CIVIL RIGHTS IN THE "CITY OF HATE:" GRASSROOTS ORGANIZING AGAINST POLICE BRUTALITY IN DALLAS, TEXAS, 1935-1990

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFDC	Aid to Families with Dependent Children
AFL-CIO	American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations
AGIF	American GI Forum
AYDLP	Angela Y. Davis Liberation Party
BCJLO	Black Citizens for Justice, Law and Order
BPP	Black Panther Party for Self-Defense
BWUF	Black Women's United Front
CAAs	Community Action Agencies
CCA	Citizens Charter Association
CHRC	Citizens for a Human Relations Commission for Dallas
CIO	Congress of Industrial Organizations
CORE	Congress of Racial Equality
DCA	Dallas Community Action
DCC	Dallas Citizens Council
DCCAC	Dallas County Community Action Committee
DCCCR	Dallas Coordinating Committee for Civil Rights
DCNO	Dallas Council of Negro Organizations
DHA	Dallas Housing Authority
DISD	Dallas Independent School District
DPA	Dallas Police Association
DPD	Dallas Police Department
DPVL	Democratic Progressive Voters League

DUL	Dallas Urban League
EOA	Economic Opportunity Act
HEW	Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
IMA	Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance
LEAD	League for Educational Advancement in Dallas
LULAC	League of United Latin American Citizens
MACA	Mexican Americans for Civic Action
MAPA	Mexican Americans for Progressive Action
MALV	Mexican American League of Voters
NAACP	National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
NAIRO	National Association of Intergroup Relations Officials
NUL	National Urban League
NCCF	National Committee to Combat Fascism
NWRO	National Welfare Rights Organization
OEO	Office of Economic Opportunity
OIC	Opportunities Industrialization Center
OWIU	Oil Workers International Union
PASO	Political Association for Spanish-speaking Organizations
PVL	Progressive Voters League
SCLC	Southern Christian Leadership Conference
SDIC	South Dallas Information Center
SDS	Students for a Democratic Society
SMU	Southern Methodist University

SNCC	Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee
TCNO	Texas Council of Negro Organizations
TEC	Texas Employment Commission
TI	Texas Instruments
UAW	United Auto Workers
UFW	United Farm Workers
UT	University of Texas
UTA	University of Texas at Arlington

INTRODUCTION

At 2 A.M. on July 24, 1973, Dallas Police Officer Roy Arnold witnessed three Latino youths running away from a filling station located in the Little Mexico *barrio* just north of downtown.[1] Suspecting a burglary, Officer Arnold called for backup and met Officer Darrell Cain at the home of twelve-year-old Santos Rodríguez and his thirteen-year-old brother David, who, according to the officers, were known to cause trouble in the neighborhood. Without a warrant, Cain and Arnold barged into their home and wrestled the two sleeping youngsters from their beds, ordering them into the front and back seats of the police car. Cain then drove them to the scene of the alleged crime and demanded the young boys confess their involvement. According to Cain, he opened the chamber of his gun, took the bullets out, and closed it. He put the gun up to Santos' forehead and told him to tell the truth. "Who was the other boy?' Cain demanded to know. "Who was with you?" Santos denied any involvement, and Cain pulled the trigger. The gun clicked and a startled Santos froze, paralyzed by fear. "Tell the truth, hombre," Arnold said. "Or this time he's going to shoot you." Cain pulled the trigger again; the gun fired and the car filled with smoke. As the haze began to subside, David Rodríguez saw the blood flowing from Santos' head.[2]

Darrell Cain was arrested and charged with murder with malice. At his trial in November 1973, he admitted to pointing the .357 magnum to Rodríguez's head, but claimed the shooting

[1] No term works perfectly to accurately describe people's identities. For simplicity and clarity, I use the term "Mexican Americans" to refer to American-born people of Mexican descent. I use the term "Mexican nationals" to refer to people born in Mexico but living in the United States. The terms "Mexicans," "Mexicanas/os," "Latinas/os", and "brown" refer to both Mexican Americans and Mexican nationals. "Chicanas/os" refers to a specific political identity of the late 1960s and 1970s and will only be used to identify those who referred to themselves as Chicanas/os. I use "African Americans" and "black" interchangeably, even though "black" sometimes can refer to a specific political identity. "White" and "Anglo" will be used interchangeably to mean anyone who has traditionally or come to be seen as white.

[2] Eduardo Celis, "The Ghost of Santos Rodriguez," *Dallas Observer,* July 16, 1992, 14-16, Vertical Files, Dallas Public Library; Osmín Hernández, "¡Justicia for Santos!: Mexican American Civil Rights and the Santos Rodríguez Affair in Dallas, Texas, 1969-1978," (Master's Thesis, Texas Christian University, 2016), 1.

was accidental. Defense attorneys portrayed Cain as an All-American boy who used "poor judgment" when interrogating the Rodríguez brothers.[3] Those who knew him, however, said Cain had earned a reputation as a brute in his beat. Three years before Santos' death, Cain shot and killed Michael Morehead, an eighteen-year-old African American resident, who fled police with his older brother after stealing food from a local restaurant. Cain opened fire as the brothers ran away, hitting Morehead in the back, and Cain allegedly continued to shoot Morehead as he laid wounded on the ground, pleading for his life.[4] Cain and his then-partner Jeffrey Kirksey were no-billed on murder charges from the grand jury. For the murder of Santos Rodríguez, Cain was found guilty. He was sentenced to five years in prison.[5]

The conviction of Darrell Cain in 1973 for the murder of Santos Rodríguez occurred at a time of increasing cooperation between black and brown residents in their fight for social justice. Subjected to similar forms of economic, social, and political marginalization, Mexican Americans and African Americans launched independent quests for liberation, engaging in campaigns for desegregation, voting rights, political representation, and adequate housing, health care, and jobs. At the center of their struggles, however, was the issue of police brutality. Throughout the decades, black and brown residents reported a plethora of beatings, shootings, sexual assaults, unlawful entries, and, perhaps most disturbing, the random disappearances of loved ones. Each complaint resulted in little to no change within the municipal government or the Dallas Police Department, both of which refused to hold officers accountable in cases of misconduct. The rampant police abuse and police indifference to high crime rates in black and

[3] George Proctor and Don Mason, "Cain Put Behind Bars," *Dallas Morning News* (hereafter cited *DMN*), July 23, 1973; Quote from "Jury Finds Cain Guilty of Murder," *DMN,* November 16, 1973.
[4] Peter Johnson, interview by author, September 29, 2017.
[5] "Burglary Suspect's Death Brings Citizens Protest," *DMN*, May 22, 1970; David Montgomery, "Attorneys Seek Cain Probation," *Dallas Times Herald*, November 16, 1973.

brown communities led activists to develop organizing strategies in their respective neighborhoods to combat racist policing practices. Arguing that law enforcement upheld white supremacist notions of law and order, activists forged a movement to reform the entire political structure with the understanding that acquiring political power and eliminating all forms of discrimination were central to curtailing police violence.

This is a story about two separate communities that found each other. Police brutality united black and brown activists, including their white allies, on multiple fronts—leading activists to challenge class and racial antagonism within city politics that obstructed black, brown, and poor whites from political representation. They entered into the political system at both the municipal and county level, seeking to transform the city by ensuring equitable treatment of all Dallas's residents, regardless of race, class, gender, and sexuality. The fight against police brutality provided the vehicle for the coalition-building efforts in the later decades of the twentieth century.

Historiography

Police violence against Mexican Americans and African Americans stems from centuries old notions about race and crime. In the aftermath of the US-Mexico War, Mexicans in the United States occupied a nebulous in-between racial identity in which they were legally classified as white but not accepted socially and culturally as such.[6] Arnoldo de León in *They Called Them Greasers: Anglo Attitudes Toward Mexicans in Texas* reveals that after the Texas Revolution, Anglos understood Tejanos/as as morally defective, and that this attitude resulted in

[6] Natalia Molina, *How Race is Made in America: Immigration, Citizenship, and the Historical Power of Racial Scripts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 17. See also; David Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836-1986* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987); Neil Foley, *The White Scourge: Mexicans, Blacks, and Poor Whites in Texas Cotton Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999);

permitted violence designed to keep Mexicans in their purported place.[7] Kelly Lytle Hernández in *Migra* and Mae Ngai have both noted that the expanded presence of agribusinesses in the American Southwest contributed greatly to the increased policing along the border, thereby connecting Mexican immigrants, and Mexicans in general, with illegality and criminal activity.[8] As a result, Mexicans resided in segregated neighborhoods, attended segregated schools, and were restricted to menial and low-paying agricultural jobs.

They were also targets of state-sanctioned and vigilante violence. The violence brought on by the Mexican Revolution forced thousands of Mexican nationals to migrate into the United States, the majority of whom resided in the American Southwest. Fears of the Mexican Revolution and the persistent anti-Mexican racism contributed to an atmosphere of hostility between Anglo Americans and Mexicans in general, regardless of their citizenship status. As historian Monica Muñoz Martínez has shown, the Texas Rangers and white lynch mobs associated Mexican people as thieves and bandits, unleashing a war of violence and terrorism that targeted American-born Mexicans, poor migrant workers, and wealthy landowners. "Vigilante violence on the border had a state-building function," Muñoz Martínez writes. "It both directed the public to act with force to sustain hierarchies of race and class and complemented the brutal methods of law enforcement in this period."[9]

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[7] Arnoldo De León, *They Called Them Greasers: Anglo Attitudes Toward Mexicans in Texas, 1821-1900* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983), 36.

[8] Kelly Lytle Hernández, *Migra! A History of the U. S. Border Patrol* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 17-18. See also Mae Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

[9] Quote from Monica Muñoz Martínez, *The Injustice Never Leaves You: Anti-Mexican Violence in Texas* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018), 6-7. See also Benjamin Heber Johnson, *Revolution in Texas: How a Forgotten Rebellion and Its Bloody Suppression Turned Mexicans Into Americans* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005); Andrew Graybill, *Policing the Great Plains: Rangers, Mounties, and the North American Frontier, 1875-1910* (Omaha: University of Nebraska Press, 2007); William D. Carrigan, *The Making of a Lynching Culture: Violence and Vigilantism in Central Texas, 1836-1916* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2006); William D. Carrigan and Clive Webb, *Forgotten Dead: Mob Violence against Mexicans in the United States, 1848-1928* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Nicholas Villanueva, Jr., *The Lynching of Mexicans in the Texas Borderlands* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 2017).

These racist assumptions that linked Mexicans to criminality carried into later decades of the twentieth century. In the World War II, Mexican Americans began outwardly protesting anti-Mexican racism. Mexican American youth donned outlandish zoot suits, a style of dress that provocatively countered the dominant Anglo cultural standards. The protests of the young men and women in zoot suits set in motion a series of strong nativist and racist sentiments that ultimately transformed into a prevailing attitude that Mexicans were prone to crime. As historian Catherine Ramirez and others have shown, the infamous murder of an East LA gang member and its subsequent trial and the Zoot Suit riots in which Anglo Navy servicemen, white civilians, and white police officers attacked *pachucos* in the streets for ten days helped solidify the association of Mexican Americans with criminality.[10]

African Americans historically have also been linked to criminal activity and have traditionally been policed by state-sanctioned or vigilante groups. Prior to emancipation, white society saw African Americans as biologically inferior, thereby justifying slavery as a necessary evil. In order to maintain law and order over black bodies, white slaveowners enlisted the help of slave patrols and night watchers to target and monitor the activity of enslaved men and women.[11] Slave patrols did not become obsolete in the aftermath of the American Civil War. As Sally Hadden argues, they merely institutionalized into more formal police forces or as vigilante groups like the Ku Klux Klan.[12] However, near the beginning of the twentieth century, social scientists moved away from biological inferiority arguments, and instead used crime and prison

[10] Catherine S. Ramirez, *Woman in the Zoot Suit: Gender, Nationalism, and the Cultural Politics of Memory* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 2-3. Sanchez, *Becoming Mexican American,* 258-259; Escobar, *Race, Police, and the Making of a Political Identity,* 17. For more on the Sleepy Lagoon murder and trial as well as the zoot suit culture, see Eduardo Obregón Pagán, *Murder at the Sleepy Lagoon: Zoot Suits, Race, and Riot in Wartime L.A* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).
[11] Sally Hadden, *Slave Patrols: Law and Violence in Virginia and the Carolinas* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 4-5.
[12] Hadden, *Slave Patrols*, 218-219.

statistics as allegedly impartial evidence of black cultural inferiority that ultimately helped usher in the age of Jim Crow.[13] In *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America,* historian Khalil Gibran Muhammad argues, "African American criminality became one of the bases for justifying prejudicial thinking, discriminatory treatment, and acceptance of racial violence as an instrument of public safety."[14]

The association between criminality and blackness justified the use of violence when whites suspected African Americans—men, women, and children—of crossing the color line. Policing agencies and vigilante groups used racial terrorism, targeting African Americans for perceived infractions. Historian William Fitzhugh Brundage asserts that as many as 4,000 African Americans were lynched across the entire nation after Reconstruction.[15] In addition, dozens of race riots broke out across the United States, in which white civilians and police officers targeted black Americans who transgressed Jim Crow in the North. In Chicago in 1919, for example, police officers refused to arrest white residents who stoned seventeen-year-old Eugene Williams for drifting into the white side of the beach. Rumors spread throughout the city, leading gangs of whites alongside Chicago police officers to attack African Americans across the city for eight days. In the end, more than fifteen whites and twenty-three African Americans had died while approximately a thousand lost their homes in the attacks.[16]

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[13] Khalil Gibran Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 35.
[14] Ibid, 4.
[15] See William Fitzhugh Brundage, *Lynching in the New South: Georgia and Virginia, 1880-1930* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993).
[16] For more on the Chicago race riot and others during Red Summer, see Simon Balto, *Occupied Territory: Policing Black Chicago from Red Summer to Black Power* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019); David F. Krugler, *1919, The Year of Racial Violence: How African Americans Fought Back* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Ann V. Collins, *All Hell Broke Loose: American Race Riots from the Progressive Era through World War II* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, LLC., 2012).

Despite the breadth of scholarship on state-sanctioned and vigilante violence against Mexican Americans and African Americans, few works of the black and brown freedom struggles center on the issue of police brutality. Edward Escobar's *Race, Police, and the Making of a Political Identity: Mexican Americans and the Los Angeles Police Department, 1900-1945* establishes the link between police abuse and the development of the Mexican American civil rights movement. Escobar argues that police brutality helped develop the political consciousness that allowed Mexican Americans from differing class and ideological backgrounds to work together and build new civil rights organizations.[17] Escobar uses the same framework to explain similar forms of activism in Chicana/o organizing. In his 1993 article, "Dialectics of Repression: The Los Angeles Police Department and the Chicano Movement, 1968-1971," Escobar contends that "the police and their tactics became issues around which Chicano activists organized the community and increased the grassroots participation in movement activity."[18] While other works often mention police violence as a contributing factor in the Long Chicana/o movement, most still focus on questions of racial identity, student movements, and labor organizing as the main sites of activism.[19]

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[17] Edward Escobar, *Race, Police, and the Making of a Political Identity: Mexican Americans and the Los Angeles Police Department, 1900-1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Edward J. Escobar, "The Dialectics of Repression: The Los Angeles Police Department and the Chicano Movement, 1968-1971," *Journal of American History* 79:4 (March 1993), 1483-1514; Edward J. Escobar, "The Unintended Consequences of the Carceral State: Chicana/o Political Mobilization in Post-World War II America," *Journal of American History* 102:1 (June 2015), 174-184.

[18] Edward J. Escobar, "The Dialectics of Repression: The Los Angeles Police Department and the Chicano Movement, 1968-1971," *Journal of American History* 79:4 (March 1993), 1485. See also Edward J. Escobar, "The Unintended Consequences of the Carceral State: Chicana/o Political Mobilization in Post-World War II America," *Journal of American History* 102:1 (June 2015), 174-184.

[19] For works that specifically address police violence, see Ernesto Chavez, *Mi Raza Primero: Nationalism, Identity, and Insurgency in the Chicano Movement in Los Angeles, 1966-1978* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); David Montejano, *Quixote's Soldiers: A Local History of the Chicano Movement in San Antonio, 1966-1981* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010); David Montejano, *Sancho's Journal: Exploring the Political Edge with the Brown Berets* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2012); Ernesto Vigil, *The Crusade for Justice: Chicano Militancy and the Government's War on Dissent* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999).

The black freedom struggle has largely overlooked the issue of police brutality as well. Civil rights and Black Power scholarship were once seen as historical binaries and that Black Power aided in the declension of the civil rights movement. Scholars have proven otherwise in recent decades. Still, only a few works spanning what Jacquelyn Dowd Hall calls "the long civil right movement" have contended with the issue of police brutality.[20] Leonard Moore in *Black Rage in New Orleans: Police Brutality and African American Activism from World War II to Hurricane Katrina* evaluates the effects of police brutality on the black population in postwar New Orleans, arguing that the issue helped unite middle-class and working-poor blacks to organize committees and civil rights organizations and engaged in civil (and sometimes violent) disobedience campaigns against the city government and police department.[21] Again, historians often mention the role of police brutality inspiring black activists to participate in local civil rights or Black Power organizations, but rarely does the issue take center stage.[22]

The present scholarship focusing on the role of police brutality in the black and brown freedom struggles do so in isolation of one another. In fact, most works focusing on Mexican American and African American activism generally use a binary analytical framework—either "white versus black" or "Anglo versus Mexican." In recent years, scholars have provided the movement with more depth and analysis by showing the nature of interracial collaboration,

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[20] Jacquelyn Dowd-Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past," *Journal of American History*, 91:4 (March 2005), 1233-1263.

[21] Leonard Moore, *Black Rage in New Orleans: African American Activism Against Police Brutality from World War II to Hurricane Katrina* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 2010), 1. For more on black activism against police brutality, see Matthew Countryman, *Up South: Civil Rights and Black Power in Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005); Karl E. Johnson, "Police-Black Community Relations in Postwar Philadelphia: Race and Criminalization in Urban Social Spaces, 1945-1960," *Journal of African American History* 89:2 (Spring 2004): pp.118-134; Simon Balto, "Occupied Territory: Police Repression and Black Resistance in Postwar Milwaukee, 1950-1968," *The Journal of African American* History 98:2 (Spring 2013), pp. 229-252.

[22] Scholarship on the black freedom struggle, spanning both civil rights and Black Power era, is vast. A few key works include; William Chafe, *Civilities and Civil Rights: Greensboro, North Carolina, and the Black Struggle for Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981); Heather Ann Thompson, *Whose Detroit?: Politics, Labor, and Race in a Modern American City* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001); Matthew Countryman, *Up South: Civil Rights and Black Power in Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007).

exposing how class and gender differences aided and fostered cross racial alliances.[23] My dissertation will carry this notion forward by illuminating how the fight against police brutality provided the vehicle for continued coalition-building against the forces of institutional racism.

Dallas and the Sunbelt South

My dissertation uses Dallas to explore black and brown freedom struggles against police violence in the Sunbelt South. The growth policies of New Deal liberalism and the emergence of the Cold War military-industrial complex shaped the spatial patterns of metropolitan cities like Dallas. Business interests dominated municipal politics through at-large voting systems that effectively disfranchised communities of color and white-working class residents. Residential segregation heightened as municipal governments tapped federal funds to accelerate white middle-class expansion of the suburban fringes of the city. Corporate leaders embraced a blueprint that historian Matthew Lassiter calls the "Sunbelt synthesis"—a booster vision designed to promote rapid economic development and enforce racial harmony.[24] City leaders across the Sunbelt South developed marketing slogans designed to champion an exceptionalist and progressive mythology of their cities. Atlanta was the "City Too Busy to Hate" and Charlotte, North Carolina, called this the "Charlotte Way," both of which marketed the cities as a flourishing metropolis with moderate race relations.[25]

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[23] For works on black and brown solidarity, see Lauren Araiza, *To March for Others: The Black Freedom Struggle and the United Farm Workers* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014); Max Krochmal, *Blue Texas: The Making of a Multiracial Democratic Coalition in the Civil Rights Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016); Gordon K. Mantler, *Power to the Poor: Black-Brown Coalition and the Fight for Economic Justice, 1960-1974* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010); John D. Marquez, *Black-Brown Solidarity: Racial Politics in the New Gulf South* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014); Sonia Song-Ha Lee, *Building a Latino Civil Rights Movement: Puerto Ricans, African Americans and the Pursuit of Racial Justice in New York City* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014); Mark Brilliant, *The Color of America Has Changed: How Racial Diversity Shaped Civil Rights Reform in California, 1941-1978* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

[24] Matthew Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 11.

[25] Ibid.

Dallas also developed a city slogan called the "Dallas Way." City leaders crafted a mythical explanation for Dallas's growth over the decades. The motto originated from a civic mystique often referred to as the "Dallas spirit," which attributed the city's founding in the 1840s to a special cooperative relationship between its first Anglo residents.[26] The settlement nearly collapsed following the American Civil War and only revitalized after business interests made Dallas a stop on the Texas & Pacific Railway in 1871. Over time, business leaders gained interest in using the city as a profitable trading center and successfully attracted large business and workers from all over the country to settle within the city limits. By the turn of the twentieth century, Dallas boasted itself as a "city of sky scrapers, resounding with the roar of trade."[27] But like most major cities across the South, Dallas was deeply segregated and racial violence permeated the landscape. City leaders' use of the Dallas Way, however, successfully suppressed that history. They employed what historian Michael Phillips referred to as "amnesia by design," obfuscating a long and complicated history of racial animosity by keeping tight control over business interests, the municipal government, and race relations.[28]

I am not the first to refute Dallas's origin myth. In 1987, former Dallas *Times-Herald* journalist Jim Schutze published *The Accommodation: The Politics of Race in an American City,* a book allegedly so controversial that the publishers abruptly dropped it, citing poor sales. But the *New York Times* uncovered that the decision to drop the book came from pressure from white

[26] Darwin Payne, *Big D: Triumphs and Troubles of an American Supercity in the 20th Century* (Dallas: Three Forks Press, 2000), 79; See also Brian Behnken, "'The Dallas Way: Protest, Response, and the Civil Rights Experience in Big D and Beyond," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 111:1 (July 2007); Royce Hanson, *Civic Culture and Urban Change: Governing Dallas* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2003), 15-17; Patricia Evridge Hill, *Dallas: The Making of a Modern City* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996), 165; Harvey J. Graff, *The Dallas Myth: The Making and Unmaking of an American City* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).
[27] Quote from Payne, *Big D*, 3.
[28] Quote from Michael Phillips, *White Metropolis: Race, Ethnicity, and Religion in Dallas, 1841-2001* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006), 3.

leadership in Dallas.[29] *The Accommodation* recalls the so-called accommodating alliance between the white power structure and black leadership in the city. Through negotiation and compromise, the civil rights movement unfolded peacefully, managing to avert urban rebellions that plagued other large cities across the United States.[30] Historian Marvin Dulaney, in his essay, "Whatever Happened to the Civil Rights Movement in Dallas, Texas?" counters Schutze's assertion of the accommodating relationship between black and white leadership, illuminating the varying class and ideological differences between African Americans in the city, and showing the ways that, in some cases, black leaders worked in tandem with the white power structure and, at other times, worked against them.[31]

Dulaney's article brought more depth and understanding about the ideological differences between movement leaders. However, prevailing attitudes and ideas about Dallas as a city without racial violence continue. In 2007, historian Brian Behnken wrote, "'The Dallas Way': Protest, Response, and the Civil Rights Experience in Big D and Beyond," in which he argues that whites responded to "cooperating" African Americans with successful desegregation plans, but that radical black activists, who worked outside and against the white power structure, were resisted and squashed entirely.[32] Behnken's article misses the mark in several areas. He narrowly defines civil rights activism to only include desegregation campaigns of the 1950s and 1960s, withholding the activism that fought against systemic inequities (housing, jobs, electoral representation, and police brutality) perpetuated by discriminatory public policy. He also equates

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[29] Peter Simek, "The Most Dangerous Book in Dallas," *D Magazine,* May 2015, https://www.dmagazine.com/publications/d-magazine/2015/may/the-accommodation-jim-schutze-dangerous-dallas-book/ (Accessed April 4, 2018).
[30] Jim Schutze, *The Accommodation: The Politics of Race in an American City* (Citadel Press, 1987).
[31] W. Marvin Dulaney, "Whatever Happened to the Civil Rights Movement in Dallas, Texas?" W. Marvin Dulaney and Kathleen Underwood (eds), *Essays on the American Civil Rights Movement* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1993).
[32] Brian Behnken, "'The Dallas Way: Protest, Response, and the Civil Rights Experience in Big D and Beyond," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 111:1 (July 2007).

the successes of the movement with the token integration plans that benefited few from the black population. And finally, he only investigates the black freedom struggle, leaving out the long and dynamic history of Mexican Americans and the coalitions they built with African American activists.

More recent work has brought Mexican American activists in Dallas to the forefront. In Robert Zieger's edited anthology, historian Max Krochmal in his chapter, "Chicano Labor and Multiracial Politics in Post-World War II Texas," argues that labor politics provided the backbone to cross-racial collaboration in Texas. He follows the careers of two prominent labor activists, including Dallas native Francisco "Pancho" Medrano, who, through his labor network, formed a cadre of black and brown activists who organized around the issue of police brutality.[33] Krochmal's article focuses on a brief moment in Dallas history in which black and brown found mutual ground through the labor movement and later relied on those established connections to fight police brutality. My dissertation expands the scope of the black and brown civil rights movement in Dallas, and shows how inadequate and racist policing and combatting police brutality dominated conversations throughout the twentieth century. Even as the movement transformed and diverged from earlier organizing traditions, eradicating police misconduct and ensuring accountability remained a central goal of black and brown organizers working in Dallas.

Chapter-by-Chapter Overview

Over the course of six chapters, I show how black and brown civil rights activists engaged in frequent struggles to combat police brutality and how the campaigns to end police misconduct were central—not peripheral—to the broader campaigns for social justice in Dallas.

[33] Max Krochmal, "Chicano Labor Politics and Multiracial Politics in Post-World War II Texas: Two Case Studies," in *Life and Labor in the New New South* by Robert Ziegler, ed. (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2012), 145.

Part One focuses on the black freedom struggle spanning the Jim Crow era to the ascendancy of Black Power. Dallas black organizers used the planning of the Texas Centennial in 1936 as the decisive first step in curtailing the racist policing practices in black neighborhoods. As chapter one reveals, black activists resorted to rhetoric that employed a "law and order" viewpoint, in which they argued that a general attitude of police indifference allowed for both high crime rates and police misconduct in black neighborhoods to occur. In order to curtail crime and reduce instances of police brutality, activists sought to reform both the Dallas Police Department and the larger criminal justice system, hoping that the hiring of black police officers and integrating the grand and petit juries would result in an equitable law and order system.

Chapter two traces the rise of the "classical phase" of the civil rights movement in Dallas, in which black activists had to rethink their organizing strategies when they faced an increasingly difficult red-baiting climate brought on by the advent of the Cold War. Having integrated the Dallas Police Department in the previous decade, black activists pressed city officials to end segregation and to denounce and prevent the continuance of white reactionary violence. The movement to desegregate public accommodations in Dallas closely aligned with their campaigns to ensure police accountability. White officials responded by trying to control black activism rather than the root causes of the violence and destruction. In doing so, white city officials turned a blind eye to the rabid and fiery ultraconservative wing of the Republican Party, whose militant actions helped rebrand the city as the "City of Hate" after the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

Chapter three focuses on the development of the Dallas chapter of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in 1967. Though the Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Act benefited African Americans across the nation in unprecedented ways, the acts failed to address

longstanding economic discrimination that heightened segregation, poverty, and police brutality in black communities. Dallas's SNCC chapter emerged in response to black middle-class leaders' acceptance of token measures of integration, which frustrated a cadre of young black activists who turned increasingly toward the Black Power movement for racial liberation. Federal and local officials used policing agencies and draconian legislation to stymie the "black militants" of SNCC. However, officials underestimated SNCC's ability to foster alliances across class and race, and used this network of collaboration to push back against city officials.

Part Two examines the rise of the Mexican American political consciousness in the early-to-mid-twentieth century and exposes the potential for cross-racial collaboration with African American activists. As chapter four reveals, Mexican immigrants in the early twentieth century experienced the harshness of Juan Crow segregation and discrimination when they settled in various segregated barrios in North and West Dallas. Through those diverse communities, however, Mexicanas/os developed a collective political consciousness that facilitated the fight against police brutality, economic discrimination, and voter disfranchisement. While some Mexican Americans climbed socially, politically, and economically by claiming "whiteness," the vast majority challenged the Dallas's power structure as racially and culturally distinct via both the Mexican American civil rights and Chicana/o movements.

Chapter five traces the activism of welfare rights organizer Ruth Jefferson, who led a cadre of black and brown welfare mothers to protest at the downtown welfare offices demanding increases to their welfare checks. Frustrated by the limitations of twentieth-century liberalism and the racist and sexist policies embedded in social welfare programs, Jefferson brought together a multiracial coalition of white, black, and brown activists to challenge the discriminatory nature of the state's Department of Public Welfare. Though President Lyndon B.

Johnson's Great Society failed to redress the structural racism imbedded in the American capitalist system, the War on Poverty in Dallas provided black and brown activists to use the "maximum feasible participation" ethos embedded in the local community action agency. At a moment when tension between black and brown heightened, as the two groups competed for adequate representation on the local War on Poverty board and in the municipal government, black and brown activists used Dallas's community action agency as the vehicle to establish a cross-racial collaboration. This coalition laid the foundation for the multiracial alliance against police violence to fully flourish in the 1970s and 1980s.

Part Three reveals the ways in which black, brown, and white organizers worked to establish various accountability measures for the Dallas Police Department. Chapter six details the formation of what local newspapers called the "Triumvirate Alliance," in a multiracial coalition formed and demonstrated against the racist and class-antagonistic policies of the white-dominated municipal government and police force. Several high-profile police shootings and assaults, including the murder of Santos Rodríguez, inspired all three groups to work together to challenge the discriminatory policies of the Dallas Police Department. Their activism led to the first conviction against a Dallas police officer in a police brutality case in the history of the city. Furthermore, members of coalition inserted themselves into the political system. Black and brown activists challenged the at-large voting process in favor of single-member districts. This movement for substantive representation worked alongside a movement to increase the oversight of the Dallas Police Department. Black and brown civic leaders in the 1980s increasingly demanded the creation of a police review board with investigative and subpoena powers. A United States Congressional Hearing led by U. S. Representative John Conyers in 1987 facilitated that process.

As I poured over countless newspaper articles, volumes of city council meeting minutes, personal records from organizers and city officials, police records, newsletters, and oral history interviews, I learned of dozens, if not hundreds, of claims of police brutality, in which police officers abused physically or verbally, threatened, harassed, sexually assaulted, and killed black and brown men and women. The purpose of this dissertation is not to retell the various assaults in the ways in which they occurred. That is not to say every one of those cases is not important. They are, and they reveal a much wider and systemic problem of policing not only in Dallas but nationwide. My goal is to illuminate the ways in which civil rights activists and community organizers in neighborhoods, in the courts, in the chambers of city hall, and in the streets demanded an end to police brutality. More specifically, I reveal that combatting police brutality acted as the mechanism that inspired black and brown activists to seek democratic political representation, desegregation, and economic wellbeing.

CHAPTER ONE
THE QUEST FOR "LAW AND ORDER" IN BLACK DALLAS, 1935-1947

At the turn of the twentieth century, the city of Dallas enacted several mandated segregation laws designed to keep African Americans in a state of permanent second-class citizenship. White leaders amended the city charter in 1907 to enforce residential segregation—limiting the mobility of African Americans throughout the city, restricting their access to adequate jobs, public parks, recreation, and housing, and confining them to the least desirable living conditions.[1] Furthermore, a series of Texas state laws limited African American participation in the electoral process. The state passed the Terrell Election Laws in 1903, which prevented most African Americans from voting by implementing poll taxes, literacy tests, and other mechanisms of voter disfranchisement. Still, removing all African Americans from the ballot box proved difficult, and the use of extrajudicial violence and police brutality became an alternative way to intimidate and eliminate black voters. Despite these mechanisms, black voting continued—organizing as unified blocs with the ability to sway elections. This led the architects of Jim Crow ultimately to create what became known as "the white primary," effectively barring African Americans from voting in all primary elections—the only elections that mattered in single-party states like Texas—because of the color of their skin.[2]

Even as white local and state leaders eliminated African Americans from public life, a growing and powerful black middle-class in Dallas emerged and became the bedrock of political and social activism throughout the first half of the twentieth century. This chapter focuses on the organizing methods of such leaders and their quest to better their own communities in the early

[1] Marvin Dulaney, "Whatever Happened to the Civil Rights Movement in Dallas, Texas?" W. Marvin Dulaney and Kathleen Underwood (eds), *Essays on the American Civil Rights Movement* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1993), 69.
[2] Max Krochmal, *Blue Texas: The Making of a Multiracial Democratic Coalition in the Civil Rights Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016), 64.

years of the black civil rights movement in Dallas. Black middle-class men and women organized on the foundations of respectability politics—serving not only as formidable and admirable leaders within the larger black population but also as representatives who successfully established lines of communication with white city officials. They appealed to working-poor African Americans by championing self-determination, racial uplift, and black consolidated political power, and they accommodated white society by advocating that African Americans, given the opportunity, could be respectable and upstanding citizens on the same level as their white counterparts. Black leaders' advocacy of reforming the police department drove these conversations.

Black middle-class leaders addressed the inequitable policing in their own communities. Throughout the twentieth century, black residents routinely experienced the threat of or, in some cases, actual instances of white mob violence if any African American crossed the color line. Black housing shortages further exacerbated mob violence when African Americans routinely bought houses in formerly designated white neighborhoods. As a result, African Americans frequently reported that police acted indifferently when white residents violently clashed with black residents. Unable to receive the same police protection as their white counterparts, middle-class black leaders routinely exposed these brutalities and called upon city leaders to quell such disturbances. In this sense, African American leaders frequently espoused the ways in which the larger black population needed and wanted adequate police protection.

By the same token, black leaders in Dallas also pointed out ways in which the white-dominated police force ignored the humanity of black lives. Black neighborhoods had egregiously high crime rates—the highest "black-on-black" murder rate in the nation—and black leaders argued that inequitable policing allowed for such high crime rates to exist. In order to

address these issues, black civic leaders throughout the 1930s and into the 1940s argued that white city leaders needed to reform the police department to adequately protect all citizens in the city. In addition, they also sought to integrate the Dallas Police Department (DPD) by pressuring city leaders to hire black officers. The hiring of black officers, they believed, would allow for more equitable policing to take place. In their minds, black police officers would also serve the dual function of reducing the high crime rate among African Americans and would further dissolve disputes between law enforcement and black residents. Furthermore, they trusted that reducing the crime rate, particularly black-on-black crime, would uplift all of Dallas's African Americans, allowing them to reach a level of respectability. Only then could racial progress be achieved.

On the other hand, black organizers rarely protested the ongoing problem of police brutality in the city despite receiving numerous reports in which police assaulted black men and women. Instead, activists spoke in terms of integrating or reforming the DPD in order to alter the policing methods that created, sustained, and maintained the dual system of policing. This distinction illustrates that African American civic and religious leaders in the first half of the twentieth century spoke about police reform measures but rarely did so by engaging in public discussions of police brutality. In short, many believed that the hiring of black police and having them patrol black neighborhoods would curtail instances of police violence against African Americans.

In order to advocate police reform measures, African Americans needed a substantial and viable political base on which to stand. The series of voter disfranchisement tactics at the state and local level made it difficult for African Americans to gain any headway in such conversations. Ultimately, black leaders found the impetus to continue the black organizing

tradition when white city leaders successfully brought the Texas Centennial Celebration, a grand exposition marking the anniversary of Texas's independence from Mexico, to Dallas. As a result, black organizers established several statewide civil rights associations that dedicated their mission to dismantling Jim Crow segregation and discrimination at all levels. When they gained enough political mobility and unified as a strategic voting bloc, white city leaders then had to make important concessions to appease black voters. Reforming the police department always remained top priority for African American organizers.

The strength they received from their access to the ballot opened the door to additional avenues in reforming the criminal justice system. Many believed that the criminal justice system as a whole routinely turned a blind eye to convicting African American assailants who committed crimes against black residents. Eliminated from jury service, African American organizers in Dallas publicly protested the discriminatory process of jury selection, both at the petit and grand jury level. As the Scottsboro cases in Alabama revealed the inequities of the enforcement of the Fourteenth Amendment, black organizers successfully petitioned Dallas federal courts to integrate the juries. Two important court cases sponsored by the local NAACP in the early 1940s opened the door to blacks on juries. The cases also brought attention to the stronghold of white supremacy both at the federal and local level.

The Rise of Jim Crow in Dallas

Dallas was no stranger to mob violence. Near the turn of the twentieth century, on August 10, 1898, a crowd of one-hundred fifty men on horseback drove toward the home Rev. E. W. D. Isaac, an African American pastor for the New Hope Baptist Church in Freedman's Town, a small all-black neighborhood located north of downtown in Dallas, Texas. With shotguns and forty-five caliber rifles in hand, the cloaked crowd silently rode along Harwood Avenue

downtown before turning northwest onto San Jacinto Street, where the gun-toting pack fired warning shots into the air and hollered profanities at black residents' homes. Reaching the steps of Isaac's single-story frame house, three men in white hoods dismounted from their horses and burst through the front door, accosting three black women inside and demanding Rev. Isaac surrender himself to the mob. "He's not here," answered one woman, who was nearly paralyzed and violently shaking as the white men glared into her eyes. "He left town on business earlier in the day." Enraged by Isaac's absence, the intruders pinned a piercing threat to the front door post that read, "First notice. Don't wait for No. 2. Move! Move!! And move quickly. You and your kind are not needed in Dallas." Upon exiting the house, the ringleader mounted his horse and signaled to his followers to move east to the New Hope Baptist Church next door, where they riddled the structure with bullets and broke nearly every window of the church. Shortly thereafter, the hooded riders dispersed and disappeared into the darkness.[3]

News of the lynch mob soon reached Rev. Isaac's congregation living in the Thomas-Hall Street district. Black men and women grabbed their shotguns, rifles, and makeshift clubs and filled the streets, creating a barrier wall of people to protect the Isaac house and the New Hope Baptist Church. Mounted police arrived on the scene to find the informal black militia standing guard, ready and armed to defend themselves and their community against vigilantism and the lawless disorder.[4]

Word also spread to the downtown police station, where police officers rushed over to the city jail to protect Joseph "Doba Joe" Malone, a twenty-three-year-old African American man who recently had been tried and convicted for the assault and rape of the elderly Mrs. Frederick

[3] "Rev. Isaac's Lucky Escape," *Dallas Morning News* August 11, 1898 (hereafter cited *DMN*); "Rev. Isaac's Callers," *DMN* August 12, 1898.
[4] "Rev. Isaac's Lucky Escape," *DMN.*

Stein, a German immigrant and resident of Miller's Switch (present-day Joppa) located four miles south of downtown. On the hot summer day of July 15, 1898, the stocky and "black as coal" Malone allegedly approached seventy-five-year-old Stein as she picked vegetables from her garden. According to published reports, he allegedly beat her mercilessly with her own shoe before pulling up her dress and raping her until she fell unconscious. Upon his capture in Hutchins, a small town just south of Miller's Switch, Malone confessed to the crime. The day of his trial, eleven days after the assault, the packed courtroom of both white and black spectators watched as the ailing Mrs. Stein was carried by stretcher into the chambers, who then pointed to Malone as the one who had assaulted her earlier in the month. In light of the evidence and upon his confession, the all-white jury sentenced Malone to swing from gallows within thirty days. "Dallas is a law and order county," wrote the *Dallas Morning News* upon Malone's conviction and death sentence. Boasting that the perpetrator received an expedited trial and sentencing, the *News* wrote endearingly that law enforcement managed to not only locate Malone only hours after the assault but that it succeeded in keeping white reactionary violence at bay. Nearly two thousand people waited outside the courthouse on the sidewalks when Sheriff Ben Cabell and his deputies removed Malone from the courtroom and escorted him outside to his quarters in the county jail. "Hang him, hang him! Hang the damned nigger," jeered a few from the audience. But they received no encouragement from the crowd as a whole.[5] Dallas had managed to avoid a lynching that day. And they narrowly escaped it again when the mob confronted Rev. Isaac's house a few weeks later.

Rev. Isaac had lived in Dallas for eight years. He became pastorate in 1890 at New Hope Baptist Church in Dallas, the largest black church in the state. His oratory gift from the pulpit

[5] "Doba Joe is Guilty," *DMN* July 26, 1898

attracted large audiences, successfully extending church membership to more than two thousand black residents in the area. Deeply concerned with community affairs, he wrote scathing critiques in his denominational newspaper *The Baptist Star,* an affiliate of Dallas's only black newspaper, *The Dallas Express.*[6] In his editorials, Isaac lamented white leaders' efforts to disfranchise and discriminate against the black population in Dallas, and he pursued justice with fierce tongue lashings that many perceived as the vile retribution of an uppity black man stepping out his place in Dallas's color line.

White Dallasites took exception to an editorial in the August 8, 1898 issue of the *Baptist Star*, a few days after Doba Joe's conviction and sentencing. The paragraph editorial allegedly referred to Mrs. Stein in a "very coarse and insulting manner," prompting the indignation of white people in the city to seek revenge. In the description of the editorial, white journalists alluded that Isaac dared to question the integrity of an elderly white woman whose delicate and aged state left her powerless to fend off the black common criminal. Isaac denied writing the piece, reported that he was out of town when the paper hit the press, and had no knowledge as to its source. In a letter to the *News*, he clarified that as a resident of Dallas and pastor of his church, he had "condemned low and brutal crimes and have stood with the best classes of both races in the maintenance of law and order. Many of the good white people are my friends," he continued. "They have found me bold in my contention that the negro should be upright and honorable and live in the most friendly and peaceable terms with his white neighbors."[7] Unpersuaded by his claims, white residents wanted to bring justice by their own hands,

[6] Clement Richardson, "E. W. D. Isaac," *National Cyclopedia of the Colored Race* (Montgomery, AL: National Publishing Company, 1919) New York Public Library Digital Gallery http://afrotexan.com/AfroPress/Editors/isaac.htm (Accessed January 9, 2019).
[7] "Isaac's Lucky Escape," *DMN* August 11, 1898.

prompting Isaac to abandon his post mere hours before the angry mob barreled into Freedman's Town to attack his house.

No record of what Isaac's paper printed in that fateful editorial of the *Baptist Star* exists. The *News* never reprinted a quote from the paragraph editorial in its entirety—most likely fearing public backlash from the city's white residents. The 1898 issues of the *Dallas Express* and the *Baptist Star* have yet to surface in the archival record. But the white reaction to Isaac's editorial reveals how quickly white residents moved to police the color line.

