparison with the police and Mayor Maier. The police were featured in 235 paragraphs. Maier received attention in 216 paragraphs.

TABLE 1
SENTINEL PARAGRAPH COVERAGE

	Number	Per Cent
Police	235	19.5
Maier	216	17.9
Groppi	203	16.9
Phillips	35	2.9
Wilkins	34	2.8
Zablocki	24	2.0
McKinney	23	1.9
Gregory	22	1.8
Seraphim	22	1.8
Cousins	22	1.8
Fagan	17	1.4

The police were on the scene for every march and rally. In reporting the two south side marches, the Sentinel focused its attention more on the police than on any other principles. Articles on later marches and rallies put the police in a more secondary role.

The police figured especially heavily in the Sentinel's report on the burning of the youth council's Freedom House headquarters. Most of the information on the events leading up to the fire and the explanation of the cause of the fire came from police sources.⁴

⁴"Freedom House Fire Bombed, Guttled," Aug. 30, p. 1

No interpretive article appeared to substantiate or deny the charges of police brutality and malpractice. A human interest sidebar describing a policeman friendly to the marchers was the only article which dealt exclusively with the police. The article did not study the police in depth.⁵

Mayor Maier was never present at a rally or march, yet he received much news attention. His name came up most frequently during news conferences and in reports of meetings which he attended at the beginning of the protests in attempts to win public support. Much was made, also, of his proclamation banning night marches, demonstrations, and parades. Practically every time he spoke on the open housing controversy he was critical of Father Groppi and the news media for tarnishing Milwaukee's national image. Judging from the Sentinel's reports on Maier, it seems that the mayor conceived the open housing protests in terms of Father Groppi. Even when Groppi was absent during the destruction of his office waiting room by black youths, Maier placed the blame on Father Groppi.

No leader of or participant in the demonstrations received news coverage equal to that of the police, Maier, and Groppi. Among the black leaders, Alderman Vel Phillips and black comedian Dick Gregory received the most coverage.

Mrs Phillips was mentioned in 35 paragraphs. These

⁵Ron Marose, "Smiling Cop in Step with Marchers," Sept. 5, p. 5.

were mainly in a report of her attempt to have the common council reconsider an open housing ordinance and in reports of her participation at St. Boniface rallies. She also received attention when she was arrested during the aborted march on August 31.

Dick Gregory, who did not appear on the scene until the first weekend, was mentioned in 22 paragraphs. Of the several national black leaders who Groppi announced would join the marches he was the only one who did so. He was present all the second week leading marches alone and with Groppi. No article gave any background on Gregory's civil rights activities, and no public official was quoted as having noticed his presence in Milwaukee.

Several other black leaders were noticed but in minor capacities by the Sentinel. Among them were:

Roy Wilkins, executive director of the NAACP, who did not take part in any demonstrations, although he spent a day in Milwaukee in late August with the President's Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders. That occasion precipitated an article in which a Sentinel reporter claimed that Wilkins was critical of Father Groppi and the youth council for marching on the south side. His name came up again toward the end of the second week when he and Maier exchanged telegrams on the Milwaukee situation. These were entwined in regular articles, but the day after the destruction of Maier's outer office, the Sentinel gave full article coverage to Wilkin's response to Maier's complaints about

the vandalism.⁶ In all, Wilkins figured in 34 paragraphs of news coverage.

Prentice McKinney, youth council commando, was given more attention than any other youth council member. He appeared in 23 paragraphs. He was quoted several times as a spokesman of the youth council and pointed out as a speaker at several rallies. Although he was the one most responsible for precipitating the melee in Mayor Maier's outer office and had tried to provoke the police that afternoon, according to its own and the Journal's reports, the Sentinel mentioned McKinney only three times in its main article.⁷ A side bar gave him a little more attention in seven paragraphs.⁸

Fred Bronson, president of the youth council, was mentioned only three times. His existence wasn't referred to until the September 5th issue. An article, at that time, singled him out as one of the leaders of the Labor Day march.

Rev. William B. Hoard, president of the Milwaukee and Wisconsin NAACP, received notice as speaking at a few rallies, including one at his own church. He was mentioned in 12 paragraphs.

Jean Matthews, 19-year-old member of the youth council, caught the eye of Sentinel reporters when she led a

⁶"Wilkins Backs Youths, but Not Vandalism," Sept. 9, p. 5.

⁷"5 Arrested After Sit-in at City Hall," Sept. 8, p. 1.

⁸Barbara H. Kuehn, "Protesters Hostile Toward Everybody," Sept. 8, p. 1.

march to four government buildings downtown on September 6. She and the other marchers received an eight paragraph report in the next morning's Sentinel.

Charles Evers, civil rights leader from Mississippi, was presented as one of the individuals who spoke at a rally on September 7. The Sentinel never referred to his coming to Milwaukee to help out at the protests.

Sydney Finley, field director for the NAACP, received a little more attention than other outside supporters of the protests. He was referred to in 11 paragraphs. He was quoted at several rallies. On September 2, he told the assembly, "I'll tell you one thing you have got in your Mayor Maier. You've got dumb, white, stupid leadership."⁹ At another rally, he told the protesters that he was in contact with Roy Wilkins, who assured him that as much financial and legal assistance as is necessary would be forthcoming. He also reported that blacks in other states were spreading the word not to buy Milwaukee-made beer. He had the unpopular task of announcing the cancellation of the September 8th march.

Other Milwaukee and national black leaders were mentioned on occasion but with no detailed description of their involvement in the open housing protests.

The Sentinel was consistent in using a select few objective phrases to describe Father Groppi and his role in the protests. Rarely was Groppi referred to by words other

⁹"Groppi Arrested, 13 Hurt in 5th Night of Violence," p. 18.

than the following phrases or their equivalents:

- adviser to the youth council of the Milwaukee NAACP,
- who led the marchers,
- assistant pastor of St. Boniface Church,
- Catholic priest,
- the controversial adviser to the youth council.

Of the 203 paragraphs which featured Father Groppi, 75 were direct or indirect quotations of his own words. Other people had much to say about him. These were quoted in 47 paragraphs. Mayor Maier, especially, had much to say about Groppi. Groppi's name came up in his conversation and interviews 24 times. Many of these were negative comments, as the following examples give evidence:

The worst thing that can be said about these marches is that Father Groppi is actually looking for noise and furor and adulation along with the national attention that he thinks he will gain from an opposition furor or uproar.

In that case, those who respond the way he wishes will only advance his aim. The people of Milwaukee who oppose him should not allow themselves to be used for this purpose.¹⁰

Groppi achieved what he wanted . . . He's got the backlash out in the open.

I don't think Groppi loves Negroes. I think he hates whites.¹¹

We're dealing in terms of history . . . not Groppi's momentary agenda.¹²

¹⁰"22 Hurt in South Side Melee; Tear Gas Used, 45 Arrested," Aug. 30, p. 6.

¹¹Marta Bender, "No Citywide Curfew Likely, Maier Says," Aug. 30, p. 9

¹²Richard Bradee, "Extremists Hide City Action: Maier," Sept. 7, p. 7.

Groppi was hoping, in my opinion, that another white mob would attack him. That's what he wanted.¹³

Maier also called Father Groppi "nothing but a white 'Uncle Tom' because he doesn't want to talk about open housing where the rich live."¹⁴ Not once was the mayor quoted saying something favorable about the youth council adviser. But, then, neither was Groppi quoted saying anything favorable about Maier the 10 times he spoke about him.

The Sentinel quoted Father Groppi most frequently speaking at a march or rally. Occasionally he was quoted at a press conference, but more often than not in these instances the quotes were indirect.

When Groppi was quoted directly, his words tended to be of a provocative nature, as the following samples exemplify:

We want Gov. Knowles and Mayor Maier, who sent the national guard with their guns on our black people, to send them out here . . . We are going to keep marching here until we get fair housing . . . so we can move in with these white bigots or wherever we want.¹⁵

We nearly got killed there last night . . . We're asking the mayor to give us the same protection he gave the white businessmen in the core (during the rioting the first week of August).¹⁶

¹³Marta Bender, "Maier: Protest Lost Steam, Needed Attention," Sept. 8, p. 10.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵"8,000 Taunt Rights Marches on S. Side," Aug. 9, pp. 1, 16.

