

REPORT
TO THE WEST VIRGINIA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
OF
THE PUBLIC HEARING IN WHEELING
ON FEBRUARY 1, 2, 3, 1971
RELATIVE TO
THE RACIAL TENSION SITUATION IN WHEELING ON THE
WEEKEND OF JANUARY 2, 1971

West Virginia Human Rights Commission
P & G Building
2019 East Washington Street
Charleston, West Virginia

WV
R
323.1
W52r



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

P & G BUILDING
2019 EAST WASHINGTON STREET
CHARLESTON, WEST VIRGINIA 25305
TELEPHONE 348-2616

ARCH A. MOORE, JR.
Governor

COMMISSIONERS

RUSSELL VAN CLEVE
Chairman
Charleston

ANCELLA BICKLEY
Vice Chairman
Morgantown

HARRY J. BERMAN
Clarksburg

D. PAUL CAMILLETTI
Wheeling

REV. J. MATTHEW COLEMAN
Bluefield

JOHN A. JONES
Weirton

E. G. MARSHALL
Huntington

REV. MOSES NEWSOME
Charleston

H. R. RICHARDS
Parkersburg

CARL W. GLATT
Executive Director

April 8, 1971

TO ALL PARTICIPANTS:

The West Virginia Human Rights Commission, in approving this "Wheeling Report" for distribution, wishes to express appreciation to all those who participated in testifying at the public hearings on February 1, 2, 3, 1971. Such co-operation on a voluntary basis represents a fine example of service to the community for which all participants may be justly proud.

Special thanks are extended to officials of the City of Wheeling for so graciously providing the excellent facilities for the public hearing in the City Council Chambers, City-County Building, Wheeling, West Virginia.

Sincerely,

Russell Van Cleve
Chairman

RVC/lp

B A C K G R O U N D

The weekend of January 2, 1971 produced a series of incidents in Wheeling, West Virginia involving the police and black citizens, allegations of at least five fire-bombings attributed to racial tension, and the allegation that a fire which destroyed a supermarket and large warehouse for an estimated \$400,000 damages was also related to the racial disturbances. The West Virginia Human Rights Commission assigned Assistant Director George E. Chamberlain, Jr., to Wheeling to determine first-hand the nature and degree of the racial tension situation.

On January 6, 1971, the Wheeling Human Rights Commission wrote to the West Virginia Human Rights Commission asking for a fact-finding investigation of the Wheeling situation. On January 11, 1971, "WE EXIST", a black citizens organization, asked the West Virginia Human Rights Commission to hold hearings in Wheeling relative to the "rapidly deteriorating situation." Similarly, on January 11, 1971, the Greater Wheeling Community Development Council, Inc., an interracial organization, sent a telegram asking the West Virginia Human Rights Commission to conduct an inquiry into the events in Wheeling on the weekend of January 2, 1971.

On January 15, 1971 Chairman Russell Van Cleve replied by letter (Exhibit A) that the West Virginia Human Rights Commission would conduct a public hearing in Wheeling on Monday, February 1, 1971, Tuesday, February 2, 1971, and Wednesday, February 3, 1971. The letter stated the inquiry would encompass the following areas:

1. Unemployment or underemployment of black youth in the Wheeling area;
2. Alleged lack of recreational facilities;
3. Alleged substandard and inadequate housing;
4. Alleged police abuses;
5. Alleged inadequacy of area-wide community relations programs.

On January 25, 1971, Chairman Russell Van Cleve sent letters to approximately 44 persons inviting them to testify at the public hearing (Exhibit B). In a press release on January 29, 1971, the West Virginia Human Rights Commission invited other individuals and organizations who might wish to testify. (Exhibit C).

When the hearings were held February 1-3, 1971, the Commission announced that all witnesses had responded voluntarily to the Commission's invitation to testify and that only two subpoenas were issued at the request of individuals for authorized excuses from their place of employment.

Chairman Van Cleve presided at the hearing with Commissioner D. Paul Camilletti, Wheeling, Commissioner J. Matthew Coleman, Bluefield, and Commissioner John A. Jones, Weirton, as Hearing Commissioners. Assistant Attorney General Thomas P. O'Brien, Jr., conducted the inquiry assisted by Executive Director Carl W. Glatt. All testimony was taken under oath or affirmation and was recorded by a certified court reporter. In addition to hearing testimony, the Hearing Commissioners made a tour of a recreation facility which had been described by witnesses as inadequate. The list of persons testifying is attached to this report as Exhibit D.

During the course of the hearing, allegations were made that racial discrimination by labor unions was partly responsible for the limited employment opportunities for blacks in the Wheeling area. The Hearing Commissioners contacted labor union officials to furnish testimony at the hearing but the request was received too late to enable the union officials to attend. However, union officials did indicate a willingness to cooperate in whatever program might result from the hearings directed at increasing employment opportunities for black citizens.

II.

FOREWORD

The Hearing Commissioners became aware from the outset in preparing this report that the public hearings had served the dual purpose of easing the immediate tension situation and bringing community leaders and black citizens together in a wholesome airing of community problems pointing the way to a cooperative spirit uniting all elements of the community in solving problems resulting from years of apathy, indifference, and neglect.