White Dallasites used terror and violence routinely to keep African Americans in their purported place. In 1910, whites accused Allen Brooks, an elderly black man, of assaulting a white three-year-old Mary Ethel Buvens. According to published reports, nearly two hundred white men pushed their way into the courtroom during Brooks' trial, tied a rope around his neck, and threw Brooks out of the second-story window, where he landed on the concrete below and cracked his skull. The angry white mob of five thousand then took turns beating his body before hanging him from a telephone pole on Akard and Main Streets downtown.[8] The white mobs' quest for vengeance did not stop with Brooks' death. After police removed Brooks' body from the street, some six hundred people from the crowd marched toward the county jail and demanded that the sheriff release Burrell Oates and Bubber Robinson, two African American men serving prison-time on separate murder charges of white men. Caving to their rage, officers admitted twenty white men of the mob to search the jail for Oates and Robinson, who had been removed from the jail earlier in the day.[9]

[8] Dulaney, "Whatever Happened in Dallas, Texas" 68; "Dallas Mob Hangs Negro from Pole at Elks' Arch," *DMN* March 4, 1910, 1.
[9] "Dallas Mob Hangs Negro from Pole at Elks' Arch," *DMN*.

Little distinguished vigilantism from formal law enforcement. A decade later, the revival of the Second Ku Klux Klan made Texas a stronghold for its political message. In short, the Klan ideology fused together concepts of patriotism, white supremacy, and purity of white womanhood as central to their overall goals.[10] The Dallas Klan chapter grew rapidly and boasted its commitment to the principles of morality and law and order. Historian Norman Brown argues that the Klan in Texas focused more sharply on policing the morality of white Americans, especially when bootlegging and a lack of a moral order seemed to run amok without much hindrance from local law enforcement. The Dallas Klan, however, was not immune to exacting revenge upon African Americans who crossed the color line.[11] On April 1, 1921, Klansmen abducted Alexander Johnson, a black bellhop, took him to the Trinity River bottoms and beat him before burning the letters KKK on his forehead with acid. They accused Johnson of sexual involvement with white women—one of the biggest offenses for African Americans to commit.[12] Despite a Dallas *Times Herald* reporter witnessing the entire scene, law enforcement made no arrests as the Dallas County Sheriff, Deputy Sheriff, Chief of Police and nearly all of the police officers were Klansmen.[13] The collaboration of white vigilantism with formal law enforcement only strengthened the forces of white supremacy.

Despite racial discrimination, terror, and violence, African Americans in Dallas did not idly accept subjugation and intimidation. The era of segregation meant that the black population

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[10] Norman Brown, *Hood, Bonnet, and the Little Brown Jug: Texas Politics, 1921-1928* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1984), 48. For more on the Second Ku Klux Klan, see Linda Gordon, *The Second Coming of the KKK: The Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s and the American Political Tradition* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2017).
[11] Brown, *Hood, Bonnet, and the Little Brown Jug,* 56.
[12] In 1924, Klavern 66 of Dallas had more than 13,000 paying members, but in 1926, the organization dwindled to less than 1,200. Mark N. Norris, "Saving Society Through Politics: the Ku Klux Klan in Dallas, Texas, in the 1920s," Dissertation, University of North Texas (December 1997), 127; Darwin Payne, *Big D: Triumphs and Troubles of an American Supercity* (Dallas: Three Forks Press, 1994), 73-74.
[13] Brown, *Hood, Bonnet, and the Little Brown Jug*, 58-59; Dulaney, "Whatever Happened in Dallas, Texas?" 68; Payne, *Quest for Justice,* 23.

in general turned increasingly inward, using the mandated segregation laws as a way to promote black autonomy and self-awareness. African Americans in Dallas turned to church and religious institutions as early as 1873 when a group of black women and men founded New Hope Baptist Church in Freedman's Town. Shortly after its creation, construction of other black religious institutions emerged to serve black Dallasites in their spiritual quest.[14] The church not only functioned as a house of worship in which black Americans sought refuge from an increasingly hostile white America, but also dually operated as a community institution. Black religious leaders and church organizers, particularly black women, garnered widespread community support and promoted education, advocated reform of city services, and facilitated economic development from the pews.[15] The black church served as a beacon and a bastion of self-determination that ultimately encouraged white city officials to hold up their end of the bargain in the "separate but equal" era. New Hope became the first education system for African Americans in Dallas when Rev. A. R. Griggs facilitated the creation of New Hope Grammar School in the early 1880s. He later used his position as a well-respected pastor to push the county to provide public education for African American students. Ultimately, white Dallasites in 1892 acquiesced and opened Dallas Colored High School, which operated for thirty years until the city built Booker T. Washington High School in 1922.[16] The creation of separate facilities in Dallas, however, did not mean that the institutions remained equal. The school operated only sixty days out of the year compared to one hundred days for white students, and most black students attended school on half-day schedules because of overcrowding. By the 1930s, Booker T. taught

[14] Melvin J. Banks, *A Century of Faith, 1873-1973: New Hope Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas* (Dallas: Neal Printing Company, Inc., 1973), 13;
[15] Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 2-3.
[16] Banks, *A Century of Faith,* 14.

more than sixteen hundred students in a facility designed to house no more than six hundred. The city also grossly underfunded black schools, spending only $22 per student annually, almost $30 less than the city spent on a white student.[17]

The racial restrictions also facilitated the growth of black middle-class leadership, which closely followed acceptable gender standards of the era. Middle-class black men serving as church leaders, doctors, lawyers, dentists, and restaurant owners assisted in uniting the African American population by regularly serving black patrons—whose business was mostly unwelcomed in white-owned institutions. Black women found respectability working as teachers and educators, using their positions to promote social advancement, literacy, and other skills. Robert Prince, a graduate of Booker T. Washington, recalled in his memoir that "black teachers cared for all of us. They taught us survival tactics for black people…We were taught that the white man would never give us our rights without a fight…This was a good education. Education should teach one to survive in one's own environment. Our environment was hostile."[18] At school, students also received valuable lessons on black American history, relatively free from the racism and control of the white power structure. When former black teacher J. Leslie Patton became principal of Booker T. in 1939, he formally implemented Negro Studies to the school's curriculum after authoring *A Student's Guide for the Study of Negro History*, a study-guide intended to help black students appreciate African American contributions to the history of the nation as well as to "awaken a proper social consciousness and pride in the developments and

[17] Michael Phillips, *White Metropolis: Race, Ethnicity, and Religion in Dallas, 1841-2001* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006), 109; Dulaney, "Whatever Happened in Dallas, Texas," 70; Darwin Payne, *Quest for Justice: Louis A. Bedford Jr. and the Struggle for Equal Rights in Texas* (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 2009), 23.
[18] Quote from Payne, *Quest for Justice,* 41; Jacqueline Jones, *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work, and the Family, from Slavery to the Present* (New York: Basic Books, 2009 [1985]), 143-144.

achievements" of the African American race.[19] Thus, professional institutions and educational facilities became centers of refuge that ultimately helped solidify a cultural hegemony that transcended class consciousness.

Rise of Middle-Class Leadership

The steady growth of the black middle class facilitated the development of the Dallas Negro Chamber of Commerce in 1926. Though largely ineffectual in its first few years, the Negro Chamber became one of the most important black community institutions in Dallas, especially when it hired A. Maceo Smith as the Executive Secretary in 1932. A native of Texarkana, Texas, Smith was born on April 16, 1903. Upon receiving his bachelor's degree at Fisk University in 1924 and his master's degree at New York University in 1928, he opened a small real estate company in Texarkana before moving in 1932 to Dallas where he quickly involved himself in community affairs.[20]

Improving the living standard of African Americans became one of the central goals of the Negro Chamber of Commerce throughout the 1930s. Though the business community, churches, and schools helped instill a sense of racial pride that connected the black middle class with the working poor, many black Dallasites still suffered from the egregious effects of voter disfranchisement and rigid segregation and discrimination patterns. African Americans living in Dallas lacked paved streets, quality housing, access to quality jobs, electoral participation in municipal elections, and a fair and unbiased police force. Though these issues existed well before the 1930s, the Great Depression exacerbated poor living conditions in the city and the vibrant but

[19] Ernest McMillan, Interview by Author, July 20, 2017 (interview in author's possession); Payne, *Quest for Justice,* 39; Thedore M. Lawe, "Racial Politics in Dallas in the Twentieth Century," *East Texas Historical Journal* 46:2 (October 2008), 31; Phillips, *White Metropolis*, 108-109.
[20] Dulaney, "Whatever Happened in Dallas, Texas," 70-71; Michael Gillette, "The Rise of the NAACP in Texas," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 81:4 (April 1978), 394.

small business elite could not ameliorate them. The Negro Chamber hired Smith to help rejuvenate the organization and to promote the successes of African American life. Part of Smith's advocacy for reforms ascribed to the uplift of African Americans by encouraging black people to adhere to certain middle-class goals in order to achieve racial equality. Smith rejected the subordinate position of African Americans in the dominant white society and believed that if blacks mirrored the central tenets of capitalism, education, and self-sufficiency, only then could African Americans overcome the racial discrimination imbedded by the Jim Crow social order. In short, Smith wanted to level the playing field—making sure that African Americans had the same chances for advancement as their white counterparts.

Smith arrived in Dallas at an opportune time. The city hoped to become the host of the 1936 Texas Centennial Celebration, an exhibition marking the anniversary of Texas's independence from Mexico in 1836. Plans to hold a centennial celebration were underway steadily throughout the early decades of the twentieth century. When the Great Depression hit, many Texans strongly believed the celebration would provide renewed economic incentives for its host city. As a result, many Dallas leaders succeeded in making the city the site of the exposition. Smith had linked up with prominent activists from around the state to develop a strategy to secure funds from the state legislature for an African American exhibit at the fair—showcasing the ways in which African Americans fundamentally contributed to the making of Texas and the nation.[21] He also secured funds from the federal government to fund the Hall of Negro Life by arguing that black participation in the fair "promises new life, new activity, inspiration, and a season of recreation which breeds loyalty and patriotism that generates

[21] Paul L. Dunbar, "A. Maceo Smith and the Hall of Negro Life," *Legacies: A History Journal for Dallas and North Central Texas* 23: 2 (Fall 2011), 4. For more on the Texas Centennial Celebration, see Kenneth Ragsdale, *The Year America Discovered Texas: Centennial '36* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1987).

interracial amity and goodwill…" In letters to W. B. Yeatts, executive secretary to the United States Texas Centennial Commission, Smith argued that if the federal government failed to provide funds for the exhibit, then the "hopes and heartthrobs of the Texas Negro Citizens will be dissipated to a point that will increase antagonism of these people toward the white man's sense of justice and fair play." In essence, Smith reasoned that federal funding of the Hall would help foster a political alliance between blacks and whites and would ameliorate the existing racial tensions that had carried on for decades or, without federal funding, the administration would risk exacerbating racial conflict. Following the lead of Eleanor Roosevelt, President Franklin Roosevelt's administration and the national Democratic Party, already working to bring in African Americans into the Party and away from Republican politics, saw the funding as a golden opportunity. As a result, the national Texas Centennial Commission allocated $100,000 for the erection of a separate building for black history and progress.[22]

Smith's strategy in successfully curating federal funds for the Hall of Negro Life demonstrates the will of black leaders to play up on the racial fears of white Americans. Smith unleashed a tactic of psychological warfare when he argued that failing to deliver on such a small concession would only exacerbate tensions among the already aggrieved black population and furthermore, had the possibility of resulting in forms of civic unrest.[23] But Smith also believed that having a black exhibition at the centennial would provide the groundwork for further political organizing. "You can't start on an integrated pattern," Smith argued. "Well, [the Texas Centennial] was the way we started this out."[24] Confronting segregation directly meant

[22] Dunbar, "A. Maceo Smith and the Hall of Negro Life," 7.
[23] I borrow the term "psychological warfare" from Emilye Crosby, "Introduction: The Politics of Writing and Teaching Movement History," Emilye Crosby (ed), *Civil Rights from the Ground Up: Local Struggles, a National Movement* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2011), 4.
[24] A. Maceo Smith, Interview with Dale Tomlinson and Dorothy Irwin, *The Institute of Texan Cultures: Oral History Offices*, undated, University of Texas San Antonio Digital Collections, http://digital.utsa.edu/cdm/ref/collection/p15125coll4/id/412 (Accessed February 12, 2019).

challenging the culture of Jim Crow. Smith needed to be more covert but still deliberate in his strategizing. He knew that the nation would be watching Texas as the state organized and facilitated travel plans for Americans across the nation to come visit the exposition. As a result, he used the centennial as the vehicle to challenge some of the most pressing issues facing African Americans, not only in Dallas but also across the state of Texas.

With Dallas selected as the host city for the centennial celebration and with federal funds in the bag for the Hall of Negro Life, Smith moved forward in his political endeavors, first by bringing widespread attention to the inequities of policing and the criminal justice system. In 1935, a series of "black-on-black" murders occurred, and law enforcement and the criminal justice system had done little to protect and serve the black population. "If this sort of crime exist[s] now, what can we expect when the Centennial comes?" he questioned in an editorial for the *Dallas Express.* "Our law enforcement agencies seem to practice a Laissez Faire policy" in the policing of black-on-black crime.[25]

Smith's assertions on the lackadaisical role of law enforcement and the criminal justice system were not unfounded complaints. During the 1920s and into the 1930s, the criminal justice system, including police officers, district attorneys, and jurors, often times disregarded and dismissed "black-on-black" crime—deeming those crimes as unimportant and ineffective to the white population. "So long as they [African American assailants] do not kill white men," a black Louisiana newspaper explained, "everything is all right. But it is 'just another nigger gone' when a colored man is killed."[26] This uneven approach to policing and law enforcement—aggressive when African Americans assailed whites but dismissive when whites assailed blacks or when

[25] "$25 For a Life," *Dallas Express*, June 1, 1935.
[26] Quote from *Louisiana Weekly,* April 13, 1929, p. 6 found in Jeffrey S. Adler, "Less Crime, More Punishment: Violence, Race, and Criminal Justice in Early Twentieth-Century America," *Journal of American History* 102:1 (June 2015), 38.

blacks assailed blacks—reinforced the idea that black lives mattered less. The double standard in the criminal justice system became yet another avenue in which law enforcement devalued black humanity. In Smith's mind, having the criminal justice system equally patrol, monitor, and punish black offenders for crimes committed against African Americans would allow for more equitable measures of law enforcement to take place. By doing so, he put extraordinary faith in the standard "law and order" viewpoint—that effective and increased policing reduced the presence of crime, and that having white officers police black communities did not allow for equal policing to take place. In other words, African Americans would less likely commit criminal offenses if black police officers patrolled the segregated neighborhoods.

On the eve of the Texas Centennial, Smith initiated his war on crime by pressuring the Dallas Police Department to hire black officers. Unlike San Antonio, Houston, Galveston, and Beaumont, the city of Dallas had never hired African Americans to patrol. African American leaders challenged this policy as early as 1888 when they petitioned the city council to hire a black officer. But the painful memories of Reconstruction, in which African Americans routinely served as police officers, prohibited white city officials from acting on the proposal.[27] Nearly six years passed before the department hired William McDuff, the first black employee, who was assigned to work security outside an African American church. After two months of duty, a couple of juveniles shot and killed McDuff, and the city chose not to replace him. Efforts to hire another black officer stalled until after World War I when, in 1919, the Negro Welfare Board, an advisory board task-force reporting to the city council, advocated a list of reforms to Mayor Frank W. Wozencraft that included the hiring of black police. The influence of the Klan on the

[27] W. Marvin Dulaney, *Black Police in America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 34; Randolph B. Campbell, "Carpetbagger Rule in Reconstruction Texas: An Enduring Myth," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 97:4 (April 1994), 595.

police force, however, delayed the hiring after white officers threatened to strike.[28] In 1927, black orphanage director W. L. Dickson petitioned the city for black officers to patrol the predominantly black streets of Oak Cliff and the business district of Deep Ellum, and pointed to the fact that other cities in Texas had already hired black police officers. Still, Dallas remained the only large city in the state without African American officers on the municipal force. Mayor Louis Blaylock favored the proposal, and even suggested that Mexican police officers should patrol Little Mexico, a predominantly Mexican *barrio* located just north of downtown. However, Police Commissioner Louis S. Turley opposed the matter, and the issue was dropped altogether.[29]

The Negro Chamber's Executive Secretary A. Maceo Smith understood the alleged high crime rate among African Americans as a two-fold problem. First, that the absence of black officers on the Dallas police force resulted in frequent miscommunications between white officers and black residents. He believed that having black uniformed officers would help, especially in understanding the cultural and class differences between the two. Prior to proposing his ideas of reform, Smith had reached out to other police departments who had hired African American officers and received glowing praise from the police chiefs in Houston and San Antonio, who admitted that black officers had a positive impact on crime in black neighborhoods. "It is an evident fact that Negro officers, understanding the peculiarities of Negroes, make better officers within their own group than white officers could possibly do," he concluded.[30] Second, Smith argued that a lack of accountability existed within the criminal justice system to adequately punish black offenders. According to Smith, between January and

[28] "Negroes Organize Welfare Council," *DMN* July 14, 1915; "Negro Welfare Board to Appoint Five Committees," *DMN* May 3, 1919; Dulaney, *Black Police in America,* 34-35.
[29] "Petitions Negro Police Officers," *DMN* January 25, 1927, 3; Dulaney, *Black Police in America*, 35
[30] Quote from "Negro Policemen," *DMN* February 11, 1937, 4; Dulaney, *Black Police in America,* 35.

August 1935, twenty-four African Americans committed "black-on-black" murders in Dallas, and not one had received the maximum penalty for such criminal offenses. He advocated fixing stiffer bonds in murder cases and more severe handling of criminals by the grand jury, believing that this would also deter black criminals from conspiring to commit murder and other crimes.[31]

Smith fully believed that maintaining law and order in the city's black neighborhoods would curtail the high black-on-black crime rate, but he also understood that Dallas officials needed a reason to care about black lives in order to adequately secure reforms. Because white city officials of the Citizens Charter Association, a white civic association who successfully amended the city charter in 1930 to create the council-manager system requiring at large elections of all city officials, routinely espoused "city as a whole" rhetoric, Smith drew upon a public shaming technique by arguing that law enforcement and the criminal justice system operated in a biased manner and inadequately patrolled the entire city. He figured the centennial might give city leaders the extra push to bring in black officers to the force. While city leaders remained unconvinced, Smith refused to bow down. He decided to invite all black police officers from around the state to participate in the Negro Day celebration planned for the Texas Centennial—hoping that the display of African American officers from San Antonio, Houston, Austin, and Galveston would embarrass city officials into action. The Dallas police chief responded by having two black city police station orderlies dress in official DPD uniforms to march with the officers from other cities. After the parade, however, the two African Americans returned to their regular duties. Rev. Maynard H. Jackson of New Hope Baptist Church, working with Smith and the Negro Chamber, tried the tactic again for the Negro Day parades in 1937 and

[31] "Effort Started to Avert Crime Among Negroes," *DMN,* August 23, 1935.

1938, but white city officials feared racial unrest amongst the department's white police officers who had threatened to strike if the city hired black officers.[32]

Embarrassing city officials into integrating the police force had not worked to ameliorate the issue. White city leaders again acquiesced to the loud complaints of white reactionaries who threatened retaliation if blacks were hired onto the police force. The movement to integrate the police department did not end for black Dallasites. They continued to push for these reform measures and used the political system as the mechanism for achieving this goal.

State and Local Political Organizing

While using the Texas Centennial Celebration as a significant push failed to make Dallas officials act on the hiring of black police, it did, however, allow African Americans a chance to continue in their political organizing. In order to attract African Americans from Texas to the centennial celebration, Smith networked with other activists from around the state and developed statewide organizations, including the Texas Progressive Voters League (PVL). Smith referred to the PVL as the "nucleus for political action" in Dallas and state politics.[33] The voters league originated in Dallas in 1934 as the Progressive Citizens League. In partnership with the Negro Chamber, Smith participated in Alpha Phi Alpha's annual "Education for Citizenship" week. As the guest speaker, Smith argued for the importance of voting and participation in the political process. Acting on Smith's enthusiasm, Rev. Maynard H. Jackson helped to formally organize the Progressive Citizens League and worked specifically with the Chamber to organize poll tax drives as well as initiate an ultimately unsuccessful bid to eradicate the Democratic Party's white

[32] Dulaney, *Black Police in America*, 35-36.
[33] A. Maceo Smith, Interview with Dale Tomlinson and Dorothy Irwin.

primary in Dallas County in July 1934.[34] While the plan failed, the organization of the Citizens League received a tremendous boost when, in 1935, Ammon S. Wells decided to run as a Democrat for the special election seat left vacant by Sarah T. Hughes in the Texas House of Representatives. In Texas, special elections did not require primaries, allowing African Americans to both run and vote in the election. According to the *Dallas Express,* Wells intended to enter the race in order to "make Negroes vote conscious and to make them go to the polls and vote and establish their solidarity on political questions." As a well-respected black attorney, former president of the Dallas NAACP, and president of the Citizens League, Wells received support from numerous black civic leaders, including Smith and Rev. Jackson. White Dallasites pushed Smith to "get the nigger out of race..." but Smith and other black leaders refused to acquiesce. With Wells in the race, the state legislature withdrew its promised funds for the Hall of Negro Life, which ultimately led Smith to request funds from the federal government.[35] On March 16, the day of the election, members of the Ku Klux Klan circulated flyers in black neighborhoods threatening violence if Wells won. While Wells lost the special election in the end, Wells' campaign served to unite black residents and further established a substantial voting bloc that had the ability to sway municipal elections. The fact that over a thousand black voters cast their ballots for Wells in the special election, and did so despite the threat of Klan violence, spoke volumes to Jackson and Smith. Out of this election, the two pushed for the formal organization of the Progressive Voters League (PVL) in 1936.[36]

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[34] W. Marvin Dulaney, "The Progressive Voters League: A Political Voice for African Americans in Dallas," *Legacies: A History Journal for Dallas and North Central Texas* 3:1 (Spring 1991), 29; Michael V. Hazel, "Rev. Maynard H. Jackson, Sr., *Legacies*: *A History Journal for Dallas and North Central Texas* 16:1 (Spring 2004), 6.
[35] Quote from Dunbar, "A. Maceo Smith and the Hall of Negro Life," 5-6.
[36] "Objectives Are Reached: Klan Threats Fail to Deter Loyal Voters," *Dallas Express,* March 23, 1935; Dulaney, "Progressive Voters League," 27-32; Dulaney, "Whatever Happened in Dallas, Texas," 72.

Dallas's black civic leaders recognized the importance of a close and working relationship with other black communities across the state of Texas. According to historian Darlene Clark Hine, "Texas blacks were perhaps the best organized Negro group in any southern state," having formed a number of statewide organizations, alliances, and committees since the late 1920s and early 1930s. The planning of the Texas Centennial provided the impetus to continue the black organizing tradition, in which numerous statewide organizations formed or restructured. The Texas Negro Chamber of Commerce worked to advance the economic position of African Americans, emphasizing black self-sufficiency; the Texas Progressive Voters League initiated widespread campaigns of civic education and stressed political participation on the local, state, and national levels while the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance approached the white power structure directly by discussing with city officials the grievances of the black population. In addition, the independent branches of the NAACP across the state formed the Texas State Conference of Branches of the NAACP and worked throughout the next two decades to dismantle Jim Crow and voter disfranchisement tactics.[37] While each operated differently and on different playing fields, all together the organizations addressed the inequities of the American democratic society from all angles.

On the local level, the Progressive Voters League created a formidable and sizeable voting bloc for African Americans in the city. Over the course of 1936 and 1937, the PVL successfully convinced more than seven thousand African Americans in Dallas to register to vote by paying their poll taxes. The white civic associations in municipal politics recognized the strength of the black voting bloc and, for the first time, they had to bargain with a unified African American electorate. In order to successfully gain their vote, the PVL announced a list of

[37] Darlene Clark Hine, *Black Victory: The Rise and Fall of the White Primary in Texas* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2003 [1979]), 216; Gillette, "The Rise of the NAACP in Texas, 393.

demands on March 27, 1937 via the *Dallas Express,* that included "a crime reduction campaign which covers all phases of law and order affecting life and property of Dallas Negroes, to wit: Negro policemen..." Additionally, the PVL lobbied for city cooperation on promotion of better housing and slum clearance, the proration of city work, and more adequate parks, recreation facilities, and public schools.[38] In the April election, the Forward Dallas Association, who worked to appease African American voters, won five of the nine city council seats—with African Americans making up a third of the 14,000 votes cast. The councilmembers then rewarded the PVL for their support by beginning construction on Lincoln High School for African American students, increasing the number of African Americans employed in city jobs by three hundred percent, and in September 1937, by voting to employ African Americans as police officers in Dallas. However, mass opposition from white residents, including over 100 petitions and a lawsuit against the proposal with the police department, ultimately forced the city council to withdraw its motion.[39]

The PVL had successfully managed to not only enter into the Dallas political sphere but also to demand that certain policies be enacted in exchange for their support. The creation of the PVL and its voter strength created a formidable opponent to the white power structure who, for decades, had ignored the humanity of black Americans living in Dallas. While integrating the city's police force stalled again in 1937 even after the city council's motion, the PVL became an important outlet for African Americans in the city to continue to push for change in their own communities. African Americans lost one uphill battle, but they now had the political base to continue challenging the issues most affecting to black residents.

Dallas's Black Housing Crisis

[38] Quote from Dulaney, "The Progressive Voters League," 32.
[39] Michael V. Hazel, "Rev. Maynard H. Jackson, Sr.," 8; Dulaney, "The Progressive Voters League," 31-32.

Finding adequate housing had long been an issue for African Americans in the city as white city officials continually promoted the use of restrictive covenants and passed zoning laws well after the 1917 *Buchanan v. Warley* decision, a Supreme Court ruling that determined racialized zoning laws violated the Fourteenth Amendment. As residential segregation persisted into the 1930s, African Americans resided in scattered pockets in nearly every census track all throughout the city. Freedman's Town, located north of downtown hosted the largest black population in the city and was home to most black-owned businesses. South Dallas neighborhoods also housed a small population of African Americans. Neighborhoods like Bonton, Ideal, and Queen City were established in close proximity to wealthy Jewish merchants, who hired African Americans to work as yardmen, handymen, cooks, and domestics. Small neighborhoods in Oak Cliff and East Dallas, where blacks serviced the large mansions on Munger Avenue, also permitted African Americans to reside.[40]

The neighborhoods were built in some of the least desirable areas of the city, usually in floodplains of the flood-prone Trinity River. "When it rained hard, Bexar Street looked like a river," recalled one former Ideal resident." A housing survey conducted in 1938 reported that nearly 86 percent of black homes were substandard. Families lived in shotgun houses and shacks with leaking roofs; dwellings also lacked running water, indoor bathrooms, and electricity. The deplorable living conditions allowed communicable diseases to spread like wildfire, resulting in widespread epidemics of tuberculosis and typhoid, egregiously high infant mortality rates, and shorter lifespans for the area's residents.[41] Black residents responded to the housing shortage by doubling up—renting rooms from already overcrowded homes—or by pushing out into other

[40] Robert Fairbanks, *For the City as a Whole: Planning, Politics, and the Public Interest in Dallas, Texas, 1900-1965* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1998), 150.
[41] Roger Biles, "The New Deal in Dallas," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 95:1 (July 1991), 15-16.

parts of the city. Some moved into the unincorporated parts of West Dallas. Located just across the Trinity River from downtown, African Americans joined impoverished whites and a small but growing Mexican population. A once convenient dumping ground for the city, West Dallas hosted some of the most hazardous living conditions as the area accommodated cement plants, lead smelters, brick factories, rock quarries, and gravel pits.[42]

White leaders were also keen on addressing the lack of housing for black residents, but not necessarily out of concern for the conditions in which black residents lived. Rather, white city leaders pressed the construction of housing projects and slum clearance for two main reasons. First, the high rate of infectious diseases in black neighborhoods could spread to their white employers and therefore had the potential to infect more white citizens throughout the city; and second, the lack of adequate housing meant that African American residents would encroach upon designated white neighborhoods. This had already been the case despite the city's attempt to restrict black mobility. In 1927, white residents responded with bombings, burnings, and near riots when black residents pushed into the 2300 block of Caddo Street in north Dallas. In response, city officials passed additional racialized zoning laws designed to circumvent the Supreme Court decision in 1917. But by the 1930s, as the Great Depression worsened and as the private sector failed to address the housing crisis, white city officials had no choice but to turn to New Deal programs.[43]

Officials from the Housing Division of the Public Works Association (PWA) approached Dallas lawyer and former member of the Texas Relief Commission M. N. Chrestman about assuming a leadership role in developing public housing in Dallas. Chrestman agreed to head a public housing committee and invited a group of white and black civic leaders to work with the

[42] Fairbanks, *For the City as a Whole,* 150-151.
[43] Fairbanks, *For the City as a Whole,* 150-153.

federal government in developing plans. He selected Dr. R. T. Hamilton, a prominent black physician and state chairman of the Texas Emergency Advisory Council, and Rev. Jackson of New Hope Baptist Church to serve as the committee's only two African American representatives.[44] The committee planned to build two housing projects—one for both black and white residents. While the report stated that black public housing deserved top priority, city officials stubbornly refused to use vacant land within city limits, placating the white residents living within close proximity who disapproved and threatened violence. The committee then focused on clearing slums in the Hall Street-Thomas Avenue area of Freedman's Town, but met dead ends when the PWA had to negotiate with the more than fifty different property-owning residents on fair prices for the land. On the other hand, the PWA moved swiftly to construct the housing project for white residents, located land easily and quickly in North Dallas, and construction began and was completed by 1937. Even though the committee continued to push for a public housing project for African Americans, a curtailment of funds officially impeded any new construction under PWA sponsorship.[45]

Losing out on a PWA-funded housing project did little to convince African Americans in Dallas to give up. With the election of five PVL-endorsed candidates on the city council in 1937 and when President Franklin Roosevelt's administration passed the Housing Act of 1937, black leaders showed great interest in taking advantage of their new position in which both local officials and the federal government would back their endeavors. In fact, the Negro Chamber of Commerce and the PVL formed a joint committee and examined the nineteen slum areas identified by the Real Property Inventory Report of 1934 and called on city officials to take part

[44] "Plans For 2 Projects," *Dallas Express* June 1, 1935; "Dallas Gets A Million And A Half For PWA Project," *Pittsburgh Courier* June 8, 1935; Fairbanks, *For the City as a Whole,* 154.
[45] Fairbanks, *For the City as a Whole*, 154-155.

in the federal housing program. Shortly thereafter, the Dallas City Council agreed 8-1 to form the Dallas Housing Authority (DHA), formally working with federal authorities on public housing. Despite the heavy lobbying and the fact that Mayor George Sprague of the Forward Dallas Association assumed his position on the council because of African American support, Sprague refused to appoint an African American to the DHA, fearing that white opposition might kill the entire movement.[46] Once again, white city officials used the idea of white reactionary violence as an easy excuse to suppress public housing options for African Americans residents.

By the time the DHA got off the ground and running in 1939, municipal elections swung back in favor of the Charter Association. Just as the Texas Centennial provided the impetus for continuing black organizing, it also worked to solidify the ascendency of the city's pro-business elite. In 1937, a group of white businessmen led by former Klan member and current president of the Dallas Chamber of Commerce R. L. Thornton formed the Dallas Citizens Council (DCC). Through Thornton's efforts with the Dallas Chamber, he successfully persuaded the state legislature to have Dallas host the centennial celebration.[47] Though officially a nonpartisan and non-political organization, the DCC used the Citizens Charter Association as its political arm and managed to solidify control over the Dallas city council and the black voting bloc.[48] The 1937 city council had promised concessions to African American voters by promising to hire black policemen and improving city parks, streets, and schools for the city's black residents. But members of the PVL and IMA felt shorted when councilmembers only managed to implement a new high school for African American students and failed to come through on black police and

[46] Fairbanks, *For the City as a Whole,* 156; Robert B. Fairbanks, "From Consensus to Controversy: The Rise and Fall of Public Housing in Dallas," *Legacies: A History Journal for Dallas and North Central Texas* 1: 2 (Fall 1989), 37-38.
[47] Mark Rice, "R. L. Thornton: Embodying the Spirit of Dallas," *Legacies: A History Journal for Dallas and North Central Texas* 24: 1 (Spring 2012), 19; Phillips, *White Metropolis,* 96.
[48] Fairbanks, *For the City As a Whole,* 110-113.

the improvement of black neighborhoods. Furthermore, only one councilmember of the entire nine decided to run for reelection, and other contenders outside the CCA were more frightening alternatives and promised to do little to support African American needs. As a result, the PVL and the IMA fully endorsed a CCA-backed ticket for the city council, further cementing the CCA's authority in municipal politics.[49] In essence, white city leaders within the DCC and the Charter Association effectively co-opted African American leadership within the PVL and the IMA.

Members of the DCC filled the ranks of the advisory committee of the housing authority. Their biggest project included the slum clearance of Freedman's Town, the largest all-black neighborhood in the city, in favor of a public housing project called Roseland Homes on Hall Street—the same location as the 1937 housing project under PWA funding. While black leaders applauded the plans, black residents on Hall Street voiced displeasure. The affected black residents gathered at Munger Avenue Baptist Church and denounced the DHA's decision to designate Hall Street as the appropriate site for slum clearance, accusing the Negro Chamber of recommending the location to the housing bureau. At another meeting, some seventy-five property owners vowed not to sell their land to the city and ended the meeting by singing, "I Shall Not Be Moved."[50] The DHA acknowledged that slum clearance would displace many black families in the neighborhood, but did little to rehouse those affected by the removal. The already limited housing stock for black renters and buyers failed to adequately meet the demands of the black population. With nearly four hundred black residents displaced by the removal, many wondered and worried about where they would go. Some housing authority officials suggested

[49] "Negro Community To Back Charter Ticket At April City Poll, *Dallas Express* March 25, 1939.
[50] Fairbanks, *For the City as a Whole,* 158.

that the DHA could supply tents for the dislocated residents. Ultimately, the city never pursued the tents.[51]

African Americans who could afford to move took matters into their own hands. In early September 1940, C. L. Walker and George Johnson, two black Dallas residents displaced by the Hall Street project, bought homes on Howell Street, a white neighborhood teetering on the edge of Freedman's Town. As the two men started to unpack their belongings from the moving truck, white residents in the neighborhood gathered outside. Housewives wearing pearls, fine dresses, and high heels threw stones at passing cars with black occupants and targeted the windows of both Walker's and Johnson's homes. Police responded to the scene by removing rocks from the area—not by arresting the women. The lack of intervention received praise from white residents of the neighborhood. "Somebody oughta give those cops a boost," one resident said. "They've been pretty swell. If they hadn't been pretty thoughtful and considerate, I guess every woman in the block would be in jail by now."[52]

More than a year of terror and violence followed the rock-throwing melee. Nine days after the stoning, an unidentified person threw dynamite into the shrubs next to the house owned by Walker. After the explosion, two men ran outside from the Walker house armed with shotguns, but the bomber had already left the scene.[53] White terrorism then extended into South Dallas as African Americans displaced by the slum clearance moved into close proximity to the newly built all-black Lincoln High School in South Dallas near Exline Park. A dynamite blast destroyed the garage of Earl Jones a few weeks after someone from the neighborhood hung a

[51] "Gov't Scored for Location of Housing Project," *Pittsburgh Courier* July 29, 1939; Robert B. Fairbanks, "From Consensus to Controversy," 37-38; Fairbanks, *For the City as a Whole,* 158.
[52] "Howell Street Battle Reaches Truce After Negro Home Stoned," *DMN* September 4, 1940, 17.
[53] "Bomb Rocks House in Howell Street While Armed Negroes Are on Guard," *DMN* September 12, 1940.

black dummy in effigy with a sign threatening African Americans to stay out of the district.[54] The following month, two more bombings occurred as more black families moved into the area. In addition, nearly six hundred white residents of the area filed into Ascher Silberstein Elementary School, where they formed the South Dallas Civic League and demanded that the school board turn Lincoln High over to whites or else more violence would ensue. When that plan failed, an anonymous individual made bomb threats against Lincoln High School, delaying its opening for more than a year.[55]

Terroristic bombings continued well into 1941—targeting not only black residents and business owners moving into white neighborhoods but also well-known and prominent African American leaders. In April, white residents bombed the home of Charles T. Brackins, a prominent black Dallasite and "wealthy bondsmen," causing Brackins to suffer a mild heart attack. Shortly before the attack, Brackins had filed NAACP secretary George F. Porter's application for the vacant city manager position, and white residents saw Porter's application as directly challenging the color line.[56] The CCA-dominated city council responded to the bombings not by pressuring law enforcement to capture the bombers but by further enforcing racial residential segregation. On October 16, 1940, the city council passed an ordinance preventing African Americans from buying homes in designated white neighborhoods. The ordinance was later rescinded after Federal Judge William H. Atwell reminded the council that state legislation for racial zoning was unconstitutional. Mayor Woodall Rodgers also blamed black residents who had moved into white neighborhoods for causing the disturbances, and

[54] "Bomb Blast Garage at Negro's Home Near Scene of Recent Effigy Hanging," *DMN* September 17, 1940.
[55] "Threat to Dynamite Negro School Made; 30 Police on Guard," *DMN* October 5, 1940; Fairbanks, *For the City as a Whole,* 158.
[56] "Wealthy Negro's Home Damaged in Bombing," *DMN* April 5, 1941; "Negro Applies for City Manager Job in Dallas," *Dallas Express* April 12, 1941.

offered to buy back the homes of black residents as a solution that would "be in the best interests of all citizens in Dallas." As a result, black leaders became more outspoken about the city's racial ills, charging that city leaders remained complicit with the perpetrators of the violence by failing to provide adequate police protection to black homeowners. "What will have to be done to make Dallas Policemen wake-up and take some action on the bombings in Negro neighborhoods," the *Dallas Express* protested.[57] In an attempt to unseat and throttle the CCA's dominance on municipal politics as the PVL had done in 1937, the League vowed to oppose Mayor Rodgers in the 1941 city council election because of his inaction against the recent racial terrorism.[58] Pressuring the CCA-backed council failed to convince the white officials to act. The alliance of the Citizens Council and the Charter Association proved too resilient to break.

African Americans in Dallas routinely pointed out the ways in which white-on-black violence and terrorism prevailed in Dallas and how white local leaders in tandem with white reactionaries effectively kept blacks from disrupting the color line. African Americans received no help from local law enforcement in obtaining protection from the threats or actual instances of white-on-black crime. As a result, African Americans turned increasingly to protecting themselves since they could not rely on formal law enforcement to act on their behalf. While they severely distrusted law enforcement in the ways it currently operated and existed, African American leaders were willing to accept the institution—arguing that it could operate justly to protect all of the city's residents. It simply needed reform from virtually every level—policing, jurors, and elected officials who would be willing to address the concerns of African American residents adequately.

The Dallas NAACP and the Texas State Conference

[57] Fairbanks, *For the City as a Whole*, 159.
[58] "Mayor Woodall Rogers' Name Left Off Negro Slate," *Dallas Express* March 29, 1941.

At the same time that Smith worked with civil rights organizations for the Texas Centennial, Smith also pushed to restructure the local NAACP branch and to link other NAACP chapters across the state into a unified state conference.[59] Branches in Texas popped up for the most part after the First World War after the war generated a new consciousness on behalf of African Americans to confront their second-class citizenship.[60] The Houston Race Riot of 1917, for example, served as the catalyst for the formation of the Houston branch when NAACP fieldworker Martha Gruening found the time "ripe for organizing."[61] The Dallas NAACP formally organized in 1918 when Ammon S. Wells and teacher George F. Porter met at New Hope Baptist Church. The chapter laid dormant for years after being intimidated out of existence when the Klan-dominated Dallas Police Department required every meeting be monitored by an officer. Porter reported to the national NAACP office that he and other NAACP members were "afraid to death" to hold meetings because of the Klan.[62]

Despite this terror and intimidation, the Dallas chapter remained open but had little influence on politics until the organization of the state conference in 1937. At the state level, the conference focused on three major priorities: elimination of the white primary; expanding NAACP membership across the state by organizing new chapters and youth councils; and

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[59] The national NAACP organization formed in 1909 in New York City and sought to launch a formal attack against the social, educational, and political discrimination against African Americans across the United States. In order to attack such injustices, the NAACP used the legal system to fully explicate the myriad ways in which white Americans routinely denied African Americans their Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendment rights. For more on the founding and strategies of the NAACP, see Patricia Sullivan, *Lift Every Voice: The NAACP and the Making of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: The New Press, 2009); Gilbert Jonas, *Freedom's Sword: The NAACP and the Struggle Against Racism in America, 1909-1969* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

[60] Michael L. Gillette, "The Rise of the NAACP in Texas," 394. See also Steven A. Reich, "Soldiers of Democracy: Black Texans and the Fight for Citizenship, 1917-1921," *Journal of American History* 82:4 (March 1996), 1478-1504.

[61] Michael L. Gillette, "The NAACP in Texas, 1937-1957," PhD Dissertation (University of Texas, 1984), 1; Merline Pitre, *In Struggle Against Jim Crow: Lulu B. White and the NAACP, 1900-1957* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2010 [1999]), 25-26. For more on the Houston Race Riot, see Adriane Lentz-Smith, *Freedom Struggles: African Americans and World War I* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), particularly chapter two.

[62] Payne, *Quest for Justice,* 31.

desegregating higher (and later public elementary and secondary) education.[63] But the formation of the Texas State Conference did not wholly usurp the Dallas branch. On the contrary, the local NAACP rejuvenated in an independent fashion through the branch secretary and former NAACP president, George F. Porter. As a former teacher and current president of Wiley Junior College in Dallas, Porter and his outspoken nature on the issues facing African Americans in Dallas garnered new impetus in the aftermath of the Scottsboro case. By 1937, several of the Alabama cases reached the Supreme Court, which then ruled that the state of Alabama denied the defendants their Fourteenth Amendment rights by not allowing a jury of their peers. This ruling inspired Porter to continue his confrontational and direct-action tactics to claim his equal protection rights. No stranger to challenging Dallas's color line, Porter first answered his summons to jury service in 1921 and, after a series of threats that included a lynching, Porter left the courthouse without serving on the jury. He elected to use the same tactic again when summoned in 1936, but similar threats against his life convinced Porter to leave before violence ensued.[64] Now armed with a Supreme Court ruling in the Alabama Scottsboro cases, Porter reentered the Dallas County Courthouse in 1938 and again refused to leave until he received a seat on the jury. On September 28, two days after his sit-in protest began, two white men grabbed Porter and threw him head first down the courthouse steps. Porter reentered the courthouse despite this violence, but was summarily dismissed by Federal Judge Sarah T. Hughes and Judge Paine L. Bush. Porter's injuries from the assault led him to give up his quest on the jury.[65]

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[63] "Dallas Branch NAACP Continues Campaign," *Dallas Express* June 26, 1937; Ramona Houston, "The NAACP State Conference in Texas: Intermediary and Catalyst for Change, 1937-1957," *The Journal of African American History* 94:4 (Fall 2009), 510.
[64] "Negro Tries to Get on Jury," *DMN* September 27, 1938; George F. Porter, "My Experience In A Dallas Jury Room," *Dallas Express* October 1, 1938.
[65] "Tossed Out Negro Ends His Jury Vigil," *DMN* September 29, 1938; "Assault On Negro Juryman Protested To Governor," *Dallas Express* October 8, 1938.