¹⁶"22 Hurt in South Side Melee; Tear Gas Used, 45 Arrested," Aug. 30, p. 6.

There is a double standard of justice, one for the white people, and one for the black people.¹⁷

When we had the riots on 3rd St. it didn't take 10 minutes for them (city officials) to bring in the national guard . . . We nearly got killed (on the south side Tuesday night) and we couldn't get the national guard . . . Unless we're willing to die, we have no place in civil rights . . . Anybody who is afraid of going to jail, afraid of tear gas or afraid to die shouldn't be here tonight.¹⁸

What we want from Chief Breier is permission to march, not tomorrow, but tonight . . . We'll stay right here until he comes and permits us to exercise our rights . . . If they're going to arrest us, make them arrest all of us.¹⁹

School starts tomorrow . . . Are we going to cool it off? . . . If you don't want to go to school, don't go to school.²⁰

Some day Christ is going to appear before the aldermen in black skin and he is going to say, "I needed a home and you would not let me in--burn in hell."²¹

Those on the south side were honest, dumb bigots . . . but the council is composed of dishonest, dumb bigots.²²

The press has been making a big thing out of what happened in Mayor Maier's office . . . I have been asked to apologize, but I will not. The blood of youth council members . . . was nearly spilled on the

17"Marching to S. Side Postponed," Aug. 31, p. 12.

18"Police Arrest Vel Phillips, Groppi as March is Foiled," Sept. 1, p. 6.

19"Groppi Arrested, 13 Hurt in 5th Night of Violence," Sept. 2, p. 18.

20"Rights Protesters Taunt Tosa Residents," Sept. 5, p. 7.

21"Open Housing Put Off, 18-1," Sept. 6, p. 7.

22"500 Launch New March on Housing," Sept. 6, p. 1.

south side, . . . but the mayor did not apologize for the lack of police protection.²³

Three public officials expressed opinions about Father Groppi's involvement in the open housing protests. They were County Judge Christ T. Seraphim, at whose court many of the people arrested during the protests were charged; Congressman Clement T. Zablocki, who tried to defend the behaviour of his south side constituency; and Joseph C. Fagan, chairman of the State Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations, who exchanged barbs with Mayor Maier on the wisdom of the ban on night marches.

Judge Seraphim received 14-column inch sidebar coverage, with a three-inch picture, when the protesters walked past his house on September 4.²⁴ He also received several inches of copy in two regular news reports of marches past his house. His name came up frequently in the listings of court fines. Omitting these latter, Seraphim still appeared in 22 paragraphs of regular news coverage.

On September 4, when reporters asked Seraphim if he would meet with Father Groppi, he answered, "I don't talk to the devil. I've convicted that criminal in my court."²⁵ A few days previously, in setting bail for Groppi on a battery and resisting arrest charge, Seraphim had described the

23"Marchers to Go into South Side," Sept. 9, p. 4.

24"Seraphim Reading as Marchers Pass," Sept. 5, p. 9.

25Ibid.

priest as a repeater. He said of him at that time, "I think the public has a right to be protected from a repeater. You have to deal with crime as you would with a disease."²⁶

Congressman Zablocki's opinion of Father Groppi wasn't any friendlier. At a news conference, Zablocki said that the residents of the south side were "not as anti-Negro as they are anti-Father Groppi."²⁷ He claimed that Groppi invited the negative feeling toward him by his highly critical remarks about the south side residents.

Zablocki called Groppi "arrogant" and asked, "Is he trying to promote himself across the country or help the colored people here?"²⁸ He challenged the priest to make more constructive use of his influence to get jobs and housing for Negroes on the south side. The Congressman figured in 24 paragraphs of news coverage in the Sentinel.

Joseph C. Fagan was one of the few public officials who said anything favorable about Father Groppi in the press. In an interview after the second night of marches, Fagan said it is

the clear duty of public officials to protect the

²⁶"Police Arrest Vel Phillips, Groppi as March is Foiled," Sept. 1, p. 6.

²⁷"Zablocki Urges Residents" 'Stay Away from Marches,' " Aug. 31, p. 7.

²⁸Ibid.

constitutional rights of people against the violence of hoodlums . . . All Father Groppi is doing is protesting the bigotry and hatred of some Milwaukee people who don't seem to realize that people should be allowed to be free and to find their place of residence--based on their ability to find their status in life.²⁹

Headlines

The Sentinel used 46 headlines to feature the news stories on the open housing protests. Six of these were one-column, three-line decks used as leads to different stories. The protest story and stories related to it received prime headline coverage with a banner headline in six of the 10 issues under study. Every page one carried at least one story related to the protests.

TABLE 2

SENTINEL HEADLINE COVERAGE^a

	Number	Per Cent
Police	11	15.0
Groppi	7	10.0
Maier	7	10.0
Wilkins	3	4.2
Phillips	1	1.4
Cousins	1	1.4

^aIncludes jump headlines

Father Groppi was mentioned in only three headlines. His name appeared in two of the banner headlines and in a headline of a sidebar on Catholic priests' reaction to his open housing protest activities.

²⁹"Fagan Accuses Mayor Maier of 'Suspending Bill of Rights,'" Sept. 1, p. 6.

The three headlines were:

--Police Arrest Vel Phillips, Groppi as March is Foiled,³⁰

--Groppi Arrested, 13 Hurt in 5th Night of Violence,³¹

--"I Agree with Groppi Aims But--" Catholic Priests Say.³²

The Sentinel also used 24 jump headlines to draw attention to articles which were continued on later pages of the paper. Father Groppi's name came up five times in these secondary headlines. The headlines were:

--Groppi Vows Return to South Side,³³

--Groppi Complains,³⁴

--Groppi Bail \$1,000,³⁵

--Shun School, Groppi Says,³⁶

--Raps Groppi, Rights Group.³⁷

The police were mentioned in 11 headlines, regular and jump. Mayor Maier was referred to seven times; and Roy Wilkins, three times. Vel Phillips, who was mentioned in one headline, was the only black leader other than Groppi and

30Sept. 1.

31Sept. 2.

32Sept. 9, Pt. 3, p. 6.

33Aug. 30, p. 12.

34Aug. 31, p. 12.

35Sept. 1, p. 6

36Sept. 6, p. 6.

37Sept. 7, p. 7.

Wilkins who was mentioned in a headline. Congressman Zablocki, Archbishop Cousins, Alderman Sulkowski, Judge Seraphim, and Mr. Fagan were among the white leaders mentioned in other headlines.

News Pictures

The Sentinel ran a total of 32 news pictures, from small portraits to full-blown action shots, to illustrate the news stories of the open housing protests. Massed together, they comprised 708.25 column inches. The three-day period, from August 30-September 2, had the most pictures: five, seven and six, respectively. The September 9th issue was the only one which did not have at least one picture of the open housing protests.

TABLE 3
SENTINEL PICTURE COVERAGE

	Number	Per Cent
Protesters	13	40.6
Police	11	34.3
Maier	7	21.8
Groppi	5	15.6
Phillips	3	9.3
Wilkins	3	9.3

Father Groppi was featured in only five of the pictures. He appeared in pictures on August 29 and 31 and September 1 and 2. On September 1, he was featured in two pictures; on the other days he appeared in only one picture.

The August 29th issue carried a large picture on page five of the crowd gathered at Kosciuszko Park. Father

Groppi can be seen indistinctly standing on a picnic table addressing the crowd. The cutline drew attention to his presence in the photograph. The picture spread across five columns and was 5.5 inches in depth.

The August 31st issue carried a close-up picture of Groppi and Vel Phillips with a group of blacks standing on the front porch of the burned-out Freedom House. The picture appeared on a page five picture page along with two other scenes of the previous night's rally. The Groppi picture was three columns wide and 7.75 inches in depth.

