

Leadership Council  
for  
Metropolitan  
Open  
Communities

155 NORTH WACKER DRIVE CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60606 (312) 236-9850

June 9, 1969

The Honorable Richard B. Austin  
United States District Judge  
United States Courthouse  
219 South Dearborn Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60604

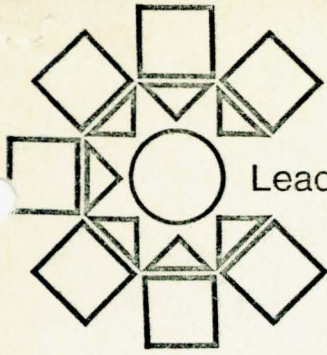
Re: Gautreaux vs. CHA, 66 C 1459

Dear Judge Austin:

The Leadership Council, as you know, is an organization of prominent business, labor, educational, civil rights and religious leaders and public officials whose prime objective is the achievement of a housing market free of artificial restraints of race or creed throughout the six-county Chicago metropolitan area. In carrying out this objective -- a product of the historic "Summit Agreement" reached following the racial conflict and tension here during the summer of 1966 -- we have found that the inadequate local stock of low and moderate income housing is as much a deterrent to the achievement of fair housing goals as are prejudice, discrimination and inadequate fair housing laws. Our program subsequently has been broadened and deepened to consider housing supply factors, particularly to initiate and support efforts to increase the public housing stock throughout the metropolitan area, including the city of Chicago, and to improve the quality thereof.

These program emphases are partially in response to the warning in the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders Report that "two separate, but unequal societies - one black and one white" - are being created by institutional racism in this nation and that one strategy for correcting this inequity is "an expanded and more diversified public housing program."

We have carefully reviewed the proposals of both the ACLU and the Chicago Housing Authority, and have conferred with counsel for both parties. We can state at the outset that we fully support the basic principles of ACLU's proposed decree. We also commend CHA, in its response, for its stated willingness to take aggressive steps to develop housing in white neighborhoods, to avoid public housing concentrations in a limited number of neighborhoods, to depart from a first-come, first-served tenant assignment policy so as to assure housing opportunities to both black and white low-income families, and to upgrade the physical and social qualities of public housing in the city of Chicago.



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The Leadership Council has a dual concern: (1) desegregation, permitting a free outward movement from the black ghettos of Chicago and from wherever such ghettos exist elsewhere in the metropolitan area, and (2) a sharp and rapid increase in the public housing supply. To the extent that the proposals before you can achieve those dual goals, they have our unqualified support. It is our hope that your final decree order will have these effects.

ACLU's decree proposal contains certain specific numerical limitations with respect to definitions of "white" and "black" neighborhoods, assumed "tipping points," number of dwelling units that constitute a "public housing project," number of units that must be constructed in white areas before any newly programmed units can go forward in black areas, percentage of units that may be developed outside the city limits, density, concentrations, locations of units, etc.

To assess the impact on the potential public housing supply of these precise numerical limitations would require an in-depth professional study for which the Leadership Council has neither funds nor staff time to undertake. However, in view of the problem, it appears that the range of numerical limitations seems reasonable in light of the objectives of the decree. We firmly believe it to be essential that such requirements be built into the decree in order to insure equal opportunity. Moreover, we do not regard such equal opportunity requirements as being inconsistent with public housing production goals.

An important consideration (which we particularly endorse) in ACLU's proposal is that the Court retain jurisdiction over the cause. The weight of the federal judiciary is urgently needed if we are to successfully achieve the goal of a desegregated and adequate supply of housing.

On behalf of the Leadership Council, I wish to commend you on the wisdom and foresight that led you to your present legal opinion on this most difficult and serious problem.

Sincerely,

Thomas G. Ayers  
President

cc: Messrs. Francis Fischer  
Thomas Foran  
Alexander Polikoff ✓  
Miss Kathryn Kula