The national NAACP grew disturbed by Porter's treatment. The New York offices sent out requests for aid to NAACP branches all across the nation so that Thurgood Marshall could travel to Dallas to investigate the case.[66] By mid-October, Marshall arrived in Dallas while Walter White delivered a scathing rebuke to Texas Governor James Allred denouncing Porter's attack in the presence of court attaches and sheriff deputies who refused to intervene on Porter's behalf. "The rights and privileges of jury service," Walter wrote, "are among the most fundamental privileges of American citizenship. Jurymen as officers of the court are entitled to the fullest protection of the laws. This denial, therefore, of protection to Mr. Porter as a juror summoned to duty is a denial of civil rights and a flagrant violation of law, both state and federal."[67]

Though Porter gave up his own personal quest for a seat on a Dallas jury, African Americans in Dallas continued to press their case into the 1940s. In a 1942 case sponsored by the Dallas NAACP, the Supreme Court reversed the conviction against Henry Allen Hill, an African American man from Dallas accused of raping and murdering a white woman, after no African Americans served on the indicting jury.[68] The NAACP lawsuit and the Supreme Court's decision in *Hill v. Texas* ultimately persuaded other African Americans convicted to pursue similar forms of justice. In 1941, L. C. Akins, an African American janitor, was charged for the murder of Dallas police officer Victor Leon Morris. Akins pushed past Morris's wife as they prepared to enter a streetcar in downtown Dallas. When Morris objected, some witnesses reported Akins flashed Morris a knife, but others refuted that claim. In any event, the disgruntled and plain-

[66] Letter, Alma M. Givens to Walter White, October 19, 1938, San Diego, California branch operations, 1937-1939, NAACP Papers; Letter, Walter White to Dr. Harry J. Groene, October 11, 1938, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania branch operations, 1938, NAACP Papers.
[67] "NAACP Lawyer Probes Brutal Assault on Juror," *Dallas Express* October 15, 1938; Quote from "Assault on Negro Juryman Protested to Governor Allred," *Dallas Express* October 8, 1938.
[68] See *Hill v. Texas,* 316 U.S. 400 (1942); Gillette, "The Rise of the NAACP in Texas," 399.

clothed officer drew his pistol and shot Akins in the abdomen. Akins managed to wrestle the gun away from Morris, and then shot and killed the officer.[69] Police arrested Akins and charged him with felony murder, and at his trial the following month, the jury found him guilty and sentenced him to life imprisonment. But Akins appealed his case, arguing that since no African Americans served on either the grand or petit juries, he did not receive a fair trial. The Court of Criminal Appeals agreed with Akins and reversed his conviction. He was then re-indicted by a new grand jury, which now had one African American.[70]

Porter's assault in the Dallas courtroom brought national attention to the injustices in the city of Dallas. Local and national leaders refused to allow his assault to go unrecognized and continued to press for changes in the criminal justice system and its discriminatory practices in jury selection. The two cases following Porter's assault—Hill and Akins—successfully petitioned the court to address the inequities that denied African Americans their Fourteenth Amendment rights. But the placement of a token African American grand juror only created the appearance that African Americans could receive a fair trial. In the second Akins trial, for example, the jury found him guilty in the slaying of Officer Morris and sentenced him to death by electrocution. Akins appealed his sentencing all the way to the Supreme Court, but the court denied retrying his case, arguing that the placement of one African American on the grand jury was "sufficient for the indictment to be valid." Akins ultimately escaped the electric chair when the Negro Chamber of Commerce in Dallas petitioned the Board of Pardons and Paroles, who

[69] "Black Slayer of Cop Faces Speedy Trial," *Dallas Times Herald,* September 16, 1941; Letter from Col. George W. Griffith to Governor Coke Stevenson, August 2, 1945, Box 1, Folder 6, Negro Chamber of Commerce Collection, Dallas Public Library, Dallas, Texas; "Killer of Policeman Demands His Freedom Because No Negro Served on Indicting Jury," *DMN* October 28, 1941.
[70] "New Trial Set For Negro Slayer of Policeman," *DMN* February 18, 1943.

ultimately convinced Texas Governor Coke Stevenson to commute Akins' sentence to life imprisonment in 1945.[71]

After the *Hill v. Texas* decision, black residents saw Porter's actions and deliberations as a win for the larger black community. Furthermore, Porter's vocal denunciations against the city of Dallas and their lackadaisical approach to handling the bombings in South Dallas prompted widespread support for Porter. But his newfound success often came at a cost with other black leaders. In a letter to Roy Wilkins at the national office, Porter wrote that he had a difficult time convincing the Dallas Branch to support Earl Jones, one of the victims of the Dallas house bombings in 1940, and his lawsuit against the city because "so many are afraid it might offend the white folk." In his own words, Porter claimed to represent the more "militant" side of the branch. Indeed, he was outspoken about the injustices in Dallas and state politics and hated bowing down to the more "ultra-conservative" members, including branch president Dr. B. E. Howell, who had voiced displeasure about Porter's publicizing NAACP activities in the *Dallas Express*. "My theory," Porter wrote to Wilkins, "has been that you win easily by doing things for [the black community], and as a result the rank and file will fight for me."[72]

At the time of the Dallas NAACP's support of legal cases to integrate juries, the Texas State Conference of the NAACP made profound decisions that ultimately changed the political dynamic of the civil rights movement going forward. In an effort to hire a local attorney to fight the Democratic white primary, the state conference hired prominent black North Texas attorney W. J. Durham to try the case in addition to the numerous other lawsuits from the area. In 1941,

[71] Letter from Coke Stevenson to Col. George W. Griffith, August 7, 1945, Box 1, Folder 6, Negro Chamber of Commerce Collection; "Akins' Life Spared by Governor," *DMN* September 30, 1945.
[72] Quotes from Letter from G. F. Porter to Dean William Pickens, Dallas, Texas Branch Operations, 1940-1943, NAACP Papers; Letter from G. F. Porter to Roy Wilkins, April 30, 1941, Dallas, Texas Branch Operations, NAACP Papers.

A. Maceo Smith working with the Negro Chamber of Commerce also initiated a lawsuit to level black teachers' salaries comparable to whites. Out of this quest, African American leaders in Dallas created the Dallas Council of Negro Organizations (DCNO) in 1942, which consisted of the NAACP, the PVL, the Negro Chamber, the IMA, and nineteen other organizations. The DCNO operated as a coordinating agency amongst all the disparate civil rights organizations to spearhead attacks on all discrimination and segregation practices. The organization hired Durham to file the case, and in February 1943, he won the *Page v. Board of Education, City of Dallas* case, which granted pay raises to black teachers over a two-year period.[73]

Consolidating the efforts of civil rights organizations granted meaningful changes across the board to the state's African American population. But it was Porter and the Dallas NAACP's support of victims of police-related assaults that continued to make Porter an important figure in the struggle for police accountability. One such instance involved the assault in 1941 on nineteen-year-old George Paul Flanagan, the son of Minnie Flanagan who later became the Dallas NAACP branch president in 1959. While en route to work, George waited outside a bus transfer station with several other white patrons. When the bus arrived, George patiently waited for his turn to board but as he inched forward, a white man jerked George back. "How dare you board this bus ahead of these white people," the man yelled. The teenager replied, "Sure, I'll let the ladies on," and stepped back to let all the white women board the bus. The angry patron then shoved George out of the way entirely and boarded the vehicle. Hours later, the teenager received a visit at his job site from a detective and two other uniformed police officers. The officers informed George he was under arrest and needed to come down to the station for formal booking. George complied and followed the men to the police car, where officers placed him in

[73] Dulaney, "Whatever Happened in Dallas, Texas," 73-74. The DCNO later spread across the state to create the Texas Council of Negro Organizations. Hine, *Black Victory*, 99.

the back seat and headed toward the county jail. After driving away, the detective told the other officers that he needed to "give this nigger a working over." The detective then pulled his gun and proceeded to beat George with a blackjack Billy club.[74] Police took him to the hospital after his injuries proved severe, never formally charging the teen with any crime.

News of Flanagan's assault soon made its way to national civil rights leaders. Good friends of the Flanagans, Pullman Porter G. C. Rawlston relayed the details of the assault to A. Phillip Randolph and asked him for assistance. Randolph summoned the national offices of the NAACP, and in response, Thurgood Marshall replied in a letter to Randolph that the Dallas branch of the NAACP would be able to hire lawyers from that area to handle the case. Furthermore, he replied that "the Dallas police department has an extremely bad record for police brutality, and we must fight each of these cases as they come to us in the hope of eventually breaking down the practice of brutality."[75] Porter remained unconvinced that the case would be successful in court. In a letter to Thurgood Marshall, Porter wrote that Dallas's District Attorney Dean Gauldin refused to file a complaint before the grand jury, "alleging it was against his practice to file complaints against police officers." He also reported two more cases—one in which a white man raped a black woman and the DA similarly refused to bring charges against the assailant; the other a Highland Park officer beat and arrested a "sick woman" in the presence of two Dallas officers. Fearing that no formal charges would be brought against the assaulting officer, George's mother Minnie Flanagan formed the Mothers, Wives and Sisters Committee, an ad-hoc group that approached the Dallas Police Department in an effort to "cease an orgy of brutality toward Negroes."[76]

[74] Letter, G. C. Rawlston to A. Phillip Randolph, Undated, NAACP Papers.
[75] Letter from Thurgood Marshall to A. Phillip Randolph, September 16, 1941, NAACP Papers.
[76] Program and Accomplishments of the Dallas Branch, NAACP, During 1940-1941, Dallas branch operations, 1940-1943, NAACP Papers.

Police brutality amongst the black population had been a longstanding issue in Dallas. In 1939, four black women came forward and reported to A. Maceo Smith at the Negro Chamber that two white police officers arrested them, but before taking the women to the jail, the police demanded that the women "submit to the officers" or be charged with vagrancy.[77] It is unclear as to whether an investigation took place after that incident. But the actions of the Dallas Branch and the creation of Minnie Flanagan's ad hoc committee signifies a crucial distinction in the organizing strategies of black civil rights leadership and organizations. As the mother of George and a committed member to the Dallas NAACP, Flanagan could no longer afford to sit on the sidelines and hope that waiting for an integrated police force would cease hostilities between the white-dominated police department and the larger black population. On one hand, several black leaders, including A. Maceo Smith, Rev. Maynard H. Jackson, and Rev. E. C. Estell continued to press for integration measures, hoping that police-related assaults would thereby decrease with the hiring of black police. On the other hand, Porter and Flanagan sought a dual strategy—advocating integration in addition to denouncing police brutality.

These distinctions became clearly evident when race relations between black military personnel, black civilians, and white police officers reached a new boiling point on January 3, 1943. According to published reports, three white Military Police Officers were called to Midway Café in Freedman's Town to investigate the alleged theft of a pistol by a black soldier. The MPs located the suspect at the tavern next door and began questioning him when the soldier struck one of the officers. Seconds later, a fight broke out between the black soldiers and patrons and the MPs, prompting the military police to call for backup from the DPD. Fighting soon spilled into the streets and resumed for more than three hours with some black civilians and

[77] "4 Women File Charges Against Dallas Police," *Chicago Defender* April 15, 1939.

soldiers retreating into the State Theater, where they were confronted by officers and backed into a corner with "rifle butts" and "abusive language." Finally, the provost marshal for the Dallas area arrived on the scene and called to formation all black soldiers. MPs apprehended nearly seventy-five soldiers and placed them in squad cars whereas the other 500 were sent back to their military bases in nearby Grand Prairie and Mineral Wells.[78]

The riot in Freedman's Town was the culmination of pent up frustrations held by African American enlisted men in Dallas. As the nation fought fascism and racism abroad, white Americans still subjected black servicemen to discriminatory treatment on the home front. Black soldiers reported to local civil rights organizations that they had limited options for eating facilities when traveling through the city and had to ride in segregated train cars. NAACP Youth Council organizer Juanita Craft recalled her dissatisfaction with segregation in a 1977 interview when she remembered a group of German prisoners-of-war were brought to the POW camp just outside of Fair Park. "I was disturbed very much when [the German POWs] were brought to the state of Texas in a first-class environment," Craft remembered, "eating in the restaurant in the train stations. But there were some Negro soldiers who had been wounded, who were not able to get food in that same environment."[79] Alarmed at the outbreak of violence in Dallas, black leaders quickly took action. In 1943, a month before the *Page v. Board* decision, the DCNO appointed a special committee to investigate the maltreatment of black soldiers and civilians during the fracas. The committee called for recreation centers for black soldiers and the hiring of black police to patrol.[80]

[78] "Soldiers, Police Clash On Dallas Streets," *Dallas Express* January 9, 1943; Payne, *Big D*, 236-237.
[79] Interview with Juanita Jewel Craft. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, 9.
[80] Dulaney, "Whatever Happened in Dallas, Texas," 74; Payne, *Big D*, 237.

Dallas NAACP branch members also took action. Branch secretary George F. Porter fashioned together a committee that included Charles R. Graggs, Rev. T. M. Chambers, Rev. C. D. Knight, and Minnie Flanagan and scheduled an interview with Major Gen. Richard Donovan, commanding officer of the Eighth Service Command. In his letter to Walter White, Porter reported that he and the committee "commanded" that Negro Military Police replace white MPs patrolling black servicemen in Dallas. Donovan agreed to this order, and by February 6, nine black Military Police were appointed to patrol. "We developed an argument," Porter wrote to Walter White at the national offices, "that white civilian police had been so unfair and brutal toward the Negro that a feeling of resentment had developed in the minds of Negroes both military and civilians." The committee believed, Porter continued, that the placement of black MPs would "help pave the way for Negro civilian police in Dallas."[81]

Racialized violence continued to escalate despite the NAACP's success when, in April 1943, a street car driver removed the colored division sign and told four black soldiers to move to the back. Protesting the loss of their seat, the soldiers picked up the sign and threw it out the window, causing a nearby white policeman to abruptly arrest the individuals. Two of the men were recuperating from their wounds fighting Nazis overseas only to find themselves segregated and forcefully removed from the street cars in Dallas.[82] In response, Dallas officials created a new biracial committee to promote better race relations between white and black residents of Dallas.[83] Black leaders like Rev. E. C. Estell, Rev. Jackson of New Hope Baptist Church, and A. Maceo Smith used the group to advocate for improvements for African American life in the city,

[81] Letter from G. F. Porter to Walter White, February 11, 1943, Dallas, Texas Branch Operations, 1940-1943, NAACP Papers.
[82] Guy C. Vanderpool, "The *Dallas Express* and the Double V Campaign," *Legacies: A History Journal for Dallas and North Central Texas* 20:1 (Spring 2008), 41.
[83] "City Group Named to End Racial Ills," *DMN* March 17, 1943.

including better parks and recreation facilities, better schools and health facilities, and a stronger law enforcement policy in black neighborhoods. Using the same tactics that had emerged in the 1930s, Smith, Estell, and others drew public attention to rising black-on-black homicides in Dallas to persuade public officials. According to Estell, approximately eighty murders had taken place in Dallas throughout 1943; fifty-nine of those murders were "Negroes murdered by other Negroes" and that at least eight had killed more than one person. "Many of these murders are a case of pure neglect on the part of law enforcement," Estell reasoned.[84]

Their efforts finally paid off when, in March 1947, Lee G. Brotherton and Benjamin Thomas went on duty as the city's first official African American police officers in Dallas. In a study that coincided with the Negro Chamber's quest for equal pay for black teachers and the NAACP's challenge the state's white primary, A. Maceo Smith received several testimonials from Houston and Austin's police departments, who spoke on behalf of black officers in their respective departments. Smith then circulated those reports to the local Dallas papers. The Law and Crime Committee, organized by Council of Social Agencies and consisting of three whites and two African Americans, supported the findings. The committee then studied crime among African Americans and used Smith's recommendations to address the city council and persuade councilmembers to hire black officers. According to historian Marvin Dulaney, Dallas actually became one of the "last southern cities to join a movement that was sweeping the South."[85]

Outwardly, the hiring of Brotherton and Thomas looked as though the city wanted to address the concerns of African American residents in Dallas by integrating the police force. In reality, however, the integration was tokenism at best. The Dallas Police Department subjected black applicants to qualification exams that generally resulted in a failing score, preventing the

[84] "More Parks Proposed for Negroes," *DMN* June 3, 1944.
[85] Dulaney, *Black Police in America,* 37-38.

vast majority of black applicants from ever being hired. The few who did pass, like Brotherton and Thomas, were restricted to State-Thomas-Hall neighborhood in Freedman's Town and could only arrest African Americans. Furthermore, the Dallas police chief prohibited the officers from dressing in their uniforms with the other white officers at the downtown station, leaving the two to change at the Roseland Homes housing project on Hall Street. They were also restricted to walking their beats instead of driving patrol cars.[86]

Despite the token integration measures, Dallas black leaders treated the hiring of black police on the city's police force as a significant gain for the entire black population in Dallas. Black leaders like A. Maceo Smith had advocated for more than a decade that black police officers would not only quell mob violence but would also allow more equitable policing measures to take place in the city. They continually pointed to black neighborhood's high murder rate, especially black-on-black crime, as evidence that the police department refused to patrol the segregated neighborhoods equally than their white counterparts. By doing so, however, Smith and others played upon white conceptions that linked race and crime. Rather than accepting the problematic economic factors that routinely discriminated against the majority of African Americans, black leaders in Dallas fashioned a "tough on crime" stance believing that elimination of criminal behavior would facilitate African American acceptance into white cultural norms.[87] Their rigorous efforts in dismantling rigid housing segregation practices and increasing the political strength of the black population provided them with significant potency in determining public policy. They had seen some changes implemented at the local level, including the appointment of a black grand juror in the wake of the Scottsboro cases, which

[86] Dulaney, *Black Police in America*, 52; Payne, *Quest for Justice*, 74.
[87] For more on this argument, see Khalil Gibran Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of a Modern Urban America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010).

pointed to the idea that the entire criminal justice system might finally prevail on its promises of equal protection. Even so, tensions between the white-dominated police force and the larger black population continued to escalate as many in the city wondered if the DPD's change in hiring practices would end discriminatory policing.

CHAPTER II:
"ALL THE NECESSARY INGREDIENTS:" THE CLASSICAL PHASE IN THE "CITY OF HATE," 1947-1965

By the time the Dallas Police Department integrated in 1947, civil rights organizations in Dallas had built statewide connections aimed to dismantle the economic, political, and social barriers designed by Jim Crow. On the local level, the Negro Chamber of Commerce, the Progressive Voters League, and the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance had pressured white city leaders in acting on their commitment to the "city as a whole" by maintaining that better police protection in black neighborhoods served the best interests of all Dallas residents. Additionally, with the advent of the Texas State Conference of Branches of the NAACP, the Dallas NAACP succeeded in implementing valuable reforms both within the criminal justice system and in the military policing troubles during the Second World War. The Texas State Conference also showed its strength when the Supreme Court ruled in 1944 that the use of the white primaries in single party states violated African Americans' right to vote. The *Smith v. Allwright* victory signaled to black leaders that the Supreme Court, the highest court of the United States, finally swung the gavel on the side of civil rights.[1]

Local civil rights leaders hoped to use the momentum of the *Smith* decision to continue pursuing the promises of American democracy and first-class citizenship in the postwar era. They made significant strides in previous decades to increase voter participation, but the *Smith* decision provided the ability to continue using the political process via the Democratic Party primaries. At the same time, however, the success of the federal lawsuit also exposed the existing tensions within the growing movement, particularly with the Dallas NAACP and the Progressive Voters League. Disagreements over partisan politics, organizing strategies, personal

[1] For more on the *Smith v. Allwright* victory, see Darlene Clark Hine, *Black Victory: The Rise and Fall of the White Primary in Texas* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2003 [1979]).

philosophies, and differing personalities all clashed going into the 1950s, leaving many black organizers to rethink their pronounced commitment to desegregation in the years after the landmark decision.

Black organizers also entered a political climate that was starkly different from that of the previous two decades. While the effects of the New Deal and the Second World War all provided some tangible benefits for the civil rights agenda, the beginning of the Cold War and the use of red-baiting limited the ways in which African Americans could climb the political ladder. It also nearly destroyed one of the most powerful civil rights organizations of its time. This forced African American activists to make adjustments in their organizing endeavors. Ultimately, black leaders used issues in equitable policing, racial bias within the criminal justice system, and police brutality as unifying components to galvanize support from the politically awakened black electorate and to measure the success of their organizing.

Dallas in the postwar era was also a much different place than in previous decades. City leaders had become increasingly preoccupied with the city's image as hundreds of thousands of transplants relocated to the burgeoning metropolis. As capital relocated to the city, civic leaders played upon the city's mythical origin story—that Dallas had no reason to exist except that the city become a site of development throughout the twentieth century because of the hard work and bootstraps mentality of white professionals. They called the philosophy "The Dallas Way," a phrase that had existed for decades in the local lexicon but reemerged with a vengeance in the postwar era.[2] City leaders prophesied that Dallas would become the beacon and an exemplar of the promises of free market capitalism.

[2] See Harvey Graff, *The Dallas Myth: The Making and Unmaking of an American City* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).

Racial violence threatened to tarnish the city's reputation. The city's postwar housing crisis erupted into attacks against black mobility in the same fashion it had in the 1940s. African Americans called upon white city officials and the local police department to dispel the violence, but it was only after African Americans defended themselves from white reactionary violence that city leaders acquiesced to such demands. White leaders thus became preoccupied in managing or controlling the actions of everyday African Americans in the city. As the classical phase of the civil rights movement made its way across the South, white city leaders jumped at the chance to protect the city image, fearing that, if left to their own devices in the call for racial equality, African Americans might go unchecked and turn to violent forms of civic protest. It was not so much that white leaders wanted to curtail violence across the board. On the contrary, they had only minimally denounced whites' use of violence against blacks during times of expanded black mobility. But black violence posed an image problem, so white city leaders worked to control black activism in the city. But surprisingly, Dallas's preoccupation with its image ultimately became a weapon that black civil rights activists could wield to convince white city officials to address systemic racism in the city.

The NAACP after the Smith Ruling

Enthusiasm for the NAACP initially skyrocketed nationwide in the years after the landmark *Smith v. Allwright* ruling. Membership increased steadily in the few years after the Supreme Court determined that the use of white primaries violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Despite the ruling, the NAACP thereafter saw a steady decline of interest well into the 1950s. Several reasons account for this decline. Throughout the 1940s, the NAACP closely aligned itself with organized labor, particularly the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), whose affiliations with the Communist Party and its record of "civil rights

unionism" provided substantial voting and citizenship rights for its African American laborers, particularly during the Second World War.[3] Known for their staunchly anti-labor policies, southern Democrats in the postwar era often red-baited the NAACP, arguing that the organization's preoccupation with equality between the races and its working relationship with the CIO amounted to the policies of Communist Russia.[4] African Americans often joined into the red-baiting hysteria, accusing some members including Lulu B. White, head of the Houston NAACP, as a Communist-sympathizer, or even worse, as a Communist herself.[5] This, in turn, made it difficult for the organization to maintain a steady base of support in the context of the Cold War and McCarthy era.

Internal disagreements over organizing strategies and the use of legal desegregation cases additionally provided serious friction between movement leaders. These matters intensified as the organization sought to desegregate the University of Texas (UT). As the *Sweatt v. Painter* lawsuit made its way through the courts, tensions over the NAACP's desegregation strategy emerged. National NAACP offices categorically opposed segregation and argued that the establishment of separate facilities would never lift the forces of discrimination against the majority of African Americans. Some state leaders like Carter Wesley, publisher of the Houston *Informer* and later the *Dallas Express,* argued to the contrary—that true equality could be accomplished through the "separate but equal" doctrine. Wesley believed that the separate but equal framework made it possible for the desegregation of UT and for the creation of Texas State

[3] For works on "civil rights unionism," see Robert Korstad, *Civil Rights Unionism: Tobacco Workers and the Struggle for Democracy in the Mid-Twentieth Century South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Robert Korstad and Nelson Lichtenstein, "Opportunities Found and Lost: Labor, Radicals, and the Early Civil Rights Movement," *Journal of American History* 75:2 (December 1988), 786-811.
[4] See Jeff Woods, *Black Struggle, Red Scare: Segregation and Anti-Communism in the South, 1948-1968* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 2003); Yashuhiro Katagiri, *Black Freedom, White Resistance, and Red Menace: Civil Rights and Anticommunism in the Jim Crow South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2014).
[5] Carter Wesley and editor of Houston's *Negro Labor News* C. W. Rice made the most visible charges of White's sympathetic leanings toward communism. Pitre, *In Struggle Against Jim Crow*, 72.

University for Negroes (now Texas Southern University), a separate all-black educational facility.[6] As historian Merline Pitre states, Wesley believed it was possible for "blacks to have their cake and eat it, too."[7]

The national NAACP's stark stance against segregation in any case made it difficult for state members to fully trust the organization as the sole voice against racial injustice. Carter Wesley broke with the institution as a result of the organization's desegregation stance, and others soon found themselves teetering on the edge between loyalty and disaffection. A. Maceo Smith found himself on the brink of this dilemma regarding Dallas's pressing housing problem. Smith, who had become the regional relations advisor for the Federal Housing Authority in 1939, continually pressed for federal intervention in Dallas's black housing crisis throughout the 1940s. When President Harry Truman's administration passed the Housing Act of 1949, Smith and the national NAACP were at odds because the bill committed to segregated public housing units. Smith appealed to the NAACP State Board, affirmed his belief in nondiscrimination but argued that housing was an equally pressing issue for African Americans in Dallas. He urged the NAACP for more flexibility, but the national office withheld its support from any "federal legislation in fields of housing, health, and education which does not expressly forbid segregation." As a result, the national NAACP offices ended up siding with northern conservative Republicans, who had strategically proposed non-segregated units as a way to kill the housing bill. [8]

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[6] For more on the creation of Texas Southern University, see Merline Pitre, *Born to Serve: A History of Texas Southern University* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2018).

[7] Wesley argued that the Texas Negro Conference of Equalization of Education, the Texas Council of Negro Organizations should join the fight. Pitre, *In Struggle Against Jim Crow*, 92, 97. Gillette, "The NAACP in Texas, 1937-1957," 108. Also see Neil Sapper, "The Fall of the NAACP in Texas," *Houston Review* 7 (1985), 53-68 and Michael L. Gillette, "Blacks Challenge the White University," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 86:2 (October 1982), 321-344.

[8] Conservative Republican Senators John W. Bricker of Ohio and Harry P. Cain of Washington proposed an amendment to kill the federal housing bill. As a way to alienate southern congressional support, the amendment

The NAACP's commitment to desegregation posed a different set of challenges when the association formed the Southwest Regional Office. Founded out of the NAACP's annual convention in 1946, the regional office based in Dallas provided support for local NAACP offices in Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, and Oklahoma. The Texas State Conference, as did other state conferences in the region, remained intact but reported directly to the regional headquarters located in Dallas. Thurgood Marshall hired Donald Jones as the regional office's Executive Secretary and U. Simpson Tate, an African American lawyer from Washington D.C., as the regional legal counsel with the intent that a full-time professional delegation would stimulate NAACP branches to prepare lawsuits to desegregate education across the area.[9] The creation of a new regional office, and others around the nation, spurred additional costs for the association. In an effort to help fund the new establishment, the NAACP increased its nationwide membership dues from one dollar to two dollars per year.[10]

As Tate spent the majority of his time working to desegregate junior and community colleges in Texas, he grew concerned that the Association's frontal assault on segregation and the NAACP's increased membership dues alienated many African Americans "on issues which the public is not in sympathy." It is unclear to exactly determine what Tate meant by not having the sympathy of the public, but evidence suggests that Tate made this connection after a significant contingent of branches reporting to the Regional Office wanted the NAACP to focus

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forbade discrimination in all public housing. White and black liberals agonized before opposing the amendment, ultimately concluding that new public housing was a more pressing need than desegregated units. Alexander von Hoffman, "A Study in Contradictions: The Origins and Legacy of the Housing Act of 1949," *Housing Policy Debate* 11:2 (2000), 309. Quote from Gillette, "The NAACP in Texas, 1937-1957," 123. For more on the history of the public housing debate and the Housing Act of 1949, see Rhonda Y. Williams, *The Politics of Public Housing: Black Women's Struggles Against Urban Inequality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004); Arnold Hirsch, "'Containment' on the Home Front: Race and Federal Housing Policy from the New Deal to the Cold War," *Journal of Urban History* 26:2 (January 2000), 158-189.

[9] Gillette, "The NAACP in Texas, 1937-1957," 134-135, 138.

[10] Gillette, "The NAACP in Texas, 1937-1957," 113.

on criminal cases, which involved the "elemental civil rights with which Negroes in general are more concerned."[11] In fact, Texas branch members brought up the issue at its annual state conference meeting in Austin in early October 1951. At the meeting, the conference's State Legal Committee convinced Tate and the Regional Office to begin screening criminal cases, providing full financial assistance if necessary, and further determined to follow up on cases of police brutality. "There is evidence," Tate wrote to the NAACP's New York offices, "that federal courts in the South are now tending to prosecute cases where a criminal conspiracy to deprive one of his civil rights can be proved…" He also outlined how to use the political system to issue complaints against police officers in brutality cases and how voting would hold elected officials accountable for addressing concerns of police brutality. "The means of dealing with cases of that nature is usually political," Tate continued. "This then, presents a method by which Negroes may be urged to qualify and vote."[12]

Upon Thurgood Marshall's seal of approval, the Southwest Regional Office enacted a campaign to assist and counsel criminal proceedings. In this endeavor, the Regional Office increased its workload across the five states and, in tandem with filing public education desegregation lawsuits and launching poll tax drives, Tate also represented African American clients accused of rape, murder, and other offenses and initiated civil suits in claims of police brutality. In one case, Tate approached the Dallas City Council on behalf of Frederick Killingsworth, an African American man arrested in his car while "in company of a woman"

[11] Quotes from Gillette, The NAACP in Texas, 1937-1957," 113. It should be noted that Tate strongly supported desegregation efforts. At the Southwest Regional Conference held in Dallas in March 1950, Tate stated that African Americans "must get ready for the new era in which we will be when segregation ends. The white man is preparing himself more than the Negro. The Negro must prepare for integration—by respecting others and ourselves. Stop segregating ourselves—after all is said and done we will eventually stand on our own [merits]." Minutes of the Southwest Regional Conference of the NAACP, March 25, 1950, Southwest Regional Reports, 1950, NAACP Papers.

[12] Report of Regional Special Counsel of the Southwest Region of the NAACP for the Month of October 1951, October 26, 1951, Southwest Regional Office Reports, 1951-1952, NAACP Papers.

outside of Moore Park in Oak Cliff. Killingsworth attested that arresting officers put a "fell nelson" on him and broke one of his vertebrae in an unprovoked struggle. After booking Killingsworth, officers transported the man to Parkland Hospital, where doctors treated him for more than a month. In his address to the city council, Tate announced his intention to file suit on behalf of Killingsworth against the Dallas council for $850 in medical expenses and $191 for lost wages. Furthermore, he lamented that he had nearly twenty-five more petitions from African Americans in the city alleging police brutality. According to the *Dallas Morning News*, Tate warned the council that "unless this type of viciousness stops, [someday a] Negro is going to kill a policeman, and that will create an ugly situation."[13]

The Regional Office also committed to increasing voter participation around the state of Texas. In conjunction with the Texas Progressive Voters League, Southwest Regional Executive Secretary Donald Jones wrote to all of Texas's NAACP branch presidents about their plans to organize a massive drive to get hundreds of thousands of African Americans registered to vote by paying their poll taxes. "We know that with 300,000 Negroes paying their Poll Taxes and voting, things are bound to be different," Jones wrote. "Friendlier mayors will be elected, streets will get paved and lighted. Police brutality will diminish."[14] Both Tate and Jones understood that more political power would allow African Americans to implement valuable changes in their own communities, and this included curtailing episodes of police brutality.

It would take several more years before the NAACP would recover from its membership slump. The Dallas branch had a particularly difficult time reorganizing in the years after the

[13] "Case Pending in Indecency, Chief Claims," *DMN* November 22, 1951; Report of Regional Special Counsel of the Southwest Region of the NAACP for the period of October 26 to November 27, 1951, December 3, 1951, Southwest Regional Office Reports, 1951-1952, NAACP Papers. Quote from "Danger Cited To Council in Police Abuse," *DMN* November 21, 1951. Quote edited for clarity.
[14] Letter to Branch Presidents from Donald Jones, Southwest Regional Secretary, January 9, 1950, Southwest Regional correspondence, 1950, NAACP Papers.

Smith decision. Many in the Dallas area associated this decline because of the national office's treatment and firing of local Executive Secretary George F. Porter. After Porter was thrown down the courthouse steps in 1938, his health steadily deteriorated throughout the 1940s. He suffered permanent brain damage and slowly lost his eyesight. National Offices were sympathetic at times, often providing funds for Porter to see medical specialists to treat his ailing condition. At other times, however, the national NAACP grew frustrated with Porter's inability to effectively manage the Dallas offices, and in 1948, the organization asked Porter for his resignation. A few years after his removal, Porter died in 1951 at the age of seventy-four.[15]

The NAACP in the years after the *Smith* decision had to rethink their organizational strategies and their pronounced commitment to desegregation. While they still maintained desegregation was an important facet in their social justice campaigns, they also realized that inequities in policing and the criminal justice system persisted. Following this trajectory, NAACP officials hoped that by counseling legal proceedings, they could prove to the broader black population that the organization would defend them in the legal system. For decades, both policing and the criminal justice system, in many ways, worked against the vast majority of black residents in the city. Even though the police department had integrated and George F. Porter integrated Dallas juries, racial biases in policing and in the courts persisted.

The Progressive Voters League Splits

The Progressive Voters League also did not escape the 1940s without its own organizational difficulties. Disagreements over partisan politics greatly affected the PVL in the years after the *Smith* decision, and those differences ultimately led to two decisive splits within

[15] Memorandum For the Files From Mr. Wilkins, Dallas, Texas Branch Operations, 1946-1947, NAACP Papers, Letter from Gloster B. Current to Donald Jones, September 14, 1948, Dallas, Texas Branch Operations, 1948-1949, NAACP Papers.

the organization. The first split occurred in 1946 when NAACP legal counselor W. J. Durham wanted the PVL to align itself with the Democratic Party. Originally founded as a strictly nonpartisan organization, the PVL's strength muddled throughout its existence because of the white primary system at the state level and at-large election systems at the municipal and county level. With the success of the *Smith* decision, Durham believed the voting organization could "gain control in every precinct where black voters were in evidence" and "assure black people living in small towns that they need not be afraid to vote."[16] As a result, Durham and a cadre of others in 1946 broke away from the Dallas organization to form the Texas Club of Democratic Voters, formally associating with the Democratic Party. In retaliation for fracturing the group, the PVL raised and donated more than a thousand dollars to the state Democratic Party to undercut Durham's new organization.[17] Though technically still nonpartisan, the PVL under the surface committed itself to Democratic Party candidates.

The second split occurred two years later in 1948 under the leadership of Rev. Stacy Adams. Adams was a relative newcomer to the political scene in Dallas. Born in 1908 in Oklahoma, Adams moved to Dallas in the 1930s to serve as a pastor of Love Chapel Baptist Church. He briefly worked as a busboy at Dunton's Cafeteria downtown to supplement his income. In the 1940s, Adams joined the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance (IMA) and the Dallas NAACP. Shortly after the Second World War, he began working with the PVL as a poll tax deputy, eventually becoming president of the organization in 1948.[18] Adams won the election for Democratic Party Chairman of Precinct 45 in South Dallas in 1946, and he also remained loyal to the PVL after Durham and others broke away.[19]

[16] Quote from Krochmal, *Blue Texas,* 108.
[17] Dulaney, "Progressive Voters League," 34.
[18] "Minister Promises Voters Quick Results If Elected To Office," *Dallas Express* March 17, 1951.
[19] "Progressive Voters League Workers Successful in Political Work," *Dallas Express* May 10, 1946.

Adams's tenure as president of the PVL created a potentially threatening situation for the organization given the postwar political culture. By 1948, Adams grew disheartened by the national Democratic Party. Like many African Americans across the nation, Adams disapproved of President Harry Truman's inability to defeat the Taft-Hartley Act of 1948 and further resented Truman's slow progress on civil rights legislation. This led many black political organizers to support Progressive Party candidate Henry Wallace for president in 1948.[20] As historian Max Krochmal has shown, the Progressive Party of Texas depended on established connections with the Texas State Conference and black union activists. At their organizational meeting in Austin in March 1948, the committee to Get Wallace on the Ballot in Texas elected several officers, including Lulu B. White, head of the Houston NAACP, and Rev. Adams, both as vice-chairs of the statewide organization.[21] Upon his election, Adams announced his resignation from the Democratic Party and as precinct chairman, pledging his full support of the Progressive Party.[22] In May 1948, Adams announced his bid for lieutenant governor as a Progressive Party candidate. He later opened an office in Dallas for the party, with his wife Ellen serving as second vice chairman, and held integrated meetings, a highly unusual and almost revolutionary act at the time, attended by nearly one hundred individuals, raising close to $1,000.[23] The PVL soon ousted Adams as the organization's president and officially changed their nonpartisan status, announcing their full allegiance to the Democratic Party. Now called the Democratic Progressive

[20] "Rev. Stacy Adams on State Wallace Tour," *Dallas Express* April 24, 1948; Krochmal, *Blue Texas*, 81.
[21] "Wallace Drive Begun in Texas," *DMN* March 22, 1948; Krochmal, *Blue Texas*, 81-82.
[22] "Registration Of 15,000 Voters Planned By Progressive League," *Dallas Express* November 24, 1945; "Wallace Backer Relieved of Precinct Chairmanship," *DMN* March 23, 1948; The Progressive Party in Texas ran Herman Wright for governor in 1948. Their party platform in Texas included $1 per hour minimum wage, abolition of the state poll tax, lowering voting age from twenty-one to eighteen, state legislative redistricting, racial desegregation, repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act, day care centers for working mothers, support for the United Nations, and opposition to the military draft. Don E. Carleton, *Red Scare!: Right-Wing Hysteria, Fifties Fanaticism, and Their Legacy in Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014 [1985]), 48.
[23] "Negroes to Run For State Offices On Wallace Ticket," *Dallas Express* May 22, 1948; "Progressive Party Names Officers In Meeting," *Dallas Express* June 19, 1948.

Voters League (DPVL), the organization publicly clarified that Adams' approval of Wallace "does not reflect the political views of the organization. It is aligned with the Democratic Party in Texas."[24]

Adams' removal from his previous positions did not alter his electoral ambitions. While his campaign for lieutenant governor ended in defeat, Adams continued to be outspoken about his disaffection from the Democratic Party and entered local politics.[25] In March 1951, Adams ran for a seat on the Dallas City Council, proposing several initiatives including the annexation of slum ridden West Dallas, better police protection including the hiring of more black police officers to patrol, especially in South Dallas, more housing for people in low-income brackets, and the improvement of parks and recreational facilities to improve juvenile delinquency.[26] The DPVL, on the other hand, endorsed candidates of the Citizens Charter Association after receiving promised concessions from CCA candidates, including better police protection, low rental housing, and the improvement of black residential areas in street paving, water works, and sanitary service improvements.[27] In the end, Adams' campaign met huge resistance among both black and white voters, and in the election, he polled twenty-third of all twenty-seven candidates. According to a *Dallas Express* editorial written by Charles R. Graggs, most African Americans in Dallas wanted to disassociate with Adams because he was not "qualified educationally" and because of his left-wing ties to the Progressive Party.[28] In other words, Adams lacked the respectability both politically and educationally of not only the candidates of the CCA but also of other civil rights organizers in Dallas.

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[24] "League Ousts Negro Officer," *DMN,* March 27, 1948; "Rev. Stacy Adams Removed From Political Offices," *Dallas Express* April 3, 1948.
[25] "Negroes Not Accepted As True Dems, Says Minister," *Dallas Express,* June 24, 1948.
[26] "Rev. Stacy Adams Enters April 3 City Council Race," *Dallas Express,* March 10, 1951.
[27] "Progressive Voters League Endorses Citizens Charter Association Candidates," *Dallas Express*, April 7, 1951.
[28] "Progressive Voters League Endorses Citizens Charter Candidates," *Dallas Express,* April 7, 1951; "Why I Voted For Stacy Adams," *Dallas Express,* April 21, 1951.