The first of the September 1st pictures appeared on page one. It depicted a struggling Father Groppi being led to a patrol wagon by two policemen. One policeman held him by an arm and the other on the collar of his coat. A commando tried pulling his other arm. The picture was four columns wide and nine inches in depth.

This picture was the only one of Father Groppi which appeared on page one. Nine other persons received page one attention. Four of the pictures were mugshots: two of Maier,³⁸ one of Cousins,³⁹ and one of Fagan.⁴⁰ The police figured in three of the page one pictures: one keeping the spectators in order at Kosciuszko Park,⁴¹ one lined up

³⁸Sept. 1 and Sept. 7

³⁹Aug. 31.

⁴⁰Sept. 1.

⁴¹Aug. 29

across the street from the burned-out Freedom House,⁴² and one arresting a struggling black youth.⁴³ The other two page one pictures featured a black marcher scuffling with a white spectator with other marchers looking on⁴⁴ and Maier's ramsacked waiting room.⁴⁵

The second picture of Groppi on September 1 featured him and Vel Phillips, surrounded by several commandos, speaking at the microphone during a rally at St. Boniface Church. The picture was four columns wide by eight inches. It was set on the page five picture page.

The final picture in which Groppi figured appeared on the picture page of the September 5th issue. It showed Groppi, Vel Phillips, and a crowd of blacks standing on a school bus during a rally in the St. Boniface school yard. It was a large picture, comprising four columns by 9.25 inches.

The protesters appeared in the most pictures, 13 in all. The police were next with 11. The mayor appeared in seven and Wilkins and Phillips in three apiece. Phillips, coincidentally, always appeared in a picture which also featured Father Groppi. Others who received pictorial attention were Zablocki, Cousins, Sulkowski, Fagan, and Seraphim.

⁴² Aug. 30.

⁴³ Aug. 31.

⁴⁴ Sept. 5.

⁴⁵ Sept. 8.

Editorials

The Sentinel felt the open housing protests important enough to comment on them in six editorials. Two of these appeared on page one, on September 2 and 9. The September 2nd editorial declared that Groppi had made clear his demands for open housing and that he would do best to now call the protests off. It called upon Archbishop Cousins to enforce the discipline of the church on Groppi. It claimed that the tumult caused by the demonstrations "obscured the constructive work being done by both white and black leaders in the fields of jobs, education, housing, and others." ⁴⁶

September 9 generated two separate editorials. One on page one again called upon Archbishop Cousins to discipline Groppi. The editorial insisted that

Church authority must help and cooperate with civil authority. Surely the archbishop has the power to prevent a Catholic church from being used as a center for inciting civil disorder and a priest from fanning the flames of hate and violence in a horrible perversion of Christ's teachings. ⁴⁷

The second September 9th editorial decried the destruction of Mayor Maier's outer office. It pointed out that the youths served the open housing cause badly and called them spoiled brats. It also was condemnatory of outside agitators and adults who egged the youths on. It called for a crackdown on the vandals by making them pay for the damage.

⁴⁶"Call It Off."

⁴⁷"A Time to Act."

The editorial concluded:

It is long past time for the authorities to quit being hobbled by the phony issue of "police brutality" and to start cracking down on the "Negro bratality." Arrest those who break the law! Restore order!⁴⁸

This was the only editorial on the open housing protests which did not mention Groppi's name.

The Sentinel's longest editorial on open housing appeared on the editorial page of the August 31st issue. It was 10.5 inches long. The editorial directed its attention mostly to the south side reaction to the demonstrations. It called the disturbances more tragic than the riots on the north side four weeks previously. It considered Milwaukee shamed and said:

There's no minimizing the shame that Milwaukee should feel at the events of two recent nights. The city has been disgraced by the show of naked hatred, which must shock those who believe in the innate tolerance of all men.⁴⁹

The editorial agreed that Father Groppi and those who marched on the south side were exercising their constitutional right of free speech, but it questioned whether they were serving their cause well by thrusting themselves into a tense situation. It counselled quieter means of winning the battle for equality, and emphasized:

The task ahead of those who struggle for civil rights, and particularly for open housing, is not to provoke more violence in the streets, but to seek a

⁴⁸"Civil Wrongs," p. 18.

⁴⁹"A City Shamed," p. 14.

lasting reconciliation, not to march into the lion's den, not to play the demagog, even in a noble cause, but to work for peace and to use persuasion, not slogans.⁵⁰

The September 6th editorial uttered dismay that Father Groppi would advise children to stay away from school. It accused the priest of a "horrible misuse of leadership"⁵¹ and condemned him for "robbing youngsters of their most important weapon against deprivation and discrimination--the weapon of education."⁵² It expressed its trust that the children and their parents will show better sense than Groppi had.

The September 7th editorial was addressed to the aldermen of the city. It reprimanded them for voting against a proposed open housing ordinance because they felt to do so would reward Father Groppi and the demonstrators. The editorial reminded the aldermen that the housing problem was with Milwaukee long before Groppi came on the scene and that it is their responsibility to take the first step in granting the Negro full equality by assuring "him the right to live where he chooses when, as an individual, it is economically possible and personally desirable."⁵³

All in all, of the six Sentinel editorials addressed to the open housing situation, five mentioned Father Groppi.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ "Misled by Groppi," p. 10.

⁵² Ibid.

The editorials comprised a total of 37 paragraphs. Ten of these mentioned Groppi, for a coverage of 27 per cent.

Father Groppi in the Journal

The Journal covered the first two weeks of open housing demonstrations with 42 news articles, 48 major headlines, 42 pictures, two editorials, and two editorial cartoons.⁵⁴

TABLE 4

JOURNAL PARAGRAPH COVERAGE

	Number	Per Cent
Maier	239	20.8
Police	234	20.3
Groppi	224	19.4
Phillips	73	6.3
Gregory	31	2.7
Wilkins	29	2.5
Cousins	21	1.8
McKinney	20	1.7
Fagan	19	1.6
Seraphim	19	1.6
Zablocki	5	.4

News Articles

Father Groppi was mentioned or quoted in 31 of the 42 news articles. He did not figure heavily in any particular article. The articles on the south side demonstrations mentioned him as a leader of the marchers but did not stress his participation. He was quoted most often after marches

⁵⁴As with the Sentinel, we have omitted several articles which are not directly related to the protests. Had we included all the articles and pictures, there would be 61 news articles and 43 pictures. The articles comprised 989.25 column inches and the pictures 881.75 column inches, for a total of 1,871 column inches of coverage.

and at rallies. His arrests were fully covered, as well as his visit to city hall for the common council vote on the march ban.

The Journal's open housing articles comprised 907.75 column inches. Were all the articles set side by side they would take up 5.2 pages or 42.2 columns in a regular issue of the Journal.⁵⁵

There were 1,148 paragraphs in the 42 articles. Father Groppi was mentioned in 19.4 per cent of the paragraphs, in 224. He received his peak news coverage on August 30 and 31 and September 1. On those days, he was mentioned in 36, 32, and 48 paragraphs, respectively. Notice was hardly given to Groppi the last three days of our study. He was mentioned in only six, seven, and nine paragraphs on those days.

Mayor Maier and the police received the bulk of news attention. Maier was referred to in 239 paragraphs. The police received attention in 234 paragraphs. Maier was quoted very extensively during news conferences, which explains his high paragraph total. Many references to him came from the youth council and other opponents of his march ban. Maier's criticisms of Groppi seem to have been toned down in the Journal. Several which were reported in the Sentinel were not found in the pages of the afternoon paper.

⁵⁵Note how close these figures are to the Sentinel's 5.3 pages and 42.5 columns.

Coverage of Maier's criticism of the press also was minimal, although noticed.

Individual policemen were mentioned by name frequently in the Journal accounts. Police Chief Breier was often identified, as were Deputy Inspector Roy Ullius and Police Sergeant Frank Miller. Police actions figured heavily in the August 30th demonstrations and the attempted marches on August 31 and September 1. The police were frequently quoted by reporters as sources of information. This was especially true in the article describing the circumstances of the burning of the youth council's Freedom House.⁵⁶ Sergeant Miller was quoted extensively in this regard. A sidebar described the baiting of the police by the marchers during the weekend marches, but nothing more substantial on the role of the police in the protests was offered.⁵⁷

Of the black leaders who participated in the marches and rallies, Alderman Vel Phillips received the most news coverage. She far outdistanced any other black leader in the amount of space devoted to her in the Journal. Featured in 73 paragraphs, she was quoted extensively at two rallies and during a common council session. Frequently her words were words of anger, as one report put it, "An angry Mrs.