It was also apparent to the Hearing Commissioners that the public hearing had not succeeded as a fact-finding effort. A great deal of testimony from opposing points of view was strongly partisan, lacking in objectivity and accuracy, and too involved in accusation and countering defensiveness. Yet, the Hearing Commissioners felt that one of the chief values of the hearing was to have permitted these strong points of view to be aired. By these unrepressed expressions was revealed the problems causing the deep-seated resentments which had led to the racial tension in Wheeling the weekend of January 2, 1971.

There were many contradictions as to the facts of each incident which occurred the weekend of January 2, 1971. The black spokesmen were united in accusations that the police "over-reacted" by turning out in force, armed with an excess of "riot equipment" to quell minor disturbances in the black

community which could have been resolved more peaceably by more diplomatic and less threatening police action. The police, on the other hand, explained the escalating tensions of that weekend resulted from acts of violence, disregard and disrespect for routine police instructions, followed by profanity, bottle-throwing, and aggressive acts aimed at the police which could only be handled by increased strength and more direct police action.

Prime examples of contradictions and counter-contradictions that developed during the course of the hearing can be reviewed in news articles at the time of the incidents and testimony of public officials related to the burning of the supermarket and large warehouse. The early news articles linked the burning of the supermarket and the warehouse with "four other fire-bombings, racial disturbances, and the arrest of sixteen Negroes." The police chief was quoted "that the fires were apparent retaliation for the arrest of 16 Negroes earlier in the day." The fire chief, in the same news article, was quoted as saying "all the fires were either set or caused by fire bombings." However, later news articles reversed these attributions and indicated that the supermarket and warehouse fires were not linked to the racial disturbances. It was speculated that organized crime was involved in alleged arson of the supermarket and warehouse. However, on the second day of the hearing, the fire chief testified the fire bombings in the racial situation were linked with the fire bombing of the supermarket on the same date. He said "indications are that the same persons or the same group did the two jobs." To date, no arrests have been reported based on the alleged arson of the supermarket.

The Hearing Commissioners have concluded that much of the testimony dealt with criminal matters which would require a great deal of follow-up investigation outside the official responsibility and capability of the West Virginia Human Rights Commission. This applies not only to the allegations related to the fire bombings but the entire accusations and defensiveness related to the violence and vandalism that occurred during the racial disturbances on the weekend of January 2, 1971. It was felt no constructive purpose would be served by delving into such particular facts when the hearing itself revealed large problem areas for which the community might take constructive action on a united front.

From the attached list of those who testified,^{1/} it can be seen that a good cross-section of the community was represented. There were spokesmen for formal black organizations; there was testimony from black citizens directly involved in the tension situations; there was testimony from older black leadership and new black leadership in the Wheeling area. Private citizens spoke on behalf of interracial organizations. City officials, state officials, public school officials, business leaders, and spokesmen for religious organizations testified. The quality of the testimony was excellent. The sincerity of the testimony could not be challenged. The following report is based on a weighing of that testimony.

1/ (Exhibit D)

III.

EMPLOYMENT

The problem of unemployment and under-employment for blacks in the Wheeling area is very real. The Wheeling area has undergone a downward trend in economic activity limiting employment opportunities in general. However, a state official testified that the area was "vibrant for the last two years" showing average unemployment in 1969 to be 4.8% of the workforce, while for the fiscal year ending June, 1970 the unemployment situation had improved to 4.5% of the workforce. This was cited as still below both the state and national levels. However, 8.1% of the minority workforce was unemployed compared with the 4.8% or 4.5% quoted for the total workforce.

Unemployment does not tell the full story. There was considerable testimony that blacks are under-employed in the Wheeling area. This failure to fully utilize the potential skills of the black community is a prime source of the dissatisfaction and discontent that affects black youth. Black leaders testified that the better qualified, better educated, more capable young black people leave for employment opportunities elsewhere rather than accept the lower level of jobs offered in the Wheeling area.

A pervasive attitude of apathy and indifference was described rather than any direct intent to discriminate. However, the craft labor unions were cited as a roadblock to apprentice training and entry into the skilled crafts. "Tokenism" was seen as the general pattern of employment for blacks in the business sections of downtown Wheeling.

On the positive side, the plans to commence the J.O.B.S. program of the National Alliance of Businessmen under the sponsorship of the Wheeling Chamber of Commerce and several Manpower Development and Training projects now underway were indications of an awareness of the problem relative to minority employment and the need to do something about it.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Hearing Commissioners recommend:

1. **Community-wide** cooperation by employers, labor unions, government agencies, and black organizations, black leadership and black youth towards the success of the J.O.B.S. program of the National Alliance of Businessmen in the Wheeling area.

2. Affirmative efforts to recruit blacks in the Manpower Training and Development programs with follow-up procedures at each step of the training and job placement phases to see that blacks enter the training program, complete the program, and then are hired on jobs for which they have been trained.
3. That the City of Wheeling and the county government set a leadership example by enacting and implementing an affirmative employment program. City and county government should publicly adopt a statement of policy that:

"It is the policy of the City of Wheeling to extend equal employment opportunities to all persons without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, age or sex for all occupations and all levels of occupation. All supervisory and employing personnel have been instructed to implement this policy at every opportunity."