Still, the pastor's campaigns and sharp rhetoric made an impression upon Dallas's rank-and-file black population, especially after the police shooting on April 14, 1951 of Ray Butler, a black veteran and resident of South Dallas. According to reports from the *Dallas Morning News*, Officer M. L. Morgan shot and killed Butler while he sat in the back of a police car on the way to the city jail. The officer alleged Butler slipped his handcuffs and grabbed Morgan's partner A. L. Edwards' gun and aimed the weapon at Edwards' chest. Morgan then grabbed his own gun and fired, killing Butler instantly.[29] Three days after the shooting on April 17, 1951, more than three hundred people met at Mount Moriah Baptist Church in South Dallas to protest the shooting, and the protestors named Rev. Adams to lead a twenty-person committee to approach the mayor and city council to demand a full investigation into Butler's death.[30]

When Adams and his supporters showed up to protest the death of Butler, the city council refuted Adams's claims and alluded that Adams's political ambitions clouded the aspiring leader's motives. According to Adams, eleven witnesses described an entirely different depiction of events, claiming that the officers routinely kicked and beat Butler before placing him in the back of the squad car. Adams presented his findings with some of his former allies from the Progressive Party, including white Dallas attorney Sam Barbaria, the former treasurer of the party who had recently defended an alleged Communist. After Adams's declaration, Mayor Wallace Savage read a formal statement. "Left wingers such as Henry Wallaceite Stacy Adams and Communist Defender Sam Barbaria have a plan," Savage stated. "The plan is to gain control of Negro Votes by such charges as these, that the police abuse Negroes." Savage further stated that the record of voting in black precincts "demonstrated that our colored citizens know that

[29] "Police Officer Kills Prisoner in Scuffle," *DMN*, April 15, 1951.
[30] "South Dallas Protest Made on Shooting," *DMN,* April 18, 1951; "Mayor Says Leftists Try Ruse for Votes," *DMN,* April 19, 1951.

such charges are not true," alluding to the fact that the Democratic Progressive Voters League still overwhelmingly supported CCA candidates. In Savage's mind, Adams's attempt to bring forward complaints of police brutality stemmed from Adams's own political aspirations. Savage also pointed to the fact that Police Chief Carl Hansson recently suspended an officer for slapping an African American prisoner at the Dallas County jail. "I think," Savage continued, "[the suspension] made it obvious that the established policy of the police department prohibits abuse of any citizen, regardless of race." District Attorney Henry Wade stated that he was willing to allow any witnesses to appear before the grand jury, "but I do not feel like that grand jury cares to waste time with instigators of race trouble and Communist sympathizers who know nothing about the facts of the case."[31]

Using red-baiting tactics, the city council and the district attorney thwarted any ability for Adams and his supporters to gain traction in their battle against police brutality. Ultimately, the city council backed the Dallas Police Department after the grand jury no-billed the police officers for any wrongdoing in the Butler shooting.[32] Red-baiting also seems to have diminished Adams's capacity to become a viable leader within the black civil rights movement in Dallas. As quickly as Adams emerged on the scene as a potential representative for the black rank-and-file, so, too, did he disappear. Not enough evidence exists to determine why Adams abandoned any future political aspirations in the city. Perhaps his close ties to the Progressive Party and his close association with Sam Barbaria during the anti-communism crusade of the McCarthy era played a role in effectively silencing the aspiring leader.[33]

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[31] "Mayor Says Leftists Try Ruse for Votes," *DMN*.
[32] "Council Backs Police Officers," *DMN,* April 25, 1951.
[33] In the early 1960s, Adams resurfaced in the historical records on the NAACP roster in Bakersfield, California, where Adams and his wife moved in the late 1950s. In 1963, his wife Ellen died. A few years later, Adams served as a board member of the Kern County Economic Opportunity Committee throughout the late 1960s. Adams died in Bakersfield in 1980 at the age of seventy-two. Many thanks to Oliver Rosales and Daniel Rios for helping me track down more information on Rev. Stacy Adams.

But Adams' swift ascendancy into the Dallas political scene was an example of the political dynamic within the African American population in Dallas. Although the original PVL had worked for over a decade to establish a sizeable and unified black voting bloc in the city, the internal frictions over partisan politics and the League's support of the CCA led disaffected groups to seek other avenues of political mobility. After the splits in 1946 and 1948, with the removal of Adams from the League as president, the DPVL never fully recovered its political strength. As historian Marvin Dulaney has shown, the organization continued to support the CCA in every municipal election between 1947 and 1959 except for one.[34] The combined forces of the Dallas Citizens Council and the Citizens Charter Association effectively co-opted the leadership of the DPVL, promising but ultimately failing to deliver concessions to the city's black population. African Americans nevertheless continued to speak out against the forces of systemic racialized terror and violence. Black inclusion in the electorate in Dallas, regardless of its fractured state, created an increasingly vocal voting population that demanded accountability measures for racially motivated police shootings. Protesting the Butler shooting marked the first mass attempt to address police brutality as an issue affecting African Americans in the city. Some in the Black electorate no longer wished to accept the presence of interracial relations committees and the token measures of integration on the police force as successful reform measures of the Dallas Police Department.

Postwar Black Housing Crisis

At the time Ray Butler's death, black residents continued to suffer from ongoing violence from white reactionaries. The black housing crisis of the 1930s and 1940s continued well into the postwar period as the city grew tremendously in size. In 1945, the Greater Dallas population

[34] Dulaney, "The Progressive Voters League," 34.

rested at 290,000 and swelled to more than 795,000 a decade later.[35] In 1944, urban planner Harland Bartholomew studied the city's shortage of housing available to African Americans and declared it one of the most serious challenges facing the city. He recommended the city redevelop blighted neighborhoods and facilitate the creation of a new black neighborhood on the outskirts of town. Plans in the late 1940s to build an all-black neighborhood south of Dallas city limits ignited protests from white residents who feared that an encroaching black neighborhood would drive down real estate value on their homes. The CCA-backed council also refused to allow water lines into the area, thereby thwarting any private sector motives in building housing for black residents. Despite the black population increasing by more than 30,000 between 1940 and 1950, private sector builders erected less than a thousand dwellings for black residents. Urban redevelopment plans, including the expansion of Love Field and the construction of North Central Expressway, which was built right in the center of Freedman's Town and effectively splintered the black enclave, further destroyed housing choices for black residents.[36]

Racist city planning continued to displace African American residents across the city. As a result, middle-class black families continued to move into previously all-white neighborhoods in South Dallas. Echoing the bombings that had occurred in the 1940s, white residents responded to perceived black encroachment with more violence and terror. Robert and Elzina Shelton, an African American couple, became targets when they moved into South Dallas in 1950. The couple worked tirelessly for years to purchase their own home; Robert as a maintenance man and Elzina as a beautician. With limited funds and inadequate housing options, the couple had previously rented a room from Rev. Maynard Jackson's family home in Freedman's Town. Thanks to a loan through Robert's employer in 1950, the two could finally start their own lives in

[35] Fairbanks, *For the City as a Whole,* 171.
[36] Fairbanks, *For the City as a Whole,* 191-192.

their dream house at 2638 Pine, then a predominantly white street. "We had to move; we had no choice," recalled Elzina years later in 1987. "Black people at that time were living on top of each other in rooming houses."[37]

As the couple turned in for the night after a day of heavy lifting, Robert, sitting up in bed reading his newspaper, heard a loud thud from the back porch. Within seconds, a huge blast shook the house, shattered every window, and knocked the wallpaper off the walls. "The smell was horrible," Elzina recalled. "We knew it was dynamite. At that time, they were bombings all around here, every night. We weren't totally unexpecting it, knowing how racist these white people were in Dallas."[38] The explosion ripped Robert's newspaper to shreds, and he suffered a gash to his face and leg. Amazingly, Elzina escaped physically unscathed. The two received treatment for their injuries at Parkland Hospital, where Elzina spent eight days there resting and calming her nerves. When the couple returned home, they received an onslaught of harassment from their new white neighbors. "There was harassment every day," Elzina remembered. "They called us and said, 'Niggers, move out.'" But the Sheltons refused to move. According to Elzina, the NAACP hired a man named Leroy Coleman to sit on the front porch with a loaded shotgun and guard the couple while they slept. The Sheltons rebuilt their home, refusing violent coercion.[39]

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[37] "A Bombing Victim Recalls the Nightmare," *D Magazine* (March 1987) https://www.dmagazine.com/publications/d-magazine/1987/march/a-bombing-victim-recalls-the-nightmare/ (Accessed December 27, 2018);
[38] "A Bombing Victim Recalls the Nightmare," *D Magazine*; "Blast Damages Negro's Home," *DMN* May 9, 1950.
[39]"Home Bombed; NAACP Acts in Dallas Dynamiting," *Chicago Defender* May 20, 1950; "A Bombing Victim Recalls the Nightmare," *D Magazine.* Many historians have discussed the role of armed self-defense in the civil rights movement. See Timothy Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999); Emilye Crosby, "Introduction: The Politics of Writing and Teaching Movement History," Emilye Crosby (ed), *Civil Rights from the Ground Up: Local Struggles, a National Movement* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011); Charles Cobb, Jr., *This Nonviolent Stuff'll Get You Killed: How Guns Made the Civil Rights Movement Possible* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015).

The bombings had begun in February 1950 and continued well into the following year. The couple, as had many other African American families, understood that they could also be targeted. But having few options in the racially segregated city, the Sheltons sought protection from the Dallas Police Department, alerting the DPD of their intentions to move in that day.[40] Similar to the bombings of the previous decade, police had few leads and did little to protect African American families from moving into the area. Black leaders continued to speak out against the onslaught of violence and terrorism. Rev. I. B. Loud spoke in front of the city council and urged city leaders to quell the disturbances. Reading from the Dallas NAACP statement, Loud lamented that, "It is too much to expect that a large segment of our community will long endure unreasonable and disproportionate penalties and punishment, heavy financial losses, threat and danger to their persons, their property, their homes and their families without retaliation, vindictiveness and efforts aimed at protection." Mayor Wallace Savage downplayed the violence directed toward African American families, arguing that the Dallas Police Department "is doing what it can" to solve the bombings and pointed to the fact that recent unsolved burglaries of white homes in the northeastern neighborhood of Lakewood as a way to show that police did not intentionally overlook South Dallas because of racial biases. "I hope," replied Loud, "you are not overlooking the fact the situation is not as simple as a burglary."[41]

Loud pointed to one of the deepest fears of white leaders in the city—the fear of black retaliation—to persuade public officials in protecting African American residents in the city. IMA President Rev. E. C. Estell made similar comments to establishment leaders when he came forward in 1951 and said, "The Negro community should not get the impression that they are

[40] "A Bombing Victim Recalls the Nightmare," *D Magazine*.
[41] Quotes from Dorothea Lyle, "Protection Asked Against Bombings," *DMN* April 5, 1950.

being abandoned to a group of criminals. If they do, they will start acting defensively."[42] Indeed, they did. When white terrorists tried to bomb the home of Birdie Mae Sharpe on July 12, 1951, Sharpe grabbed her pistol and fired toward the bomber's car as it sped away. The gunshots alerted patrolling police officers in the neighborhood, who were then able to extinguish the dynamite before it detonated.[43]

Black leaders continued to press white city officials through the various interracial relations committees formed during the 1940s to push for change. Many had approached the Chamber of Commerce subcommittee on interracial relations and urged the appointment of a special grand jury to investigate the matter. Prior to the Sharpe bombing, white city leaders refused to approach the criminal district judges. However, Sharpe's act of armed self-defense changed the game. Fearing more black retaliation, the chamber approached Criminal District Judges Henry King and Robert A. Hall, both of whom agreed to create what later came to be known as a "blue-ribbon" special grand jury to investigate the bombings of South Dallas.[44]

Undoubtedly, the fact that Birdie Mae Sharpe defended herself from white terrorism in South Dallas ultimately swayed public officials in investigating the matter more fully. Sharpe's quick response in self-defense gave credence to white fears of black retaliation in the postwar Sunbelt South. The Chamber of Commerce, under the direct control of the Dallas Citizens Council, had successfully established Dallas as the technological hub of the Southwest when the Citizens Council brought Texas Instruments (TI) to the city in 1951. The recent racial turmoil posed the chance that other developers would be unwilling to settle in Dallas, thereby crippling

[42] Schutze, *The Accommodation*, 18.
[43] "Bomb Attempt Draws Bullets," *DMN* July 13, 1951; Affidavit of Mrs. Birdie Mae Sharpe, August 9, 1951, Box 3N321, Folder 1, Juanita Jewell Shanks Craft Collection, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, The University of Texas at Austin; Schutze, *The Accommodation*, 23-24.
[44] Charles Murphy, "C of C Acts For Inquiry In Bombings," *DMN* July 8, 1951; Harmon Kallman, "Special Jury to Search For Cause of Bombings," *DMN* July 15, 1951; Schutze, *The Accommodation*, 24.

future business endeavors. White Dallas leaders had their eyes set on expanding economic opportunities, and Birdie Mae Sharpe's and others' overt willingness to protect themselves, or threaten to, when the police department did not, endangered lucrative investments.

The appointment of the special grand jury contained the Who's Who of elite white Dallasites. All of the white jurors were presidents of banks, insurance companies, or entrepreneurs, and all were members of the Dallas Citizens Council. And because of George F. Porter and the Dallas NAACP's lawsuit in support of Henry Allen Hill, the Dallas man whose lawsuit opened up grand juror seats to African Americans, the district judges selected W. J. Durham, legal counsel for the Texas State Conference, Dallas NAACP president Rev. Bezaleel R. Riley, and Rev. Robert Lawrence Parish to serve as black representatives.[45] For more than a year, law enforcement had made not a single arrest in the eleven bombings of black homes in South Dallas. That all changed when, on July 23, 1951, the day the grand jury was to begin its investigation, the Dallas Police Department announced they had arrested forty-two-year-old Claude Thomas Wright and his sixty-two-year-old half-brother Arthur Eugene Young and charged them with the bombing of Birdie Mae Sharpe's home. Within twenty-four hours of their arrests, Wright and Young both confessed their participation. But as details emerged about their nearly illiterate state and lack of formal education, it became clear to white city officials that the brothers were not the orchestrators of the bombings. The conspiracy ran much deeper.[46]

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[45] White members of the grand jury included Ray Hubbard, oilman and Park Board President; James Ralph Wood, president of Southwestern Life Insurance Company and organizer of the Dallas Crime Commission; Bernard F. McLain, president of Hart Furniture Company; William H. Cothrum, Sr., a residential apartment developer; Julius Schepps, wholesale liquor distributor; Jacob Golman, president of the Oak Cliff Baking Company; Clarence A. Tatum Jr., vice president of Dallas Power and Light; Justin F. Chambers, managing editor of the *Dallas Times Herald*; James C. Dycus, president of the Oak Cliff Bank and Trust Company; P. B. Garett, president of the Texas Bank and Trust Company; and John T. Higginbotham, president of Higginbotham-Bailey Company. Schutze, *The Accommodation*, 7.

[46] Schutze, *The Accommodation*, 22-25.

Over the next few days, police made more arrests, painting a much different picture of the assailants than Wright and Young. With the help of the Texas Rangers, the police homed in on Charles O. Goff, a business representative of the Lathers Local 140 of the American Federation of Labor and resident of South Dallas. Goff was known to the Dallas City Council as he routinely appeared before councilmembers lamenting his disapproval for black encroachment in South Dallas. In 1950, he organized the South Dallas Improvement League, one of the many "improvement leagues" organized to prevent further black mobility into the area. Dallas's District Attorney Henry Wade named Goff as one of the masterminds behind the conspiracy and accused him of hiring a number of individuals to carry out the bombings on his behalf.[47] Suddenly, the perpetrator looked more like a middle-class homeowner and less like a nameless nobody.

When the cases went to trial, none of the defendants were convicted in relation to the bombings because of "uncorroborated supporting evidence" even though Wright and Young confessed their part. According to the grand jury's official report, the conspiracy reached into "unbelievable places" and as journalist Jim Schutze put it, "ran deep in the bowels of the city." The grand juror's report read, "There was evidence that lay and religious and community groups, through misguided leadership, entered an action perhaps unwittingly, that resulted in violence and destruction." But the grand jury never revealed the evidence that led to such conclusions in their official statement. Following their address, the grand jury quietly asked to be disbanded yet assessed that a more thorough investigation be conducted.[48] By that point, no black residence had

[47] William H. Smith, "Political, Labor Figure Charged in Bomb Case," *DMN* August 10, 1951; Schutze, *The Accommodation*, 8. For white retaliation against African American mobility, see Andrew Wiese, "The House I Live In: Race, Class, and African American Suburban Dreams in the Postwar United States," Kevin Kruse and Thomas J. Sugrue (eds), *The New Suburban History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).
[48] Schutze, *The Accommodation*, 69-70.

been bombed in more than a year, and the few cases that did go to trial also resulted in not guilty verdicts. For the establishment powers, the performance of appointing an investigative grand jury of both black and white members quelled the social disturbances even though none of the perpetrators, despite signed confessions, were convicted. In the appearance of acting in favor of law and order, white city leaders acquiesced to loud calls of better police enforcement and equal police protection for black residents. Their fears of black retaliation in the context of the postwar Sunbelt phenomenon ultimately inspired white city leaders to act on behalf of law and order and equitable police protection.

The Committee of 14 and Managed Desegregation

When the "classical phase" of the civil rights movement reached Dallas, the Texas State Conference of the NAACP had proven its strength in several important civil rights cases. African Americans could now serve on grand and petit juries; black teachers' salaries were comparable to whites; the Supreme Court declared the white primary unconstitutional; and, after more than twelve years of challenging the University of Texas's segregation policy, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the NAACP in *Sweatt v. Painter*, which opened public graduate school education to African American students in 1950. The Regional Office under U. Simpson Tate continued to pressure junior colleges and trade schools throughout the state, successfully desegregating twelve schools by 1954.[49] And when the Supreme Court declared segregation inherently unequal in the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, the local offices in Dallas jumped at the chance to desegregate all facets of city life.

NAACP youth organizer Juanita Craft led many of the desegregation campaigns. Craft arguably became on the most important figures in the civil rights movement not only in Dallas

[49] Houston, "The NAACP State Conference in Texas," 515.

but also across the state of Texas. "She was certainly a strong, fiery woman, and she organized well. That's why she was a statewide organizer," Diane Ragsdale, a former Youth Council member, said of Craft. "During the active NAACP years, [Craft] was the ideal person for the job."[50] Born Juanita Jewel Shanks in 1902 to a middle-class family in Round Rock, Texas, Shanks attended Prairie View State Normal and Industrial College (now Prairie View A&M University) and later attended Samuel Huston College (now Huston-Tillotson College) in Austin, where she received her teaching certificate. She married briefly to a drugstore clerk in Galveston, but when the marriage ended in divorce in 1925, she moved to Dallas where she worked for the Adolphus Hotel as a maid for nine years. In 1937, Shanks married Johnny Edward Craft, who died in 1950. Craft never remarried.[51]

Recruited by Minnie Flanagan in 1935, Craft joined the Dallas Chapter of the NAACP, where she worked on membership drives for the Dallas branch throughout the 1940s, and in 1944 alone, she successfully recruited more than 3,000 members.[52] By 1949, her steady commitment to the organization prompted A. Maceo Smith to write to the national offices to request hiring Craft as a statewide organizer, a post in which she would reorganize local branches, set up new ones, and help promote the annual membership campaigns. Roy Wilkins of the New York headquarters approved the hiring of Craft, granting her a $50 per month salary as a part-time statewide organizer, a position she held for eleven years until 1960.[53]

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[50] Diane Ragsdale, "Juanita Craft and the NAACP," interview by Katherine Bynum, CRBB, July 12, 2017 https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/6937/juanita-craft-and-the-naacp (Accessed January 11, 2019).
[51] Juanita Craft, Oral History Interviews by David Stricklin and Gail Tomlinson, 1984 (Transcripts, Dallas Public Library).
[52] Ramona Houston, "The NAACP State Conference in Texas: Intermediary and Catalyst for Change, 1937-1957," *The Journal of African American History* 94:4 (Fall 2009), 510.
[53] Letter, A. Maceo Smith to Roy Wilkins, January 12, 1949, Texas State Conference, 1949-1950, NAACP Papers; Letter from Roy Wilkins to A. Maceo Smith, April 18, 1949, Texas State Conference, 1949-1950, NAACP Papers. See also Stefanie Decker, "Women in the Civil Rights Movement: Juanita Craft Versus the Dallas Elite," *East Texas Historical Association* 38 (2001); Yvonne Davis Frear, "Juanita Craft and the Struggle to End Segregation in Dallas, 1945-1955," Sam W. Haynes and Cary D. Wintz (eds.), *Major Problems in Texas History*: *Documents and Essays*

In 1944, Craft also helped to reorganize the Dallas NAACP Youth Council.[54] Craft saw the Youth Council as a dual operation, functioning primarily as a social organization for black youth but also as an educational opportunity for children to learn about the ongoing campaign for civil rights. She held youth meetings in her backyard, where the school children made NAACP t-shirts and posters, and on weekends, the students walked door-to-door in black neighborhoods to encourage people to join the local branch.[55] The Youth Council not only functioned as a social gathering but also a training operative for black youth to engage in respectable civil rights protests. The year after the *Brown* decision in 1955, the Dallas NAACP solicited the help of twenty-eight African American Youth Council members and had them enroll in all-white schools. When the schools refused to admit black students, the NAACP filed a lawsuit to begin the desegregation process in Dallas. The same year Craft and the Youth Council engaged in two nonviolent direct-action protests—one downtown at the Melba Movie Theater, which refused to sell tickets to black customers, and the other at the State Fair of Texas for its segregated "Negro Achievement Day," the only day African Americans could attend.[56]

The public protests led by the NAACP Youth Council filled a void in the civil rights organizing that had dissipated in the aftermath of the *Smith* decision. After Dallas NAACP's executive secretary George F. Porter died in 1951 and Rev. Stacy Adams' swift political demise the same year, black residents had yet to see a leading figure challenge the Jim Crow order in public view. Craft's ability to organize black youth for the cause ignited a protest movement that

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(Boston: Houghton Mifflin, Co., 2002); Yvonne Davis Frear, "Making the Invisible Visible: African American Women in the Texas Civil Rights Movement," Bruce A. Glasrud and Merline Pitre (eds.), *Southern Black Women in the Modern Civil Rights Movement* (College Station: Texas A&M Press, 2013).

[54] Letter from Mrs. Annye Penn-Barnwell to Secretary NAACP Youth Council, May 11, 1944, Dallas Branch Files, 1944-1945, NAACP Papers.

[55] Interview with Diane Ragsdale, interview by Kyle Edelbrock, April 21, 2014, University of North Texas Oral History Collection.

[56] Dulaney, "Whatever Happened in Dallas, Texas," 76; Brian Behnken, "The 'Dallas Way,': Protest, Response, and the Civil Rights Experience in Big D and Beyond," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 111: 1 (July 2007), 7-10.

lasted well over a decade. It also initiated a widespread counter movement in which white city politicians engaged in a series of negotiations with black movement leaders to desegregate the city on white terms. In some ways, a few black leaders accommodated to those demands—believing that small gains in the short run would facilitate bigger gains overall. But in other ways, many continually pushed the boundaries by engaging in protests and picket lines to denounce African Americans' second-class citizenship status.

The Youth Council's picketing at the Melba Theater and the State Fair prompted white city officials to act, fearing that more racial turmoil rested on the horizon. The city experienced almost two years of racial violence when whites bombed black homes in South Dallas earlier in the decade. Publicly protesting desegregation in the wake of the *Brown* decision, white officials feared, would ignite the flames again. Throughout the latter 1950s and into the 1960s, white leaders worked closely with several black organizers to manage the desegregation process. As historian Brian Behnken has shown, just days after Craft and the Youth Council demonstrated, president of the Dallas Citizens Council and Mayor of Dallas Robert L. Thornton called Craft and local black businessman and NAACP auditor George Allen, for a series of meetings to discuss desegregation.[57] In one meeting, Allen threatened to initiate a black boycott of the Dallas city bus system. In violation of the Supreme Court order and in the wake of the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955, Mayor Thornton ultimately decided to end segregation policies on city busses immediately.[58] The downtown movie theater and the State Fair of Texas, however, continued their policies of discrimination.

[57] George Allen tried to integrate the University of Texas in 1937 at the direction of the Texas State Conference of Branches of the NAACP. For more on this, see Pitre, *In Struggle Against Jim Crow.*
[58] "Jim Crow Out On City Buses," *Dallas* Express, April 28, 1956; Behnken, "The Dallas Way," 10.

Desegregating Dallas city busses was an easy concession for white civic leaders. The threatened boycott had the potential of not only crippling the entire public transit system but also could bring unwanted negative publicity. The NAACP's continued efforts to desegregate public schools, on the other hand, led white local and state politicians to pursue a permanent injunction against the organization. As historian Marvin Dulaney has shown, it was the Dallas NAACP's lawsuit against the schoolboard in 1955 that precipitated action by white Texans to fight the Supreme Court's desegregation order.[59] In September 1956, State Representative Joe Pool from Dallas urged Governor Allan Shivers to call a special session of the legislature in order to pass a series of laws to limit the operations of the NAACP. While the special session never took place, the following month, however, Texas Attorney General John Ben Shephard opened an official investigation into the Texas State Conference and filed a temporary restraining order prohibiting the NAACP from "doing business in the state." Shephard then filed a lawsuit charging the NAACP with inspiring racial unrest, failure to pay state taxes, and illegally initiating litigation.[60] In *State of Texas v. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People et al.,* State District Judge Otis T. Dunagan placed the Texas NAACP under a permanent injunction in the state, barring the organization from operating in Texas altogether. The injunction effectively impeded desegregation efforts across the city, and the organization took more than three years to recover.[61] In 1958, for example, the Dallas NAACP branch was near total collapse because of a depleted membership base, a lack of funds, and warring factions within the organization.[62]

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[59] Dulaney, "Whatever Happened in Dallas, Texas," 77. For more on desegregating Dallas's schools, see Glenn M. Linden, *Desegregating Schools in Dallas: Four Decades in the Federal Courts* (Dallas: Three Forks Press, 1995).
[60] Houston, "The NAACP State Conference in Texas," 522-523.
[61] Judge Dunagan later lifted the permanent injunction against the NAACP in Texas on May 8, 1957. See Dulaney, "Whatever Happened in Dallas, Texas," 77.
[62] F.D. Jones in his annual report wrote that had he known about the contentious nature within the Dallas NAACP, he would not have assumed the presidency upon Rev. Caesar Clark's resignation to run for Dallas School Board. Annual Report of the Dallas Branch NAACP by F. D. Jones, Dallas Branch President, December 14, 1958, Papers

By 1960, the Dallas Citizens' Council had solidified control over city politics. The fractured political base in the African American population continued to diminish the overall power that civil rights organizations could yield in city politics. But the tides were about to turn. The Dallas branch of the NAACP pulled themselves out of its near collapsed state after local members elected Minnie Flanagan as the branch president in 1959. And, in early 1960, the Southwest Regional Office of the NAACP was in the midst of planning its annual state meeting to be held in Dallas in March 1960. The office selected Roy Wilkins as the principle speaker for the engagement.[63]

The Southwest Regional NAACP meeting came at an opportune time. At the time of the planning, the sit-in movement was well underway across the South. College students on February 1, 1960 in Greensboro, North Carolina, sat down at the Woolworth lunch counters that were designated for whites only and refused to vacate until the restaurant served them. Before long, black college students in other cities across the South joined the movement. By March 1960, sit-ins reached Texas when students in both Houston and San Antonio refused to vacate "white only" lunch counters in downtown business establishments.[64] As images of reactionary whites clashing with nonviolent black protesters reached television sets across the nation, white city officials feared that unrest would soon make its way to Dallas, prompting the Dallas Citizens Council to act preemptively. Upon learning of Wilkins' arrival in Dallas, members of the DCC

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of the NAACP, Part 25: Branch Department Files, Series B: Regional Files and Special Reports, 1956-1965 via ProQuest History Vault.

[63] Monthly Report of Clarence A. Laws, Field Secretary, SWR, February 26 to March 31, 1960, Papers of the NAACP, Part 25: Branch Department Files, Series B: Regional Files and Special Reports, 1956-1965 via ProQuest History Vault.

[64] For more on the sit-in movement in the South, see William Chafe, *Civilities and Civil Rights: Greensboro, North Carolina, and the Black Freedom Struggle* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981); Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995); Iwan Morgan and Philip Davies (eds), *From Sit-Ins to SNCC: The Student Movement in the 1960s* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2012); Christopher Schmidt, *The Sit-Ins and Legal Change in the Civil Rights Era* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018).

called a meeting with Wilkins, hoping to convince him that Dallas did not need a sit-in movement. Wilkins persuaded the DCC to form a biracial committee if white leaders wanted to avoid similar confrontations that had occurred across the South.[65] Making good on the suggestion, Julius Schepps of the DCC called upon A. Maceo Smith and George Allen to attend an "urgent meeting" in order to discuss the creation of a permanent committee to "establish closer communication in regard to problems that may arise." At the meeting held on March 24, 1960, Smith and Allen put together a long list of grievances that needed remedied by the proposed committee. The list included black employment in both the public and private sector, adequate black housing, access to healthcare, school desegregation, hiring black police and adequate police protection for black homebuyers, and ending segregated lunch counters.[66] Out of the meeting came the creation of the Committee of 14, a biracial organization with seven white members, all of whom were members of the DCC, and seven black leaders that included A. Maceo Smith, NAACP attorney W. J. Durham, black funeral director C. Jack Clark, businessman Ed Reed, Moorland YMCA director Henry Lenoir (later replaced by Rev. E. C. Estell), Rev. B. E. Joshua, and George Allen.[67] Altogether, the Committee of 14 would manage the desegregation process in Dallas, hoping that closed door negotiations instead of public demonstrations would ease the city into the transition.

Within one month of its creation, the Committee of 14 failed to prevent sit-in demonstrations from occurring in Dallas. On April 30, 1960, Rev. Aston Jones, a white minister, joined Rev. T. R. Thompson, a black minister, in a series of sit-ins at the lunch counters of S. H.

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[65] Clarence Laws, "Special Report for Atlanta Conference, NAACP, May 7, 1960, Papers of the NAACP, Part 25: Branch Department Files, Series D: Branch Department General Department Files, 1956-1965; Dulaney, "Whatever Happened in Dallas, Texas," 78.

[66] Even though the Dallas Police Department formally integrated in 1947, by 1960, however, no black officers were currently working as police officers on the force. Letter, Julius Schepps to A. Maceo Smith, March 7, 1960, Box 2, Folder: Community Relations, A. Maceo Smith Collection, African American Museum of Dallas, Dallas, Texas.

[67] Dulaney, "Whatever Happened in Dallas, Texas," 79.

Kress, H. L. Green, and Sanger's, all located downtown. The stores traditionally reserved seating for black customers in the basement, but the two ministers sat side-by-side at the "Whites Only" lunch counters and asked to be served. Amazingly, the two ministers were served without incident at each establishment, but in the days following, Kress, Green, and Sanger's continued their policies of racial segregation and refused to serve black customers at the main lunch counters going forward.[68]

Shortly after the April sit-ins, tensions mounted amongst the black leaders in the city of Dallas. In a meeting held at the Moorland branch of the YMCA, all seven of the black members of the Committee of 14 met with other black organizers, including Juanita Craft and Dallas NAACP branch president Minnie Flanagan. In the meeting, many expressed their satisfaction with nonviolent direct action as a means to continue to push for desegregation. A. Maceo Smith and Rev. E. C. Estell, however, believed that engaging in protests, picket lines, and demonstrations had the ability to "destroy the effectiveness" of the Committee of 14.[69] Dallas's NAACP legal counsel and member of the Committee of 14 W. J. Durham dissented and argued that he "could ill afford to negotiate and when negotiations fail [to] not take an active leadership role in whatever protest or demonstration needed to bring results." Other Committee of 14 members, including Henry Lenoir, George Allen, Rev. B. E. Joshua, also agreed. They argued that as "members of other organizations interested in a protest movement, they would lend support to any such group to which they were related in a protest…"[70]

[68] "Negro Clergyman Served at Downtown Lunch Counter," *Dallas Express*, May 2, 1960; "Negroes Are Served At Several Downtown Eating Places," *Dallas Post Tribune*, April 30, 1960.
[69] Minutes of Meeting Held at Moorland Branch YMCA, July 23, 1960, Box 2, Folder: Community Relations, A. Maceo Smith Collection.
[70] Ibid.

While some cities across the South opened the lunch counters to both black and white customers in the months following the first sit-ins, the businesses in Dallas refused to budge on their customary policies of segregated eating facilities. The failure of Dallas's first sit-in led a number of black activists to begin to collectively coordinate a stronger and sustaining movement. In August 1960, they formed the Dallas Community Committee and elected Rev. E. C. Estell as president and selected Rev. H. Rhett James of New Hope Baptist Church as Estell's immediate subordinate. By October, with the support of Minnie Flanagan and the Dallas Branch of the NAACP, Rev. James organized a picket line of the downtown stores that refused to serve black customers, including S. H. Kress and H. L. Green. The pickets began in early October 1960 and continued for two months. Rev. James also promoted an informal boycott, arguing that "Dallas Negroes [should] unite together and refrain from buying concerns who insult human dignity and use their customers purely as economic gain."[71] Around the same time, the NAACP Youth Council headed by Juanita Craft initiated their picket lines against the Texas State Fair, where hundreds of black and white volunteers encircled all the entrances to the fair and protested its continued racial segregation policies.[72] Coverage of the pickets in both of Dallas's black newspapers of the two picket lines was generally favorable. However, two months after the downtown pickets began, Rev. E. C. Estell and Rev. I. B. Loud demanded an end to all demonstrations, believing that the Committee of 14 would end the racist policies of the department stores—not continued protests. A frustrated Rev. James resigned from the group as a result.[73]

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[71] "Rev James Says Group Protests Integrating Dollar and Segregating Service," *Dallas Express*, October 6, 1960; "Protest Demonstration Halted at Green Store," *Dallas Express*, December 17, 1960; Behnken, "The Dallas Way," 12-13.
[72] Behnken, "The Dallas Way," 13.
[73] Dr. Rhett James, Interview with Bonnie Lovell, December 21, 2002, Dallas, Texas, Dallas Public Library; Dulaney, "Whatever Happened in Dallas, Texas," 81; Behnken, "The Dallas Way," 12.

Others shared in Rev. James's frustration about the slow pace of change and the lack of progress achieved by the Committee of 14. One such individual was Rev. Earl Allen. A native of Houston, Allen had come to Dallas to study theology at Southern Methodist University in 1960. After his graduation in 1963, Allen became pastor for the Highland Hills United Methodist Church. Even as a relative newcomer to the city, Allen recognized the stark color line that existed. "Dallas at that time had an atmosphere of being very tight racially," Allen explained. "Everybody knew their place. Blacks stayed in their place. Whites stayed in their place. And the races just didn't mix." When he and his family first arrived in Dallas, his wife was pregnant with their third child and her doctor in Houston referred the Allens to a physician in Dallas for their son's impending arrival. According to Allen, the doctor expressed regret and informed the couple that he could not treat Allen's wife during labor and delivery because he practiced at Dallas Methodist Hospital, which did not treat black patients. As a student at a Methodist institution studying to be a Methodist preacher, Allen grew incensed that he and his family could not be treated at the local Methodist hospital because of the color of their skin. "Those were the kinds of situations," Allen admitted, "that sort of motivated me to begin to get a little bit more militant."[74]

On December 12, 1960, Allen and several other black and white students from Southern Methodist University engaged in non-violent "eat-in" at the Greyhound Bus Station, where Allen and Darnell Thomas, another student of theology at SMU, were denied service at the Greyhound lunch room inside the station.[75] One month later, Allen again led a group of students in January

[74] Interview with Earl Allen by Stephen Fagin, June 23, 2006, The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza Oral History Collection, Dallas, Texas.
[75] WBAP-TV, "News Script: Eat In," December 12, 1960, Fort Worth, Texas, University of North Texas Libraries, the Portal to Texas History, https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc940400/?q=%22Earl%20Allen%22 (Accessed June 18, 2019).

1961 at the University Drug Store, in which the owner denied service to African American students. At that sit-in, more than seventy-five white and black students filled the booths of the restaurant and refused to leave until the owner, C. R. Bright, agreed to serve all patrons, regardless of race. Bright refused to budge on his discriminatory policy. With business at a standstill because of the protestors, Bright told reporters who arrived at the scene that "this was a good time to kill some cockroaches," and after locking the front door, he put in a call to the exterminators, who then proceeded to deploy fogging machines loaded with a kerosene-based insecticide. Students covered their faces with coats and handkerchiefs but remained at the restaurant despite the gassing for more than thirty minutes. When police arrived, and threatened to arrest each demonstrator and charge them with disrupting the peace, the students promptly ended the demonstration. As Bright watched the students vacate the premises, he told news reporters, "I worked hard for fifty-two years to raise money to buy this store, and no one—not Ike, the Army, the Navy, or a bunch of students—is going to tell me how to run it."[76]

Picket lines, protests, and other demonstrations continued off-and-on in Dallas throughout the first half of 1961. W. J. Durham of the Committee of 14 even toyed with the idea that African Americans should boycott stores still pursuing racial segregation during the Easter holiday. But the threatened boycott and the continued protests failed to implement, at least immediately, any alleviation of the racially discriminatory policies of those downtown businesses. The initial failures hardly meant the protests on the whole were unsuccessful. As Committee of 14 member George Allen recalled years later in an oral history, the protests and threatened boycotts "built a fire under some of the members from the Citizens' Council to work

[76] WBAP-TV, "New Script-Sit-in," January 9, 1961, Fort Worth, Texas, University of North Texas Libraries, the Portal to Texas History, https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc940941/m1/1/ (Accessed April 10, 2019); Behnken, "The Dallas Way," 14.

at [desegregation] a little more rapidly."[77] That fire did bring about some measures of success. By early July 1961, the seven black members of the committee prevailed when a few downtown department stores, including Walgreens, Sears and Roebuck, and the Woolworth removed their discriminating signs and when the Dallas School Board approved a stair-step program to desegregate Dallas schools were implemented later that year.[78]

The committee also boasted when the Dallas Police Department made twenty positions available for black police. Even though the department officially integrated in 1947, by 1960, no black officers worked as patrolmen on the force.[79] In addition, the department allowed black officers to dress in uniform at the downtown station and assigned them to beats all throughout the city.[80] Surprisingly, the reforms for the Dallas Police Department came without much prodding from local civil rights organizations. The year before in 1959, a series of police-related shootings involving black residents occurred—two within a week of another.[81] But the near total collapse of the Dallas branch of the NAACP and the fractured political state of the black electorate prevented the organization or any aspiring political candidate from protesting the shooting and demanding reforms to ensure more equitable policing measures. By 1960, however, with the advent of the sit-in movement, black political leaders working with the Committee of 14 had more political leverage than in years before. While efforts to desegregate much of public life

[77] George Allen, interview with Yvonne Johnson, March 29, 1985, Dallas Public Library. For more on the planned boycott of downtown stores for the Easter holiday, see Behnken, "The Dallas Way," 15.
[78] Dulaney, Whatever Happened in Dallas, Texas, 80-81.
[79] Only eight African Americans in 1960 were employed by the Dallas Police Department, and the majority worked as plainclothesmen to the criminal investigation division. Two worked as detectives. "Curry Studying Use of Negro Patrolmen," *DMN*, July 15, 1960.
[80] "Accomplishments, Work Unfinished and a Suggested Program for Implementation of the Unfinished Work of the Group Working with Non-Negro Citizens to Eliminate Racial Discrimination in Eating Establishments, Stores, in Employment, and in Other Areas of the Community Life of Dallas Citizens," July 23, 1960, Box 2, Folder 16: Community Relations, A. Maceo Smith Collection.
[81] "Man Killed In Home By Police Officer," *Dallas Express*, February 14, 1959; "17-Year-Old Killed By Officer," *Dallas Express*, February 21, 1959;

endured a strenuous war of attrition, reforming the police department under the guise of equitable policing moved swiftly.

Becoming the "City of Hate"

Dallas's image as an economic and conciliatory safe haven became severely threatened not because of unchecked racial protests but largely because of the growing conservative movement in the city. While much of Dallas's white leadership fell on the moderate to conservative side of the political spectrum, a growing force from the ultraconservative wing found a new lifeblood in the city. According to historian Edward Miller, the city of Dallas became the bedrock of the rising ultraconservative wing of the Republican Party. Dallas had begun its shift from the Democratic Party to the GOP earlier than many cities in the state and across the South. In 1954, Republican Bruce Alger won his seat as a United States Representative from Dallas, the first Republican elected since Reconstruction.[82] Over time, defectors from the traditionally Democratic state increasingly joined the Republican Party, and their power and influence in the political arena altered Dallas's image through a series of scandals.

The city's first image scandal involved Texas's own Lyndon Baines Johnson and his wife Lady Bird. The U.S. Senator and Lady Bird made a Vice Presidential campaign stop in Dallas at the downtown Adolphus Hotel on November 4, 1960. When the two left the Democratic Luncheon at the hotel, conservative women attending a nearby Republican women's event protested Johnson's presence in Dallas, showing their support for Republican presidential candidate Richard Nixon and held signs that said, "Lyndon Go Home." As the Johnsons made their way past the protestors, the women reportedly hissed and spat upon Lady Bird and her

[82] Edward H. Miller, *Nut Country: Right-Wing Dallas and the Birth of the Southern Strategy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 2; Payne*, Big D,* 324

husband.[83] More than three years passed before President John F. Kennedy and Vice President Johnson returned to Dallas to begin their 1964 presidential campaign. U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Adlai Stevenson cautioned Kennedy and Johnson about their trip to Dallas. A month before the president's scheduled campaign trip, Stevenson gave a speech in the city where ultraconservative demonstrators infiltrated the crowd, spat on him as he tried to leave, and assaulted him on the head with a protest sign. Regardless of Stevenson's warning, Kennedy and Vice President Johnson arrived in Dallas on November 22, 1963. Dallas was thrust into the spotlight again when a sniper's bullet collided with the president. JFK was dead, and the nation held Dallas responsible for the assassination.[84]

The so-called spitting incident, the assault on Stevenson, and JFK's assassination rebranded the city. People all over the world looked at Dallas as a breeding ground for the ultraconservative sensationalism running amok and for the violence that killed the Leader of the Free World. Though many refused to admit aloud, they breathed a sigh of relief when they discovered Lee Harvey Oswald, the suspected assassin of Kennedy, was an avowed Marxist and not a ring-wing nut. Still, Kennedy's death ultimately sealed the city of Dallas as the "City of Hate" in the national lexicon.[85] The city had prided itself for not being another Birmingham during the civil rights era but did little to alter or publicly denounce the actions of the ultraconservative wing of the Republican Party.

"All the Necessary Ingredients"

The managed desegregation movement led by the Committee of 14 continued to operate its closed-door meetings while others persistently used protest and picketing to push the

[83] Miller, *Nut Country,* 86-87; Payne, *Big D,* 365.
[84] Stephen Fagin, *Assassination and Commemoration: JFK, Dallas, and the Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2013), 23; Miller, *Nut Country,* 111-113.
[85] Fagin, *Assassination and Commemoration,* 32.

movement forward. Throughout much of 1962 and 1963, the local NAACP offices led by Rev. H. Rhett James organized a series of boycotts of downtown businesses in an effort to fully desegregate. The organization also spearheaded a job training program, arguing that African Americans' access to gainful employment would lift the burden of Jim Crow and would allow the vast majority a chance at first-class citizenship.[86] At the same time, President Lyndon Johnson after the death of President Kennedy remained committed to fulfilling's Kennedy's wish to push through a civil rights bill that would provide teeth to the Fourteenth Amendment. As the bill made its way through the House and Senate throughout the first half of 1964, African Americans in Dallas still resented the lack of desegregation in the city—even though the Committee of 14 proclaimed numerous successes on their behalf. The year 1964 marked a pivotal turning point in the processes of the protest movements in that its short-term goals of integration called for much broader reforms in the quest for social justice.