⁵⁶Charles L. Buelow, "Shots Heard as Freedom House Burns," Aug. 30, p. 1.

⁵⁷Paul G. Hayes, "Humor Walks with Marchers, but Hatred Sometimes Steps in," Sept. 5, p. 1.

Phillips stood on the corner, 'What the hell is going on?' she asked newsmen. 'This is absolutely unbelievable.'⁵⁸

Speaking against the mayor's ban on night marches, she told the common council:

I think purely and simply that his decision was a mistake in judgment. By everyone's admission the disturbances were started not by the marchers but by unruly spectators. Therefore to invoke sanctions against the marchers was ill advised and just plain wrong. If the mayor used the same logic elsewhere, he would ban the sale of lead based paint because children die from eating paint chips or ban matches because they can start fires.⁵⁹

Referring to her fellow aldermen, Phillips said, "these cats are just too dumb," and went on:

It's bad enough to deal with a bigot, but when you've got a dumb bigot. . . you haven't got anything going for you. It's high time we wake up and recognize that the minority groups are sick and tired of white people messing around with our freedoms, and we are not going to stand for it.⁶⁰

Dick Gregory was mentioned 31 times, usually as a leader of specific marches and a speaker at rallies. In one article, his name was coupled with Groppi's as the source of several paragraphs of information about a future rally. He was identified solely as a "Negro comedian." Nothing was presented of his past civil rights activities or why he had come to Milwaukee.

⁵⁸"New NAACP Rally Set After 58 Arrests," Aug. 31, p. 12.

⁵⁹"Aldermen Refuse to Act on Housing," Sept. 6, Pt. 2, p. 1.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 2.

Roy Wilkins was the national black leader who received the most attention in the Journal. He was mentioned in 29 paragraphs. Many of these were in an article in which he denied that he had been critical of the youth council's protest strategy.⁶¹ The other references were in regard to telegrams he and Maier sent to each other the second week.

Commando Prentice McKinney was the most visible youth council member in the Journal. He was mentioned in 20 paragraphs. He figured heavily in the reports on the destruction of Maier's waiting room, and a special sidebar about the vandalism played up his involvement leading up to the melee.⁶² He was also often quoted speaking at rallies.

Youth Council President Fred Bronson was mentioned only three times. He was identified as co-leader of a march with Gregory.

Unlike the Sentinel, the Journal gave notice that Edward L. Thekan was the youth council publicity director. The Journal quoted Thekan, but only four times.

Sydney Finley, regional NAACP director, Assemblyman Lloyd Barbee, head of MUSIC, and Rev. William Hoard, president of the Milwaukee and Wisconsin NAACP were the only other black leaders alluded to. They appeared in fourteen, three,

⁶¹Wilkins Denies Criticizing March Here," Aug. 30, Pt. 2, p. 1.

⁶²Mildred Freese, "Sit-In Commando Calls Maier a Nigger," Sept. 8, p. 16.

and two paragraphs, respectively.

Charles Ever, Mississippi civil right leader, received several paragraphs of attention on September 8th. He counselled protesters at a rally to avoid violence when they marched.

In identifying Father Groppi's role in the protests, the Journal was cautious about calling him anything other than "adviser to the NAACP youth council." It almost exclusively used that description, or variants of it, in the opening paragraphs of articles in which it routinely identified Groppi. Deviations from that description were few. About three times he was referred to as "assistant pastor of St. Boniface Church," one time as "a Catholic priest," and one time as "leader of the civil rights demonstrators." Only in the last issue of our study did the Journal permit a judgemental adjective to describe Groppi. In a presentation of a statement by the Milwaukee Conference on Religion and Race, Groppi was referred to as the "the militant adviser of the youth council."

Father Groppi was directly and indirectly quoted 89 times in the 224 paragraphs which featured him. Most of his negative remarks were directed toward the police, Maier, and whites. But he had much to say at the rallies to spur the protesters on. There were some quotes which the Journal

caught that were missed by the Sentinel.

In referring to the violence of the spectators during the first march, the Journal reported that Groppi said: "This is what they call a white riot. It was not as bad on 3rd St. Mayor Maier should close down the town with curfew."⁶⁴ Groppi repeated this complaint on several other occasions. Almost in equal vein, after the burning of the Freedom House, Groppi said: "It is the mayor's obligation to give us adequate protection . . . When the black people on N. 3rd St. rioted, it didn't take the mayor too long to call out the guard."⁶⁵

When he went to the safety building the first evening of the ban on night demonstrations, Groppi told the police: "We had no intention of violating the mayor's proclamation."⁶⁶ The Journal was the only Milwaukee newspaper to report this statement, but it did not pursue it to find out why the march and resultant arrests occurred nonetheless.

A day later, when told by reporters that the mayor had lifted his ban on night marches, Groppi told them:

The only comment I have is this, that I don't think he should have issued the proclamation. As far as determining our future action, we will have a commando meeting and then our freedom rally at 6. p.m. at St. Boniface. I don't think he should have issued the proclamation in the first place. What he should have been doing is protecting our rights of free speech and

⁶⁴"Crowds Harass Groppi Marchers," Aug. 29, p. 12.

⁶⁵Charles L. Buelow, "Shots Heard as Freedom House Burns," Aug, 30, p. 27.

⁶⁶Frank A. Aukofer, "New NAACP Rally Set After 58 Arrests," Aug. 31, p. 12.

assembly, not taking them away from us.⁶⁷

The Journal also reported the content of Groppi's rally speeches more extensively than did the Sentinel. It covered the rally referred to by Groppi in the above quote in the following manner:

After conferring with the commandos, Father Groppi made an emotional and frequently angry speech in which he denounced the mayor and his emergency proclamation.

The priest was greeted by roars of approval. "We're getting tired," he said. "Every time something happens, the mayor issues another proclamation."

He said the mayor's proclamation was aimed at the youth council "because we're exercising our American constitutional right of free assembly."

Father Groppi said Milwaukee operated under a double standard of justice--one for the black people and one for white people.

"The Declaration of Independence was never written for black people in this country," he said. "We want one standard in this country."

. . . "I've had it right up to here," Father Groppi said, holding the palm of his hand in front of his neck. "Those kids nearly got killed out there because the mayor didn't call out the guard."

He said accusations had been made that there were Communists among the open housing demonstrators.

"If the rights of free speech and demonstrations are not guaranteed and protected," he said, "then we're already living under communism."

Father Groppi said some things were more sacred than life.

"Unless a man has his full dignity as a child of God, death is not so bad," he said.

"Unless we're ready to die, we have no business in the civil rights movement."

He asked those in the crowd if they were ready to march and they shouted: "Yeah!"⁶⁸

The September 6th Journal also dealt with a topic which did not catch the attention of the Sentinel: the youth

⁶⁷"Groppi Says He Will Go to US Court," Sept. 1, p. 1.

⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 12-13.

council's reaction to outside dictation of its strategy. An article, bylined by Frank A. Aukofer,⁶⁹ pointed out that the youth council was determined to run its campaign for a city open housing ordinance in its own way. Aukofer alternated between McKinney and Groppi for his source of information. Groppi said, according to the article, that supporters must be willing to go along with the youth council's strategy and tactics. And McKinney was credited with saying, "Be they national figures or not, they don't come into our bag and tell us how to blow it." Groppi emphasized, "There'll be no deals. We'll have massive demonstrations and massive civil disobedience until we get a bill that says black people can move anywhere without being questioned because of the color of their skin."

Aukofer did not say that the youth council was having trouble with outside interference. But he did draw notice to the fact that Dick Gregory was the only national black leader participating in the rallies and marches. Several times at rallies, Gregory had suggested a national boycott of Milwaukee products, especially beer. The council did not make a boycott a part of its strategy during the period under study.