4. In cooperation with the West Virginia State Employment Service, the public school system might re-evaluate the employment requirements of the greater Wheeling area and develop vocational or adult education programs to qualify blacks to meet these requirements.

IV.

R E C R E A T I O N

Black spokesmen testified recreation facilities in the black neighborhoods were inadequate. They cited one recreational facility which, though in constant use, was alleged to be dilapidated and in otherwise poor condition. The Hearing Commissioners visited this facility and were of the opinion that, while it was by no means deluxe, it was a good utilitarian facility for recreation in an otherwise limited area.

Wheeling does have two fine parks and some forty playgrounds in the area of eleven square miles. However, it seems that in the areas where poor people and black people live there are just not enough playgrounds or recreational facilities. There is an organized recreation program in basketball and some organized playground activities for smaller children, but these efforts seem to be most inadequate for providing opportunity for children in poor neighborhoods and black neighborhoods to get off the streets. A Summer recreation program is worthwhile except that it is not large scale enough to service the recreational needs of the neighborhoods where the need is greatest.

There was criticism that Oglebay Park, hailed as one of the largest and most complete recreational parks in the nation, is too remote for utilization by children from the poor neighborhoods and the black neighborhoods. The bus trips to Oglebay Park that pick up children throughout the city on certain days of the week accommodate only a fraction of the children who could benefit from days at the Park. The criticism was that the poor neighborhoods and the black neighborhoods were provided only a limited number of seats per week on the scheduled buses for Oglebay Park, while children from more affluent neighborhoods were assigned a greater share of seats on per week basis. However, the proportion of need would be greater in the poorer neighborhoods and the black neighborhoods and was not being met by the ratio allocated the past few Summers. Oglebay Park is noted for its golfing, tennis, swimming, fishing, boating, camping, wood craft, etc., and is heavily utilized by children from middle-income or more affluent homes for whom transportation is provided by parents or neighbors. Poor children and black children who have the greater need for wholesome recreation, are not attracted or able to return again and again to the wonderful facilities of Oglebay Park which, for them, might just as well be out in the Rocky Mountains.

Wheeling's recreational problems are no different than the recreational problems facing most cities of America. The cities have outgrown their open spaces. Kids used to play sandlot ball. Any open lot was a baseball field, a football field, a soccer field, a place to play cops and robbers, hide and seek. In the cities of America, the "Inner City", there no longer are these open spaces, except for the million dollar, concrete and asphalt parking lots where automobiles have deluxe facilities to be at rest, while children have only the hazardous streets to roam for playing. Parking lot construction is high cost. Parking lot revenues are high-finance. Modern recreational facilities are high cost. Modern recreational facilities are not revenue producing. As a result of this cost equation, the children of America, the poor children and the black children are neglected.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Hearing Commissioners recommend:

1. A review or evaluation by the City of Wheeling, possibly in conjunction with the county government, might be made of all the present recreational facilities and recreational programs with the goal of planning for new facilities at strategic locations for which new recreational programs could be devised to meet the needs of all the children of the Wheeling area, especially the children from poor neighborhoods and black neighborhoods.

2. Citizens organizations, apart from city and county government, might examine transportation arrangements to enable a greater number of Wheeling's children, especially those from poor neighborhoods and black neighborhoods, to participate on a more continuous basis in the full recreational programs available at Oglebay Park.
3. The planning for any city or county recreational program might consider affirmative efforts to recruit recreation directors and staff personnel with professional training and experience, with a special effort to recruit black persons for such employment. Black youth have a deeper need to see young black adults in successful leadership roles and the recreational program is an ideal area for which there are young black people with training and experience and the willingness to offer dedicated service.
4. Any review as in #1 and #2 above might benefit from a study of the city, county, school board "Consolidated Recreation Commission", which provides year-around camping and recreation programs at Chestnut Ridge Camp in Monongalia County. This is an all-purpose program sponsored and supported by the United Fund and the County Court which might well be adaptable for the needs of the Wheeling area.

V.

H O U S I N G

There was a consensus among those who testified that housing discrimination does exist in Wheeling. There is a shortage of rental housing in Wheeling and the Wheeling area which makes housing discrimination enormously burdensome for black citizens, most of whom rent and do not own housing accommodations. Urban renewal and interstate highway construction projects have chopped up the City of Wheeling, affecting mostly the poor neighborhoods and the black neighborhoods, causing black citizens to be rehoused more tightly in the existing black neighborhoods or expanding into adjacent white neighborhoods. A new urban urban renewal project is scheduled for a neighborhood which is 99% black. Relocation officials are optimistic about progress in relocating families from this area. However, it was admitted relocation efforts have uncovered incidents of housing discrimination. Black spokesmen indicated this has caused that black neighborhood to be

extremely apprehensive of the entire project. Not all families are eligible for or interested in relocation into public housing, and for such black families the Wheeling area rental housing market is diminished by the prevalence of discrimination.

Wheeling does have a fair housing ordinance but there was testimony that only one complaint has ever been filed under that ordinance. The ordinance requires court action. Black citizens just don't believe that it would be helpful for their situation to file complaints.