On May 30, 1964, Clarence Broadnax, an African American man, left the draft board on Commerce Street in downtown Dallas with his draft papers in hand. As he made his way back to his residence, he stopped at the Piccadilly Cafeteria to grab some lunch. While he stood in line waiting to be served, the white manager of the restaurant, James Ramig, told Broadnax to leave because he did not "serve niggers there and wasn't about to get started." Broadnax politely responded that his only intention that day was to buy a meal, and if the owner wanted to join him for lunch and discuss the restaurant's policy, he was more than happy to oblige. "He proceeded to harass me and tell me to leave his restaurant, and I told him I wasn't going any place," Broadnax stated. Broadnax then took a seat at a table near the entrance, where he pulled out his draft papers and laid them upon the table. "That would be another one of my purposes of not

[86] See Marvin Dulaney, "Whatever Happened in Dallas, Texas," 82-83.

leaving the restaurant," Broadnax declared. "That freedom right there was worth me fighting for. I wasn't about to get up to go to Vietnam not to die. I had brothers and sisters that was already fighting that war over there—that was fighting for those same basic rights that I was trying to enjoy."[87]

Broadnax was not about to serve his country overseas only to be refused service at a restaurant at home. As had many others before him, Broadnax saw his military service for the Vietnam War as opening the door for his full citizenship rights, and he refused to placate to Ramig's insistence that Broadnax's skin color made him ineligible as a customer at the restaurant.[88] Since Broadnax refused to leave, the owner called police, and after a long squabble between Ramig, the police officers, and Broadnax, the police arrested Broadnax and escorted him downtown to the city jail. At the police station, the officers began questioning him, asking if he belonged to any particular organization or if someone had put him up to his protest. Broadnax denied that the sit-in was staged or planned by other individuals. One officer placed a gun up to his head to coerce a confession, but Broadnax remained steadfast in his convictions. "It did piss me off," Broadnax admitted about the police officer's brazen move. "I just explained to [the officer] that he wasn't being too polite. That he didn't seem to know what to do with a gun because you don't play with them."[89]

Officers never charged Broadnax with any crime and released him without further incident. Upon his release, Broadnax returned to the Piccadilly lunch counter and retook his

[87] Clarence Broadnax, "Beginning the Movement," Interview by Aaron Fichera, January 1, 2014, UNT Oral History Program, CRBB, https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/28/beginning-they -movement (Accessed April 1, 2019).
[88] For more on the connection between military service and full citizenship rights, see Adriane Lentz-Smith, *Freedom Struggles: African Americans and World War I* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011); Chad L. Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy: African American Soldiers in the World War I Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013); J. Todd Moye, *Freedom Flyers: The Tuskegee Airmen of World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012);
[89] Clarence Broadnax, "Beginning the Movement," Interview by Aaron Fichera, January 1, 2014, UNT Oral History Program, CRBB, https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/28/beginning-they -movement (Accessed April 1, 2019).

former seat at the same table where the ordeal first began. By that time, the press showed up, giving Broadnax the opportunity to denounce the discriminatory practices of the restaurant in an on-camera interview. Police arrested Broadnax for a second time and held him in the jail until the restaurant closed for the day.[90]

Unbeknownst to Broadnax, his solitary sit-in caught the attention of several seasoned activists in the Dallas area. Upon his release from jail that night, Broadnax received a phone call from NAACP Youth Council director Juanita Craft. "She and I had a conversation about how serious was I—what were my plans. I told her I planned to continue to stay there [to protest]," Broadnax stated. The two met at Craft's house where they planned the details of the sit-in. Over the next month, nearly three hundred other individuals, both black and white joined Broadnax in his demonstration at the downtown lunch counter. One such protestor was Rev. Earl Allen who helped develop the Dallas chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). Plans for a Dallas chapter of CORE fomented in late March 1964 when the organization's Southern Regional Director Isaac Reynolds met with interested students from SMU and Bishop College. While in town, Reynolds and Bruce Baines, another CORE official, met with *Dallas Express* editor Julia Scott. Scott offered her support for the organization of a Dallas chapter, but warned Reynolds and Baines not to let any of the other news media know of their pending organizational plans "since the Dallas police knew that they are [affiliated] with CORE…" "The Dallas Power Structure," Scott warned, "is very much against a CORE chapter here and all our work will be done in secret until we have set up the chapter here." The next month, twelve students from SMU and Bishop College, including elected Chairman Ted Armstrong of Bishop College and

[90] Ibid.

Rev. Allen as regional representative, applied for the formal organization of the chapter.[91] CORE and the Dallas Coordinating Committee for Civil Rights (DCCR), a new umbrella organization that brought disparate civil rights groups into one coordinated agency, worked together on several operations throughout 1964, protesting the lack of desegregation in Dallas, saying "our progress in Dallas has been too little and too slow."[92]

Throughout the month of June 1964, Clarence Broadnax, CORE, and DCCR led dozens of black and white picketers to interrupt the daily business of the Piccadilly restaurant. Broadnax used JFK's death against city officials by holding a sign with President Kennedy's picture that read, "Did JFK Die in Vain." Other demonstrators sang freedom songs and reclined on the restaurant floor. Before long, white counter-protestors showed up in support of Piccadilly's racial segregation policy. During the first few days, a handful of white men whistled "Dixie" to passing protestors and held signs that said, "Integration Is a Sin from God," and "Race-Mixing Will Destroy the White Race." As CORE, DCCR and Broadnax continued to protest throughout the month of June, however, many more white agitators arrived jeering at passing demonstrators and, in some cases, assaulted black and white protestors. Others fashioned their own signs that read, "Bobby Kennedy Is Not Going To Tell Me What To Do," and "Wallace or Goldwater for President, 1964." The biggest counter-demonstration took place on June 24, 1964, when the local Dallas Junior Chamber of Commerce, or the Jaycees, marched down Commerce Street carrying a large Confederate battle flag that stretched from one side of the street to the other.[93]

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[91] Letter, Richard A. Koogle to James McCain and Marcia McKenna, March 21, 1964, Subgroup F. Organization Department, 1957-1968, Series II: Chapter Files, 1958-1967, Congress of Racial Equality Papers via HistoryVault Database (hereafter cited CORE Papers).
[92] "A Statement of Purpose," Dallas Coordinating Committee for Civil Rights, undated, Subgroup F. Organization Department, 1957-1968, Series II: Chapter Files, 1958-1967, CORE Papers; Behnken, "The Dallas Way," 19.
[93] WBAP-TV, "News Clip: Demonstrators," May 30, 1964, Fort Worth, Texas, University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc1062741/m1/#track/1 (Accessed April 10, 2019); WBAP-TV, "News Clip: Hearing," June 24, 1964, Fort Worth Texas, University of North Texas Libraries,

Shortly after the protest began in June 1964, the lawyer representing owner James Ramig and the Piccadilly Cafeteria, L. W. Anderson, filed a temporary injunction against Rev. Allen, Clarence Broadnax, and Ted Armstrong, stating that the protestors' actions interfered with the daily business of the restaurant. Furthermore, the suit read that the cafeteria reserves the "right to choose and determine what customers it desires to serve and do business with." District Judge Dallas Blankenship granted the temporary restraining order and ordered that demonstrators stay at least fifty feet from the restaurant.[94] According to Clarence Broadnax, the Dallas Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance (IMA) led by Rev. E. C. Estell also filed suit against Broadnax, demanding that he end his protest at the Piccadilly cafeteria so that the Committee of 14 could continue its negotiations to desegregate without the added pressure.[95] But Broadnax was well-connected and well-supported in his continued crusade for desegregation. Not only did he have the support of CORE and DCCCR, but he also established a viable relationship with Juanita Craft. Craft had the ability of being both a community leader and foot-soldier. While she organized many of the Youth Council picket lines at downtown stores and at the State Fair, her health began to deteriorate into the 1960s. And in many ways, she had to take a less visible role in the type of leadership she provided to civil rights organizers in the city. Because of her connections to well-respected and well-meaning lawyers, Craft worked to solicit John B. Wilson, a local white attorney, for DCCR and Broadnax, which ultimately resulted in the dismissal of all the pending lawsuits.[96]

The Portal to Texas History, https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc1062768/m1/#track/1 (Accessed April 10, 2019).

[94] "Judge Bans Group From Piccadilly," *DMN*, June 3, 1964.

[95] Clarence Broadnax, "Ministers, Arrests, Incarceration," Interview with Aaron Fichera, January 1, 2014, UNT Oral History Program, CRBB https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/31/ministers-arrests-incarceration (Accessed April 11, 2019).

[96] Clarence Broadnax, "Ms. Juanita Craft," Interview with Aaron Fichera, January 1, 2014, UNT Oral History Program, CRBB https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/33/ms-juanita-craft (Accessed April 11, 2019).

Twenty-eight days after the sit-in first began, James Ramig finally ended the discriminatory practices of his business, citing that the demonstration caused more than two thousand dollars in lost sales.[97] The nonviolent direct-action protestors working outside of the city's Committee of 14 applauded their ability in successfully desegregating several additional downtown businesses, including three other restaurants and shoe-shine parlor, as a result of their initial Piccadilly sit-in. In their minds, this proved that picketing, demonstrating, and boycotting had the ability to move white businesses to end their segregated policies, and they did so literally days before President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act on July 2, 1964.[98]

The Piccadilly protests reveals the limitations of the Committee of 14 and its plans to manage the desegregation process in the city. While the committee did successfully desegregate some businesses in the downtown area, most whites in Dallas still resorted to policies of racial discrimination and marginalization, which kept the Jim Crow social order intact. Only after losing thousands of dollars in sales did the owner finally acquiesce to black demands to desegregate. And, after other businesses feared the same financial losses did they, too, follow suit. Furthermore, white members of the committee did little to convince or suppress the actions of white counter demonstrators, who often taunted and threatened black and white protestors at the Piccadilly. In white city officials' minds, CORE, DCCR, and others had instigated such a response by working outside the Committee of 14, and they were responsible for the actions of reactionary whites.

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[97] WBAP-TV, "News Script: Hearing," June 24, 1964, Fort Worth, Texas, University of North Texas Libraries, the Portal to Texas History ; WBAP-TV, "News Script: Piccadilly," June 27, 1964, Fort Worth, Texas, University of North Texas Libraries, the Portal to Texas History https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc959366/?q=%22earl%20allen%22 (Accessed April 11, 2019).
[98] Letter, John B. Wilson to Mr. Isaac Reynolds, Field Secretary of CORE, June 30, 1964, CORE Papers.

To many African Americans, however, the campaigns of desegregation only addressed the most visible aspects of Jim Crow society. Larger and more systemic forces of racism still occurred unabated, and events in both the North and the South brought those issues into sharp focus. The year 1964 marked a turn in civil rights organizing across the U. S. South. Several civil rights organizations continued to pressure southern states to end the widespread voter disfranchisement practices. In Mississippi, when several civil rights groups organized Freedom Summer, the nation was suddenly exposed to the existing hostilities and violence that local whites used in reaction to black organizing.[99] Racial tensions in the North also reached tantamount heights. African Americans in Harlem revolted for six days beginning on July 16, 1964. Then two days after New York City declared relative tranquility, African Americans in Rochester, located on the northern edge of New York state bordering Lake Ontario, erupted in rebellion on July 24. Both uprisings were sparked by police brutality.[100]

Just as black leaders applauded their abilities to desegregate more downtown establishments, the continued forces of voter disfranchisement, economic discrimination and marginalization, and police brutality were brought to the forefront of discussions as the North and Deep South seemed to be in a state of disarray. Reacting to the news, a biracial group consisting of W. J. Durham, NAACP Regional Director Clarence Laws, Dallas counsel for the NAACP E. Brice Cunningham, Roosevelt Johnson, Rev. L. Butler Nelson, and Wayland Boles, the only white member, drafted a program entitled, "A Program for Racial Harmony in Dallas." In the report, the group first wrote that they "abhor violence and lawlessness," condemning the actions of African Americans engaged in violent rebellion and then pledged their "full support to

[99] For more on Freedom Summer, see Wesley C. Hogan, *Many Minds, One Heart: SNCC's Dream for a New America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).
[100] Michael W. Flamm, *In the Heat of the Summer: The New York Riots and the War on Crime* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017), 1-2, 209.

the Dallas Police Department and other law enforcement authorities in performance of their legal duties and urge all other citizens to do likewise." What might seem like placation for calls of "law and order" at first glance was actually strategic in nature. Durham and the other members of the group played upon the fears of black retaliation to demand fairness and equality and justice and accountability. Knowing full well that white Dallas leaders feared tremendously about its recently tarnished image in the aftermath of the Kennedy assassination, Durham first need a way to get white civic leader's attentions. In doing so, Durham realized the precarious situation in which he, and other African Americans, resided; he knew that as an African American, he needed to condemn the urban rebellions and praise and support law and order. But at the same time, he used that rhetoric to argue that he, too, "feared" that Dallas was on the "brink of riots and disaster" and that the city possessed "all the necessary ingredients" for such an event to occur. Perhaps Durham and others did actually fear that the violence and destruction only harmed the cause of civil rights. But at the same time, Durham knew he could exploit the violence and could manipulate white civic leaders into bending to his will. "The Harlem, Rochester, and Mississippi patterns are present in the streets of Dallas," he argued. "The same seeds of trouble there are present here and are infecting the homes and hearts of some Dallas citizens."[101]

The group distributed the program to the Dallas City Council and to Mayor Erik Jonsson. In the report were twenty-eight continued grievances of the larger black Dallas population, including unfair hiring and promotion practices in both public and private sector employment, the failure of desegregation in public schools, the presence of slum-like conditions in black neighborhoods, and the "continuing evidence of harassment, discourtesy, and brutality by some

[101] W. J. Durham, "A Program for Racial Harmony in Dallas," undated, Box 022, Folder 3, Jonsson papers.

police officers." Furthermore, the group reported additional problems of policing, including inadequate police protection for African American residents and the "insufficient number" of black police officers on the Dallas police force. But the group also outlined twenty resolutions for the City Council to enact in order to improve race relations. At the top of the list was the call for a "meeting of responsible Negro citizens and others with the mayor, Chief of Police, County Sheriff, and the District Attorney…to discuss and outline a program of effective and equal enforcement of all the laws."[102] Other demands included the establishment of a biracial interracial relations board in place of the Committee of 14, affirmative action policies in employment, and better access to educational opportunities and healthcare. Ultimately, the city council and Mayor Erik Jonsson ignored the groups' suggestions for improving race relations in the city, arguing that the existing system of the Committee of 14 worked better than any formal representative public board would.[103]

The Piccadilly protests, which coincided with the violence of Freedom Summer and slightly before the urban rebellion in New York state, exposed the idea that Dallas had "all the necessary ingredients" for an urban rebellion. Even though the major players of civil rights demonstrations in Dallas were committed to nonviolent direct action, Rev. Earl Allen and others still defied law enforcement and the restaurant's various restraining orders, and as a result, Allen and others were arrested over twenty-five times throughout the twenty-eight-day ordeal. In this light, white leaders closely associated civil rights demonstrators as agitators, believing that CORE, the NAACP, and DCCCR engaged in the same kinds of behavior that caused Mississippi and New York to erupt in violence. Speaking to the Dallas City Council, president of the Dallas Crime Commission John McKee expressed his desire to see that civil rights protestors be

[102] W. J. Durham, "A Program for Racial Harmony in Dallas."
[103] "Plea Made on Meeting Race Issue," *DMN*, July 31, 1964.

arrested for their demonstrations. "We further recommend," McKee stated, "that minority groups who defy the law be treated the same as criminals."[104] Rev. Allen fought back. He approached the city council where he denounced the council for burying the Program for Racial Harmony and responded to McKee's call to arrest nonviolent protestors, stating "If this is done, then our city will have taken the final step necessary to ignite the fuse to the powder keg on which we sit."[105]

Ultimately, the Program for Racial Harmony never came to fruition as an enacted policy within Dallas. Mayor Jonsson and others still rested on the idea that the Committee of 14 allowed for continued peace in the city. Even though the program failed implementation, it does reveal the ways in which the Dallas political leadership associated black civil rights protests with criminality. In white people's minds, African American activists in Dallas routinely violated the law in pursuing racial desegregation. And their actions became synonymous with the campaigns to end voter disfranchisement in the South and the systemic forces of racism present in both the North and South.

The Committee of 14's limitations in the managed desegregation process led other movement activists to challenge the rigid racial order in the city. In doing so, they manipulated white city leader's own fears about racial unrest when violence broke out in other parts of the nation. They agreed that the policies of law and order should be enforced, but that systemic forms of racism, economic discrimination, political disfranchisement, and racial-biased policing and police brutality made Dallas not a conciliatory safe-haven but a city sitting on a powder keg waiting to erupt.

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[104] "Crull Suggestions Supported by DCC," *DMN*, August 16, 1964.
[105] "CORE Man Pleads His Case in Dallas," *DMN*, August 18, 1964; Speech, Rev. Earl Allen to the Dallas City Council, undated, Box 022, Folder 3, Jonsson papers.

CHAPTER III:
"RISE UP AND KILL TEN RACIST COPS:" THE DALLAS SNCC CHAPTER AND CROSS-CLASS ALLIANCES, 1965-1969

On a muggy afternoon on July 1, 1968, twenty to thirty black organizers working with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) filed into the OK Supermarket, a local grocery chain, in South Dallas. The group then proceeded to disrupt the daily business of the store, filling up shopping carts with tubs of ice cream, ordering specific cuts of expensive meat, and then abandoning the carts in various aisles without paying. The SNCC chapter, led by Dallas native Ernest McMillan, accused the owners of operating a "ghetto gouger," or a white-owned business that located stores in black neighborhoods and charged inflated prices for poor quality of goods. Their demonstration inside the store was part of the emerging Black Nationalist philosophy that Black Power organizers used to empower black people to control their own political and economic destinies. But when the shopping cart nuisance failed to capture the attention of the white store owners, McMillan and other protestor's actions grew more provocative and destructive. Later the same afternoon, a larger group of protestors reentered the store and began destroying food. They pushed cantaloupes and tomatoes out of the crates, stepping on them as the produce hit the floor. Others dropped eggs in steady succession while McMillan dropped a glass bottle of milk.[1]

The OK Supermarket "food smashing raid," as it came to be known, shook white city leaders to their core. For the most part, Dallas remained concerned with improving its image after President John F. Kennedy's assassination. The city was known as a conservative, fundamentalist, and business-controlled metropolis where local ultraconservative figures such as

[1] "SNCC Leader Jailed," *Dallas Express*, July 20, 1968; Ernest McMillan, interview with author, July 20, 2017.

Congressmen Bruce Alger and Joe Pool, retired General Edwin Walker, and oil billionaire H. L. Hunt pushed the city farther to the right by espousing fearful and conspiratorial paranoia of alleged Communists working in the government.[2] After JFK's assassination, the nation dubbed Dallas the "City of Hate"—alluding to the idea that ultraconservative organizing cultivated a general tolerance of bigotry and violence that ultimately led Lee Harvey Oswald to pull the trigger. Under the direction of Mayor Erik Jonsson, civic leaders endeavored to redirect national attention away from the Far Right and instead, sought to promote a civic program called *Goals for Dallas* in which residents from different races, religions, and creeds could come together and address the mutual concerns of the city. Jonsson hoped to show the nation how Dallas could lead by example and recover from its recently tarnished reputation and rebuild through the hard work, dedication, and cooperation of its residents.

Mayor Jonsson also believed it would quell the forces of black militancy and rebellion. When Watts in Los Angeles, California, exploded in rebellion on August 11, 1965, less than a week after President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the federal voting rights legislation, conservative and liberal Americans drew a stark contrasting line between the respectable nonviolent civil rights protests and the unruly underclass militants who "destroyed their own neighborhoods" in an "unorganized rebellion."[3] When SNCC chairman Stokely Carmichael iterated his first cries of "Black Power" in Mississippi and closely aligned with the newly formed Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, liberal and conservatives alike mostly associated Black Power to violence that

[2] For more on this, see Sean P. Cunningham, "The Paranoid Style and Its Limits: The Power, Influence, and Failure of the Postwar Texas Far Right," David O'Donald Cullen and Kyle G. Wilkinson (eds.), *The Texas Right: The Radical Roots of Lone Star Conservatism* (Texas A&M Press, 2014); Robert B. Fairbanks, "Assassination and Dallas Politics: Changes to Continuity," *Legacies: A History Journal for Dallas and North Central Texas* 10:2 (Fall 1998); and Edward T. Miller, *Nut Country: Right-Wing Dallas and the Birth of the Southern Strategy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015).

[3] For this argument, see Jeanne Theoharis, "'Alabama on Avalon:' Rethinking the Watts Uprising and the Character of Black Protest in Los Angeles," Peniel E. Joseph (ed), *The Black Power Movement: Rethinking the Civil Rights-Black Power Era* (New York: Routledge, 2006), pp. 27-53.

fostered riots and crime. As a result, federal and local policing agencies surveilled Black Power organizations, hoping that their policing tactics would diminish episodes of rebellion and the power of black militancy.

But the OK Supermarket disturbance also served as a point of unification between middle-class black civil rights organizations and Black Power activists. Led by Dallas native Ernest McMillan, the Dallas SNCC chapter challenged the establishment powers in unprecedented ways. McMillan refused to placate to white demands and he was unafraid of challenging the racism of the Dallas power structure, including the police. SNCC's activism in the city, on the other hand, closely mirrored what previous civil rights organizations had battled—political representation, economic autonomy, and police brutality. Through this endeavor, SNCC fostered a series of coalitions with outside groups, including white leftist students from Southern Methodist University (SMU) and black middle-class activists. It was through these relationships that SNCC built a long-lasting legacy of a cross-class and cross-racial coalition-building base that continued to mount strength in the years to come.

Goals for Dallas

President of the Dallas Citizens Council J. Erik Jonsson became Dallas's mayor less than three months after President John F. Kennedy's assassination. As a wealthy businessman who had played a key role in transforming Texas Instruments (TI) into a world-wide firm, Jonsson seemed to embody the composure and moderate political leanings that the city power structure craved after more than a decade of Far-Right extremism. Brooklyn-born of Swedish immigrants, Jonsson was a towering figure at six feet, three inches. He compensated his height with an even and tempered voice, speaking thoughtfully with a commanding presence about the issues at hand and rarely appeared angry or insensitive in public view. He loved Dallas, and had called the city

home since his relocation from New Jersey in 1934.[4] But in his mind, rapid urbanization and racial tensions in the city prevented Dallas from reaching its full potential. Throughout his mayoral tenure, which lasted until 1971, Jonsson embarked on a series of civic programs that became known as *Goals for Dallas*. Based on President Dwight Eisenhower's *Goals for America*, the *Goals for Dallas* campaign claimed to offer Dallas a chance to modernize and improve the image of the city.[5]

The *Goals for Dallas* program brought together business professionals, clergymen, doctors, lawyers, and educators to establish common goals in such areas as local government, design of the city, transportation, health, welfare, education, cultural activities, and public safety. Jonsson asked his participants to paint "an idyllic picture of what we would like our city to be if money, manpower, and other resources were of little consequences."[6] Jonsson coordinated a planning committee, selecting men and women of the Dallas area from "diverse backgrounds, creeds, races, viewpoints, interests, cultures, and occupations to represent all Dallas citizens" to draft goals of mutual concern for the city. At their retreat in Salado, Texas, the attendees recommended improvements in healthcare, transportation, education, social welfare services, the beautification of Dallas, the cultivation of cultural activities, and support of law enforcement.[7]

The *Goals for Dallas* committee published their report in September 1966 and received widespread support from Dallas residents. The racial disparities in policing, housing, education, and employment, however, led the Planning Committee to strengthen its second recommendation—creating a human relations council to a "Human Relations Commission

[4] Darwin Payne, *No Small Dreams: J. Erik Jonsson—Texas Visionary* (Dallas: DeGolyer Library, 2014),
[5] Payne, *Big D*, 378.
[6] Bryghte Godbold, interview by Bonnie Lovell, March 29, 2002, Dallas Public Library, Dallas, Texas; Payne, *Big D,* 378.
[7] *Goals for Dallas: Mutual Aims of its Citizens*, 1966, Box 2, Folder 33, Jonsson papers.

established by city ordinance, advisory in nature, to insure fair treatment to all people." While the language of the *Goals for Dallas* report provided little clarity as to how a human relations commission would operate, many in the city, both black and white, supported its creation. Black middle-class professionals representing a "substantial segment of the medical, dental professions" circulated a petition in mid-December 1966, calling on the Dallas City Council to create a human relations commission. Among the signees were black attorneys W. J. Durham and L. A. Bedford and Drs. Emmett J. Conrad and Robert Prince. [8] The loudest calls, however, came from the Citizens for a Human Relations Commission for Dallas (CHRC), organized in January 1967 by a local white lawyer named Sidney Stahl. Stahl was born in Dallas in 1933 to Jewish immigrants in Oak Cliff. In the 1940s, he and his family moved from South Dallas to the Park Cities. After his graduation from Highland Park High School in 1950, Stahl entered Southern Methodist University, where he received his Bachelor's and later a law degree in 1956. Throughout much of Stahl's early adult life, he abstained from politics and rarely paid attention to the ongoing political debates unfolding around him. But in the mid-1960s, he grew inspired to commit himself to a cause greater than what his law practice could provide. In an oral history interview, Stahl admitted that no singular incident inspired him to form the Citizens for a Human Relations Commission. As a lifelong resident of Dallas, though, he understood that African Americans and Mexican Americans in the city had endured a status of second-class citizenship and that certain privileges that he enjoyed were not available to the vast majority of people of color. "I felt that it was my civic duty," he explained.[9]

Stahl wanted a human relations commission that was representative of the citizens of Dallas. To recruit members to CRHC, Stahl first reached out to African American, Mexican

[8]. "Petition to the Mayor, J. Erik Jonsson," December 16, 1966, Box 021, Folder 15, Jonsson papers.
[9] Sidney Stahl, interview by author, August 6, 2019 (interview in author's possession).

American, and white civic, religious, and business professionals, hoping that an example of tri-racial collaboration would inspire city officials to act on creating the commission. Stahl believed that a future city board should study and investigate complaints of racial, ethnic, or religious discrimination in the fields of housing, employment, and police-community relations and further make recommendations to the city council. "It really should be a responsibility of the local government to have a voice in human relations with a body that has official status and the power and prestige of city government behind it," Stahl told the *Dallas Morning News*. "If a citizen has a complaint in this regard now," Stahl said, "he doesn't know where to go or whom to see about it."[10]

The CHRC held community forums and invited guest speakers from other cities to recruit support for a Dallas commission. In one such forum in mid-April 1967, the CHRC invited Barbara Jordan, the newly elected Texas State Senator and the first black woman elected to the Texas Senate, as the principal speaker at a gathering held at Warren United Methodist Church in South Dallas. In her address, she spoke of the composition of such a commission—that it should include both "bank presidents and bellboys"—and argued that having a commission would foster better race relations and change white attitudes and assumptions that African Americans were untrustworthy or lazy. "The present system," she warned, "instills in the Negro self-doubt, self-hate [and] hostility toward self and the white majority." This, she argued, led to the "pathetic cry" of Black Power. "If we remove the cancer, we destroy the need for the defensive and protective Black Power cry. If we don't," Jordan warned, "the militants will get a following. We should want to channel action into a more constructive direction."[11]

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[10] "Relations Agency Sought by Group," *DMN*, January 19, 1967; "Human Relations Panel Urged," *DMN*, March 13, 1967

[11] Alex Bickley, "Report on Speech by Sen. Barbara Jordan from Houston, 4-15-67, on Human Relations Commission of Dallas," April 16, 1967, Box 021, Folder 10, Jonsson papers.

Jordan attached the infamous Black Power slogan to connotations of anti-white rhetoric and violence, concluding that the rise of urban rebellions resulted because discontented African Americans adhered to a Black Power philosophy. But she was not alone in her convictions. Jordan was a part of a broader liberal contingency that equated Black Power as a damaging departure from the nonviolent civil rights movement. At the 1966 annual NAACP convention, Roy Wilkins denounced the slogan. "No matter how endlessly [Black Power advocates] ty to explain it, the term "black power" means anti-white power," Wilkin stated. As historian Clayborne Carson has shown, Wilkins' remarks set in motion for other civil rights leaders and liberals to comment on "Black Power" in an effort to reassure white supporters by distinguishing SNCC from the rest of the movement. Whitney Young of the Urban League and Bayard Rustin, for example, both repudiated the slogan, contending that it would derail the effectiveness of the civil rights movement.[12] In her analysis, Jordan similarly distanced herself from Black Power advocates, and instead championed the central tenets of American liberalism in which she believed dialogue, reform, and regulation offered the best solutions to improving race relations.

While many organizations supported the creation of a human relations commission, a counter movement in which the Dallas City Council, the Dallas Police Association, and the ultraconservative Right united. Mayor Erik Jonsson denounced the *Goals for Dallas* initiative, fearing that a human relations commission might overrule the powers of the city council and would become a sounding board for people of little credibility who will complain of supposed mistreatment and will receive "unlimited publicity and attention" as a result. Jonsson claimed this will prevent the police from "knowing whether they dare arrest somebody that is truly criminal and truly vicious or not." He further reinforced his support of the Dallas Police

[12] Carson, *In Struggle*, 219-220.

Department by arguing that policemen make lifetime commitments in defending all of Dallas's residents, and that such a commission would be used as a police review board if established. "I believe we can [increase dialogue between the races] without risking the danger I see…of establishing a commission which would furnish a forum with the potential to undermine our Police Department and thus our laws," Jonsson declared.[13]

Jonsson's prediction that a human relations commission would usurp the powers of the city council and conduct investigations into police activities paralleled a widespread fear amongst Dallas police officers. The Dallas Police Department had organized the Dallas Police Association (DPA), the department's union, in 1959, despite opposition from Dallas leaders. As a staunchly anti-union city, Dallas city officials argued that police officers forming or joining a police association with "union leanings" would derail the effectiveness of the police department.[14] Throughout its first few years, the DPA existed within a contentious environment in which city officials often distrusted the association. By the mid-1960s, however, the Dallas Police Association, as had many other police unions around the nation, gained considerable clout and potency in civic affairs.[15] Efforts led by civil rights organizers, and reinforced by the Supreme Court, cracked down on the unconstitutional practices of law enforcement agents when making arrests and interrogating suspects.[16] In response, police officers used their unions to shroud themselves in secrecy and ultimately pitched that if any organizational body conducted investigations into police officers' actions, then their job as the defenders of law and order would

[13] J. Erik Jonsson, "Mayor Jonsson Expands Statement of His View on the Proposal to Establish by City Ordinance a Human Relations Commission in Dallas," undated, Box 021, Folder 10, Jonsson papers.
[14] "Police Organizers Claim 67% of Force Reached," *DMN*, January 8, 1959.
[15] Literature on police unions throughout 1960s
[16] In 1961, the Supreme Court ruled in *Mapp v. Ohio* that all evidence obtained by unconstitutional searches and seizures was inadmissible. Five years later in 1966, the Court ruled in *Miranda v. Arizona* that officers must warn a defendant of his privilege against self-incrimination if conducting a custodial interrogation. For more, see Katherine J. Bies, "Let the Sunshine In: Illuminating the Powerful Role Police Unions Play in Shielding Officers Misconduct," *Stanford Law and Policy Review* 28:1, 120-122.

be greatly diminished. Aligning with this philosophy, Dan Talkington, president of the DPA wrote to Jonsson in the days after his address, expressing his support for Jonsson's position. "We feel that if such a commission was formed," Talkington wrote, "it would only be a matter of time before it would become a Police Review Board."[17]

Jonsson and the DPA also found themselves alongside the ultraconservative Right. Even though the city had worked to distance itself away from Far-Right politics after Kennedy's assassination, ultraconservatism found a new lifeblood in the city as the John Birch Society (JBS) continued to campaign its white supremacist message. JBS members Myron Dickey and W. W. Caruth III worked throughout the mid-60s to strengthen the image of the local police department, arguing that police officers were under attack from Communists pushing for police review boards. Dickey and Caruth formed the Dallas County Committee for Support of Local Police, which included the sponsorship of Lamar Hunt, founder of the American Football League and Major League Soccer as well as local prominent doctors, lawyers, business owners, and local officials such as Congressman Joe Pool and Judges T. Whitfield Davidson and W. Lew Sterrett. The Committee formally launched a widespread campaign to delegitimize civil rights protests, police review boards, and human relations commissions on the local level. In their campaign, the Dallas County Committee contended that citizens should fully cooperate with law enforcement agencies at all times and added that residents should also provide encouragement and gratitude to officers in the field. But their campaigns did not end with flowery rhetoric. The Committee also made it a point to distribute "Support Your Local Police" bumper stickers, decals, and window

[17] Letter, Dan Talkington to J. Erik Jonsson, May 1, 1967, Box 021, Folder 15, Jonsson papers.

posters and provided speakers to service clubs, church groups, and public schools to help foster a climate of respect for law enforcement.[18]

In October 1966, the Committee set their sights on Dallas public schools when Caruth distributed a film entitled "Civil Riots U.S.A.," which equated civil rights protests to riots led by criminals, to Bryan Adams High School during a "police-appreciation assembly" sponsored by the Birch Society.[19] The school required all students to attend one of two assemblies held in late October to watch the film. The film and its accompanying pamphlet detailed the Watts rebellion in Los Angeles in August 1965, when a "routine traffic stop" resulted in a violent rebellion that caused millions of dollars' worth of damage to private businesses and left at least thirty-seven dead. The film then charged that the civil rights movement was a Communist conspiracy inspired by the Soviet Union who had recruited Communist Party USA members to start a "race war" by "[breaking] down respect for law and order and [portraying] the policeman as the enemy of the Negro." Police review boards, they argued, have "tended to come under control of minority or political pressure groups and serve as a forum to intimidate the police from doing an effective job in protecting the public."[20]

The pressure for a Human Relations Commission united political aspirations on both sides of the spectrum. White, black, and brown liberals believed the creation of a commission would provide additional avenues of negotiation and compromise between city officials and the population at large. Without those avenues of reform, liberals feared that communities of color might turn to more leftist forces of revolutionary rhetoric. The "pathetic cry of Black Power," as

[18] Pamphlet, "Dallas County Committee for Support of Local Police Presents 'Localism and the Police Power'" by Rev. Rousas J. Rushdoony," undated, Box 021, Folder 15, Jonsson papers.
[19] "School Officials Will View Film," *DMN*, November 3, 1966; Editorial Broadcast on KBOX Dallas, Box 022, Folder 1, Jonsson papers.
[20] Pamphlet, Gary Allen, "Civil Riots U.S.A., *Constructive Action, Inc.*, 1965.

Barbara Jordan put it, could inspire many to abandon the practices of American liberalism in favor of a separatist movement that many, both liberals and conservatives, equated to violence. At the same time, city officials, the DPA, and the ultraconservative Right found common ground in opposing the commission's creation. The mayor, the DPA, and the JBS-inspired Committee feared that it would become a police review board, allowing the commission to investigate claims of police misconduct, thereby thwarting the maintenance of law and order. As mayor, Erik Jonsson possessed the authority to thwart the commission's creation. And he did. He also feared that black militants could gain a following in Dallas, yet he disagreed with liberals who thought a human relations commission would help. But the CHRC and others' calls for a human relations commission did not fall on deaf ears. Jonsson felt an inordinate amount of pressure to placate residents and provide additional channels of communication between white and black residents to reconcile city grievances. In this effort, Jonsson decided that the Urban League, a social services organization, provided a sound alternative to the proposed city commission.

In late May 1967, members of the Dallas Citizens Council reached out to Whitney Young, executive director of the National Urban League (NUL).[21] Upon the DCC's recommendation, Young requested the national League's board of directors to implement a Dallas chapter. In a statement to the *Dallas Morning News*, Avery Mays, chairman of the Citizens Council, remarked, "There is not any particular reason for us to consider this program in Dallas at this time, but we want it as a preventive measure."[22] Though the DCC denied that their

[21] Originally founded in 1910 in New York, the National Urban League sought to help the hundreds of thousands of African Americans who left the south and migrated northward in search for greater economic opportunities. Established as a social services organization, the League during the 1960s, under the new leadership of Whitney Young, began its participation in civil rights movement demonstrations. Though its new role remained controversial amongst its national biracial board, the League expanded its advocacy and started to establish branches in southern cities. For more on the Urban League, see Nancy J. Weiss, *The National Urban League, 1910-1940* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974); Nancy J. Weiss, *Whitney M. Young, Jr., and the Struggle for Civil Rights* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989).
[22] "Urban League Proposed for Dallas," *DMN*, May 26, 1967.

decision to bring in the Urban League was done to prevent the establishment of a human relations commission, their timing led many to speculate. Rev. Douglas Jackson of the Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University (SMU) wrote to Jonsson in support of the Urban League, but cautioned the mayor. "Your comments as reported in the *Morning News* indicate that you anticipate the NUL as a substitute for a human relations agency," Jackson wrote. "The NUL has not generally conceived itself as an agency to which a full range of complaints of discrimination are made."[23]

The Dallas Urban League (DUL) formally launched on July 1, 1967.[24] Officials created a biracial board of directors consisting of fifteen black and fifteen white leaders, many of whom were members of the Council of 14 and the DCC. [25] The black and white establishment hoped that the organization's social service programs would not only provide employment relief to the city's black residents, but would also fulfill the needs of a human relations commission, or as one activist lamented, the DUL would help "to keep a lid on the Negroes."[26] The board hired Felton

[23] Letter, Douglas Jackson to J. Erik Jonsson, May 26, 1967, Box 021, Folder 15, Jonsson papers.
[24] Efforts to bring the Urban League to Dallas had surfaced several times in previous decades. The various forms of economic discrimination throughout the Second World War had signaled to Black leaders that the Urban League might address African Americans' need for economic advancement in defense industries. The Negro Chamber of Commerce under the direction L. Virgil Williams had worked to persuade various white city leaders to bring the National Urban League into Dallas to set up a full-time office. But the Dallas Citizens Council established a wide variety of interracial relations committees designed to ameliorate racial grievances, and white city leaders downplayed the importance of establishing a local Urban League office.
[25] David Morgan, "Alexander to Run League," *Dallas Morning News,* 10 August 1967, 1; Originally founded in 1910 in New York, the National Urban League sought to help the hundreds of thousands of African Americans who left the south and migrated northward in search for greater economic opportunities. Established as a social services organization, the League during the 1960s, under the new leadership of Whitney Young, began its participation in civil rights movement demonstrations. Though its new role remained controversial amongst its national biracial board, the League expanded its advocacy and started to establish branches in southern cities. For more on the Urban League, see Nancy J. Weiss, *The National Urban League, 1910-1940* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974); Nancy J. Weiss, *Whitney M. Young, Jr., and the Struggle for Civil Rights* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989).
[26] Quote from Marilyn Clark, "The Dallas Urban League," Interview by author, July 26, 2017, CRBB https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/the-dallas-urban-league (Accessed July 20, 2018). Tom Shipp, a white minister from Lovers Lane Methodist Church served as the president of the board and Dr. J. Leslie Patton, Jr., a black principal of Booker T. Washington High School, served as the first vice president. The other twenty-eight board members consisted of black and white businessmen who either retained membership in the DCC or the Council of 14, including Smith, Craft, and Allen.

Alexander, a thirty-eight-year-old ex-Marine from New Orleans, as the League's executive director.[27] Alexander seemed to embody what the white power structure had envisioned as *their* director. Mayor Erik Jonsson and the rest of the white establishment hoped that Alexander would operate in much the same way as other black mainstream leaders. His "professional look" signaled to establishment politicians that Alexander resembled the perfect candidate as well as the exemplar that African Americans needed to bring themselves out of poverty.[28]

Upon his hiring, Alexander endeavored to connect those in need with varying resources and support. Throughout the first few months as director of the League, Alexander toured the black neighborhoods in the city, where he spoke to both community leaders and "working men and women at Waiters and Porters Café."[29] In Dallas, the vast majority of the black population had had no say in the amelioration of racial issues, and Alexander opposed silencing those voices. On black residents' behalf, Alexander worked frequently with Mayor Jonsson and others on the city council, promoting economic development in South Dallas by coordinating a job fair. He also made it a point to address other inequities, proposing that Mayor Jonsson enact a fair housing and open occupancy ordinance and made plans to establish a police-community relations program within the DUL.[30] Given the city's refusal to build a human relations commission, Alexander and the League stepped in when the city refused.

The establishment of the Dallas Urban League was the first concession to Dallas liberals who favored a human relations commission. Jonsson advocated that increasing dialogue between the races offered the best solution to the city's race problems, but when CHRC and others

[27] "Alexander to Run League," *DMN* August 10, 1967.
[28] "Emphasis Put on Opportunity," *DMN,* August 20, 1967; "Meet on Urban League Set," *DMN,* February 2, 1969.
[29] "Emphasis Put on Opportunity," *DMN*, August 20, 1967.
[30] Letter, Felton Alexander to J. Erik Jonsson, November 28, 1967, Box 027, Folder 10, Jonsson papers; Letter, Felton Alexander to J. Erik Jonsson, December 5, 1967, Box 027, Folder 10, Jonsson papers.

pointed to a commission as the antidote, Jonsson endeavored in other ways to fill this void. He believed racial tensions could be solved not by increasing the powers of the local or federal governments, but through the coordinated efforts of social service organizations like the Urban League. Fearful that a commission might operate as a sounding board for "radicals" or "militants," Jonsson turned to the Urban League, believing that Alexander and the League would provide "more constructive" outlets for aggrieved residents.

The Rise of Dallas SNCC

According to historian Clayborne Carson, SNCC Chairman Stokely Carmichael's declaration of "Black Power" began a new stage in the transformation of black political consciousness. The civil rights struggles of the 1960s had reawakened ideas of black radicalism and racial separatism, leading SNCC to reassess its commitment to interracial collaboration as the means to achieve racial equality. SNCC leaders like Carmichael, H. Rap Brown, and others distanced themselves from that philosophy, suspecting that alliances with white Americans were improbable and unappealing given the absence of significant white support for radical social change. Instead, SNCC promoted itself as a "Human Rights Organization" that encouraged the struggle against colonialism, racism, and economic exploitation.[31]

Shortly after Stokely Carmichael's declaration of Black Power, the FBI began targeting SNCC activities under its Counterintelligence Program, dubbed COINTELPRO. Created in 1956 to harass the Communist Party, COINTELPRO had targeted SNCC sporadically throughout the early 1960s. But, after the numerous urban rebellions of 1967, the FBI led by J. Edgar Hoover included SNCC members on a "Rabble Rouser Index," blaming SNCC for "inciting riots" across the nation. On August 25, 1967, Hoover directed FBI field offices to begin a new effort to

[31] For more, see Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981 [1995]), particularly chapters 16 and 17.