The same article revealed a conversation with Groppi in which the priest said that the youth council protests

⁶⁹ "Youth Council Doesn't Accept Outside Dictation," Pt. 2, p. 2.

could not be classified as nonviolent. "If someone attacks our line," said Groppi, "we're going to defend ourselves. This extends to the police." Aukofer pointed out, also, that although many youth council members admired the black power principles of H. Rap Brown and Stokely Carmichael, they welcomed whites who wished to participate in their demonstrations. Prentice McKinney was quoted putting it this way:

We reject white people, but it has nothing to do with the color of a man's skin. You can have a black skin and have a white heart. And you can have a white skin and a black heart. To have a black heart is to have a heart for the equality of man.⁷⁰

Father Groppi also came in for some praise in the Journal which was passed over in the Sentinel. Sydney Finley paid tribute to Groppi at one of the later rallies in these reported words: "He has complete and total support from the Negro community . . . This is rare--even for a Negro leader--in these days."⁷¹ Finley expressed amazement at how Father Groppi managed to stand the physical punishment of the daily marches and demonstrations. The Journal reported that Groppi had been getting along on three to four hours of sleep a night and brief naps whenever he could squeeze them in. His feet were blistered from the walks, and he had a bout with the flu, which kept him away from one of the marches. The only medicine he had taken, however, was two salt tablets.

⁷⁰
Ibid.

⁷¹
Ibid.

Gerald F. Natrop, president of the Catholic Interracial Council of Milwaukee, also had praise for Groppi when he offered the support of his organization, saying the actions of Groppi and the youth council were "well directed toward arousing the conscience of the community."⁷²

The Journal discovered some of Maier's kind words also, although they were two-sided compliments. The Journal reported:

In announcing that peaceful assemblies would be allowed under the spirit of his march ban, Maier said: "If Father Groppi wants to take his people to the south side between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., we'll guarantee him full protection."⁷³

Speaking to clergymen, the mayor said: "Father Groppi does a disservice and an injustice to the cause he represents . . . I do not challenge his sincerity or his intensity, but from this intensity has come a hardness beyond reason."⁷⁴ On the same occasion, the mayor called the marchers a "courageous little band of Negroes." At that time he was critical of south siders who took their children to the demonstrations and wondered about the good sense of people who hung Wallace signs on the necks of their children, as depicted in a Journal picture.

⁷²"More Support Given," Sept. 6, Pt. 2, p. 10.

⁷³"Peaceful Assemblies Allowed, Mayor Says," Aug. 31, p. 1.

⁷⁴"Maier's Open Housing Bid Backed by 30 Clergymen," Aug. 31, Pt. 2, p. 1.

Judge Christ T. Seraphim figured in 19 paragraphs. His negative comments about Groppi were not as evident in the Journal as they had been in the Sentinel.

Among white leaders, Archbishop Cousins received most attention--21 paragraphs. He managed to speak out on the open housing protests without silencing, criticizing, or disciplining Father Groppi. He managed, moreover, to issue a statement without mentioning Groppi's name once. The Journal reported that when Moynihan went to speak to Cousins at the behest of Maier, he took along Father Alphonse Popak, a south side pastor and church lawyer known for his conservative views, to be an advocate for the common good--a detail omitted by the Sentinel.⁷⁵

Zablocki's press conference, which was reported extensively in the Sentinel, received only five short paragraphs in the Journal. Fagan's exchange of barbs with Maier received about equal attention in the two newspapers, the Journal, however, devoting a full article to the story. Fagan was mentioned in 19 paragraphs, and his comments were essentially the same as those reported in the Sentinel.⁷⁶

County Board Chairman Eugene H. Grobschmidt's suggestion that a countywide open housing ordinance might be considered by the board received double attention from the

⁷⁵ "Cousins Urged To Step in," Aug. 30, p. 1.

⁷⁶ "Maier, Fagan Trade Barbs on Civil Rights," Sept. 1, Pt. 2, p. 1.

Journal. A full article was devoted to Grobschmidt's suggestion on September 8th.⁷⁷ The next day some of the material was repeated in a regular news article on the support that the open housing cause was winning.

The attention given to Maier in the Journal might have been less had Groppi not spoken about the mayor so often in his speeches and interviews. He made reference to Maier 25 times. Maier spoke about Groppi only 18 times.

The Journal ran a sidebar article on Father Groppi's reputation on the south side. It presented the results of a survey of 83 south siders that showed that 67 per cent of those surveyed said that any group of citizens had a legal right to demonstrate in a peaceful manner in any part of Milwaukee. However, in being asked, "What do you think about a Catholic priest, such as Father Groppi, leading a group of civil rights demonstrators in the south side of Milwaukee?", very few granted that Groppi was doing right. An overwhelming number said Groppi was causing more damage than good. The indication was that the hatred of the south siders was directed more toward Father Groppi than the open housing cause.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ "Grobschmidt Backs Open Housing Law," Sept. 8, p. 1.

⁷⁸ "80% Denounce White Hecklers," Aug. 31, p. 1.

In another sidebar, the Journal featured St. Boniface Church, which served as Father Groppi's base of operations. The article pointed out how the church had been serving as a refuge, rally hall, medical station, housing and transportation bureau, and cafeteria during the rallies and demonstrations. The article said the church functioned as did the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Selma, Alabama, when civil rights demonstrators descended on Alabama two years previously.⁷⁹

Headlines

The Journal drew attention to its news articles and pictures on the open housing story with 48 regular headlines. Two were seven-column, one line heads on the picture page. Four were decks which separated different stories flowing from a major headline. Only four times did the Journal pull out its largest five-column, two-line headline: (1) to announce Maier's 30 day ban on night demonstrations;⁸⁰ (2) to announce the lifting of the ban;⁸¹ (3) to inform readers that the NAACP will march on September 2;⁸² and (4) to lead into a story which told about the destruction of the mayor's office and plans for a mass rally.⁸³

⁷⁹ "Marcher's Mecca," Sept. 5, Pt. 2, p. 1.

⁸⁰ Aug. 30.

⁸¹ Sept. 1.

⁸² Spet. 2.

⁸³ Sept. 8.

None of these major headlines featured Father Groppi. Mayor Maier was mentioned in three of the four.

TABLE 5
JOURNAL HEADLINE COVERAGE^a

	Number	Per Cent
Maier	17	23.6
Groppi	7	9.7
Police	5	6.9
Phillips	3	4.1
Cousins	3	4.1
Wilkins	2	2.7

^aIncludes jump headlines.

The Journal gave page one coverage to the open housing protests every issue except September 6th. On that date it displayed the main protest stories on page one of part two of the paper. The coverage was minimal on September 7th, but we included it among our statistics since some information on the protests was weaved into the page one story, which revealed that Maier was considering not running for election.

Father Groppi's name appeared in four headlines. One of these was the main headline on page one, another was a page one deck. A third was the headline on the picture page. And a fourth was a headline on page one of part two.

The four headlines were:

--Crowd Harass Groppi Marchers,⁸⁴

⁸⁴ Aug. 29.

--Youth Council, Groppi Carry Open Housing Protest to South Side,⁸⁵

--Groppi Says He Will Go to US Court,⁸⁶

--Schools Can't Link Absences to Groppi⁸⁷

The first two were the only headlines with Groppi's name that appeared in the same issue.

In contrast, the headline attention given the mayor was more extensive. Maier was referred to in 13 different headlines. The police received headline attention five times. Cousins, Phillips, Wilkins, Fagan, and Grobschmidt were other individuals singled out in headlines. Each appeared in one headline, except for Cousins, who had two appearances.

Father Groppi's name also appeared in three of the 24 jump headlines. These almost equaled Maier's four appearances in these secondary headlines. The three in which Groppi was featured were:

--Ald. Phillips, Father Groppi Arrested,⁸⁸

--Groppi, 14 Others Arrested; 19 Injured,⁸⁹

--Father Groppi and Gregory Say Daily Marches Will Go on.⁹⁰

⁸⁵ Aug. 29

⁸⁶ Sept. 1.