Public housing officials testified there have been waiting lists for public housing but that situation is being eased as new public housing projects have become available. There was some criticism about conditions in public housing projects emphasizing a major need for a variety of social services both within the projects and the surrounding neighborhoods.

The shortage of housing, the shortage of rental housing, the trend for whites to move to the suburbs with blacks concentrated in the "Inner City" and the admitted prevalence of discrimination in housing, all have contributed to the general anxiety, apprehension, and discontent that has produced the racial tension that exists in Wheeling and the Wheeling area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Hearing Commissioners recommend:

1. That the Wheeling fair housing ordinance be replaced by new legislation that would parallel the newly-enacted fair housing sections of the West Virginia Human Rights Act to empower the local human rights commission to investigate complaints, hold public hearings, issue cease and desist orders, with court enforcement of such orders.
2. The local real estate industry might enter into a voluntary "market area agreement" whereby real estate firms, rental agencies, and landlords would adopt a nondiscriminatory housing policy to be implemented affirmatively at every opportunity.
3. Public housing agencies such as urban renewal, the housing authority, public housing management, might re-assess the present and proposed public housing or urban renewal programs to see how best relocation efforts might be coordinated so that persons to be dislocated can expect ready access to decent, safe, and sanitary housing. As it now stands, the black community is not assured that this is the case.

4. Public and private agencies might review their social service programs to see how they might be more helpful in easing the problems connected with public housing projects and the surrounding neighborhoods.

VI.

P O L I C E

The Hearing Commissioners concluded that a significant portion of the black community does believe that police abuses and police brutality do exist in Wheeling and that the elimination of this belief should be given top priority if racial tensions are to be eased and police-community relationships improved.

As stated in the foreword to this report, the Hearing Commissioners feel no constructive purpose would be served by attempting to unravel the contradictions relative to whether the police did or did not "over-react" to incidents involving black youth and the black community the weekend of January 2, 1971. The reality is that the black community does "believe" that the police over-reacted and came into the black neighborhood prepared for a full-scale race riot when the situation in no way approached that possibility. The black community "believes" that the police indulged in mass arrests, took into custody black by-standers not engaged in any violence or vandalism, and that the police used excessive force and some verbal abuse directed at not only those who were active in the disturbances but upon others who were innocent of any wrong-doing except they happened to be on the street at the time the disturbances were occurring.

The police officials and the police officers "believe" that they assessed the situation the weekend of January 2, 1971 as being fraught with violence and vandalism that could break out into a full-scale riot, that they assigned sufficient numbers of police to the area to handle any situation that might develop, and that the police as a group and individual police officers only used that force or show of force as was necessary to apprehend those responsible for the disturbances. The police "believe" that the difficulties and disturbances in the black community stem from a handful of black "troublemakers", "outsiders," or "agitators". The police "believe" that without this core of black "troublemakers", with these "troublemakers" eliminated by arrests or the fear of future arrests, the problems in the black community would diminish and things would return to normal. The police also "believe" that neither the Wheeling Police Department or individual police officers have engaged in "abuse" or "police brutality" or discriminatory treatment of black citizens.

Between these two opposing "beliefs", that of the black community and that of the police, there is a very serious confrontation that cannot be

resolved by one side or the other attempting to be more emphatic and prevailing with their point of view. To continue to wage war between the realities of these two opposing "beliefs" will only perpetuate the racial tension that already has resulted in violence and vandalism in Wheeling. Whether the question is "police abuse" or "abusiveness to the police", there can be no return to peace and tranquility unless and until both sides sit down together to analyze the opposing accusations and then come to some mutual understanding as to how to avoid a repetition or continuance of the deteriorating situation between the police and the black community.

The phenomena of hostility and lack of confidence on the part of a large segment of the black community is not unique to Wheeling. Fear of the police, hostility towards the police, disrespect for the police are widespread throughout the nation because the black community does "believe" most of the negative aspects of police conduct and attitudes. Across the nation, police attitudes have polarized in hostility towards black citizens based on fear, based on growing examples of disrespect and abuse leveled at the police. The frustrations of police departments and police officers that they lack public support and understanding as they try to deal with today's most serious problem of race relations contribute to the negative reaction of the police. If black citizens are the victims of society's past apathy, indifference, neglect, and overt discriminatory practices, so also are the police the victims of the same apathy, indifference, and neglect of their problems from the society they serve. All this is clearly described and analyzed in a report that should be "must" reading for every civic-minded citizen concerned with how to deal with the problem of deteriorating police-community relationships, especially as related to racial problems. This report is entitled "Task Force Report: The Police, Chapter 6, 'The Police and the Community'", prepared by the Task Force On the Police, The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice published in 1967 by the U. S. Government Printing Office, Document 1967 O-268-967.

One major point of emphasis in the above cited "Task Force Report" is the need to recognize that among policemen there are both good and bad, but that as it relates to relationships between the police and the black community the "bad" policemen can be the cause of the distrust, hostility, and lack of confidence directed at the entire police force. The Hearing Commissioners feel there was evidence that several police officers in Wheeling have gained for themselves a reputation as being "tough" or "unfair", or "prejudiced" in their dealings with the black community and in particular with black youth. Any attempt to deny this possibility or to protect such police officers from the common charges of the black community about this alleged misconduct will only solidify the "belief" of the black community that all of the police force is similarly the enemy of black people.