"expose, disrupt, misdirect, or otherwise neutralize the activities of black nationalist, hate-type organizations and groupings, their leadership, spokesmen, membership and supporters, and to counter their propensity for violence and civil disorder." Among the targets for "intensified attention" were the Deacons for Defense and Justice, the Nation of Islam, CORE, SCLC, RAM, and SNCC. In his orders, Hoover wrote, "No opportunities should be missed to exploit…organizational and personal conflicts of the leadership" and "an effort should be made to capitalize upon existing conflicts between black nationalist organizations." As the FBI expanded its counterintelligence program to control black militancy, it increased surveillance of not only SNCC's leadership but also of SNCC field offices around the nation. The FBI worked closely in exchanging intelligence information such as names, addresses, and license plate numbers with local police departments.[32]

The Dallas SNCC chapter led by Ernest McMillan emerged out of McMillan's frustration with both national and local politics. He detested US involvement in the Vietnam War; he openly criticized the failures of American liberalism and capitalism, and resented local officials who used whatever means they could to stall racial progress. Through his Dallas SNCC chapter, McMillan endeavored to not only challenge federal and local officials, but also sought to unite African Americans across class divides.

McMillan was no stranger to civil rights organizing. His mother Eva Partee McMillan worked with her older brother, A. C. Partee, as activists for the Dallas Progressive Voters League. McMillan's father, Marion Ernest McMillan, came from a prominent family in the city. His father, McMillan's grandfather, was a doctor and helped build McMillan Sanitarium on the

[32] Carson, *In Struggle*, 261-263.

corner of Hall and State Streets in Freedman's Town, the first black hospital in Dallas.[33] At the age of thirteen, McMillan's father left the family to pursue his master's degree in theology when he moved across the country to study at Atlanta University in Georgia, leaving his mother Eva to raise four children by herself. As a way to keep her children occupied when not in school, Eva enrolled Ernest and his three sisters in the NAACP Youth Council, where they participated in numerous protests including the picketing of the State Fair of Texas for its Negro Achievement Day and the stand-ins at the Majestic Theater downtown. Upon his graduation from high school in 1963, McMillan decided he needed a change of scenery. He had grown frustrated by the slow pace of change in Dallas where, in his view, black leaders had accepted token gestures of integration as progress and success.[34] In 1963, he moved to live with his father in Atlanta, where he attended Morehouse College. He later joined as a field secretary for SNCC, whose headquarters was located down the street from campus. There, he met activists such as Dick Gregory, Julian Bond, Bob Moses, and Stokely Carmichael, whose spirit and determination to demand freedom now resonated with the young McMillan.[35]

As a SNCC field secretary, McMillan worked to organize the majority-black Lee County, Georgia, for nearly two years before returning home to Dallas on the eve of the passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965. Once home, McMillan admitted he felt traumatized by his experiences in the Deep South, where he saw a number of his good friends beaten or killed in the movement. He revealed in an oral history interview in 2014 that his experience closely resembled "shell shock." For a few months, McMillan refused to socialize with friends; he rarely

[33] Ernest McMillan, Interview by author, July 20, 2017; "W.R. McMillan, M.D.," *The Dallas Express*, May 20, 1922.
[34] Ernest McMillan, interview by author; Ernest McMillan, "Joining the Dallas NAACP," Interview by Tiffany Smith, UNT Oral History Program, April 27, 2014, https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/joining-the-dallas-naacp (Accessed May 17, 2018).
[35] Ernest McMillan, interview by author, July 20, 2017.

left his house and had no real plans to continue organizing in Dallas. After a few months, he enrolled in the fall of 1965 to Arlington State College (now University of Texas at Arlington), where he felt humiliated by the campus's "Lost Cause" Confederate theme. "[Arlington State College] had a rebel flag flying over the campus and they had celebrations like Old South Week…where people would dress up [in black face] and romanticize, uplift an Old South mentality."[36] Over the next few weeks, McMillan gathered with a few dozen black and Latina/o students on campus to form the Student Congress on Racial Equality and staged a peaceful demonstration in front of the student center, where the students pleaded for the college to eradicate the Confederate theme from campus, to desegregate dormitories, and to end discrimination in off-campus housing. McMillan's on-campus organizing activities ultimately got him expelled in March 1967.[37]

After his expulsion, McMillan decided to open a SNCC chapter in Dallas, forming it when the national organization was undergoing major transitions. As a field secretary for Dallas SNCC, McMillan undoubtedly was aware of the organizational transformation in process when he opened the Dallas SNCC office on Oakland Boulevard in August 1967. But as COINTELPRO records, oral histories, police records, and newspapers reveal, McMillan sought interracial collaboration, particularly in opposing the Vietnam War, in spite of national SNCC leaders' recent redirection. First, McMillan reached out to black students at Bishop College but found difficulty organizing students on campus because of the conservative atmosphere of the administration. He later attended a meeting with the Nation of Islam (NOI) at the Mosque on Routh and Flora Streets in South Dallas, where he told NOI members that he was an assistant to

[36] Interview with Ernest McMillan by Tiffany Smith, Transcript, 61.
[37] "25 Arlington Students Protest 'Rebel' Theme," *DMN* October 28, 1965; Interview with Ernest McMillan by Tiffany Smith, Transcript, 63; Ernest McMillan, interview by author, July 20, 2017.

H. Rap Brown and that he wanted to educate African Americans on how to legally dodge the draft.[38]

Unable to make significant headway with the Nation of Islam or Bishop College, McMillan reached out to the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) chapter from Southern Methodist University.[39] The SDS chapter formed in late January 1967, and soon thereafter, some of its members, including Roy Haile, Doug Baker, and J. D. Arnold, developed an underground newspaper called *Notes from the Underground*. Its first issue released in March 1967 delivered scathing rebukes of SMU's official student newspaper *Campus*, in which the editors argued that the university's journalism lacked insight and rarely reported on the War in Vietnam and SDS organizing around the country. *Notes* was not only a leftist alternative to the conservative student newspaper, but also activist in its reporting. The editors encouraged students to stand up for their beliefs and publicly denounce the war. They also exposed various Dallas-based corporations whose earnings swelled because of U.S. involvement in Vietnam. In their September 1967 issue, *Notes* wrote that Texas Instruments Chairman Mark Shepherd Jr. said that the end of the war would hurt TI's profits. True to form, *Notes* editor Brent Stein, whose *nom de plume* was Stoney Burns, pointed out that TI's profits in 1967 totaled $568,500,000. "War's hell, but peace is worse," wrote Burns.[40]

Upon making the connections, SNCC and SDS worked together as draft counselors—helping unwilling and potential draftees avoid conscription. On August 31, 1967, SNCC and SDS members passed out mimeographed leaflets entitled "Resist the Draft," accusing Texas

[38] Report, "Activities, August 28, 1967," DL-100-10996, February 29, 1968, SNCC FBI Files.
[39] Throughout the early 1960s, SNCC worked closely with SDS. For more on this, see Wesley Hogan, *Many Minds, One Heart: SNCC's Dream for a New America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).
[40] Bonnie A. Lovell, "Stoney Burns and the *Dallas Notes*: Covering the Dallas Counterculture, 1967-1970," Master's Thesis, University of North Texas, 1998), 60-61.

Instruments, LTV Aerospace, and Bell Helicopter of "using our lives to fatten their wallets" and advertising that SNCC and SDS knew of legal ways to evade the draft.[41] "We studied the Selective Service Act, which showed the process and procedures for [inducting] young people into the military," McMillan revealed in an oral history interview. "We came up with some loopholes and developed some counseling techniques." McMillan and others found that pre-registering for divinity school a year in advance and belonging to certain organizations like the Communist Party or the International Workers of the World would receive deferments. "We also had some techniques for raising your temperature so when the doctor examined you, it would be 101 degrees, [and the doctor] would send you home," McMillan remembered.[42]

Throughout September, SNCC and SDS continued to counsel potential draftees. At one point, SDS member Robert W. Foley organized the Draft Information Center and rented an office building at 3715 Parry Street across from Fair Park in South Dallas. Local and national figures responded by using red-baiting tactics and police harassment to dispel their activities. U.S. Representative Joe R. Pool of Dallas urged the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) to investigate, charging that both SDS and SNCC were Communist-front organizations who planned to shut down the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., on October 21, 1967, as a part of their anti-draft resolution.[43] As a result of the probe, property owner Jack Blakeley and leasing manager J. M. Friedman both agreed to terminate Foley's lease.[44] Pool then set his sights on SMU when he criticized the university for allowing an SDS chapter on campus. "This group would be treasonous if we had a declaration of war," Pool said in a press conference. Pool

[41] Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee FBI Files, Dallas, Texas, United States Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Field Office File 100-10996, Bureau File Number 100-439190, February 28, 1968, Internet Archive (hereafter cited as SNCC FBI Files).
[42] Ernest McMillan, interview by author, July 20, 2017 (interview in author's possession).
[43] Ernest McMillan, interview by author, July 20, 2017 (interview in author's possession); Ed Harris, Interview by Ava Wilson, "Left in an Unmarked Grave," 163-165; "Rep. Pool Charges Draft Plot," *DMN,* September 28, 1967.
[44] "Rep. Pool Says His Probe Forcing Center's Eviction," *DMN*, October 8, 1967.

further resented that the SMU Student Senate provided $200 in financial support to *Notes from the Underground,* which Pool argued was the unofficial mouthpiece of SDS.[45]

The actions of SNCC and SDS created a tense environment for establishment officials. The two organizations were finding ways for young men to avoid conscription, which in political officials' minds threatened the security of the United States. This prompted local and federal law enforcement to take action. Federal investigators working under COINTELPRO furnished the names, addresses, and license plates numbers of both Ernest McMillan and SDS members to the Dallas Police Department. McMillan remembered the frequent harassment he faced on the streets where "standing on the street corner was considered loitering [and] distributing literature [was] considered trespassing." Police had also been known to tap phones and falsely arrest them, often times planting drugs or weapons on SDS and SNCC members.[46] The harassment was so intense that, a few weeks after the probe, the chairman of SMU's SDS chapter, John Mayo, revealed that "without prodding from the university's administration" the SDS faculty and student officials voted to disband.[47] Though officially disbanded, many within the organization, including J. D. Arnold and Stoney Burns, continued to speak out regardless of intimidation. In November 1967, however, SMU banned *Notes* from campus. Shortly thereafter, Arnold defied the ban orders and sold copies of the newspaper in front of the student center. SMU President Willis Tate expelled Arnold as a result. Burns continued to publish the newspaper off-campus, and by late 1967, readers could buy the newspaper at eight different locations around the city, including the Doubleday bookstore located downtown.[48]

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[45] "Pool Attacks SMU for Allowing SDS," *DMN*, October 7, 1967.
[46] Ernest McMillan, interview by author, July 20, 2017.
[47] Campus Chapter of SDS Disbands, *DMN*, October 12, 1967;
[48] Eric Celeste, "Past Lives," *D Magazine* (December 1990) https://www.dmagazine.com/publications/d-magazine/1990/december/past-lives/ (Accessed October 29, 2019); Lovell, "Stoney Burns," 92.

By this point, McMillan had lost a significant contingent of his organizing base when SDS formally disbanded. He decided to focus on organizing black residents in South Dallas, revealing that black Dallasites needed "an angry voice from the ghetto." In his view, he resented the accommodating tactics of older leadership in the city that provided few tangible benefits to black residents at large. "After almost two years of fighting in the Deep South," McMillan stated, "it was a shock to me to come back to Dallas and realize that things were just like I had left them. Nothing had changed. Nobody in the Black community was doing anything."[49] In December 1967, McMillan began working in the South Dallas community, where he handed out mimeographed leaflets to passers-by on Oakland and Forest Avenue. "We are not concerned with integration because our problem is the problem of survival," McMillan wrote in his leaflet. "What we want is power. That is, the power to get rid of the cracker cop in our neighborhood. The power to get rid of racist congressmen and city councilmen. In short, we want the power to control our own communities."[50]

Throughout January and February 1968, Ernest McMillan worked to organize black residents and bring them into SNCC. McMillan still used his connections with Stoney Burns to disseminate interest in Black Power to a broader audience. In the January 1-15, 1968 issue of *Notes from the Underground*, Burns revealed that McMillan and SNCC were working to host the Texas Black Youth Conference (TBYC), which McMillan promised to be "the greatest effort in Texas so far in implementing the actions of the National Black Power Conference, held in Newark, N.J. last July." On January 28, McMillan led a SNCC meeting on Swiss Avenue at the house of Wade Chambers, an SMU history professor and former faculty advisor for the SDS

[49] Quote from Ava Tiye Kinsey and Judson L. Jeffries, "From Civil Rights to Black Power in Texas: Dallas to Denton and Back to Dallas," Judson L. Jeffries (ed), *The Black Panther Party in a City near You* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2018), 148.
[50] United States Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation Files, DL 100-10996.

chapter on campus. There, five African Americans educated nearly twenty white students about Black Power. According to FBI records, one of McMillan's recent recruits, William Leach, allegedly stated that he supported bombing and burning buildings as a way to expose the exploitative capitalist system. "He stated if the whites lived in rat-infested ghettoes and were exploited, they too would want to fight and destroy…if they were not a part of the American community," the report read. Lafayette Locke, another recent recruit, iterated that achieving equal citizenship alone would not ameliorate the effects of racism in American society. "[The] capitalist system had to be destroyed," Locke alleged.[51]

McMillan continued to build a base of organizers throughout February and March. He continued the black organizing tradition in Texas by linking up with other like-minded organizations from around the state to unify and establish a network of communication. In early February, McMillan made contact with Lee Otis Johnson, the head of the Houston SNCC chapter, which had been founded at Texas Southern University in 1967. McMillan and Johnson traveled to black college campuses across the state to recruit conference participants. At their meetings at the various HBCUs, McMillan, Johnson, Leach, and Locke talked to students about Black Power, informing them of SNCC's intention to hold the Texas Black Youth Conference at the end of March.[52]

He also spoke publicly—away from the relative protection of HBCUs—about the longstanding problems of majority-white police forces who routinely terrorized, beat, harassed, and killed African Americans across the nation. On March 20, 1968, McMillan organized a peaceful protest of roughly twenty-two members from the Afro-American Cultural Society from Bishop College and members of the SDS chapter in front of the Dallas County Courthouse. The

[51] "Activities, January 28, 1968," DL-100-10996, February 29, 1968, SNCC FBI Files.
[52] "Activities, February 13, 1968," DL-100-10996, February 29, 1968, SNCC FBI Files.

demonstrators offered their support for incarcerated SNCC Chairman H. Rap Brown and Black Panther Party members Huey Newton and Leroy Jones. They also protested the Orangeburg, South Carolina, massacre and the police riot at Texas Southern University in 1967.[53] According to Fahim Minkah (formerly Fred Bell), McMillan read aloud the SNCC manifesto on the steps of the county courthouse, where it was broadcast on a local news channel. Minkah remembered McMillan's words well. "He said, something to the effect of, 'In order to stop the unjustified murder of Black men by racist police,' he said, 'the community should rise up and kill ten racist cops for every Black man unjustly killed.'" Such powerful rhetoric inspired Minkah, Edward "Black Ed" Harris, and Charles Beasley, to join the organization.[54]

McMillan's radical denunciation against police brutality sparked an interest in SNCC. Young men and women from the community and students from Bishop College filled the ranks within the organization, and soon the new members of SNCC gathered to attend the TBYC on March 22, 1968, at the Bethlehem Center on Leland Street in South Dallas. Over one hundred delegates from Houston, Austin, San Antonio, and Tyler attended the meeting, where they discussed the creation of a statewide communication system that would be tied in with SNCC headquarters in Atlanta.[55]

Given that *Dallas Notes* publicized the intention of the TBYC in early January, federal and local police watched SNCC's actions closely. The *Dallas Post Tribune,* one of the city's

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[53] "Demonstrators Picket Court House," *Dallas Post-Tribune*, March 23, 1968. The Orangeburg Massacre occurred February 8, 1968, when South Carolina Highway Patrol officers shot and killed three students from South Carolina State University after they protested continued segregation practices. For more, see Jack Bass and Jack Nelson, *The Orangeburg Massacre* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2003). The riot at Texas Southern University occurred a year earlier in May 1967 when the Houston Police Department raided the dormitories of black students after the students protested the death of eleven-year-old Victor George, who drowned in a garbage filled pond in the predominantly black part of town. For more, see Behnken, *Fighting Their Own Battles*, pp. 155-159.

[54] Fahim Minkah, "Meeting Ernest McMillan," Interview by author, August 26, 2017, CRBB https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/meeting-ernest-mcmillan (Accessed January 3, 2018); Ed Harris, Interview with Ava Wilson, "Left in an Unmarked Grave," 161.

[55] Ernest McMillan, interview by author, July 20, 2017.

black-owned newspapers, reported that large numbers of FBI and Dallas police constantly circled and patrolled the area near the Bethlehem Center, and that employees of the center also complained of trouble with the phones, presuming the lines had been tapped.[56] Unbeknownst to the attendees, FBI informants infiltrated the meeting and wrote in detailed reports what the conference participants discussed. On Friday night, attendants allegedly proposed "riots" in Dallas and Houston, urging the need to "look for [a race problem] and exploit it to make people aware that such a problem really existed." The same evening, Larry Jackson, the SNCC Field Director from Austin, allegedly spoke to the group in a "militant vein" about the long, hot summer coming up, telling the group, "You know what you have to do here," implying that the attendees should rebel. The following evening, Lee Otis Johnson from Houston's SNCC chapter spoke about the formation of black co-ops, "where Negroes would band together to build their own businesses, houses, and apartments, thereby gaining economic power." On Sunday, the last day of the conference, the attendees allegedly resolved several initiatives of SNCC's agenda. The attendees agreed that SNCC should work to "bring unity to the black race" and that by doing so, they would "gain political, economic and social strength through peaceful means, if possible, by force if necessary." Further, the attendees resolved that "SNCC does not intend to destroy America but does intend to have a piece of the cake for the black people."[57]

But the informants also reported that a lack of planning and difference of opinions among attendees ultimately diminished the overall effectiveness of the conference. The reports alleged that many attendees found the discussions uninteresting and opted to play baseball outside instead. Further, the reports acknowledged that Bishop College's dietician Collum Jaffer

[56] "Black Youth Conference A Slow Drag," *Dallas Post Tribune*, March 28, 1968.
[57] "Activities, April 25, 1968," DL-100-10996, May 10, 1968, SNCC FBI Files.

interrupted one of the meetings and stated that everyone ought to be in jail.[58] Characterizing the meeting as a failure hardly captures the overall effectiveness of SNCC's agenda in Dallas. While it may be true that the meeting failed to live up to its potential, the Texas Black Youth Conference did foster a growing racial pride amongst the local Dallas organizers to continue pressing the needs of the black population. McMillan had effectively communicated with young men and women, using widely held grievances, such as the war in Vietnam, economic and political disempowerment, and police brutality as significant organizing strategies to broaden the membership of Dallas SNCC.

McMillan also was successful in establishing close connections with the Dallas Urban League when his cousin, Marilyn Clark, began working in the office. Clark had come to Dallas from Quitman, a small rural community in East Texas, to study at Bishop College in 1963. There, she developed a rebellious streak. Inspired by the Black is Beautiful movement of the 1960s, Clark grew out her natural hair into an Afro and refused to wear stockings with her open-toed sandals, which resulted in the Dean of Students telling Clark that her scandalous toes would "excite the men."[59] In December 1967, DUL Director Felton Alexander hired Clark as the organization's secretary. Clark's administrative position allowed her to screen potential patrons of the DUL. She often threw away clients' messages if they sounded rude or middle-class and gave preferential treatment to the black underserved and poor.[60] Her attitude and appearance did not jive well with the black and white leadership of the organization. Clark recalls that local UL Director of Employment, Cullen McCoy, repeatedly told her to press her hair, wear certain

[58] SNCC FBI Files, May 10, 1968.
[59] Marilyn Clark, interview by author, July 27, 2017; Marilyn Clark, Interview with Marvin Dulaney, May 2016.
[60] Marilyn Clark, interview with Ava Wilson, "Left in an Unmarked Grave," 142. Marilyn Clark, interview by author, July 27, 2017.

dresses, and look "civilized." When Clark refused to fall in line, McCoy retaliated by calling her a "Black Power wench."[61]

Though white city officials envisioned the Urban League would stymie "black militancy," Marilyn Clark allowed it to flourish. In the evening hours, she allowed SNCC to use the DUL as a meeting place, where SNCC members used the untapped phones to connect with other SNCC chapters across the state. She also provided McMillan and others reams of printing paper and granted them access to the mimeograph to make copies for political posters, fliers, and later the SNCC newspaper, the *Black Disciple*.[62] By assisting SNCC, Clark was hardly undermining Felton Alexander's authority at the Dallas Urban League. On the contrary, Alexander wanted to make connections with all of Dallas's black residents, and he opposed alienating the voices of supposed black militants in the process. According to McMillan, Alexander respected the work of SNCC but knew that, as the director of the Dallas Urban League, he could not operate on the same level of Black Power organizations.[63] Ironically, the DUL not only operated as a "sounding board" for "black militancy" but also as a safe house for the organization.

Dallas Fears Rebellion

Following the long, hot summer of 1967, President Lyndon B. Johnson appointed a commission to investigate the causes of the 159 urban rebellions across the nation. As historian Elizabeth Hinton has shown, Johnson staffed the commission with liberal policymakers and civil rights advocates who evaluated the factors leading to unrest, hoping to provide law enforcement

[61] Marilyn Clark, interview by Marvin Dulaney.
[62] Marilyn Clark, "Urban League as a Resource," interview by author, July 26, 2017 CRBB https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/7532/urban-league-as-a-resource (Accessed February 28, 2019); Marilyn Clark, Interview by Marvin Dulaney.
[63] Ernest McMillan, interview by Tiffany Smith

officials at all levels with techniques and strategies to avert it. Released in February 1968, the conclusions of the Kerner Commission, named for its chairman, Governor Otto Kerner of Illinois, recommended the creation of two million jobs for low-income Americans, continued federal intervention in school desegregation, year-round schooling for low-income youth, the immediate construction of at least 600,000 housing units, and a guaranteed minimum income. But the uprisings and the aftermath produced growing doubts about the effectiveness of antipoverty politics that the Kerner Commission emphasized. The commission also argued, however, that increased police manpower and screening measures coupled with sensitivity training would lower crime rates and discriminatory policing.[64] Policymakers thus continued in their expanded policing processes, arguing that increased policing—not antipoverty measures—would curtail crime in communities of color.[65]

Still, when the Kerner Commission released its report, members of the Dallas City Council, including Charles Cullum and Mayor Jonsson, downplayed its significance. They were particularly critical of the Commission's warning of police "overreaction" to racial disturbances, saying the city's police department should be prepared and equipped to enforce the law vigorously." Still, the Kerner Report renewed widespread interest in the creation of a human relations commission, especially from Dallas liberals. CHRC director Sidney Stahl stated he agreed "100 percent with the commission report. I believe [the Kerner Commission] is saying we need to have total mobilization of efforts to eliminate the conditions that cause riots—because these conditions still exist," he stated.[66]

[64] Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime*, 127-129.
[65] Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime*, 97.
[66] "Dallas Leaders Concerned: Black Militancy Present Under Calm Surface Here, *Dallas Times Herald,* March 3, 1968.

Instead of acting on the Kerner Commission's recommendations in implementing antipoverty programs, Jonsson and the city council expanded the powers and workload of the police department. First, Jonsson made arrangements for additional assistance from other Dallas County police departments in case of an emergency, and even spoke to Governor John Connally about the possibility of bringing in the National Guard should the need arise. In the event of an uprising, Jonsson could then call for help easily and receive additional policing assistance.[67] Jonsson also ordered the city manager's office to brief the mayor and the rest of the city council on the content of the report, which Jonsson admitted he hadn't read in its entirety because "the report is big." City Manager W. Scott McDonald had recently finished reviewing the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) report, which had made several recommendations to city officials about restructuring the police department. Upon his briefing of the Kerner Report, McDonald found similarities with the IACP's recommendations, particularly the use of storefront community service centers. He then suggested to the city council that the police department establish these storefronts.[68] On March 19, the city council unanimously approved McDonald's recommendations, allocating more than $3.7 million, of which $3.3 million went to salary raises and roughly $450,000 to additional equipment and operating the storefront centers.[69] Throughout March and April, the Dallas Police Department searched for viable locations to house their community service centers, deciding that the low-income areas of South Dallas, Oak Cliff, West Dallas, and short-North Dallas would be the most desirable

[67] Letter, W. S. McDonald to Mayor W. W. McAllister, March 14, 1968, Box 065, Folder 29, J. Erik Jonsson papers, DeGolyer Library, Southern Methodist University (hereafter cited the Jonsson papers).
[68] "Major Changes Urged for Police," *DMN*, March 12, 1968.
[69] "Changes Backed in Police Field," *DMN*, March 19, 1968.

neighborhoods. They proposed that each store front would be staffed by "2 Negro officers and 2 with Latin [surnames]."[70]

The expanded policing provided a sense of comfort to establishment officials. Fears reignited, however, following Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination on April 4, 1968, as nearly every major city in the United States exploded in rebellion. Jonsson breathed a sigh of relief when Dallas remained immune from the destruction. In a letter to U. S. Senator John L. McLellan from Arkansas, Jonsson proudly proclaimed that "no incidents in our community…can be properly classified as civil disturbances."[71] But King's death and the aftermath once again sparked calls for a human relations commission. Jonsson remained unpersuaded. Shortly before King's assassination, Jonsson received a phone call from Dr. Luther Holcomb, former executive secretary for the Greater Dallas Council of Churches (GDCC) and a current vice-chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, who recommended Jonsson and Chief of Police Charles Batchelor to have the Memphis Police Department in Tennessee investigate the activities of Rev. Baxton Bryant, a white minister who formerly preached in Dallas. "If the Mayor had permitted a Human Relations Commission, Bryant was due to have been the first executive director," Holcomb claimed. "His actions in Memphis have been highly inflammatory as well as irresponsible."[72] A former minister of Elmwood Methodist Church in Dallas, Bryant was well known for his affiliation with the Council of Human Relations in Nashville, Tennessee. As a Democrat and strong advocate of civil rights, Bryant left his parish in Dallas and had joined forces with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in Memphis, where he marched with Dr. King just days before his assassination. In the April 5th report, Dallas police in

[70] George Schrader, Assistant City Manager, City of Dallas Official Memorandum, April 15, 1968, Box 023, Folder 14, Jonsson papers.
[71] Letter, J. Erik Jonsson to Hon. John L. McLellan, April 19, 1968, Box 065, Folder 29, Jonsson papers.
[72] Notes, Telephone call, Luther Holcomb to Nelle Johnston, April 2, 1968, Folder 12, Box 021, Jonsson papers.

Memphis relayed to Dallas Detective H. M. Hart that "if Baxton were to come back to Dallas, it would not be in connection with the church." Further, the report alleged Baxton was "closely affiliated with Rev. [Jim] Lawson, one of the founders of SNCC," and that "SNCC is known to propose a violent approach to civil rights issues."[73]

It is difficult to determine whether the police intelligence report furthered Jonsson's opposition to the proposed human relations commission. But evidence suggests that, following his receipt of the report, he persisted in discrediting the effectiveness of a commission, playing up the fears that it would act as a police review board that would undermine the work of police officers. "If there is brutality occasionally, you must ask—is it justified?" Jonsson stated. "Do you believe a criminal whose polygraph test shows he is lying, or…[do] you believe a policeman who has made a lifetime career of defending you?"[74]

Still, Jonsson was a seasoned politician. He could hardly suggest increased dialogue between black and white residents without providing a "mechanism" to do so.[75] As a result, Jonsson reached out to Donald Bourgeois, a black attorney and the executive director of the St. Louis Model City Agency, to come speak to the Greater Dallas Council of Churches.[76] Bourgeois had recently implemented a program called Block Partnership in St. Louis, Missouri, where church, school, civic, fraternal, union, or business organizations worked with

[73] Detectives H. M. Hart and C. T. Burnley, Criminal Intelligence Section, to Captain W. F. Dyson, Administration Service Bureau, April 3, 1968, Box 021, Folder 12, Jonsson papers; E. L. Cunningham, Criminal Intelligence Unit to Captain W. F. Dyson, Administration Service Bureau, Dallas Police Department, April 5, 1968, Box 021, Folder 12, Jonsson papers;

[74] Mayor Jonsson Expands Statement of his View on the Proposal to Establish by City Ordinance a Human Relations Commission in Dallas, undated, Box 021, Folder 10, Jonsson papers.

[75] In a letter from Dallas attorney Marvin Wise, also a member of CHRC, Wise quoted Jonsson as saying that he was "searching for a mechanism to improve the dialogue between the races." Letter, Marvin Wise to J. Erik Jonsson, April 8, 1968, Box 021, Folder 12, Jonsson papers.

[76] For more on St. Louis Model City Agency, see Clarence Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway: Class Politics and Black Freedom Struggle in St. Louis* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009); [Civil Disturbance Ordinance], August 26, 1968, Box 2, Folder 43, Jonsson papers.

neighborhood blocks in low-income areas to improve the vitality of the neighborhood. Bourgeois met with Louis Saunders, the executive director of GDCC, to discuss the organization of Block Partnership in Dallas under GDCC sponsorship.[77] Saunders agreed and motioned to the Board of Directors to implement the Block Partnership program in Dallas. In a letter to Jonsson, Saunders wrote, "I am so grateful for this opportunity of the churches to become involved in the urban crisis."[78] Jonsson placated calls for a human relations commission by inviting a privately endowed religious organization to bear the brunt of managing interracial relations programs in Dallas.

By early May, two service centers opened—one located at 2820 Singleton Boulevard in West Dallas and the other at 3109 South Oakland Avenue in South Dallas. The department planned for two more centers, established at 220 Allen Street in short-North Dallas and another at 2237 Cedar Crest Boulevard in Oak Cliff, to open in the coming weeks.[79] By July, City Manager W. Scott McDonald lauded the storefronts as successes, revealing that police officers located full-time employment for as many as ten residents and distributed more than eight hundred cases of dry cereal donated by General Foods to needy families in the area. City Councilmember Sybil Hamilton applauded the storefronts, stating the police department should implement "twice as many" in operation across the city.[80] What began as a way to alter the image of the police officer in communities of color quickly gave way to surveillance. A few days after the West Dallas storefront center opened, for example, Lieutenant Paul Townsend of the Community Services Division of the DPD wrote to Chief of Police Charles Batchelor, revealing

[77] Rev. Saunders also read the death rites for the suspected assassin of President Kennedy, Lee Harvey Oswald, in Fort Worth, Texas, during Oswald's funeral and burial. "Oswald Buried in Fort Worth; Brief Rites Held at Cemetery," *DMN*, November 26, 1963.
[78] Letter, Rev. Louis Saunders to J. Erik Jonsson, April 10, 1968, Box 022, Folder 10, Jonsson papers.
[79] "Police Centers' Rental Backed," *DMN*, April 30, 1968; "Community Centers Will Aid Poor," *Dallas Post-Tribune*, May 22, 1968.
[80] "City Manager Calls Police Centers Success," *DMN*, July 16, 1968.

he received reports of "Negro militant activities" near the West Dallas storefront location.[81] While the Dallas Police Department boasted its success in supplying resources to the city's poor and underserved, the department also used the location to surveille the predominantly black and brown neighborhood for supposedly militant organizing.

The establishment of the storefront community service centers and Block Partnership in Dallas were, indeed, compromises between the conservative power structure and white liberals. Conservatives in Dallas felt uneasy about the release of the Kerner Report, which demonstrated how socioeconomic discrimination and the lack of equal opportunities moved the United States "toward two societies, One black, One white—Separate and Unequal."[82] The Commission's proposals in attacking the socioeconomic roots of urban unrest, however, required wide-scale intervention on both the federal and local level, prompting both conservatives and many liberals, including President Lyndon B. Johnson, to view the report as unreasonable and too radical.[83] Dallas conservatives and liberals joined forces again when they agreed that the storefront centers worked to alter the image of law enforcement, and that this—not cracking down on racist policing—would decrease the likelihood of urban rebellion. At the same time, many white liberals like Rev. Saunders, who was troubled by the urban crisis, believed that the social service program of Block Partnership was the remedy to bridging racial divides as well as a compromise to the proposed human relations commission. As had other members of the Dallas City Council, Jonsson figured that relieving tensions between police officers and communities of color would not only result in lower crime rates but would also thwart the establishment of a human relations commission going forward.

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[81] Letter, Paul Townsend to Charles Batchelor, May 7, 1968, Box 023, Folder 14, Jonsson papers.
[82] Quote from Kerner, et al., *Report of the National Advisory Commission* (1968) located in Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime*, 124.
[83] Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime*, 127.

SNCC and Policing

The Dallas SNCC chapter became aware of the increasing surveillance of their activities, and especially so after Channel 8 organized a panel of community activists and civic leaders from Dallas and Fort Worth to have them discuss race relations in the area. Mayor Erik Jonsson, Bishop College Vice President Dr. Irving Baker, Regional Director of the NAACP Richard Dockery, and Felton Alexander represented Dallas. Alarmed that Channel 8 excluded young voices from the panel, Alexander persuaded the station to include Ernest McMillan.[84] The live panel aired on May 21, 1968. When McMillan got the chance to air his grievances against racial injustices in the city, he pointed to the mayor's own company, Texas Instruments, as evidence of racial bias in employment in Dallas. As a former employee of TI, McMillan brought to light the ways in which the company discriminated against black employees. "I know how they treated people [at Texas Instruments], so I contradicted him right to his face," McMillan remembered. "I said, 'This is what happens down there. This is how you treat black women. This is what you're doing to divide families.' I didn't mean to say *you*, but it was about his company." McMillan contended that, as a result, local and national policing agencies increased their surveillance efforts and worked to enact "revenge" upon Dallas SNCC.[85]

SNCC members used whatever outlet they could to avoid abuse by the Dallas police. Charles Beasley and Fahim Minkah created a police patrol called the Kaka Tayari, meaning "brothers ready" in Swahili. The Kaka Tayari followed police cars in black neighborhoods,

[84] Ernest McMillan, interview by Tiffany Smith; Carolyn Barta, "Dallas-Fort Worth Panelists See Hope in Racial Situation," *DMN,* May 22, 1968.
[85] Ernest McMillan, interview by Tiffany Smith. In a monthly report from Richard Dockery, the Regional Director of the NAACP located in Dallas, Dockery stated that the Dallas NAACP Metropolitan Council named Texas Instruments as "one of the worst violators of the Civil Rights Act of 1964," and that TI routinely discriminated in employment, retention, and promotion. Monthly Report of Richard Dockery, June 15-August 15, 1968, Region VI Southwest Field Staff Files: Richard Dockery reports, 1968-1969, Papers of the NAACP, Part 29: Branch Department, Series A: Field Staff Files, 1965-1972.

taking pictures and making recordings of police officers' behavior when making arrests.[86] SNCC used their relationship with the SDS chapter and the *Dallas Notes* to propagate the types of harassment they faced. In one such issue, editor Stoney Burns reported that Dallas police arrested McMillan and Fahim Minkah for allegedly threatening a man while distributing leaflets. "He's Black - - $20,000 Peace Bond," the headline screamed. "Even the accused assassin of President John F. Kennedy was only held on $10,000 bond," the article read. "Such is 'white' justice in Dallas."[87]

Despite police harassment, SNCC continued to organize and soon they began implementing strategies for economic self-determination. In July, SNCC targeted OK Supermarket, a grocery chain and what SNCC called a "ghetto gouger," or a white-owned business with stores in black neighborhoods that charged inflated prices for poor quality of food. McMillan and SNCC hoped to convince the owners to sell to black owners, who could then help determine the economic vitality of the neighborhood. [88] McMillan, Fahim Minkah, and Matthew Johnson recruited between twenty and thirty black residents to disrupt the daily business of the stores, having some fill up carts of food and leaving them at the checkout counter while others ordered expensive cuts of meat and left them in the carts and departed the store without paying. Protests escalated when, on July 1, 1968, about fifty black protestors entered the store and began destroying various items, including vegetables, fruits, and milk bottles. McMillan and Johnson were apprehended by police two days later and charged with the destruction of private property

[86] Ernest McMillan, interview by author; Fahim Minkah, "Working with SNCC," Interview by author, August 26, 2017, CRBB, https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/working-with-sncc (Accessed January 3, 2017).
[87] Lovell, "Stoney Burns and the *Dallas Notes*," 97-98.
[88] Fahim Minkah, "O.K. Supermarket Boycott," Interview by author, 26 August 2017, CRBB, https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/ok-supermarket-boycott (Accessed January 1, 2018); "SNCC Boycotts OK Supermarket," *Dallas Express*, July 27, 1968; "SNCC Strikes Again," *Dallas Express,* August 10, 1968; Dulaney, "Whatever Happened in Dallas, Texas?" 86; Brian Behnken, *Fighting Their Own Battles: Mexican Americans, African Americans, and the Struggle for Civil Rights* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 165.

of over fifty dollars. As the prime organizers of the boycott, they were held responsible for the destruction inside the store. "An amount of stuff was supposed to have been damaged and destroyed, including a gallon of milk," McMillan stated. "But it wasn't like we threw anything at the windows, [threw] rocks or bricks or beat anybody up. It was just our demonstration as to consciously disrupt their service to really get their attention."[89]

The food-smashing raid attracted an enormous amount of attention in Dallas. Richard Dockery from the Regional Office of the NAACP received a flood of phone calls after McMillan and Johnson's arrest, asking if the office would raise bond money to get them out of jail. Fearing for the NAACP's "image, reputation, and prestige," Dockery refused to intervene immediately. The offices had conducted a survey of black residents in the days after the protests and found that the black population in Dallas displayed mixed reactions of the food-smashing raid—"curiosity, sympathy, fear of a riot"— all of which troubled Dockery at the regional office.[90] In response, Dockery and the NAACP sat on the sidelines and chose not to intervene on SNCC's behalf. Lawyers representing McMillan and Johnson raised bail money, and the two were released on bond a few days before SNCC launched an official boycott of the grocery chain on July 19, 1968. That morning, Fahim Minkah, Matthew Johnson, Ernest McMillan, and Marilyn Clark stood outside the stores on South Oakland and Grand Avenue, holding signs that read "Black Power," "Stay Away from O.K. Nigger," and "Boycott O. K." The picketers also handed out mimeographed leaflets to black patrons, urging customers to stay away from the grocery store. "It is time that we the Black People unite for the purpose of putting an end to white

[89] P. K. Brown, "SNCC Leaders Convicted," *Dallas Notes*, September 4, 1968; Quote from Ernest McMillan, "Police Harassment, Arrests, and Imprisonment," Interview by Tiffany Smith, April 27, 2014, UNT Oral History Program, CRBB https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/lafayette-locke (Accessed January 16, 2018); "SNCC Leader Jailed," *Dallas Express,* July 20, 1968.
[90] Monthly Report of Richard Dockery, Regional Director, Region VI Office, NAACP, August 15-September 15, Region VI Southwest Field Staff Files: Richard Dockery reports, 1968-1969, Papers of the NAACP, Part 29: Branch Department, Series A: Field Staff Files, 1965-1972.

Supremacy in Black communities," the leaflets read. "The White man has Cheated, Robbed, and Exploited our Black Brother for over 300 years. Let's not make it 400."[91]

Shortly before the food-smashing raid, Mayor Jonsson continued to investigate the ways in which Dallas needed to prepare in the event of urban unrest. In early June, he sent Harry W. Hobbs and Joe Loving, the city's two assistant city attorneys, to Washington D.C. and Baltimore, Maryland, to gauge how those cities dealt with the uprisings after King's assassination. In their reports to City Attorney Alex Bickley, Loving and Hobbs made a series of recommendations to Jonsson. Considering the vast majority of people arrested in D.C. and Baltimore were held for violating the imposed curfew, the assistant city attorneys recommended that the Dallas mayor have the ability to enact such a measure. Furthermore, Hobbs and Loving recommended that the city also pass what they called the "scavenger ordinance," which would prosecute individuals who were caught with items as a result of looting, "even though it is not possible to prove burglary or theft," Hobbs and Loving wrote.[92]

The city government received word of these recommendations in mid-June 1968, but refused to act on passing any city ordinance until nearly two months later. SNCC's food-smashing demonstration and subsequent boycott at the O.K. Supermarket in July served as the catalyst for the city council to move. In early August, City Attorney Alex Bickley wrote to Mayor Jonsson and the council, arguing that the city needed to study the pros and cons of amending the existing Public Disturbance ordinance, which had been on the books for the annual Texas-Oklahoma University football games. Bickley admitted that "the publicity will not be

[91] SNCC FBI Files, Dallas, Texas, August 22, 1968.
[92] Harry H. Hobbs and Joe Loving, City of Dallas Office Memorandum, June 21, 1968, Box 29, Folder 31, Jonsson papers.

good."[93] On August 12, 1968, the Dallas City Council acted on Bickley's suggestions and passed City Ordinance 12228, Article IX, commonly referred to as the "anti-riot" ordinance. The ordinance gave the mayor broad powers. Based on information provided by the Chief of Police, the mayor could declare a state of emergency or a public disturbance, defined as "any riot, affray, noise, disturbance or disorderly assembly in any public or private place within the city," in which the mayor could then request the Governor of Texas to send in the National Guard, and in some cases, could recommend sending federal troops. Furthermore, the amendment gave the mayor powers to order a mandatory curfew, temporarily close private businesses that sell ammunition, weapons, gasoline, and alcohol, and "declare items contraband and to authorize search for items on the list."[94]

Reaction to the ordinance received immediate push-back from black activists. Ernest McMillan publicly denounced its passage in a televised news conference, stating, "The ordinance makes coercion and tyranny the order of the day for dealing with any kind of act the mayor wishes to deem an emergency."[95] Black organizers feared that the ordinance provided the ability for the mayor to declare a state of emergency and allowed the police the ability to arrest African Americans based on police perception of a riot. They also argued that the ordinance violated their freedom of assembly rights protected by the First Amendment. As a result, several civil rights organizations, including SNCC, the NAACP, and the Dallas Urban League publicly denounced the ordinance. Felton Alexander urged all activists who disagreed with its passage to attend a meeting at the DUL.[96]

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[93] Alex Bickley, City of Dallas Office Memorandum to the Mayor and Dallas City Council, August 2, 1968, Box 065, Folder 31, Jonsson papers.
[94] Dallas City Council Ordinances, Ordinance Number 12228, August 12, 1968, p. 344. Dallas Municipal Archives, Dallas, TX.
[95] "Negroes to Draft Views," *Dallas Times-Herald*, August 14, 1968.
[96] "NAACP To Study New Ordinance," *The Dallas* Express, September 14, 1968; Marilyn Clark, "Black Citizens for Justice, Law and Order," Interview by author, July 26, 2017 CRBB https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/7531/black-

Alexander needed to reach as many representatives of black organizations as he could. Alexander wanted to showcase how black residents opposed the passage of the ordinance. "We don't have a homogenous black leadership in Dallas," he argued. "So, no group can speak for the community." At the Urban League office, Secretary Marilyn Clark reached out to various organizations in Dallas—selecting members carefully and screening potential attendees. On August 15, 1968, members of SNCC, church ministers Rev. O. H. Lakey, Rev. S. Moses Ragan, and former Dallas NAACP President Rev. H. Rhett James all attended the meeting. Kathlyn Gilliam, president of the Colored PTA, who had been known to support the activities of SNCC, also attended as did Al Lipscomb and Elsie Faye Heggins, two black Dallas organizers from the recently developed Block Partnership program.[97] All together the activists formed Black Citizens for Justice, Law and Order (BCJLO), an umbrella organization of both middle- and working-class activists and Black Power advocates who opposed the passage of the anti-riot ordinance.