⁸⁷ Sept. 5.

⁸⁸ Sept. 1

⁸⁹ Sept. 2.

⁹⁰ Sept. 5.

News Pictures

The Journal's 42 news articles were equalled by the same number of news pictures. Seven were mug shots, but the rest were action shots which took up 796 column inches. The largest, a four-column by 10.5 inch picture, was of the mayor's vandalized office and appeared on page one of the September 8th issue.

August 30 had the most pictures, nine in all. The next day there were seven; and August 29 and September 5 had five each.

Father Groppi was featured in nine of the pictures, appearing in at least one a day from August 29 to September 6. He appeared in two pictures apiece in the September 1st and 2nd issues.

TABLE 6

JOURNAL PICTURE COVERAGE

	Number	Per Cent
Protesters	17	40.4
Police	10	23.8
Groppi	9	21.4
Maier	2	4.7
Phillips	2	4.7
Wilkins	1	2.3

Groppi appeared in a page one, four-column by 7.5 inch picture on August 29. He was pictured in Kosciuszko Park with a sign reading, "We South Siders Welcome Negroes," held aloft by a youth council member. Groppi's face was the only one in clear view.

The August 30th picture, on page five of part two depicted Groppi walking in the lead during the south side march, with police walking close by. The picture was four columns by six inches.

In the same issue, Groppi figured indirectly in another picture. On page one of part two, white youths held up a sign reading, "Groppi the Black God." An accompanying picture had other youths holding up a Confederate flag.

The Journal camera caught Groppi again on August 31 at a Freedom House rally. He was pictured on the porch of the House shouting to followers to gather on the House property. The picture was two columns in width and seven inches depth.

On September 1, Father Groppi was featured in two pictures, both on page one of part two. In the first, a large four-column by nine inch picture appearing in the upper half of the page, Groppi was pictured being carried hand and foot by police to a patrol wagon. In the second, lower on the page, Groppi drew attention to Vel Phillips on the shoulders of commandos at a rally in St. Boniface Church. The picture was four columns wide and 5.25 inches deep.

The September 2nd issue also carried two pictures of Groppi. The priest was shown with a policeman in a patrol wagon after his arrest the night before. This was the only picture which appeared in the Journal that was credited to AP. The picture appeared on page 17 and was three columns by 7.5 inches. The second picture of the day appeared on a pic-

ture page, page five of part two. It had Groppi, Vel Phillips, and youth council members listening while Prentice McKinney addressed a rally. The picture was three columns by 7.25 inches.

Groppi appeared again on page one of part two of the September 5th issue. He was shown clapping enthusiastically during a march rest period. The picture was a slim column and a half by 7.25 inches.

The last Journal which featured Father Groppi in a picture was the September 6th issue. On page one of part two he was shown surrounded by youth council members after a visit to city hall. One commando held up a sign over his head which said, "Think Black and Graduate." The picture was two columns by six inches.

The protesters appeared in more pictures than any other group or individual. They figured in 17 different pictures. The police were the next most visible. They were in 10 pictures. No individual personality dominated the Journal pictures, however. Maier appeared only twice, once in a mug shot portrait and once in front of the burned-out Freedom House during his inner core tour. Vel Phillips also appeared twice. Other individuals who received picture notices, most of them mug shots, were: Wilkins, Cousins, Fagan, McKinney, Finkey, and Grobschmidt.

Editorials

The Journal was very sparse in its editorial comments on the open housing controversy. Only two editorials appeared, one on August 30 and one on September 8. The two totaled 13 paragraphs and were of almost equal size. Only two of the paragraphs, and these in the first editorial, mentioned Father Groppi.

The first, headlined, "Groppi Proves His Case," admitted that the demonstrators led by Groppi had proven to the community that it was poisoned by hate. It decried the bigotry shown by whites toward the demonstrators. But now that the point had been made, it called upon Groppi and his followers not to push the matter further. Instead, it said, there was need to get the mayor's war on prejudice off the ground. The multi-idea editorial also found room to praise the Milwaukee police force. "Firmly, courageously and with great restraint," the editorial said, "the police kept a dangerous situation under control in face of surging passions and unthinking hate."

The second Journal editorial did not appear until September 8. It was precipitated by the destruction of Mayor Maier's waiting room. The editorial called the vandalism an outrage and suggested that it was "a deliberate scheme to provoke the police into a physical assault upon them in turn, to create antipolice propaganda."⁹¹ It praised the re-

⁹¹"A Hoodlum Outrage," p. 22.

straint of the mayor and police. The insult, it said, was not to the mayor and the police but to the Negroes themselves. It questioned whether the vandalism served the cause of racial social justice and asked how tearing apart the mayor's dictionary related to the cause of open housing.

The Journal editorial warned: "One outcome of outrages like this is that police may begin reacting strongly and stop worrying whether firm suppression of disorder will be called 'police brutality.'"⁹²

Two editorial cartoons by R. A. Lewis helped fill the gap of editorials in the Journal. On page one of the August 31st issue appeared a two-panelled cartoon entitled, "A Short Study of Prejudice." The top panel had four figures dressed in early 1900 clothes standing next to a sign declaring: "Polacks, Dagos, Hunkies Stay Out." The lower panel had the same figures clothed in modern garb standing by a similar sign declaring "Niggers, Greasers Keep Out."

A second editorial cartoon, which appeared on page one of the September 7th issue, chided the Milwaukee aldermen for their slowness in ratifying the mayor's ban on night marches. The ban had been lifted by the time they got around to considering its ratification. The cartoon was captioned: "Aldermen Come to Visit a Sick Friend--Who Died Last Week." The cartoon had three stereotyped politicians standing with flowers (depicting ratification) at the mayor's door decorated with a funeral wreath (symbolizing the march ban).

⁹²Ibid.

CHAPTER V

COMPARISONS AND OBSERVATIONS

Statistical Comparison of Sentinel and Journal Coverage

Statistically, there was very little difference in the amount of attention and display that the Sentinel and Journal devoted to the open housing protests and the role Father James Groppi played in them. Considering the different editorial and reportorial staffs, the greatly different space available for news in each paper, and the length of time covered by this thesis, it is significant that the number of news articles, headlines, and paragraphs devoted to Father Groppi are as close as they are.

TABLE 7

COMPARISON OF SENTINEL AND JOURNAL TOTAL COVERAGE

	Sentinel	Journal
Paragraphs ^a	1,201	1,148
Articles	40	42
Headlines	46	48
Jump Headlines	24	24
Pictures	32	42
Editorials	6	2

^aEditorial paragraphs are not included in these figures.

The Sentinel carried 40 news articles compared to the Journal's 42. The difference is larger, 72-61, had we considered all articles related in any manner to the protests. Many of the additional articles in the Sentinel in the latter

instance resulted from that paper's practice of devoting full articles to court appearances and lists of injuries, information which the Journal usually included in other stories.

The number of paragraphs devoted to the open housing story in both newspapers also compares well. The Sentinel had 1,201 paragraphs compared to the Journal's 1,148, a difference of only 53 paragraphs, the size of two medium-size articles. Groppi was mentioned in 16.9 per cent of the Sentinel's paragraphs, in 203 of them. He figured a little more heavily in the Journal's paragraphs. He was referred to in 19.4 per cent of the total, in 224 paragraphs.

The number of headlines, major and jump, to display the news stories was also significantly close in both newspapers. The Sentinel used a total of 46 major headlines to the Journal's 48. Both newspapers carried 24 jump headlines. Groppi was mentioned in the Journal headlines more often, 5-3, than in the Sentinel's, but in the major headlines he was mentioned four times in the Sentinel compared to three times in the Journal. Counting all the headlines together, however, the difference is minimal, with the Journal leading by only one headline, 8-7.