The Hearing Commissioners noted the favorable testimony regarding the officer now assigned to police-community relations work. However, the

Hearing Commissioners feel that despite the heriocratic efforts of this one officer, the program to better police-community relationships in Wheeling is doomed to failure unless the police department can recruit, train, and assign black police officers to assist in this program. The black community must be enlisted in this recruitment effort to find and encourage young black men to seek employment as police officers and then to support these new black policemen as they assume the additional responsibilities for establishing better police-community relationships among both black and white citizens.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Hearing Commissioners recommend:

1. That top priority should be given to an intensive campaign to recruit, train, and employ black police officers for the City of Wheeling. This campaign should enlist community-wide support from every public agency, civic organization, service club, church group, and from black organizations and the black community.

Concomitant with this campaign should be a community-wide effort to increase support for the police department. Such support should include efforts to upgrade standards, increase salaries, provide training and higher education opportunities for ambitious police officers, and to set forth a promotion ladder based on merit and ability which would assure career advancement for those officers who undertake self-improvement and professionalization. This concomitant campaign is necessary to improve the self-image and the self-respect which is so lacking among police officers, not only in Wheeling but throughout the nation. A poor self-image and lack of self-respect only generates a reciprocal poor image and lack of respect from the community which the police must serve.

2. The present police-community relations staff of the Wheeling Police Department should be increased, not only in numbers but in training of those assigned to this work. This increase most definitely should include black police officers. The

importance of the police-community relations program should be elevated in rank and respect as an operating arm of the police department having the full support of city officials, the police leadership, and the entire community. Upgrading should result in promotions in rank and increased salaries for those assigned to this work or those who acquire additional training and experience in this work.

3. An effort might be made to consult with a successful police department community relations program to obtain not only advice and information for the operation of such a program but to bring in other police officers as consultants while any new program is getting underway. An example of a good police-community relations program can be found nearby in Dayton, Ohio.
4. Some special effort should be made to establish communications between the police and the black youth of the community. This might be done through a police-cadet program wherein white youth and black youth might be encouraged to participate to bring about understanding of police work and perhaps groom candidates for eventual employment as police officers.

VII.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS PROGRAMS

The Hearing Commissioners were unanimous in feeling that the City of Wheeling and the Wheeling area has a wealth of resources among people and organizations of good will. Despite the bluntness of the testimony from opposing points of view, it was evident throughout the hearing that each spokesman was conveying a sincere desire to resolve whatever were the problems troubling the community. The public officials had this goal, the black spokesmen had this goal, and all spokesmen whether from the Chamber of Commerce, the civic groups, or the church groups, had the common purpose in testifying to bring to public attention what they perceived to be the ills of the community so that the community itself would bring its resources to bear upon a resolution of these ills.

The Wheeling Branch of the NAACP and the newly-formed black organization, "WE EXIST", represent a strong nucleus of black leadership around which the black community can rally to support community-wide efforts to eliminate the problems that have led to racial tension. The Greater Wheeling Community Development Council, Inc., is and could be a still greater force for uniting the community through interracial efforts. The Chamber of Commerce spokesmen did not hesitate in offering the Chamber's support

for the entire range of programs that will be necessary for the community to undertake in the areas of employment, recreation, housing, and police-community relations. The church groups, despite testimony that the churches had lagged in providing leadership on the interracial scene, can be expected to rally around any community-wide programs that might be developed as a result of the racial tensions the community now realizes it no longer can afford. The labor organizations, though not present to testify at the hearings, can be counted upon to lend more than just token support for any united effort to bring about more harmonious race relations in the Wheeling area.

There seemed to be common acknowledgement that the Wheeling Human Rights Commission has been ineffective because of lack of official support from the government and the community and the lack of funds and staff to carry out an active program. The resolution creating the Wheeling Human Rights Commission does not contain the essential powers to enable the Commission to implement the declarations of policy. Over the years, members of the Commission have convened monthly almost in complete isolation from the community, with the result that the black community no longer sees the Wheeling Human Rights Commission as the viable organization to work on the problems of race relationships in the area. Nevertheless, those testifying felt that the Wheeling Human Rights Commission could be the official body serving as the nucleus or catalyst for rallying support of the entire community in a wide range of programs designed to eliminate the causes of the racial unrest.

A statement in the lead editorial entitled "Uniting For a Better City" in the Wheeling News-Register, Sunday, February 7, 1971, seemed to sum up the need for the entire community to unite "in efforts to build a better Wheeling for ALL citizens." The editorial went on to state "there should be no disagreement among blacks and whites in seeking to improve housing conditions, expand recreational facilities, provide more job opportunities for young people, and promote continuing progress in the area of race relations. There is no question in our minds that all men of good will in Wheeling can join hands in working for these goals." This editorial added "The hearing by the West Virginia Human Rights Commission perhaps did serve a useful purpose in focusing attention on certain problems in the community that can and should be attended to without delay."