Originally, BCJLO organized as a united front to oppose the city ordinance. But as quickly as the group emerged did problems arise among its participants. Clark, McMillan, and other Black Power activists proposed that the organization should solicit wide-scale community engagement. They argued that "poverty, exploitation, capitalism, police oppression and brutality are the roots of [black] enslavement" and that the Dallas City Council was making a "grave error by making this blind decision that in no way deals with the basic causes."[98] Black middle-class activists, including business professionals and ministers, of the organization wanted to approach the mayor and the city council and inform them of the ordinance's injustices. Ultimately, the

citizens-for-justice-law-and-order (Accessed February 28, 2019); Gene Ormsby, "Council Seat Issue: Proposals Ask District Voting," *DMN News* September 4, 1968; Ernest McMillan, interview by author; Ernest McMillan, Interview by Tiffany Smith.

[97] Ernest McMillan, Interview by Tiffany Smith; Julia Scott Reed, "City Boxes Itself in with Riot Ordinance," *DMN* August 26, 1968; Marilyn Clark, interview by author.

[98] SNCC FBI Files, August 22, 1968.

organization went in the latter direction. At the council meeting that evening, Rev. O. H. Lakey read a formal statement from BCJLO, which declared the ordinance "a blatant act of tyranny by law" and "an invidious subterfuge for the oppression of black peoples, resolved to be free."[99] In a televised interview, Lakey further refuted Mayor Jonsson's claim that the ordinance was similar in nature to the one passed every year for the Texas-Oklahoma University football game and that no racial overtones existed in the ordinance. "Without questioning the mayor's integrity," Lakey stated," I do feel there is a tremendous difference between the intent and the content of the ordinance."[100] Ultimately, their powerful rhetoric did not persuade the mayor and council of the law's discriminatory nature. The main architect of the ordinance, Mayor Erik Jonsson, did not attend the council meeting when BCJLO approached the city council.[101]

After the council meeting, Mayor Erik Jonsson gave a televised speech defending the controversial ordinance. He placed the passage of the ordinance within the confines of preventing urban unrest. But Dallas was different, he argued. The city had yet to experience similar kinds of strife as had other cities, and Jonsson pointed to the idea that benevolent reformers in the city were consciously and deliberately working to "improve the opportunities for all citizens," regardless of race. As evidence, he listed a series of reforms that showed Dallas wanted a different trajectory. The Dallas Police Department, for instance, opened four community service storefront centers. He boasted his commitment to white and black community cooperation when he invited and supported Block Partnership.[102] But also in his speech, he

[99] "Negroes Rap Riot Steps," *Dallas Times-Herald,* August 16, 1968.
[100] "From Reel to Web – August 19, 1968, Part 2," WFAA Newsfilm Collection, ca. 1960-1978, G. William Jones Film and Video Collection, Hamon Arts Library, Southern Methodist University https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LCqpmejPBOI&list=PL8WZP-NbjEoEFHQgHkqI-pXgeM7795os5&index=19 (Accessed April 29, 2019) (hereafter cited WFAA Newsfilm Collection).
[101] Gene Orsmby, "Council Seat Issue: Proposals Ask District Voting," *DMN,* 4 September 1968; Mark Herbener, interview by Ava Wilson, "Left in an Unmarked Grave," 195.
[102] For more on the development of Block Partnership, see Neal R. Peirce, *Great Plains States of America: People, Politics, and Power in the Nine Great Plains States* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1973), 62.

warned that certain residents of Dallas sought to impeach the process of law and order, which he called one of the "essential components of progress." Jonsson further targeted Felton Alexander of the Dallas Urban League for his complicit support of SNCC's food-smashing campaign and subsequent boycott. "We do not wish to correct injustice with injustice. If there is any fraud in a foodstore *[sic]* in Dallas," Jonsson continued, "about which Mr. Alexander has direct knowledge, I hold it to be his responsibility to inform the City Attorney in order that we may correct through lawful proceedings any such injustices."[103] In essence, Jonsson accused SNCC of exploiting an issue long known to the majority of black residents, and he held Alexander responsible for not addressing the issue through the proper channels.

The passage of the anti-riot ordinance by the Dallas City Council reveals the ways in which the municipal government endeavored to preserve and protect the city's image. Dallas could ill afford to be subjected to the racial turmoil and tension that other cities experienced in the late 1960s. The OK Supermarket boycott and other activism of SNCC posed the chance that future disturbances—bigger in nature and more destructive than the $200 worth of damage at the grocery store—could plague the city of Dallas. In response, white city leaders launched a series of aggressive attacks, including police harassment and municipal legislation, against the "rabble-rousers" when federal and local police agencies believed SNCC and other "black militants" wanted to disrupt the apparent tranquility in Dallas. Even though the language of the ordinance contained no racial overtones, African Americans in the city pointed to the timing of the passage of the ordinance, agreeing that this ordinance directly targeted the actions and protests that SNCC and others had engaged. In response, a large majority of black civil rights leaders agreed

[103] J. Erik Jonsson, [Civil Disturbance Ordinance], August 26, 1968, J. Erik Jonsson Papers, Series 2: Civic Affiliations, Box 2, Folder 43, SMU Digitial Archives http://digitalcollections.smu.edu/cdm/ref/collection/jej/id/8 (Accessed March 7, 2019).

that the city ordinance infringed upon black Americans' constitutional rights. Unintentionally, the mayor and the Dallas City Council united black activists across class lines when BCJLO formed.

Local authorities used frequent police harassment and arrests to silence black radicals, but they also received significant help and cooperation from the district attorney, the courts, and federal policing agencies under COINTELPRO. All together, these forces worked continuously to stymie the efforts of Black Power groups like SNCC both on the local and state level. Less than a week after the city council passed the anti-riot ordinance, Ernest McMillan and Matthew Johnson faced trial for felony destruction of private property for their role in the OK Supermarket disturbance. Prosecutors called in a number of police officers to attest to the character of McMillan and Johnson, claiming the two had "bad reputations."[104] Defense attorneys had their hands full repudiating the accusations against their clients. They called for Felton Alexander and Rev. Zan Holmes, a black minister who was running for a seat in the Texas House of Representatives, to defend McMillan and Johnson's reputations in the broader Dallas community. In addition to the favorable testimony, defense attorneys likened the food smashing raid to the Sons of Liberty of the Boston Tea Party, arguing that McMillan and Johnson's actions represented the struggle for democracy, full citizenship, and freedom. "That argument didn't work," McMillan laughingly recalled. On August 23, 1968, an all-white jury found Ernest McMillan and Matthew Johnson guilty of felony destruction of private property. Both were given ten-year sentences.[105]

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[104] Ernest McMillan, "Arrest and Prosecution," interview by Tiffany Smith, April 27, 2014, UNT Oral History Program, CRBB https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/165/zan-wesley-holmes-jr (Accessed April 22, 2019).
[105] Brown, "SNCC Leaders Convicted," *Dallas Notes*; "SNCC Leaders Given 10 Years, *DMN* August 24, 1968; Holmes was running to fill the seat of Joseph Lockridge, the first African American man elected from the Dallas district to the Texas House of Representatives since Reconstruction, after Lockridge died in a plane crash on May 3, 1968. Interview with Rev. Zan W. Holmes, Jr., by Marvin Dulaney and Alfred Roberts, *Documenting the History of the Civil Rights Movement in Dallas County*, August 26, 2011.

Elsewhere in the state, police departments homed in on other black radical activists in SNCC. In April 1968, Houston police officers arrested SNCC leader Lee Otis Johnson for allegedly selling a marijuana cigarette to an undercover narcotics officers. At his trial in late August the same year, an all-white jury convicted Johnson of felony drug possession and the judge sentenced him to thirty years in prison.[106] The convictions against SNCC members did not discontinue in the days after the Dallas and Houston trials. On the same day that juries convicted Matthew Johnson and Ernest McMillan, Dallas FBI arrested Fahim Minkah for his alleged involvement in a burglary at the Farmers and Merchants State Bank in Ladonia, Texas, a small town about eighty miles northeast of Dallas. The FBI also issued a warrant for SNCC member Charles Beasley in connection with the bank robbery.[107] According to Beasley, he and a few others of SNCC belonged to the more "militant" faction of the organization. Prior to the bank robbery in Ladonia, Beasley and brothers Clyde and Clay Stuart raided the towns of Bowie and Greenville, Texas. "Bowie had a black dummy hanging from a service station on the south end of town," Beasley stated. "So, we got us a truck…a little bobtail truck. And we went there to rob the whole town." Beasley and the Stuart brothers stayed in Bowie for nearly three hours where they broke windows and loaded their truck with various items, including refrigerators, and came back to South Dallas to dispense the stolen goods to black residents.[108] Their raid in Greenville was similar in nature. "Greenville had a sign up [that read], 'The Only Thing Black in Greenville is the Dirt.' So, we went to Greenville late one night," Beasley said. Once in the city, Beasley entered the police station where he "knocked out" the officer behind the desk, took his gun, and

[106] In 1968, possession of marijuana carried a five-year to life sentence. Behnken, *Fighting Their Own Battles,* 162.
[107] "Bank Robbery Suspect Arrested by FBI Agents," *DMN* August 24, 1968; SNCC FBI Files, November 27, 1968.
[108] Charles Beasley, interview by author, March 27, 2019.

then disabled all the police cars in the parking lot. "We took a few things from Greenville and came back and passed them out on Oakland Avenue [in South Dallas]," Beasley admitted.[109]

The bank robbery in Ladonia a few weeks later was, according to Beasley, Clay Stuart's plan. After police arrested Matthew Johnson and Ernest McMillan for their role at the OK Supermarket disturbance, the Stuart brothers and Beasley decided to rob the Farmers and Merchants State Bank to bail the two out of jail, using Fahim Minkah's car in their escape. Beasley learned of his warrant for arrest while in Port Arthur, Texas, where he was draft counseling. From Port Arthur, Beasley travelled to Austin, where met with Larry Jackson, head of the Austin SNCC chapter, who had connections with the SDS in Detroit. From there, Beasley fled to Canada and later attempted to force an airline pilot on Air Canada in St. John, New Brunswick, to fly him to Cuba to escape persecution in the United States. When the plane landed in Montreal to refuel, Canadian officials promised to grant Beasley asylum, but they later reneged on their offer and arrested Beasley for hijacking the plane. In December 1968, the Canadian courts sentenced Beasley to six years.[110]

The same month, Fahim Minkah's attorneys, former district attorney's assistant John Helms and Ney Wade, brother to Dallas District Attorney Henry Wade, convinced Minkah to plead guilty to the charges in connection with the bank robbery. Helms and Wade both knew Minkah prior to the bank robbery arrest. According to Minkah, both attorneys approached the young SNCC member in the days after the OK Supermarket boycott, in which they expressed their desire to "groom" him to run for a new state legislature seat. Realizing it was an attempt to buy him off, Minkah refused to abandon his activism with SNCC and declined their offer. After

[109] Charles Beasley, interview by author, March 27, 2019.
[110] "Dallas Man Arraigned Twice in Plane Incident," *DMN* October 12, 1968; "Beasley Gets Six Years in Hi-Jacking Try," *Bonham Daily Favorite,* December 11, 1968; Charles Beasley, interview by author, March 27, 2019 (interview in author's possession).

his refusal, the two lawyers agreed to defend Minkah in his case. Helms and Wade gave him the choice of pleading guilty and receiving a plea deal or "going to trial before an all-White East Texas jury and getting 99 years." Minkah figured that, regardless of his innocence, pleading guilty to the charges would give him the best opportunity to walk as a free man at some point in the future. Minkah ultimately pleaded guilty and was sentenced to six years in Leavenworth penitentiary.[111]

The political imprisonment of SNCC members Ernest McMillan and Matthew Johnson halted their activism only temporarily. Johnson and McMillan both appealed their sentences and were waiting on bond money to get out of jail. Though they had often conducted themselves in brash and brazen ways, they still were successful in aligning with black middle-class activists who understood what SNCC wanted to do. In the beginning, BCJLO divided along class lines when organizing to defeat the anti-riot ordinance. BCJLO bridged the divide by using gendered concepts of black manhood and emasculation. The group selected Don Johnson, the director of the Harwood Presbyterian Center, as temporary chairman and all together, the organization wrote a constitution arguing that the "American Practice (way of life)" stripped African American men of their manhood and that all black men needed to unite "to be welded into one big voice." "In unity, there is strength," BCJLO wrote. "When you are strong, no one attacks you. In large numbers, there is safety. 'They' cannot fire everybody from jobs or foreclose on everybody's loans, beat-up or assassinate [everyone] due to your determination."[112]

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[111] Fahim Minkah, "Texas Legislature Seat," interview by author, August 26, 2017, CRBB, https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/7094/texas-legislature-seat, (Accessed August 13, 2019); "Racist and Political Repression of Fred Bell Continues…," United Defense for Political Prisoners, June 1973, Fahim Minkah Collection, Dallas Public Library. The author wishes to thank Mr. Minkah's family for donating the materials to the Dallas Public Library.

[112] Pamphlet, "Face Reality: Get Under the Umbrella or Waste Away in Civil Slavery," undated BCJLO flyer, Box 2.325/Q119, Folder: Militants, Croner papers.

BCJLO continued to fight on behalf of the imprisoned McMillan and Johnson. In early September 1968, prominent black actor Ossie Davis flew into Dallas Love Field airport from Shreveport, where Davis was filming the movie "The Slave." Davis had heard about the arrest and sentencing of McMillan and Johnson, calling their sentences "exorbitant" and offering to help promote BCJLO's new fundraising group, the Greater Dallas Black Citizens Legal and Defense Fund.[113] The Legal and Defense Fund raised money throughout September and into early November, pushing to release Johnson and McMillan. Matthew Johnson was released in late September after posting his $10,000 bond. McMillan, on the other hand, faced additional criminal charges. A month after his sentencing in August, a federal grand jury in Abilene, Texas, indicted McMillan on federal draft evasion.[114] The SDS chapter at SMU and *Dallas Notes* editor Stoney Burns continued to air SNCC voices and even smuggled out a letter from Johnson and McMillan while incarcerated. In the October 4th, 1968 issue, Johnson and McMillan admitted their guilt in destruction of public property but argued that white injustice under the guise of maintaining law and order were the real agitators. "We are guilty of destroying food unfit for human stomachs. We are guilty of a fight to end white looting in our community," the letter read. "We are guilty of being fed up with the ruthless system that chains us. We are guilty of being Black."[115]As McMillan sat in jail, SDS and SNCC continued to gather support for him by hosting a "Free Ernie" rally on SMU's campus, hoping to raise enough funds to bail out McMillan. "As we go to press," *Dallas Notes* reported, "enough money has been raised for

[113] "Legal Funds For Negroes To Be Sought," *DMN*, September 9, 1968.
[114] Ernest McMillan, interview by author; "Matt Johnson Out of Jail," *Dallas Notes*, October 4, 1968; "McMillan Tripped Up by Draft," *DMN*, September 14, 1968.
[115] "Letter from Ernie & Matt," *Dallas Notes*, October 4, 1968.

Ernie's bail but SNCC members have been unable to find a bail bondsman to take the risk of bonding a 'political prisoner' and thus risk incurring the wrath of the Dallas power structure."[116]

By the time of McMillan's release in mid-November 1968, McMillan and other members of SNCC had shown how potent intra- and interracial coalitions could be. By developing strong connections to Felton Alexander, the executive director of the Dallas Urban League, McMillan and others of SNCC fostered a climate in which black middle-class activists united with the so-called militants and formed an intra-racial coalition that ultimately helped bail McMillan and Johnson out of jail. McMillan's close connections to the SDS chapter at SMU also proved fruitful in that Stoney Burns propagated the voices of SNCC activists to a white affluent audience, who also contributed monetarily to free SNCC's political prisoners. Even the national leaders of SNCC respected McMillan's organizing ability, naming him the deputy chairman of SNCC for the Southwest in October 1968 and stating, "he is our best organizer in the state and we can now begin to give him some visibility in jail that he has needed so long."[117] His release from jail allowed SNCC to continue organizing against the establishment powers, further demonstrating the effectiveness of bridging class and racial divides in battling systemic racism in local, state, and federal politics. Their role in a welfare rights demonstration in late November became one of SNCC's final acts of public protest in Dallas.

[116] "SMU's Ernie and Matt Day is Successful," *Dallas Notes,* November 6, 1968.
[117] "Notes: Central Committee of SNCC, Baltimore, MD., October 28, 29, 30, 1968," Subgroup A: Atlanta Office, Series III., Staff Meetings, 1960-1968, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee Papers, 1959-1972, Martin Luther King, Jr., Center for Nonviolent Social Change, Inc., Atlanta, Georgia (accessed via ProQuest History Vault).

Chapter IV:
SEEDS OF COLLABORATION: MEXICAN AMERICAN CIVIL RIGHTS AND CHICANA/O MOVEMENTS IN DALLAS

On the corner of Griffin Street and McKinney Avenue near the edge of the Little Mexico barrio sat El Fenix, the city's first Tex-Mex restaurant, established in 1918 by the Martínez family. Miguel "Mike" Martínez, the family patriarch, moved to Dallas from Mexico during the Mexican Revolution and began working in the service industry as a dish washer and later as a waiter before starting his own business venture with his wife, Faustina. Through hard work and dedication, the Martínez family built the restaurant from the ground up, catering to the tastes of the barrio's Mexican residents.[1] Over the decades, however, the eating establishment became more popular among Anglos. As their white clientele grew, the Martínez family implemented strict segregation policies—serving Latinas/os away from white patrons and refusing service to African Americans entirely.[2]

Francisco "Pancho" Medrano recalled in an oral history interview how the dynamic inside El Fenix changed throughout the years. As a young professional boxer who had won several awards and received favorable mentions in the press throughout the 1940s, Medrano remembered visiting El Fenix and receiving first-class service. Later on, as Medrano and other Mexicanas/os in the barrio protested the poll tax and organized politically, El Fenix no longer offered the same services for Mexicanas/os "*porque alli estan unos gringos* (because there are gringos here)." As a result, "*los gringos los ponia alla y a los Mexicanos aca* (the owner would sit the gringos there and the Mexicans over there)," Medrano recalled.[3]

[1] Sol Villasana, *Dallas's Little Mexico* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2011), 34.
[2] Francisco Medrano, interview by Jose Angel Gutierrez, July 16, 1997, CMAS 37, Special Collections, University of Texas at Arlington Libraries, Arlington, Texas.
[3] Ibid.

The discriminatory policies at El Fenix prompted Medrano and others to act. In 1964, Medrano and Manuel "Pepper" Garcia decided to challenge the segregation practices in the restaurant. From Medrano and Garcia's storefront office, the Chicano organizers led a group of twenty black, white, and brown community activists to sit-in at the restaurant in protest. Mike Martínez, the manager and owner of the restaurant, came over to the group, informed the protestors that he had called police and asked them to leave or face arrest. When Medrano, Garcia, and the others refused to vacate, Martínez abruptly closed the restaurant for the day.[4] Indeed, Martínez refused to integrate even after the black and white Committee of 14 pushed several downtown eating establishments to remove their discriminatory signs.

The segregation practices at El Fenix and the subsequent interracial protest reveal the diversity of experiences of Mexican American residents in Dallas. Though legally classified as white, Mexicans in the United States occupied a nebulous intermediary racial category. As a racially mixed group—part indigenous and part Spanish—a select few, generally with lighter skin coloring, could climb socially, politically, and economically, while the majority could not. The Martínez family exemplifies the Mexican experience of those who could and did climb. Adhering to segregation inspired by American white supremacist norms afforded the Martínez family the ability to assimilate into the dominant Anglo society, which then opened the door to various forms of political and economic power in Dallas. Pancho Medrano and other Mexicanas/os resented those policies that denigrated Mexicans and African Americans to a lower substandard class and racial status, regardless of who enforced them. The sit-in at El Fenix in which Medrano and Garcia organized black, brown, and white allies to protest racism and

[4] Ibid. Also see, Max Krochmal, "Chicano Labor and Multiracial Politics in Post-World War II Texas," Robert Zieger (ed), *Life and Labor in the New New South* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2012), 133; Max Krochmal, *Blue Texas: The Making of a Multiracial Democratic Coalition in the Civil Rights Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016), 364-365.

discrimination is an example of cross-racial activism in the broader civil rights struggle in Dallas.

Juan Crow discrimination was similar to Jim Crow in that the dominant Anglo society enacted various discrimination laws that subjected Mexican residents to a lower social, political, and economic status. The same voter disfranchisement tactics that limited African Americans' access to politics—the poll tax and the at-large election system—also restricted Mexican Americans. Perceptions of criminality and laziness as well as the use of extralegal or state-sanctioned violence similarly affected both black and brown. But because they were legally considered white, Anglos resorted to using other forces of discrimination against Mexicans to keep the vast majority in a subordinate position. Anglos argued that Mexicans' perceived inability to learn English, their attachment to Mexican culture and customs, and their alleged undocumented status justified their substandard living conditions in the city's segregated barrios. Mexicans throughout the majority of the twentieth century lacked access to quality jobs, education, and health care. Those perceptions also made them particularly vulnerable to police brutality.

Mexicans did not idly accept subjugation. Some, like the Martínez family, subscribed to whiteness ideologies that privileged them above racial minorities, including both African Americans and working-class Mexican Americans. They saw themselves in racial terms, celebrating their Mexican heritage while accommodating Anglo societal norms that stressed assimilation. Others compared their circumstances to African Americans, in which both Jim Crow and Juan Crow excluded the vast majority from mainstream society. They grew frustrated by the continued exclusion of Mexicans from the political process and strove to not only have Anglos recognize Mexicans as a racially distinct group but to also eliminate the racist stereotypes

that kept them in a state of second-class citizenship. While some tried to advance the Mexican American cause through self-help programs, education, and career placement, others confrontationally criticized the structural racism imbedded in Anglo-dominated institutions.

Los Barrios de Dallas

Relatively few Mexicanas/os called Dallas home prior to 1900. A handful had migrated from South Texas and Mexico to work on the railroads when the Houston & Texas Central Railroad crossed through Dallas in 1872, and more followed sporadically throughout the remainder of the century, working as farmhands on the outskirts of town.[5] The majority of ethnic Mexicans arrived in North Texas after the turn of the twentieth century. War violence, starvation, and the lack of employment opportunities brought on by the Mexican Revolution beginning in 1910 provided the impetus for thousands to migrate into the Lone Star State, and a small portion settled in Dallas.[6]

As the Mexican population in Dallas grew, residents experienced the harshness of Juan Crow discrimination and segregation. Similar to Jim Crow, Juan Crow was a system that forced residents into certain jobs, to live in segregated neighborhoods, and limited their access to political power, all of which made them vulnerable to state-sanctioned violence. The lure of jobs led many ethnic Mexicans to West Dallas, settling in Cement City or *Cemento Grande*, the company town of Trinity Portland Cement Company, established in 1910. Two years later, Lone Star Cement Company founded Eagle Ford, commonly referred to as *Cemento Chico*, just east of Cemento Grande. The two cement plants were the largest in the state and converted West Dallas into a focal point of cement manufacturing that serviced the burgeoning urbanized area. Workers

[5] Michael Phillips, *White Metropolis: Race, Ethnicity, and Religion in Dallas, 1841-2001* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006), 20.
[6] Bianca Mercado, "With Their Hearts in Their Hands: Forging a Mexican Community in Dallas, 1900-1925, (Master's Thesis, University of North Texas, 2008), 28-29.

lived in a small village communities of two rows of approximately thirty dwellings separated by a dirt street. Trinity Portland Cement Company hired as many as 325 workers during peak seasons but offered the lowest in pay. A study conducted in 1929 estimated that, on average, laborers earned 37 cents an hour and often logged more than 70 hours per week. [7] Laborers and their families shopped at the company-operated grocery store and meat market, where employees used their food coupons only redeemable at the company stores. In this way, company paternalism was used as a guise of goodwill on part of the employers, who argued that company stores offered fair prices and protected residents from food shortages, especially during the Great Depression.[8]

The majority of ethnic Mexicans resided further east in a small neighborhood formerly known as "Frogtown." Frogtown was Dallas's red-light district in 1890, around the same time that Polish Jews immigrated to the city. Discrimination from non-Jewish white residents forced the newly arriving immigrants to take residence next to the brothels and saloons, where they often worked as street peddlers and sidewalk vendors and later established grocery and wholesale stores. When Dallas closed down the vice district in 1913, many Jewish families, who had prospered from their economic pursuits, vacated the neighborhood in favor of other white neighborhoods in South Dallas. The cheap rent and the lack of housing options drew many Mexicans to replace the Jews in the former red-light district. Many referred to the neighborhood as *La Colonia* or Little Mexico. Bounded by McKinney Avenue to the east and the Missouri-

[7] Gregg Andrews, "Unionizing the Trinity Portland Cement Company in Dallas, Texas, 1934-1939," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 111:1 (July 2007), 32-35; Leigh Ann Robinson Ellis, "The Place of Borders and Between: Little Mexico, 1900-1950, Dallas, Texas," (Master's Thesis, University of Texas at Arlington, 1996), 40.
[8] Andrews, "Unionizing the Trinity Portland Cement Company in Dallas," 38.

Kansas Railroad to the south and west, Little Mexico expanded north to Maple Avenue, forming a small neighborhood just north of downtown.[9]

Due to discrimination and language barriers, most Mexicans were restricted to "unskilled" labor with menial pay. Men in La Colonia worked as day laborers for the railroad, in construction, or in the city's various meat-packing plants. A select few maintained jobs in hotels as bellboys or porters, while others worked in restaurants as waiters or cooks. A large percentage of married Mexican women did not work outside the home—constrained by Mexican cultural tradition and gender expectations of a woman's "proper" place. But many did work inside the home as seamstresses and pecan shellers while caring for their young children. Unmarried women often worked as dressmakers, factory workers, maids, and as farm hands on the outskirts of town.[10] Despite this, formal unemployment remained high in the barrio for decades, reaching as high as 39 percent in 1939.[11]

Living conditions in the barrios varied but were generally substandard. Some lived in houses made of scrap wood and tar paper. Railroad workers often inhabited boxcars near the tracks on the fringe of the Little Mexico neighborhood. Tiny shotgun houses with small front porches lined the unpaved streets. As one former resident remembered, Little Mexico was tightly compacted with homes. "There was no front yard; there was no back yard," Manuel Ayala revealed. "If the house was built on the lot that had a backyard, they would literally put a fence

[9] Gwendolyn Rice, "Little Mexico and the Barrios of Dallas," *Legacies: A History Journal for Dallas and North Central Texas* 4:2 (Fall 1992), 21; Villasana, *Dallas's Little Mexico*, 17; Mercado, "With Their Hearts in Their Hands," 45-46; Osmín Hernández, "Justicia por Santos!: Mexican American Civil Rights and the Santos Rodríguez Affair in Dallas, Texas, 1969-1978" (Master's Thesis, Texas Christian University, 2016), 23-24.
[10] Bianca Mercado, "Latinas in Dallas, 1910-1920: Becoming New Women," Rebecca Sharpless, Elizabeth Hayes Turner, and Stephanie Cole (eds), *Texas Women: Their Histories, Their Lives* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2015), 303.
[11] Arthur T. Tattman, "Colonia, Commerce, and Consuls: The Dallas Mexican American Chamber of Commerce, the Early Years, 1939-1948" (Master's Thesis, Southern Methodist University, 2005), 21; Villasana, *Dallas's Little Mexico*, 77.

across it and a build another house on the other side. The kids had no place to play other than the dirt street."[12] A few hundred residents lived just west of the railroad tracks of La Colonia, but the demolition of several dozen homes and buildings to make way for a new industrial district beginning in 1920 pushed more residents into already overcrowded community of Little Mexico. Others were pushed across the Trinity River into the unincorporated parts of West Dallas surrounding Cement City.[13] Homes in both Little Mexico and West Dallas had little to no amenities. Few houses had hot water, nearly three quarters of the residents lived without gas heating or indoor plumbing, and roughly 60 percent lived without electricity.[14]

The congested and unsanitary living conditions exposed residents to a plethora of diseases. Exceptionally high rates of tuberculosis, typhus, and pellagra affected more people in Little Mexico than in anywhere else in the city. Between 1934 and 1936, for example, Little Mexico had the highest death rate in Dallas from tuberculosis, accounting for nearly 3.2 percent of deaths when the Latina/o population of Dallas rested around 2.3 percent. They also experienced high infant mortality rates—as high as 35 percent compared to 9 percent of white residents.[15] Few had the financial means to visit medical doctors, forcing residents to rely on folk medicine to cure abrasions and illnesses. Pancho Medrano remembered his mother grew concerned when he, as a youngster, cut his foot on a Coke bottle. "Back in Mexico, to stop the blood usually they go and get some cob webs—spider webs—from under the house," he stated. "And they'd send everyone under the house to get some cob webs to see if it would stop the flow of blood."[16] Others relied on the few church-managed clinics in the barrio, including those at Our

[12] Manuel Ayala quoted in "Little Mexico: El Barrio," KERA (1997) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DFXH9q_av4s (Accessed September 3, 2019).
[13] "Mexicans Moving Out of Industrial District," *DMN*, December 16, 1920.
[14] Rice, "Little Mexico and the Barrios of Dallas," 23.
[15] Tattman, "Colonia, Commerce, and Consuls," 23; Rice, "Little Mexico and the Barrios of Dallas," 23.
[16] Medrano quoted in "Little Mexico: El Barrio," KERA (1997) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DFXH9q_av4s (Accessed September 3, 2019).

Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church, Methodist Mexican Mission, and the Presbyterian Mission.[17]

Unlike African Americans, Mexican children in some cases attended public schools with white children. William B. Travis Elementary School, situated on Little Mexico's northern border, was the primary public school for the barrio's children. Some students also attended Cumberland Hill School located on Akard Street.[18] Though physically integrated with white students, Mexican children often found a hostile environment in the classroom. In 1918, Texas passed restrictive legislation that prohibited bilingual instruction through a series of English-only school laws. As a result, students who spoke Spanish in schools often reported verbal and physical abuse from their teachers.[19]

Latinas/os were also subjected to segregation and discrimination in public accommodations. Mexicanos/as often saw "No Negroes, Mexicans or Dogs" signs on the outside of restaurants. Pancho Medrano remembered when he and his family travelled downtown to buy a hamburger, they were not allowed to sit inside the restaurant—forced instead to eat their meal on the hot pavement outside.[20] Some movie theaters, like the Hippodrome Theater downtown, only permitted Mexicans one day a week, while others like the Majestic Theater forced black and brown patrons to sit upstairs in the balcony—what many called the "buzzards' roost" or the "peanut gallery."[21] Public transportation in the city's downtown trolley cars and later busses were also segregated, forcing many Latinas/os to sit in the back. Discrimination affected

[17] Tattman, "Colonia, Commerce, and Consuls," 23.
[18] Villasana, *Dallas's Little Mexico,*
[19] Carlos Kevin Blanton, *The Strange Career of Bilingual Education in Texas, 1836-1981* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2007), 66.
[20] Francisco Medrano, interview by Jose Angel Gutierrez, CMAS.
[21] Ricardo Medrano, "Discrimination Experiences & Involvement with NAACP," interview by author, June 13, 2015, CRBB https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/1630/discrimination-experinces-involvement-with-naacp (Accessed November 9, 2019)

Mexican residents in their own community, particularly with the use of public parks. Pike Park, established in 1913 in the heart of Little Mexico, prohibited Mexican children from accessing its many facilities, including the swimming pool.[22]

Despite the persistence of racial segregation and discrimination, Little Mexico served as the nucleus of the Mexican community in Dallas, catering to the needs and wants of the residents in the barrio. Some were fortunate to ascend into the middle class by starting their own business ventures as restaurant owners. In 1918, Mike Martínez opened El Fenix, named for the mythic bird who arose from its own ashes. Similar ventures opened shortly thereafter. In 1924, Maria Luna, a young widow with two children to support, bought a corn grinder on credit from her employer. She needed the expertise and labor of other Mexican women to help her with her endeavors. But traditional Mexican culture frowned upon women working outside the home. As her son Francisco "Pancho" Luna remembered, "Nobody would come to work because [the women's] husbands wouldn't let them come." Instead, Maria Luna devised a plan in which she would deliver the *masa* to the women at their homes and then pick up the tortillas at the end of the day. Throughout the 1920s and into the 1930s, several more businesses opened in the barrio. Grocery stores, service stations, laundry services, *panaderias* or bakeries all opened to service the ethnic Mexican clientele. Some Jewish store owners who remained in the barrio even catered to the Mexican food culture, travelling to San Antonio to purchase the necessary food items to sell in their stores back in the barrio of Dallas.[23]

[22] "Little Mexico: El Barrio," KERA (1997) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DFXH9q_av4s (Accessed September 3, 2019).
[23] Pancho Luna quoted in "Little Mexico: El Barrio," KERA (1997) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DFXH9q_av4s (Accessed September 3, 2019); Villasana, *Dallas's Little Mexico*, 80.

Religious organizations moved into the barrio soon after ethnic Mexicans began residing in the neighborhood. The Catholic Diocese of Dallas, for example, established a Catholic Mission in the barrio as early as 1914. By 1925, the Diocese dedicated Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church, which was the center of religious life for most Spanish-speaking immigrants across the city. Residents of Cement City, located several miles west of Little Mexico, would often walk along the railroad tracks on Sundays to attend morning Mass.[24] Two years after the Church's founding, Our Lady of Guadalupe opened St. Ann's Elementary School on the corner of Turney (now Harry Hines Boulevard) and Olive Street. The school served the barrio's children with an education rooted in Catholic curriculum.[25] Not all Mexican immigrants were practicing Catholics. According to sociologist Ethelyn Davis found that nearly 24 percent of residents in the barrio in 1938 were affiliated with one of several evangelical protestant missions. The Mexican Presbyterian Church in Dallas started working with Mexican immigrants in the barrio as early as 1912, and fully secured a church property known as El Divino Salvador Presbyterian Church in 1923 on Payne Street.[26] Others attended Emanu-el United Methodist Church on Akard Street or the Primera Iglesia Bautista, a Baptist congregation located on Harwood Street.[27]

Despite class and religious differences in the barrio, many Mexicanas/os united around cultural activities facilitated by the Mexican consulate. Mexican consuls sought to instill and maintain a sense of Mexican nationalist pride, believing that one day the Mexican nationals who had immigrated to the United States would return to Mexico when conditions there stabilized. In

[24] Villasana, *Dallas's Little Mexico,* 18.
[25] Hernández, "Justicia por Santos," 26.
[26] Villasana, *Dallas's Little Mexico*, 23; Ethelyn C. Davis, "Little Mexico Stereotype—Does It Exist?" *Studies in Sociology* 2 (1938), 30.
[27] Villasana, *Dallas's Little Mexico,* 22, 27.

facilitating this endeavor, Mexican consuls routinely engaged in what historian George J. Sanchez called a "Mexicanization process" designed to unite working- and middle-class immigrants and citizens alike. In doing so, the Mexican consulate often sponsored holiday celebrations in the barrio.[28] Cinco de Mayo, commemorating the anniversary of the Mexican defeat of French forces at Puebla in 1862, and *el 16 de Septiembre*, when Mexico declared its independence from Spain in 1810, were common holidays celebrated in the barrio. At these festivals, Mexican residents hosted parades and dances, and made traditional Mexican food staples, such as *tamales,* prepared by the women of the barrio.[29]

The lack of political representation also meant that Little Mexico's residents relied upon the Mexican consul to serve as a liaison between Latina/o residents and the city's white power structure. For example, Mexicans in the barrio called upon the consul to negotiate with the city power structure to gain admittance for Mexican residents to Pike Park. After many years of negotiation, city officials finally acquiesced in 1931, opening up all city parks to Mexican residents going forward. Their access remained limited, however, as officials allowed the barrio residents to use the swimming pool only one day a week early in the morning when the water was cold. Mexican children remembered being subjected to cleanliness checks in which city officials would inspect them for lice or sores before allowing them to swim. The children also had to help drain the water and clean the facility before Anglo residents arrived to enjoy the park's amenities later that same day.[30]

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[28] George J. Sanchez, *Becoming Mexican American*: *Ethnicity, Culture, and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 108-109.
[29] "Dallas Mexicans Observe Holiday," *DMN*, September 17, 1920; "Speeches, Music, and Flag Raising Feature Cinco de Mayo Events," *DMN,* May 6, 1926; Villasana, *Dallas's Little Mexico*, 22.
[30] "Little Mexico: El Barrio," KERA (1997) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DFXH9q_av4s (Accessed September 3, 2019); Francisco Medrano, interview by Jose Angel Gutierrez; Hernández, "Justicia por Santos," 24.

The Mexican Consul also served as a liaison between Mexican residents and the police. In 1928, for instance, Mexican consul Rafael Aveleyra asked for the removal of Patrolman B. D. Nix from his beat in Little Mexico after several residents went to Aveleyra to complain about the officer. According to the *Dallas Morning News*, Aveleyra wrote two letters to the city commission criticizing Nix, saying the policeman acted violently and intimidatingly toward the barrio's residents. He also complained that Nix entered a private house on Alamo Street without a search warrant and arrested a Mexican youth, taking him to the city jail on an unknown charge. Surprised by Aveleyra's assertions of police brutality, Police Chief Claude Trammell responded that the former Mexican Consul R. Cantu Lara had often "commended [Nix] for his work among Mexican nationals."[31]

Evidence suggests that the city received no shortage of complaints from Mexican residents regarding officer misconduct. In 1927, for example, a year before the official complaint written by Aveleyra, the city government had considered hiring Mexican police officers to patrol the streets of Little Mexico at the same time when black city leaders petitioned the Dallas Police Department to hire African American patrolmen.[32] The Klan dominated police force prevented this from happening. But police brutality affected many residents within the barrio. "It was everywhere," Pancho Medrano stated. "You saw a lot of the Mexican kids, or especially their fathers who—a lot of them were embarrassed by being kicked in the back or hit over the head [by police] for no reason at all." The Medrano family personally experienced this violence. In the early 1930s, Sabas Medrano, Pancho's father, disappeared from the house late one evening and never returned home. Rumors circulated throughout the barrio that police arrested Sabas behind the fire station on Laws Street and McKinney Avenue on an unknown charge, and that someone

[31] "Complains of Little Mexico Policeman," *DMN*, August 16, 1928.
[32] "Petitions Negro Police Officers," *DMN*, January 25, 1927.

from Maria Luna's family visited him and spoke with him at the jail. "And then they came back and they never heard from him [Sabas] anymore," Medrano revealed. "What happened to him, nobody knows."[33]

Historian Edward Escobar has suggested that Mexicans saw the police as a humiliating and violent force that harassed and brutalized them, and that this treatment aided in the development of the Mexican American political consciousness that ultimately grew into the Chicano movement.[34] A similar story unfolded in Dallas. Even though the ethnic Mexican population remained small—accounting for nearly 4 percent by mid-century—they still appealed to the Mexican consul in those instances of brutality, and this reveals the developing nature of a collective political consciousness. They saw the various Mexican consuls as bargaining tools—someone who appeared to have their best interests at hand and could negotiate with city officials on their behalf.[35] While they were unsuccessful in curtailing all police violence, they succeeded in using the consul to desegregate Pike Park. Still, the fact that Mexicans saw the consul as a medium between themselves and the white establishment demonstrates that as residents, regardless of their citizenship status, they wanted the city government to be responsive to the needs and desires of the Mexican community. This included ending police brutality.

Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, the Mexican population in Dallas remained relatively small. Not until the 1960s did the population increase dramatically, climbing

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[33] Francisco Medrano, interview by Jose Angel Gutierrez.

[34] Edward Escobar, "Dialectics of Repression: The Los Angeles Police Department and the Chicano Movement, 1968-1971," *Journal of American History* 79: 4 (March 1993): 1483-1514; Edward Escobar, *Race, Police, and the Making of a Political Identity: Mexican Americans and the Los Angeles Police Department, 1900-1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Edward Escobar, "The Unintended Consequences of the Carceral State: Chicana/o Political Mobilization in Post-World War II America," *Journal of American History* 102:1 (June 2015): 174-184.

[35] For more on the role of Mexican consuls as intermediaries between ethnic Mexicans and local and federal governments in the US, see Gilbert González, *Mexican Consuls and Labor Organizing: Imperial Politics in the American Southwest* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999).

from roughly 4 percent to about 8 percent by 1970. By that time, the majority of Mexican Americans resided in West Dallas, a flood plain of the Trinity River. Most Mexicanas/os were pushed out of Little Mexico due to overcrowding and urban redevelopment. The construction of Dallas North Tollway beginning in 1966 displaced thousands of residents, forcing them into the barrios of West Dallas. According to the 1970 census, of the 38,897 residents in West Dallas, 90 percent of residents were racial minorities. Nearly 60 percent were African American, most of whom resided in the low-income Edgar Ward Place and George Loving Place housing projects established in 1955.[36] Thirty percent were Mexicans, who lived both east and west of black housing projects.[37]

West Dallas's proximity to the Trinity River and its lack of infrastructure caused problems for residents. When it rained, the unpaved streets flooded, making the roads nearly impassable. During droughts, the dusty winds pelted residents with dirt debris, forcing many to retreat inside on warm and hot days without the comfortability of air conditioning. The area also lacked city services despites its incorporation into the city of Dallas in 1952. The flooded roads caused intermittent trash collection, allowing trash to pile up in the alleyways and causing dozens of stray dogs and cats to feed on the uncollected refuse. The barrios also lacked street lights, minimal public transportation, and public utilities like water and electricity. In 1972, the Department of Planning and Urban Development allocated $8 million for neighborhood

[36] In 1955, the Dallas Housing Authority (DHA) opened three new housing projects in West Dallas to address the "Negro Housing Problem"—one for whites, one for Mexicans, and one for African Americans. In 1965, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, acting under the provisions of the Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, demanded that the DHA cease its assignment of tenants by race. City Attorney Alex Bickley adopted a "Freedom of Choice" plan, which in theory allowed residents to apply for a housing project of their choosing. However, the DHA Board of Directors needed to grant approval, and rarely did so if the applicant was not the predominant race at that project. In 1966, the DHA "carefully" selected four black families to move into George Loving Place, the all-white housing project. As a result, white tenants moved out in droves, and by 1971, 90 percent of all tenants living at George Loving were African Americans. For more on this, see Gina Briley, "Dallas Divided: Race, Power, and Public Housing," *LBJ Journal of Public Affairs* 9:29 (1997).