The only noticeable variation between the two newspapers' coverage of the open housing protests and Father Groppi was in the number of news pictures and editorials. The Journal carried 10 news pictures more than the Sentinel, 42-32. Much of the difference was due to the Journal's greater tendency to use portraits. In regard to space, it

devoted only 88 column inches more to pictures than the Sentinel did. Its 796 column inches compared well with the Sentinel's 708.25 column inches, considering that the Journal carried a larger news hole on its picture page. The percentage of pictures which featured Father Groppi was also similar. He was featured in nine Journal pictures and five Sentinel pictures. This represented 21.4 per cent of the Journal's pictures and 15.6 per cent of the Sentinel's.

The difference in number and tone of editorials was more marked. The Sentinel editorial staff deemed it necessary to speak out on six occasions. The fact that two of these editorials were placed on page one, an unusual occurrence, gives evidence that the Sentinel spoke strongly on what was happening as a result of the open housing protests. Its editorials were usually short and to the point. The largest was only 10 paragraphs long. The Sentinel editorials also tended to call for specific actions. For instance, the editorials openly called for silencing and disciplining Father Groppi by his religious superior and recommended legal action against the blacks who vandalized the mayor's waiting room. The Journal, in contrast, spoke out editorially only twice. In both editorials it suggested only general, indeterminate actions, like stopping the demonstrations and reprimanding the unruly spectators.

The Sentinel's editorials focused on Father Groppi much more often than did the Journal's, which mentioned Groppi only twice in a total of 13 paragraphs. The Sentinel

referred to him in 10 of its 37 paragraphs. The Sentinel's intense concern was also more evident. Groppi was the center of both of the page one editorials, which called for his removal by Archbishop Cousins.

The Quality of the Coverage Given Father Groppi

Because of the attention given him in the reports and displays of both newspapers, it is evident that the local press considered Groppi an important and even pivotal personality in reference to the open housing protests. Since Groppi was identified by so few adjectives, it seems to have been with editorial intent that in most instances he was referred to as, "a Catholic priest," "assistant pastor of St. Boniface Church," "advisor of the youth council of the NAACP," and "leader of the demonstrations in Wauwatosa." The one instant when the Journal referred to him as "militant" was the closest both newspapers came to making a judgment about Groppi's activities. They can be commended for their objectivity in that regard.

There was an evident lack, however, in both newspapers of giving the public an understanding of Groppi's background and personality. During the 10 days of our study, no interpretive or in-depth article on Groppi appeared in print. Taking the news reports in isolation, one would wonder why the south side residents would react so negatively toward the priest. His provocative statements as reported in the press certainly were no less provocative than those

of several other black leaders. And Maier's rhetorical denunciations of Groppi were similar to those directed by Groppi toward Maier. Perhaps the same dynamic which was operative in situations studied in research on dissemination of news in crisis situations, as the death of President John F. Kennedy and the Detroit riots, were also in evidence in Milwaukee. Be that as it may, as objective as the Milwaukee press seemed to be in its news coverage of Father Groppi, Milwaukee citizens focused much of their rancor or admiration, as the case may be, more on Groppi than on the open housing cause itself. The many anti-Groppi remarks by Mayor Maier, Congressman Zablocki, County Judge Seraphim, and the south siders gave ample evidence of that fact.

It would appear that Father Groppi's position as a white Catholic priest in the civil rights movement marked him for distinction in the public's mind. It was a time in the history of the civil rights movement when leadership had already passed effectively from the hands of liberal whites to blacks. Black consciousness was on the rise and the cry of black power had come on the scene. Groppi was perhaps the only white civil rights leader in the country at that time. And the last. A study on the effect his race and priesthood had on the attention given to him by the press and the public would be productive of significant conclusions.

In the atmosphere of the time, it is commendable that Archbishop Cousins could issue an extended statement on the open housing situation, that Alderman Robert L. Sulkowski

could give an interview on the demonstrations, and that County Board Chairman Eugene H. Grobschmidt could speak for a countrywide open housing law without mentioning Father Groppi's name once. These three reports contrast sharply with reports on press conferences of Mayor Maier and Congressman Zablocki, both of whom spent much time denouncing Groppi. The Sentinel found it newsworthy to cite that Cousins had not mentioned Groppi.

The Open Housing Story

Both newspapers did an excellent and thorough job reporting the incidents related to the open housing marches and rallies. They also presented much copy on several public officials' reaction to the controversy spawned by the protests. But they were very deficient in explaining what open housing itself was all about. Never once did they even bother to quote the details of Alderman Vel Phillips' proposed city ordinance. The only information presented on the implications and content of an open housing ordinance had to be gleaned from comments of Father Groppi and Mayor Maier.

The Sentinel came close to giving some information on open housing on September 9, 13 days after the protests began. At that time, it ran a background article on a proposed state open housing law. Were it not for that article, and had they not used other sources of information, Milwaukee newspaper readers would have been sadly uninformed about the very issue which so stirred their emotions.

Reporting the Black World

In 1968, the President's Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders pointed to a flaw in the news press' coverage of black news which, on the basis of our study, also applied to the Milwaukee newspapers. The commission accused the press of inadequate treatment of black news events. In its chapter on the mass media it stated:

The media report and write from the standpoint of a white man's world. The ills of the ghetto, the difficulties of life there, the Negro's burning sense of grievance, are seldom conveyed. Slightings and indignities are part of the Negro's daily life, and many of them come from what he now calls "the white press"-- a press that repeatedly, if unconsciously, reflects the biases, the paternalism, the indifference of white America. This may be understandable, but it is not excusable in an institution that has the mission to inform and educate the whole of society.¹

That the white world was more important than the black world to the Milwaukee newspapers was evidenced by the amount of coverage given to white political and religious leaders compared to that given to black leaders. The press searched out the opinions of white leaders who did not even have direct involvement in the open housing demonstrations and protests. Archbishop Cousins, Mayor Maier, County Judge Seraphim, Congressman Zablocki, County Board Chairman Grobschmidt, Secretary Fagan and several Milwaukee aldermen all received more news space than most black leaders.

¹Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, with a special introduction by Tom Wicker of the New York Times (N.Y.: Bantam Books, 1968), p. 366.

A few black leaders were singled out. Father Groppi, if we may consider him a black leader, stood off by himself, receiving by far the most attention. Other than he, only Vel Phillips and Dick Gregory received noticeable news attention. Alderman Phillips, the only woman and the only black on the common council, was a natural news personality. Still the Sentinel found nothing to report about her activities except her arrest and participation in several rallies. She was mentioned in 35 paragraphs in the Sentinel. In one of the sharpest differences between the news coverage of the two Milwaukee newspapers, the Journal in contrast mentioned Mrs. Phillips in 73 paragraphs. The Journal also was more enterprising in running a background profile article on the black alderman and her role in the civil rights movement.

Dick Gregory figured in much news coverage, considering that he did not appear on the scene until the end of the first week of the protests. The Sentinel mentioned him in 22 paragraphs, and the Journal in 31. He was most frequently mentioned as a leader of specific marches. Occasionally he was quoted at rallies. But no news article addressed itself to explaining why Gregory had come to Milwaukee or to informing the public of his past involvement in the civil rights movement.

Roy Wilkins was another black leader who received more than token news attention. The Sentinel mentioned him 34 times, and the Journal 29 times. He was the subject of

three articles, a distinction no other black leader, including Father Groppi, received.

The question can be asked how much the national reputations of Gregroy and Wilkins affected the attention the Milwaukee press gave the two black leaders. The only local black leader, other than Mrs. Phillips, who received similar press attention was Commando Prentice McKinney. According to the structure of the youth council, he did not classify as a leader; but he received news attention because of his fiery talks at rallies and the central role he played in the destruction of Mayor Maier's waiting room. The Sentinel and Journal gave him about equal attention: 23 paragraphs in the Sentinel, and 20 paragraphs in the Journal. The Journal went beyond the Sentinel's regular coverage by featuring McKinney in a sidebar on the September 7th vandalism.

Sydney Finley, regional director of the NAACP, was one of the few other black leaders who received attention. The coverage of his activities, mostly comments at rallies, was about equal in both newspapers.

Two youth council leaders were practically neglected. Fred Bronson, president of the youth council, was mentioned only three times in both newspapers. Edward L. Thekan, the youth council's publicity director, was mentioned only four times, and then only by the Journal. He was never identified as spokesman of the youth council, although press conferences were held almost daily during the height of the protests.