The Hearing Commissioners were pleased to learn from later news articles that the J.O.B.S. Program of the National Alliance of Businessmen was already being launched in Wheeling, that the Chamber of Commerce was publicly pledging its support to this and other programs to increase employment opportunities for minority groups, that the Greater Wheeling Community Development Council, Inc., had held follow-up meetings which were well attended and which indicated support and the willingness of citizens and organizations to support whatever community-wide programs might now be developed in the area of community relations.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The resolution creating the Wheeling Human Rights Commission should be reviewed and an effort made to enact modern human rights legislation paralleling the West Virginia Human Rights Act. Such a municipal ordinance would re-create the Wheeling Human Rights Commission with at least one professional staff person and some clerical help. The ordinance should empower the Commission to investigate complaints of discrimination based on race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, age or sex in the area of employment, public accommodations and housing. The Commission should endeavor to resolve complaints through conference and conciliation. If conference and conciliation fails, the Commission should be empowered to hold public hearings, to issue cease and desist orders, and to seek court enforcement if the cease and desist orders are violated.
2. The Greater Wheeling Community Development Council, Inc., might continue in its present form or re-establish itself on a broader base to serve as the independent, voluntary organization to support the official efforts of the Wheeling Human Rights Commission under the new ordinance and to enlist community-wide support in the broader programs of community relations which will in the long run be most effective in bringing an end to the discontent and dissatisfaction which produced racial tensions and the violence and vandalism of the weekend of January 2, 1971.

The Hearing Commissioners realize that this report, for the most part, is devoid of the statements of fact that made up the bulk of the testimony at the public hearings. The transcripts prepared by a certified court reporter of the testimony at the public hearing will be on file in the office of the Commission in Charleston. A similar recording of the testimony was made by city officials and should be available in Wheeling. The transcript of this testimony might very well be a source of information and insight into the attitudes and expressions of a cross-section of the Wheeling area community. Scholars and students might benefit from re-searching this testimony for a more in-depth study than could have been done within the limited time available to the Hearing Commissioners and the staff of the West Virginia Human Rights Commission. Exhibit E is a

photocopy of the letter sent to all who testified at the hearing expressing the appreciation of the West Virginia Human Rights Commission for this service to the community.

SUBMITTED APRIL 8, 1971 BY:

Russell Van Cleve

CHAIRMAN RUSSELL VAN CLEVE

Paul Camilletti

COMMISSIONER D. PAUL CAMILLETTI

J. Matthew Coleman

COMMISSIONER J. MATTHEW COLEMAN

John A. Jones

COMMISSIONER JOHN A. JONES

APPROVED FOR DISTRIBUTION APRIL 8, 1971

WEST VIRGINIA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Russell Van Cleve

CHAIRMAN RUSSELL VAN CLEVE

* * * * *



A

STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

P & G BUILDING
2019 EAST WASHINGTON STREET
CHARLESTON, WEST VIRGINIA 25305
TELEPHONE 348-2616

ARCH A. MOORE, JR.
Governor

COMMISSIONERS

RABBI SAMUEL COOPER
Chairman
Charleston

RUSSELL VAN CLEVE
Vice Chairman
Charleston

ANCELLA BICKLEY
Morgantown

MR. D. PAUL CAMILLETTI
Wheeling

REV. J. MATTHEW COLEMAN
Bluefield

MR. THOMAS M. DRAKE
Morgantown

MR. JOHN A. JONES
Weirton

E. G. MARSHALL
Huntington

MR. H. R. RICHARDS
Parkersburg

CARL W. GLATT
Executive Director

January 15, 1971

Mr. Jerome A. Burke, Chairman
Wheeling Human Rights Commission
Room 306-307 Riley Law Building
Wheeling, West Virginia 26003

Dear Mr. Burke:

At its regular meeting on Thursday, January 14, 1971, the West Virginia Human Rights Commission considered the request of the Wheeling Human Rights Commission that we hold a public hearing in Wheeling relative to the tension situation that occurred the weekend of January 2, 1971.

Please be advised the West Virginia Human Rights Commission has authorized and will assign at least three Commission members to conduct a public hearing on Monday, February 1, 1971, Tuesday, February 2, 1971, and, if necessary, Wednesday, February 3, 1971 at the City Council Chambers, City County Building, Wheeling.

The Commission considers this public hearing to be fact-finding in nature, not an inquisition to assign culpability for individual or group actions. It is to be hoped this fact-finding inquiry will identify the underlying causes for the general tension situation and for the specific recent incidents that led to alleged violence and alleged counter-violence. It is further to be hoped that, having identified these causes, there will be developed from those who testify concomitant suggestions for a resolution of the problems which this Commission can then organize into recommendations for community leadership to develop and implement.

Based on the initial investigation of a member of this Commission's staff, it seems that inquiry into the causes for the general tension situations in Wheeling should encompass the following areas:

1. Unemployment or underemployment of black youth in the Wheeling area;
2. Alleged lack of recreational facilities;
3. Alleged substandard and inadequate housing;
4. Alleged police abuses;
5. Alleged inadequacy of area-wide community relations programs.

The Commission staff will be in contact with your office for assistance with public hearing arrangements. The Commission plans to invite testimony from public officials, police officials, school officials, chamber of commerce officials, leaders of business and industry, spokesmen from minority group organizations such as the NAACP, "We Exist," Greater Wheeling Community Development Council, black youth involved in incidents, and other individuals who may have testimony to offer as witnesses or commentators on the general situation in Wheeling.

Very truly yours,

Russell Van Cleve

Russell Van Cleve
Chairman

RVC/lp

cc: All Commission members

Honorable James Rogers
Mayor Wheeling

Mr. Charles Steele
Wheeling City Manager

Wheeling Chapter of NAACP

"We Exist"

Greater Wheeling Community
Development Council



B

STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

P & G BUILDING
2019 EAST WASHINGTON STREET
CHARLESTON, WEST VIRGINIA 25305
TELEPHONE 348-2616

ARCH A. MOORE, JR.
Governor

COMMISSIONERS

RABBI SAMUEL COOPER
Chairman
Charleston

RUSSELL VAN CLEVE
Vice Chairman
Charleston

ANCELLA BICKLEY
Morgantown

MR. D. PAUL CAMILLETTI
Wheeling

REV. J. MATTHEW COLEMAN
Bluefield

MR. THOMAS M. DRAKE
Morgantown

MR. JOHN A. JONES
Weirton

E. G. MARSHALL
Huntington

MR. H. R. RICHARDS
Parkersburg

CARL W. GLATT
Executive Director

January 25, 1971

Dear

The attached letter to Mr. Jerome A. Burke, Chairman, Wheeling Human Rights Commission, dated January 15, 1971, is self-explanatory.

The West Virginia Human Rights Commission respectfully requests that you appear to testify or provide information to the Hearing Commissioners at the City Council Chambers, City-County Building, 16th & Chapline Streets, Wheeling, West Virginia. We understand you may have helpful information about one or more of the five subject areas listed in the attached letter.

We have scheduled your appearance between _____ and _____ on _____, February _____, 1971.

Kindly indicate by returning the enclosed slip if you will require a subpoena to excuse your absence from your place of employment, school, or other official duties. The West Virginia Human Rights Commission does hope for voluntary cooperation in response to this request to assist the Commission to fully understand the racial tension situation which may or may not exist in Wheeling.

Sincerely,

Russell Van Cleve
Chairman

RVC/ae
Attachment - 1
Enclosure - 2
cc: Mayor James Rogers
City Manager Charles Steele

Mr. Jerome A. Burke
Thomas P. O'Brien, Jr.
Asst. Attorney General

D

LIST OF PERSONS IN ORDER OF TESTIMONY

(Testified as private citizens unless otherwise stated.)

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 1971

1. Mr. Ray Harvey, Chairman, "We Exist"
2. Rev. Lee Wright, President, Wheeling Branch - NAACP
3. Mrs. Jean Paige - (Letter entered in testimony)
4. Mrs. Shirley Paige
5. Mrs. Sydney Cochran
6. Dr. H. A. Lewis
7. Mr. Wade Hamlin
8. Mr. James L. Cruse
9. Mr. Mark Lee
10. Mr. Tayvan Hopkins
11. Mr. George Lee
12. Mr. Eddie Reed
13. Mrs. Cornelius McGhee
14. Mr. John McGhee
15. Mrs. Billie Parks
16. Mr. Eddie Lamb
17. Mrs. Geraldine Wade
18. Mr. Herbert S. Pitts
19. Attorney Thomas Miller, President
Greater Wheeling Community Development
Council, Inc.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1971

20. Mayor James Rogers
21. City Manager Charles Steele
22. Chief of Police Arthur L. McKensie
23. Fire Chief William McFadden
24. Mr. Leroy W. Watt, Superintendent
Ohio County Schools
25. Dr. Robert Whiting
West Liberty State College
26. Mr. Tom Baller
Director of Recreation
City of Wheeling
27. Mr. Harry F. Lewis
Executive Director
Wheeling Housing Authority
28. Mr. John W. Serig, Chairman
Wheeling Housing Authority
29. Mr. W. D. Hendershot
Manpower Coordinator
Dept. of Employment Security
30. Mr. George E. Cieply
Executive Director
Urban Renewal Authority
31. Mrs. Thelma Griffin
32. Mrs. Bertha May Gibson

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1971

33. Mr. Jack Waterhouse, President
Wheeling Chamber of Commerce
34. Mr. P. Phillip Day
Executive Director
Wheeling Chamber of Commerce
35. Mr. John Klug
Catholic Charities
Diocese of Wheeling
36. Attorney Herbert J. Rogers
Northern West Virginia Legal Services
37. Mr. James H. Mauck
Director of Catholic Charities
38. Mrs. Anne P. Jones
Public Relations Chairman
Greater Wheeling Community Development Council
39. Dean Thomas G. Wack
Wheeling College
40. Mr. D. Larry Branham, Coordinator
Wheeling Human Rights Commission
41. Mr. Jerome A. Burke, Chairman
Wheeling Human Rights Commission

C

WEST VIRGINIA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
P & G BUILDING
2019 EAST WASHINGTON STREET
CHARLESTON, WEST VIRGINIA 25305
TELEPHONE 348-2616

PRESS RELEASE

FOR RELEASE JANUARY 29, 1971:

The West Virginia Human Rights Commission today announced that forty-four persons have been invited to testify at the public hearing the Commission will hold in Wheeling relative to the tension situation that occurred the weekend of January 2, 1971. In a letter to Mr. Jerome A. Burke, Chairman, Wheeling Human Rights Commission, Chairman Russell Van Cleve advised that the public hearing would be held on Monday, February 1, Tuesday, February 2, and Wednesday, February 3, 1971 at the City Council Chambers, City-County Building, Wheeling, West Virginia, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The Hearing Commissioners will be Chairman Van Cleve, Charleston; Commissioner D. Paul Camilletti, Wheeling; Commissioner J. Matthew Coleman, Bluefield; and Commissioner John A. Jones, Weirton.