Established leaders of the black community were hardly referred to in the Milwaukee press. Assemblyman Lloyd Barbee and Rev. William Hoard received minimal attention. Other leaders received no press attention at all.

Maier's High Press Visibility

Mayor Maier has frequently accused the Milwaukee press of distorting his civic programs. His criticisms of the press have gone to the extent of claiming that there has been a "conspiracy of attitudes" by Journal editors and reporters against him. At a dinner of the Marquette University Chapter of Sigma Delta Chi on December 1, 1970, Maier accused the press of supporting Father Groppi's open housing marches. He denounced the Journal editor by saying: "You must have had 35 or 40--maybe 50--editorials for open housing and you obfuscated every other damn thing else that was in the picture."²

To Maier, Father Groppi and the press set the agenda and the issues that he himself, as an elected official, could have controlled with better effect. On the basis of the actual news reports and other coverage, however, it is difficult to accept Maier's assertions and accusations. Certainly, he was not neglected by the Sentinel and Journal in their reports on the open housing situation. He was given more news space, appeared in more pictures, and figured in more

²"New Journalism Urged by Mayor," Sentinel, Dec. 2, 1970, p. 14.

headlines than any other personality or group connected with the open housing story, including Father Groppi. And his coverage was not superficial. The articles which featured him gave more solid background on his ideas and programs than anything that was presented about Father Groppi and his program.

In contrast to Maier, Groppi was quoted mostly in the heat of the battle, directing marchers at the demonstrations and sparking the spirit of his followers at rallies. More of his rhetoric than his program was reported in both newspapers. About the most one could gather from the news accounts about Groppi and the youth council was that they were for open housing in Milwaukee, they thought the blacks had been discriminated against, they insisted that the mayor, police and other public officials were hacks who were not concerned about the real needs of the black community, and they had no love for Maier.

Much of Maier's rhetoric was reported also, it is true. In fact, it would seem that he spoke too much in such terms for a public official. But the Journal, especially, took pains to report all his press conferences and went into detail in presenting his programs. It is significant, however, that on those occasions Maier enumerated his past accomplishments more than his plans for the present and future.

Were we to judge on the basis of newspaper attention who was the most important personality during the open

housing dispute, we would have to conclude that Mayor Maier was that man. Father Groppi, central as he was in most of the marches and rallies, was second to Maier on all levels of news coverage and display. It is significant that Maier received as much attention as he did, considering that he was never a part of the demonstrations themselves. Except when he was a newsmaker himself, when he issued his ban on night marches, it was the reporters who sought him out for his opinions and comments. On the basis of the facts, it cannot be said that he was neglected by the press.

His accusation that the Journal published up to 50 editorials on open housing is of questionable validity. At the rate the Journal published open housing editorials during the two weeks of our study, the paper would have been hard put to meet the quota Maier stated. A study of wider scope than ours will have to search out the truth of the accusation.

Confrontation Journalism

We ask ourselves why the press tended to give so much information about Maier. We dare to surmise that the mayor's critical remarks about Father Groppi and the demonstrators and his extreme reaction to the violence on the south side made him an ideal personality to bring conflict to the front pages of the newspapers. In fact, on other fronts, it appeared that both newspapers tended to search out conflict between personalities and groups. There were articles putting Maier vs. Fagan, Maier vs. Groppi, Maier vs.

women protesting police brutality, Maier vs. clergymen, Groppi vs. south siders, Groppi vs. Seraphim, Groppi vs. Zablocki, police vs. spectators, police vs. marchers, etc. Many of the quotes in these stories were ferreted out by reporters and not given freely by the persons involved. Perhaps, the slogan, "conflict sells papers," was being acted out in reality.

The Role of the Police

The dramatic effect of uniformed policemen also seemed to have been used effectively by the newspapers. The police's visibility was very high in both newspapers, approximating that of Mayor Maier and Father Groppi. The presence of policemen, often with riot helmets and shotguns, in news pictures was unusually high in both newspapers. It would seem that reporters and photographers found the police a dramatic subject with which the public could easily identify. The early south side marches appeared to be confrontations between the police and spectators. In these cases, Father Groppi and the marchers were depicted as being protected by the police from the violence and ire of the spectators. The later north side marches appeared as confrontations between the police and the marchers. Overall, both the marchers and spectators received less news notice than the police.

The Sentinel and Journal handled the police with equal attention. The only noticeable difference was that, perhaps with better leg work, the Journal tended to identify

specific policemen more often than the Sentinel did. Police Chief Breier also received more attention in the Journal than in the Sentinel, even though he was rarely on the scene of the marches and rallies.

Summarizations

In summary, then, we commend the Sentinel and Journal on several fronts:

1. For their voluminous coverage of an important local news story.
2. For not cowering in depicting behavior that would be embarrassing to Milwaukee's reputation.
3. For being objective in their descriptions of Father Groppi and not succumbing to the temptation to editorialize about him in straight news reports.
4. For doing a tolerable job in reporting Maier's programs, in spite of his accusations to the contrary.
5. For reporting both the commendable and uncommendable actions of the police.
6. For correctly recognizing in their editorials that the violence on the south side was on the part of the spectators and not the protesters.

There were several areas of news coverage, revealed in the open housing protest reports, that need improvement. We draw attention to them, fully aware that both newspapers have improved in those areas since the open housing demonstrations took place.

1. Both newspapers tended to seek out establishment leaders, political and religious, for opinions and reactions.
2. Even though the open housing campaign was a black news event, not enough attention was given to black leaders.
3. Black leaders with national reputations were given more news attention than local black leaders.
4. More articles should have given background on the personalities and events.
5. Interpretive articles on open housing were noticeably lacking.
6. Background on the black situation in Milwaukee and why the blacks felt so deeply about an open housing ordinance was not presented.
7. There should have been less reliance on police and other official sources for information.
8. Maier's role was overemphasized in headlines and news articles.
9. The protests were depicted too frequently as an activity of Father Groppi rather than of the youth council.
10. The protests were often presented in confrontation terms.
11. When Father Groppi and Mayor Maier were quoted, more of their rhetoric than their reasoned thinking was presented.
12. The newsmen tended to quote Father Groppi rather than black members as spokesman of the youth council.

13. The Sentinel did not have the honesty to report that Wilkins' denied that he had been critical of the youth council and Father Groppi.

14. It would have been more enterprising on the Journal's part if it had sought opinions of blacks as well as the south siders in its survey on the reaction to the south side demonstrations.

Postscript

Father Groppi and the youth council persisted for over 200 days in their attempt to have an open housing ordinance to their liking enacted in Milwaukee. On December 12, 1967, the Milwaukee Common Council adopted an ordinance which duplicated the state open housing law. It covered only an estimated 25 per cent of Wisconsin housing. The protesters considered the law inadequate and continued their marches.

Four months later, on April 30, 1968, after the U.S. Congress had enacted federal open housing legislation, a new city ordinance was passed. It was stronger than the federal law but still exempted a large portion of the city's housing.³ On January 21, 1969, the common council struck out the exemptions and made the law apply to all housing in Milwaukee.

Father Groppi defended the open housing marches by pointing to the success of having one of the strongest open

³Frank A. Aukofer, "Civil Rights Drive Makes Big Strides in Year After Riot," Journal, July 31, 1968, p. 12.

housing laws in the country enacted in Milwaukee. Most of the municipalities in the metropolitan area had also passed open housing laws in one form or another.⁴

Fourteen months after the passage of the basic law, however, no complaints had been filed on violations of the ordinance.⁵ When the first suit was finally filed it was not brought by a black against a white, but rather by a Jew against an Arab.

Declaring that he wanted to devote more time to social action within his parish, Father Groppi resigned as adviser to the Milwaukee youth council on November 15, 1968.⁶

⁴Marta Bender, "No Housing Complaints Filed Yet," Sentinel, Feb. 25, 1969, p. 5.

⁵Ibid.

⁶"Groppi Quits Youth Council, Will Stress Work in Parish," Journal, Nov. 17, 1968, p. 1.

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