The Commission's letter indicated the inquiry will be in the areas of unemployment or underemployment of black youth in the Wheeling area; alleged lack of recreational facilities; alleged substandard and inadequate housing; alleged police abuses; alleged inadequacy of area-wide community relations programs.

Chairman Van Cleve's letter of invitation to testify was sent to

Mayor James Rogers, City Manager Charles Steele, Police Chief Arthur L. McKenzie, Fire Chief William McFadden, Recreation Director Tom Baller, School Superintendent Leroy W. Watt and Dr. James L. Chapman, President, West Liberty State College. Invitations also went to members and staff of the Wheeling Housing Authority and Urban Renewal Authority, plus representatives of the West Virginia State Employment Service. Spokesmen were invited from the local NAACP Chapter, "WE EXIST", and the Greater Wheeling Community Development Council, along with individuals from the Wheeling area Negro community. The Wheeling Chamber of Commerce was asked to provide spokesmen as were the major church and civic organizations concerned with community relations.

Chairman Van Cleve has requested local newspapers to announce the Commission has extended a general invitation via this newspaper announcement to other individuals and organizations who may wish to testify at the hearing on either of the three scheduled days. The testimony will be recorded and transcribed by a Certified Court Reporter and all testimony will be under oath or affirmation.

* * * * *

Attachments - 2



E

STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

P & G BUILDING
2019 EAST WASHINGTON STREET
CHARLESTON, WEST VIRGINIA 25305
TELEPHONE 348-2616

ARCH A. MOORE, JR.
Governor

February 4, 1971

COMMISSIONERS

RABBI SAMUEL COOPER
Chairman
Charleston

RUSSELL VAN CLEVE
Vice Chairman
Charleston

ANCELLA BICKLEY
Morgantown

MR. D. PAUL CAMILLETTI
Wheeling

REV. J. MATTHEW COLEMAN
Bluefield

MR. THOMAS M. DRAKE
Morgantown

MR. JOHN A. JONES
Weirton

E. O. MARSHALL
Huntington

MR. H. R. RICHARDS
Parkersburg

CARL W. GLATT
Executive Director

The West Virginia Human Rights Commission has asked that I express appreciation to you for offering testimony at the public hearing in Wheeling on

Commissioners D. Paul Camilletti, J. Matthew Coleman, John A. Jones, and I were impressed with your sincerity and the high quality of the information offered by you and by every witness who testified at the public hearing. Because of your testimony, we were able to get "both sides of the story" and a variety of viewpoints to enable us to better understand and offer suggestions for the resolution of the very complex and controversial problems discussed at the hearing. It is a tribute to your good citizenship and that of the others who testified that the Commission had 100% cooperation on a voluntary basis from all who were invited to testify. We know that this cooperation involved the expenditure of time, energy, and financial loss for some. We are deeply grateful.

The Hearing Commissioners hope to have our report ready for approval by the West Virginia Human Rights Commission at the regular meeting of the Commission on March 11, 1971. If the report is approved, it will be given general distribution shortly thereafter, and you will most certainly receive a copy. Once again, many thanks for your cooperation in this regard.

Sincerely yours,

Russell Van Cleve
Russell Van Cleve
Chairman

RVC:cf

CENSUS DATA 1950, 1960, 1970

U.S. CENSUS REPORTS

WHEELING

	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>
TOTAL POPULATION	58,891	53,400	48,188
WHITE	56,883	51,552	46,263
NEGRO	2,000	1,789	1,790
% NON-WHITE	3.4	3.5	4.0

OHIO COUNTY

	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>
TOTAL POPULATION	71,672	68,437	64,197
WHITE	69,024	66,288	62,038
NEGRO	2,637	2,089	1,998
% NON-WHITE	3.7	3.1	3.4

MARSHALL COUNTY

	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>
TOTAL POPULATION	36,893	38,041	37,598
WHITE	36,566	37,670	37,306
NEGRO	323	360	226
% NON-WHITE	0.9	1.0	0.8

BROOKE COUNTY

	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>
TOTAL POPULATION	26,904	28,940	29,685
WHITE	26,333	28,528	29,337
NEGRO	568	410	292
% NON-WHITE	2.1	1.4	1.2

WEST VIRGINIA

	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>
TOTAL POPULATION	2,005,551	1,860,421	1,744,237
WHITE	1,890,282	1,770,135	1,666,870
NEGRO	114,867	89,378	73,931
% NON-WHITE	5.7	4.8	4.4