[37] Shirley Achor, *Mexican Americans in a Dallas Barrio* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1976), 20.

improvements, but local officials stalled in the planning stages, leaving most of the federal dollars to be rescinded.

Living conditions in West Dallas varied greatly, but most were subjected to excessive levels of poverty and poor health. Unemployment for Mexican Americans was high and most employed Latinas/os were underpaid. The average salary rested around $6,000 per year, above the poverty threshold $3,748 established in 1969 for a family of four in Dallas.[38] Still, nearly a quarter of Mexican Americans in West Dallas lived below the poverty line, causing them to suffer from poor housing conditions. White landlords charged inflated rents and often refused to make repairs, accusing tenants of intentionally clogging up toilets or breaking appliances. In order to escape the high cost of living, families resorted to living with extended family networks, in which as many as eleven or twelve people shared a six-hundred square foot house. Poverty, discrimination, and absent landlords caused undue health problems. Residents often suffered from malnourishment, improper winter clothing, high infant mortality rates, and poor overall health. They had limited access to health care services in which the Anglo-dominated medical institutions caused anxiety amongst Mexican Americans, who often felt embarrassed from language barriers or were degraded by Anglo health care workers.[39]

Education for Mexican school children was also subpar. Texas consistently ranked the worst of the five southwestern states in educating Mexican American youth. According to the United States Commission on Civil Rights, the dropout rate for Mexican American students ranked as high as 80 percent, in which students completed on average 7.2 years of education.[40]

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[38] U.S. Department of Commerce, Social and Economic Statistics Administration, Bureau of the Census, "1970 Census Population: Supplementary Report: Low-Income Neighborhoods in Large Cities: 1970, Dallas and Fort Worth, Tex." (May 1974)
[39] Achor, *Mexican Americans in a Dallas Barrio*, 26, 37.
[40] "Dropout Rate of Chicanos Put at 80%," *DMN*, September 13, 1970; Achor, *Mexican Americans in a Dallas Barrio,*33,93.

Furthermore, 73.5 percent of surveyed eighth grade Mexican students read a full grade level below the reading average in 1971. The dropout rate in Dallas was comparable to the statistics of the state, but less so in the total completed years of schooling. In 1969, for example, reports estimated that Mexican American students completed as little as 4.6 years of schooling before dropping out.[41] Dallas ISD Superintendent Nolan Estes promised implementation of a bilingual education program to mitigate such high dropout rates, but by 1971 only seven of the district's 186 elementary schools employed bilingual education. Even so, such programs often subjected students to racist stereotypes. Anthropologist Shirley Achor, who lived and researched in West Dallas in the early 1970s, noted that students in bilingual programs were often instructed to draw a man with a "sombrero" taking a "siesta."[42]

Such stereotypes were only exacerbated by "Frito Bandito," a commercial advertisement of Frito-Lay, whose headquarters relocated to Dallas earlier in the decade. In 1967, the chip company introduced Frito Bandito, an animated cartoon character dressed in a sombrero and Mexican Revolutionary-era garb who spoke broken English with an exaggerated accent. This depiction of a Mexican bandit who sought to steal Frito chips from "citizens" played upon common stereotypes about people of Mexican descent, especially their perceived laziness, criminality, or undocumented status.[43] Many white Dallasites assumed that most Latinas/os in the barrios had recently arrived from Mexico. Or as one white DISD teacher put it, "Well, those people haven't lived here very long—most of them are foreigners in a strange country."[44] The teacher had made assumptions about the citizenship status of Mexican students given that many

[41] Letter, Anita Martinez to Honorable Jim Collins, August 8, 1969, Box 019, Folder 9, Jonsson papers.
[42] Achor, *Mexican Americans in a Dallas Barrio,* 95.
[43] Brian Behnken and Gregory D. Smithers, *Racism in American Popular Media: From Aunt Jemima to the Frito Bandito* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, LLC., 2015), 44-45.
[44] Quote from Achor, *Mexican Americans in a Dallas Barrio,* 33.

could not speak English. Even though the Latina/o population in Dallas doubled between 1960 and 1970, roughly 90 percent of the population were American-born. While the undocumented population also grew during that time period, the vast majority of Latinas/os were American citizens.[45]

Juan Crow discrimination transcended multiple decades and expanded into various regions across the city. Upon their early settlement in the Little Mexico barrio, Mexicanos/as built diverse communities across class and space. Some managed to ascend into the middle-class by forming their own businesses, which granted them higher forms of economic, social, and political power than other residents of the barrios. Still, racism and discrimination persisted and the majority of Mexican residents lacked access to quality jobs, housing, health care, and schooling and were subjected to discriminatory policing practices well into the 1970s. By the late 1960s, many more Mexicanos/as saw their positions in an Anglo-dominated society not as equivalent to African Americans but distinct—their cultural customs and language made them unique and subjected them to alternative (though similar) forms of discrimination. And many began to argue that problems "peculiar to the Mexican American" needed addressing.

Fighting for Political Recognition

Mexican Americans across the American Southwest engaged in extensive campaigns for social justice. According to historian Mario T. Garcia, the political climate of the Great Depression, the Second World War, and the Cold War helped generate a new wave of Mexican American community leaders. This "Mexican-American Generation," as Garcia calls it, developed numerous civil rights organizations. In 1929, Mexican Americans living in Corpus

[45] The Immigration Act of 1965 repealed the earlier quota systems that limited immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe. However, the act placed restrictions on Latin Americans, imposing a cap of 120,000 entries from the Western Hemisphere. For more, see Natalia Molina, *How Race Is Made in America: Immigration, Citizenship, and the Historical Power of Racial Scripts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 140.

Christi, Texas, organized the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), one of the most important civil rights organizations for Mexican Americans at that time.[46] "The search for America and their place in it shaped the consciousness and politics of the Mexican-American Generation," Garcia argues. This generation, beginning with LULACers, believed that they, too, deserved the same equal protections and benefits as Anglo Americans because in their minds, they were just as American as anyone else in the nation.[47]

Military service in the Second World War also fueled Mexican American activism.[48] In 1948, Hector P. Garcia of Corpus Christi established the first chapter of the American GI Forum (AGIF), a civil rights organization that sought to provide social welfare benefits and rights to returning veterans who also endured the same types of discrimination and segregation as they had before the war. The AGIF gained national attention when they protested a funeral home in Three Rivers, Texas, after the owner refused to bury Felix Longoria, a decorated Mexican American war hero.[49] The GI Forum and LULAC teamed up on numerous occasions throughout the 1940s and 1950s, including numerous school desegregation cases. In 1954, the Supreme Court case of *Hernandez v. Texas* ruled in favor of Mexican American activists, who had used the "class apart" theory to show that Mexican Americans, even though legally were considered white, were actually treated as a separate class. Essentially, the case protected Mexican Americans as a group under the Fourteenth Amendment.[50]

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[46] Mario T. Garica, *Mexican Americans: Leadership, Ideology, and Identity, 1930-1960* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1-3.
[47] Ibid, 34.
[48] See Maggie Rivas-Rodriguez, ed., *Mexican Americans and World War II* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005).
[49] George N. Green, "The Felix Longoria Affair," *Journal of Ethnic Studies* 19:3 (Fall 1991), 23.
[50] David Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836-1986* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987), 278-279. For more on the range of issues in which LULAC assisted, see Cynthia Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed: The Rise of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009), 5-9; Zamora, *Claiming Rights and Righting Wrongs*; For more on *Hernandez v. Texas,* see Michael A.

The rise of such organizations in the Cold War era shifted Mexican American activism to focus more on political power. According to historian Ignacio Garcia, Mexican American reformers were most concerned about poverty in their communities, but as "middle-class pseudo capitalists," they believed that discrimination would end when Mexican Americans fully participated in the political system.[51] This belief drew many Mexican Americans to support John F. Kennedy in the presidential election of 1960, with many forming Viva Kennedy clubs to help turn out Latinas/os voters across the American Southwest. As a result of their success in Kennedy's election, the Viva Kennedy campaign transformed into a political coalition composed of Mexican American leaders from the GI Forum and LULAC as well as labor and political activists. Together, they formed the Political Association of Spanish-speaking Organizations (PASO). Historian Max Krochmal describes PASO as a "polyglot group who pledged to use the vote to uplift their *raza* (race or people)." According to Krochmal, PASO became "the bedrock of what pundits in the present day call the 'Latino vote.'"[52]

Even as black and brown activists made significant headway in challenging racial discrimination and segregation, the doors remained closed for African Americans and Mexican Americans to participate in local politics—and this continued well after the passage of the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts. Elections for the Dallas City Council and the Dallas Independent School District School Board both operated under an at-large city government structure, preventing candidates of color, who often times lacked the necessary funds to campaign across the entire city, from getting elected into either political entity.

Olivas, ed., *Colored Men and Hombres Aqui: Hernandez v. Texas and the Emergence of Mexican-American Lawyering* (Houston, TX: Arte Público Press, 2006), 43-46.

[51] Ignacio Garcia*, Viva Kennedy: Mexican Americans in Search of Camelot* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2000), 30.

[52] Quote from Krochmal, *Blue Texas*, 242; also see Benjamin Francis Fallon, *The Rise of the Latino Vote* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2019).

In the late 1960s, the tides began to change within the Citizens Charter Association when the civic organization endorsed handpicked black candidates for city council and school board in an effort to appear more inclusive. In late February 1967, Mayor Jonsson appointed C. A. Galloway as the city's first black city council member. Galloway filled the remaining term of white Councilmember Joe Moody, whose term was set to expire on May 1, 1967. Galloway served less than three months after he decided against running for an additional term in the April 1967 election.[53] The same year, the political establishment endorsed Dr. Emmett J. Conrad for the school board. When he won in May 1967, Conrad became the first African American elected to the position.[54] The efforts made it seem as though the CCA was receptive to diverse political inclusion of all of Dallas's residents.

The endorsements and subsequent elections, however, drew the ire from Mexican Americans. City leaders had, for decades, excluded Mexican Americans from civil rights conversations between white and black leaders—perceiving race relations in a white-black paradigm. Residents of the barrios resented this, and many began to call out the political establishment for such practices, especially following the proposed creation for two additional city council seats. In May 1968, the Dallas city council initiated a referendum to be held in October, calling for numerous amendments to the city charter, including Proposition 4, which set to enlarge the city council from nine to eleven seats, all elected at large. The proposed new districts were located in Northeast Dallas, an affluent white neighborhood, and in the South Dallas-South Oak Cliff area, a predominantly black region.[55] Mexican American activists, in response, widely protested the proposed expansion. Frank Hernández, a local attorney, wrote to

[53] "1st Negro Named to Dallas Council," *DMN*, February 21, 1967.
[54] "3 Endorsed For Board by LEAD," *DMN*, March 2, 1967; "Dr. Conrad Wins School Board Post," *DMN*, May 2, 1967.
[55] "Charter Revision Plan Going to Council Soon," *DMN*, April 28, 1968.

Mayor Jonsson on behalf of the Coalition of Mexican American organizations, which included Mexican Americans for Civic Action (MACA), American GI Forum, and LULAC, explaining their opposition to the proposed plan. The Coalition opposed the expansion of the city council for two reasons. First, they alleged that the black community had been "promised" representation on the council if enlarged and that members of the "Negro Community met at the Negro Chamber of Commerce on Wednesday, September 25, 1968, to discuss and select the appointee from 'their' community." While the coalition recognized and supported the need for "Negro representation, the method by which said representative is to be selected, and appointed, is not in keeping with our idea of a representative form of city government."[56]

Hernández was a recent arrival to the Dallas area. Born in Galveston, Texas, Hernández attended Texas A&M University before moving to Dallas in 1961 to attend law school. In 1964, he graduated from Southern Methodist University, an affluent and predominantly white private institution in North Dallas. Upon his graduation, Hernández formed his own private practice, most famously defending Dallas SNCC member Ernest McMillan after the OK Supermarket boycott and food-smashing raid in July 1968.[57] Hernández also was active in Mexican American affairs. He became a member of the local chapter of LULAC, which had formed in 1963 under the direction of Albert Bonilla, the brother of national LULAC president William Bonilla.[58] He joined the Political Association for Spanish-Speaking Organizations (PASO), eventually becoming chairman of the Dallas chapter in 1966. He frequently appeared before the city council, speaking about the poor conditions in the barrios of West Dallas and in Little Mexico, including the high number of traffic accidents and pedestrian injuries following completion of

[56] Letter, Frank Hernández to J. Erik Jonsson, September 27, 1968, Box 064, Folder 1, Jonsson papers; "Larger Council OK'd," *DMN*, October 23, 1968.
[57] "Frank Hernandez, Dallas County's First Hispanic Judge, dies at 73," *DMN*, February 22, 2012.
[58] "Bonilla to Head LULAC Chapter," *DMN*, June 11, 1963.

numerous urban redevelopment projects.[59] Still, the majority of complaints fell on deaf ears as the white-dominated city council rarely acted with much concern to Mexican American plight. Furthermore, the creation of two additional districts, in which the city council "promised" to appoint a black official troubled Hernández, not because the official would be black but that Mexican Americans were left out of negotiations altogether and that the city of Dallas was denying residents the ability to express their choice via the ballot box.

Despite Hernández and others' opposition, the referendum continued as scheduled for October 21. After the vote was certified and the city announced that Proposition 4 had passed, the Coalition of Mexican American Organizations informed City Attorney Alex Bickley and City Secretary Harold Shank that they planned to sue the city after an examination of public records revealed more votes were tallied than actually cast. Hernández discovered discrepancies in about 50 of the 195 precincts in Dallas, attributing the miscounts to "confusion over using paper ballots and the fact that Proposition No. 1 was on the ballot." Proposition 1 allowed voters to vote straight ticket— in favor of all twenty-four propositions on the referendum. Bickley argued that a tabulation error occurred, stating that the election judges likely computed the total ballots by adding Proposition 1 results to the results of all other propositions. The city government immediately issued a recount of ballots. Hernández, on the other hand, demanded the city council declare the election void and set another one to coincide with the election of councilmembers the following April 1969.[60]

Days after Hernández notified city officials of the error, an election worker came forward and revealed that he had notified City Secretary Harold Shank and City Councilman Jesse Price

[59] "PASO Parley Opens Today," *DMN*, March 18, 1966; "Help Promised in Traffic Dispute," *DMN*, May 28, 1968.
[60] "City to Seek Recount," *DMN*, October 26, 1968; "Council Says Election Out of Jurisdiction," *DMN*, October 29, 1968.

about the discrepancies in tallying the ballots, but neither Shank or Price acted on the inconsistencies before the vote was certified. According to the *Dallas Morning News,* Price relayed that he notified Shank of the inconsistencies but Shank claimed that delaying the election and ballot counting was illegal. "This happens frequently," Shank stated. "Discrepancies appear. But my job is to run the election, not to change anything." Price called the inconsistencies "obviously honest errors" on the part of the election judges. He also accused Hernández and the Coalition of being "sore losers." "The opposition should admit that they know this was a fair election and that these are tabulation errors," Price stated.[61]

Hernández remained unconvinced that these were honest mistakes. He wrote a formal complaint letter to District Judge Dallas Blankenship, stating that both Price and Shank knew of the irregularities and asked that Price, an official observer of the recount, and members of Shank's office be barred from the recount process. Hernández also stated that "widespread fraud and voting irregularities have been discovered" in recent county elections and that the recent city referendum "definitely fit the same mold." Ultimately, Judge Blankenship ruled that Price's participation as an observer was permissible and Shank's staff could continue the recount procedures as originally instructed.[62] The following day, Shank and his office completed the recount, confirming that Proposition 4 carried. Hernández and the Coalition chose not to appeal.[63] After the recount allegedly confirmed the election results, the city created the new districts in Northeast Dallas and South Dallas as planned. Shortly thereafter, Mayor Erik Jonsson and the council voted unanimously to appoint George Allen to fill the new South Dallas-South

[61] "Officials Knew of Election Errors," *DMN*, October 30, 1968.
[62] "Officials Knew of Election Errors," *DMN*, October 30, 1968.
[63] "Recount Shows Issues Carried," *DMN*, November 1, 1968.

Oak Cliff district council seat with his term beginning December 2, 1968.[64] Allen became the second African American to serve on the council.

While Hernández and the Coalition of Mexican American Organizations supported black representation on the council, they resented the undemocratic methods at which the city council used to appoint George Allen. In Hernández's letter to Mayor Jonsson before the referendum, the Coalition advocated the creation of single-member districts as "the most direct and responsible form of government." But the CCA had coordinated with members of the black community in approving the expanded city council under the same at-large system, which actively worked against Mexican Americans in this process. Still, the defeat in the referendum hardly curtailed Hernández's prospects for representation. In January 1969, Hernández announced his intention to run as an independent for Place 9, filling the seat of Sibyl Hamilton, a CCA-backed candidate who chose not to run again after serving two terms. In response to Hernández's announcement, the Charter Association revealed their support for five incumbents—including George Allen and Mayor Erik Jonsson—for reelection as a well as five new candidates for the city council. Among the new CCA-endorsed candidates was Dallas native Anita Martínez for Place 9. Born Anita Nanez in 1925, Martínez grew up in the Little Mexico barrio where she met her husband Alfred, the son of Mike and Faustina Martínez, who owned El Fenix restaurant. In 1946, Anita and Alfred married and settled into family life, eventually purchasing a home at 3866 Beutel Court in Northwest Dallas. Alfred worked at El Fenix with his father, and Anita stayed home to care for the couple's four children. She joined the Zonta Club, became president of the Ladies Auxiliary to the Dallas Restaurant Association, and volunteered at her children's school.[65]

[64] "Stuart, Allen Appointed to City Council," *DMN*, November 12, 1968.
[65] Katherine Reguero Cloer, "A Champion for the Chicano Community: Anita N. Martínez and Her Contributions to the City of Dallas," Master's Thesis, University of North Texas, 2011, 68, 73.

According to Hernández, the nomination of Martínez was part of the same ploy that the CCA used to show its progress toward diversity and inclusion. In early 1969, Martínez received a phone call from Candy Estrada, the only woman on the CCA nominating committee, who encouraged Martínez to run for Place 9.[66] In February, Martínez accepted the endorsement for the position, and the Citizens Charter Association paid for all fees and expenses incurred during the election process. Hernández, on the other hand, ran as an independent, meaning he not only had to campaign across the entire city for his position but also that no civic organization like the CCA paid his expenses. Hernández charged that the Charter Association was attempting to create dissension among the Mexican American community by nominating Martínez as his opposition. He also pointed to the fact that the CCA wanted to appear as if the governmental structure was diversifying. "The Mexican Americans and blacks, as well as other members of the community are not going to be fooled by having pseudo-representatives for their communities handpicked for them by the CCA," Hernández stated.[67]

On April 1, voters went to the polls and overwhelmingly supported the nine CCA-backed candidates, including Mayor Jonsson, George Allen, and Anita Martínez. According to the *Dallas Morning News*, Martínez polled first for Place 9 with almost twenty-two thousand votes while Hernández came in at a distant third with a little over six thousand votes.[68] Shortly after the election, hundreds of Mexican Americans complained that they registered to vote but never received their certificate before election day. County Auditor George Smith led an investigation and discovered that as many as 5,300 were prevented from voting.[69] In response, the Mexican

[66] Anita Martínez, interview by José Angel Gutiérrez, *Tejano Voices*, June 10, 1999, CMAS No. 129; "Hernandez to Seek City Council Position," *DMN*, January 18, 1969.
[67] "Hernandez to Seek City Council Position," *DMN*, January 18, 1969; "Hernandez Raps CCA 'Failures,'" *DMN*, February 23, 1969.
[68] "Jonsson Leads CCA To Another Victory," *DMN*, April 2, 1969.
[69] "Voting Slips Not Sent to 5,300," *DMN*, April 9, 1969.

American League of Voters (MALV) led by Esther Ramirez went before the County Commissioners Court and alleged that an "organized attempt" occurred to keep minority groups from the polls. In her statement to the court, Ramirez produced figures showing that nearly 5,300 voter slips were not delivered to voters and that many of the affected had Spanish surnames or lived in predominantly African American precincts. County commissioners denied that this was a coordinated effort to disfranchise black and brown voters. Instead, they claimed that many Mexican Americans and African Americans hadn't received their voting cards because "the computer had inadvertently hidden them" and that this "mix-up" occurred because of a late voter registration drive, which produced the errors, was located in predominantly minority precincts.[70]

Activists turned to the newly formed Community Relations Commission for help. The commission had formed in October 1968 under private auspices when the Community Council of Greater Dallas, a private social services agency established in 1940, agreed to act as the commission's official sponsor.[71] The Community Relations Commission would investigate complaints of discrimination and then make recommendations to the city council.[72] But because it remained a privately-endowed organization, the commission lacked official government sponsorship and had no authority to change public policy directly. Still, many in the community believed that the commission was better than nothing. In keeping with its goals to represent a cross-section of the Dallas community, a nominating council selected twenty-one "deeply committed" individuals, composed of three Mexican Americans, eight African Americans, and ten Anglos. Mexican American membership included LTV engineer Trini Garza, Rev. David

[70] "De la recientes elecciones: Mexicanos de Dallas abren investigacion," *El Sol de Texas*, April 11, 1969; "Civil Rights Violation Charged in Voter Registration Mixup," *DMN*, April 15, 1969.
[71] Community Council of Greater Dallas*, News and Views*, Volume V, No. 3 (October 1968), Box 021, Folder 10, Jonsson papers.
[72] Community Council of Greater Dallas*, News and Views*, Volume V, No. 3 (October 1968), Box 021, Folder 10, Jonsson papers.

Cardenas, and AGIF Chairman Brownie Trevino, whereas African American membership included Bishop College President Irving Baker, Colored PTA president Kathlyn Gilliam, Don Johnson of Block Partnership, and parole officer Randy Ratliff. The committee also nominated Tom Unis, a Dallas-based attorney and president of the Citizens Charter Association (CCA), to serve as chairman.[73]

Unis was no stranger to the Dallas political scene. The son of a Lebanese grocer, Unis was born in Tyler, Texas, and attended the Ira P. Hildebrand's Law School at the University of Texas in Austin where he and other notable conservatives, such as Texas Governor John Connally, Dallas District Attorney Henry Wade, and Joe Dealy, president of the *Dallas Morning News*, belonged to the Delta Theta Phi, a professional legal fraternity. There, Unis earned the reputation as a "born showman" who played a significant role in electing Connally as president of the student body in 1939, and later persuaded Connally to enter politics. Unis moved to Dallas shortly after World War II and worked as an assistant district attorney for Dallas County beginning in 1947. Ten years later, Unis served on the city council "as a good right arm of the late Mayor Bob Thornton." But he also provided "invaluable political counsel" to the so-called Dallas "oligarchy"—or what the *News* termed the "well-intentioned business leadership which wanted to preserve good local government in Dallas." The *News* continued, "[Unis] boils vehemently inside when he hears 'The Establishment' criticized."[74] In 1965, the CCA elected Unis as its president—a position he held until his second term expired in May 1969.

[73] Other appointed members to the commission include: Mrs. James Clark Jr., David H. Foster, Rev, Paul Frank, Johnny Graham, Jack Lowe, President of the Dallas Citizens' Council Avery Mays, Rabbi Levi Olan, Lester T. Potter, Mrs. John Schoellkopf, Mrs. Daisy Smith, and Mrs. Myron Watkins. "Relations Committee Appointed," *DMN*, January 26, 1969; "Community Relations Commission Named," *Dallas Express.*
[74] "Mr. Dedication Will Be Available," *DMN*, March 2, 1969.

With Unis as chairman of the Community Relations Commission, many questioned whether the commission would live up to its idealized origins in thoroughly investigating complaints of racism and discrimination in the city. Shortly after its formal organization, the commission disappointed displaced black homebuyers as a result of the Fair Park expansion plans in South Dallas. Plans to expand Fair Park stemmed from the growing recognition of the Dallas Cowboys, who played in the Cotton Bowl stadium located in Fair Park. In October 1968, the city of Dallas received widespread voter support to acquire fifty acres of land to expand the facilities and to provide over "four thousand parking spaces."[75] In early 1969, the city had begun the process buying out the owners of 277 dwellings. Black homeowners, who had occupied their homes for years, and in some cases decades, were battling the city, which had offered small sums of money for their dwellings. Black homebuyers refused to sell and the city threatened to use eminent domain.[76]

Some appealed directly to Tom Unis of the Community Relations Commission in response to the city's Fair Park expansion. But Unis and the Commission provided no relief. Unis relayed to the black homeowners that the commission was "not well organized enough to be effective." The commission had yet to hire an executive director, and the request from the Fair Park homeowners to investigate the housing matter came "two weeks too soon" for action on behalf of the commission. Unis added that he sent the commission's charter to the secretary of state less than a week prior to receiving the request. Furthermore, the commission lacked a proper staff or an office space. "We're just getting organized," he stated. Unis used the same excuse more than two months later when investigating the discrepancies in the April 1969 city election after the city prevented thousands of voters from casting their ballots. Ultimately, the

[75] "Fair Park Expansion OK'd," *DMN*, July 30, 1968.
[76] W. S. McDonald, "Status Report of Fair Park," City of Dallas Official Memorandum, May 25, 1970.

commission sided with the county commissioners, concluding a "mix-up in computer programming" was the culprit.[77] The CCA proved victorious and their nine councilmembers, including Mayor Jonsson, George Allen, and Anita Martinez claimed their seats on the city council.

The backing and selection of minority candidates provided the appearance that the city's power structure wanted to include the voices from communities of color. However, the overwhelming dominance of the CCA and the at-large election system provided little ability for black and brown communities to engage directly in the democratic process by voting for their own independent leadership. Instead, candidates were handpicked and selected to run—and the CCA provided the financial backing that most independent candidates could not afford. Furthermore, many Mexican Americans distrusted the CCA and the methods they used to ensure their candidates ascended politically to the city council. Mexican Americans pointed to the alleged computer errors in two city elections—the referendum in October 1968 and the city council election in April 1969—as evidence of a rigged election system. But even the newly minted Community Relations Commission that many racial liberals envisioned would help investigate such grievances provided little relief. The fact that CCA President Tom Unis operated as its chairman indicated that the Community Relations Commission was a smokescreen, leading many, including some of the CCA's political opponents in the April 1969 election, to call for Unis's resignation as chairman of the commission.[78]

[77] "Report Panics Officials: Mysterious Case of Voter Applications Solved," *DMN*, April 15, 1969.
[78] Marvin Steakly, a white candidate vying for Place 4 on the city council, argued that "Unis's attack upon minority group voters and his devaluation of their worth as individuals, unless they vote for his Citizens Charter Association candidates, shatters for all time any possibility that he has qualifications to serve in a human relations function." "Steakly Urges Resignation of Relations Panel Chair," *DMN*, March 28, 1969.

For Mexican Americans, the election of Anita Martínez was contentious at best. Many from the Mexicana/o community viewed Martínez as a token or a "coconut"—a term used to accuse someone of betraying their race by implying that, like a coconut, they were brown on the outside but white on the inside. Critics pointed to the fact that Martínez lived in an affluent neighborhood in North Dallas, arguing that she was out of touch and could not assist the Latina/o community with its needs. One resident of *La Bajada* barrio in West Dallas remarked, "You come here from your ivory tower, make a splash, and then you'll go home and forget about us."[79] Anita Martínez refuted these charges by holding her swearing-in ceremony at Pike Park in Little Mexico, a symbolic gesture to show that, as a former resident of La Colonia, she remained loyal to the broader Mexican community. But the inaugural celebration at Pike Park revealed how little Martínez knew about the neighborhood as it existed in 1969. Unbeknownst to Martínez, the park was in a state of disarray. "The swings were broken, the faucets didn't work, the hinges on the bathroom didn't work. [The] commodes didn't work. It was just a scandal," Martínez later recalled.[80] Upon her election to the city council, Martínez had lived for nearly two decades outside of Little Mexico, rendering the criticisms against her as an outsider as warranted. To her credit, however, Martínez used that criticism as fuel to revitalize the park, preventing the city from cashing in on the park's lucrative location. Instead, she pushed through a series of safety and aesthetic improvements for the park, including the installation of two baseball fields, a large recreation building, new playground equipment, a junior swimming pool, and lighting for the soccer field.[81] Nonetheless, many barrio residents still distrusted her because of her proximity

[79] Quoted in Cloer, "A Champion for the Chicano Community," 79.
[80] Anita Martínez, interview by José Angel Gutiérrez.
[81] Cloer, "Champion for the Chicano Community," 83.

and connection to the CCA, which, to many Mexican Americans, actively disfranchised black and brown communities.

Dallas's Chicano Movement

By the late 1960s, the Chicano/a movement gained momentum across the American Southwest, building on the traditions of Mexican American civil rights activism. For the most part, a younger generation influenced by the rising militant youth culture adopted cultural nationalism and called themselves "Chicanas/os." Though originally a derogatory term, young people of Mexican descent reclaimed the term and used it to express *Chicanismo,* an ideology that emphasized self-determination and solidarity in a shared cultural identity while also rejecting assimilation. As historian Marc Simon Rodríguez explains, the Chicano movement was an "amalgam of groups sharing the same general goals—civil rights, social and educational equality, economic opportunity, and cultural independence for Mexican American people."[82] In 1963, Chicano labor activists in South Texas organized electoral campaigns to combat discrimination in the minority Anglo-controlled Crystal City. In the farm lands of California, the United Farm Workers led by Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta organized an international boycott movement by mid-decade, demonstrating the plight of Mexican farm workers and sparking widespread interest amongst Mexican Americans to challenge discrimination wherever it existed.[83] High school students organized the Chicano Blowouts of 1968, in which students

[82] Marc Simon Rodriguez, *Rethinking the Chicano Movement* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 5. For more on the Chicano movement, see Carlos Muñoz, *Youth, Identity, Power: The Chicano Movement* (New York: Verso, 1989); Juan Gómez-Quiñones and Irene Vásquez, *Making Aztlán: Ideology and Culture in the Chicana and Chicano Movement, 1966-1977* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2014); Maylei Blackwell, *Chicana Power!: Contested Histories of Feminism in the Chicano Movement* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011); Ignacio Garcia, *Chicanismo: The Forging of a Militant Ethos Among Mexican Americans* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997); David Montejano, *Quixote's Soldiers: A Local History of the Chicano Movement, 1966-1981* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010).

[83] For more on the UFW and grape and lettuce boycotts, see Frank Bardacke, *Trampling Out the Vintage: Cesar Chavez and the Two Souls of the United Farm Workers* (New York: Verso, 2012); Matt Garcia, *From the Jaws of*

walked out of classrooms in East Los Angeles, protesting educational inequality in Los Angeles school district. Paramilitary organizations like the Brown Berets of Los Angeles, the Black Berets of Albuquerque, and the Crusade for Justice in Denver sparked an interest in confrontation and militancy and protesting economic disadvantage, the war in Vietnam, and police brutality.[84]

While the Chicano/a movement made headway across the American Southwest, traditionally conservative Mexican American civil rights organizing grew alongside the militant movement. In Dallas, a number of organizations emerged in the 1960s to combat racial prejudice against the Latina/o population. In 1969, Dallas resident Richard Menchaca became the president of the local LULAC chapter. A native of San Antonio, Menchaca moved to Dallas after graduating from North Texas State University in 1963 to work as a PE teacher at William B. Travis Elementary School in Little Mexico. He stayed in that position for four years until he received a job as a career advancement advisor at El Centro College in downtown Dallas.[85] Upon his election to LULAC as president, Menchaca made it his mission to fight the stigmatization and discrimination that the Chicano/a community endured. "For too long we have been pictured in television commercials and stories as 'bandidos' or sleepy people taking siestas beside the road," he said. "It's time to tell the other side of the story." During his tenure as president of LULAC, he initiated several self-help programs designed to eliminate the stereotypes and the

Victory: The Triumph and Tragedy of Cesar Chavez and the Farm Workers Movement (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014).

[84] For more on the Brown Berets, see David Montejano, *Sancho's Journal: Exploring the Political Edge with the Brown Berets* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2012); Ernesto Chavez, *¡Mi Raza Primero!: Nationalism, Identity, and Insurgency in the Chicano Movement in Los Angeles, 1966-1978* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), particularly chapter two; and Montejano, *Quixote's Soldiers.* For more on the Crusade for Justice, see Ernesto Vigil, *Crusade for Justice: Chicano Militancy and the Government's War on Dissent* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999).

[85] Richard Menchaca, "Taking a Job in Little Mexico," Interview by Moises Acuna-Gurrola, June 12, 2015, CRBB https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/619/taking-a-job-in-little-mexico (Accessed April 7, 2020).

prejudices against the Chicana/o people. In 1971, LULAC and the American GI Forum co-sponsored Operation SER- Jobs for Progress, a job training program originally founded in Houston, as a center to serve the Mexican American community.[86] He also connected with Los Barrios Unidos, Incorporated (LBU) founders Pete Martínez and John Zapata González, and made plans to open a community health clinic in West Dallas. "Pete organized the barrio community; John Zapata, the governmental sector, and I, the medical doctors," Menchaca recalled. After more than a year of petitioning for funding from local and federal agencies, LBU received its first grant to open and finance Los Barrios Unidos Community Clinic, which opened in 1972.[87]

Still, while Operation SER and Los Barrios Unidos Community Clinic provided some tangible benefits to Mexican residents across the barrios, many still resented the self-help-style of activism without further disrupting the structural inequalities imbedded in such institutions. Mexicanos/as did not want job training for only blue-collar positions. Many aspired to climb the socioeconomic ladder by narrowing the opportunity gap between the haves and have-nots. Or as one eighteen-year-old Mexican American resident conveyed, "Sure, I can get free job-training—to be an upholsterer! But I don't want to be an upholsterer. Why don't they teach me to be a bank president? When they come up with something like *that*, then I'll go over there."[88] Residents also viewed Los Barrios Unidos skeptically. Both Pete Martínez and John Zapata González were not

[86] "Job Plan to Begin in West Dallas," *DMN*, September 16, 1971. For more on Operation SER, see Cynthia Orozco, "Operation SER-Jobs for Progress," *Handbook of Texas Online* https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/oas01 (Accessed April 8, 2020).
[87] Richard Menchaca, "Barrios Unidos," Interview by Moises Acuna-Gurrola, June 12, 2015, CRBB https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/240/barrios-unidos (Accessed April 7, 2020); Richard Menchaca, "Acquiring Land for Barrios Unidos," Interview by Moises Acuna-Gurrola, June 12, 2015, CRBB, https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/235/acquiring-land-for-barrios-unidos (Accessed April 7, 2020); "Clinic Opens to Provide Free Care," *DMN*, December 7, 1972.
[88] Quote from Achor, *Mexican Americans in a Dallas Barrio*, 67.

from the West Dallas barrios and many believed that both Martínez and González established Los Barrios Unidos for their own political gain.[89]

In Dallas, the Brown Berets emerged in 1969 as a counter to the traditionally conservative approach in the broader Dallas Mexican American freedom struggle. Organized by brothers Robert and Ricardo Medrano, the Dallas Brown Berets drew upon their personal family history of interracial activism. The Medrano's father, Pancho, was a native of Dallas and longtime labor organizer. During the Second World War, Pancho landed a job at North American Aviation in nearby Grand Prairie, where he helped build Local 645 of United Auto Workers (UAW) at the plant, encouraging white, Mexican, and African American workers to join. Because of that experience, Medrano learned the importance of voting and committed himself to the quest for social justice for both Mexican Americans and African Americans. Shortly after the war, he organized the local chapter of the American G.I. Forum, became a member of the NAACP, and collected poll taxes for the Progressive Voters League. He later organized Mexican Americans into the first local Viva Kennedy Club and the Political Association for Spanish-Speaking People (PASO).[90]

Because of their father's organizing in the union and the wider Dallas community, the entire Medrano family participated in political organizing. At the age of seven, Pancho's daughter Pauline passed out leaflets encouraging Mexican Americans to vote for then presidential candidate John F. Kennedy in the 1960 election and encouraged them to join the Viva Kennedy Club.[91] The eldest three Medrano children—Pancho Jr., Robert, and Ricardo— in the mid-1950s joined the NAACP Youth Council under the direction of Juanita Craft. They

[89] Osmin Hernandez, "Justicia For Santos!: Mexican American Civil Rights and the Santos Rodriguez Affair in Dallas, Texas, 1969-1978," (Master's Thesis, Texas Christian University, 2016), 45.
[90] Krochmal, "Chicano Labor Politics," 138-139; Hernández, "Justicia for Santos," 39.
[91] Pauline Medrano, interview by author, July 8, 2017.

contributed in downtown demonstrations at the Majestic Theater and picketed at the State Fair of Texas for its Negro Achievement Day. Ricardo was also recruited by Julia Scott Reed, a reporter for the black newspaper the *Dallas Express*, to come help register people to vote in front of the black YMCA on Hall Street in Freedman's Town.[92]

Pancho's two decades of union and political organizing granted him a sizable reputation in activist communities, which ultimately led him to an advanced position of organizing on the national stage. As historian Max Krochmal has shown, in 1963, UAW president Walter Reuther offered Pancho a full-time position working directly for the international union's Citizenship Department, a position that enabled him to travel around the nation assisting civil rights struggles and political candidates. He personally participated in the March for Jobs and Freedom in Washington D. C. in August 1963, the Selma-to-Montgomery voting rights march in March 1965, and the multiracial Poor People's Campaign in 1968. He also joined other Chicana/o activists from across the country in walking out in protest from a hearing of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in Albuquerque in 1966. In June 1968, he stood not far from Senator Robert F. Kennedy when the senator was assassinated following his victory in the California presidential primary.[93]

Pancho's legacy went far beyond his own personal endeavors. His children followed their father's footsteps in both union and political activism. Pancho Jr. became a union steward for North American Aviation in the early 1960s.[94] Robert was the first in his family to go to college—enrolling in Arlington State College (now University of Texas at Arlington) in the fall of 1964. His time there as a student was invaluable. He joined Ernest McMillan of SNCC and

[92] Ricardo Medrano, "Father's Sit-in at El Fenix," interview by author, June 13, 2015, CRBB https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/1632/my-fathers-el-phoenix-sit-in (Accessed December 6, 2019).
[93] Krochmal, "Chicano Labor and Multiracial Politics in Post-World War II Texas," 139.
[94] Ibid, 144-145.

other students of the Black Panther Party in protesting the Confederate theme on campus. He studied the organizing techniques of the Panthers and applied those methods to his own community organizing.[95] In late 1968, Robert was hired with the Dallas County Community Action Committee, the local War on Poverty board, and eventually became the director of the West Dallas Community Center in 1969. There, he applied directly the organizing techniques he learned from SNCC and the Black Panther Party and developed relationships with both Black and Brown Power advocates.

Ricardo also involved himself in the local politics of the Mexican American community in Dallas. In 1964, Pancho helped Ricardo purchase a local grocery store called Kiko's, which Ricardo and his mother, Esperanza, helped run. Kiko's became more than just a grocery store for the community. Ricardo, Pancho, and Esperanza would register people to vote, offer informal daycare services, and used the space to hold meetings for various Mexican American organizations.[96] Kiko's also served as the location for the local Brown Berets chapter meetings when it formally organized in 1969. Inspired by the development of other Beret chapters, Pancho, Ricardo, and Robert jumped on the idea and organized a local chapter. Robert's employment with the local War on Poverty board prevented him from participating directly with the Brown Berets, leading Ricardo to take the reigns as the first Prime Minister.[97] The Dallas Brown Berets became another organization of the Mexican American community pushing for voter education, political representation, cultural recognition in schools, and ending police brutality. Initially, the Berets used themselves as "radicals" in the Dallas political arena. But their

[95] Robert Medrano, "Activist Groups at UT-Arlington," interview by Moisés Acuña-Gurrola, June 10, 2015, CRBB, https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/246/activist-groups-at-ut-arlington (Accessed December 9, 2019).
[96] Ricardo Medrano, "Kiko's Grocery Store," Interview by author, June 13, 2015, CRBB https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/my-grocery-store-kikos (Accessed July 25, 2017).
[97] Ricardo Medrano, "Brown Berets," Interview by author, June 13, 2015, CRBB, https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/the-start-with-brown-berets (Accessed July 25, 2017).

agenda was no less radical than for what other Mexican American middle-class leaders or organizations had fought, such as renaming public schools after Hispanic figures, serving culturally Mexican food in schools to students, and hiring more Mexican American teachers and principals across the district. But instead of using negotiation and compromise, as many middle-class Mexican American activists had, the Brown Berets engaged in confrontation with the establishment, often times leading picket lines and protesting directly to the city council.[98] In a May 1971 city council meeting, the Berets criticized the city's lack of fair hiring practices for Mexican Americans in government agencies, including firemen and police officers. The *Dallas Morning News* reported that Ricardo Medrano made several demands of the city council, including lowering both height and weight restrictions for policemen. They also attacked Anita Martínez for not being an adequate representative of the Mexican American community. In defense of Martinez, founder of Los Barrios Unidos John Zapata González responded to the Berets by stating, "Violence breeds violence. I would like to challenge you to work toward constructive goals."[99]

González's charge against the Brown Berets of breeding violence was part of a larger movement to discredit their activism. particularly against the chapter in Los Angeles. The Los Angeles chapter formed after the East-LA Blowouts in 1968. As a paramilitary group, the Berets used confrontation and militancy to combat issues of discrimination against the broader Mexican American population. At the same time, law enforcement agencies conducted their own campaigns to destroy Chicano organizations like the Brown Berets. As historian Edward Escobar has shown, local and federal policing agencies harassed members of the Berets—sometimes beating, falsely arresting, or violent suppressing Beret demonstrations. In response, Berets used

[98] Ricardo Medrano, "Brown Berets."
[99] "Minority Hiring Urged: Council Hears Mexican-American Spokesmen," *DMN*, May 25, 1971.

police violence as an issue around which Chicano/a activists organized the community. Some in the Berets even resorted to violence to further demonstrate their alienation from American society.[100] But the Dallas chapter abstained entirely from violence. "We already knew the theory of non-violence from Martin Luther King and Mahatma Gandhi," Robert indicated. Still, their outspokenness drew attention from the entire Dallas community, including Gonzalez as well as the police. In one incident, Ricardo remembered that an undercover police officer approached him one day with a picture of him, letting him know that law enforcement was closely monitoring the group's activities.[101] In another instance, Ricardo admitted suspicion when a group of "reporters" approached him about doing a story on the Brown Berets in Dallas. When Ricardo invited them to the clubhouse for a meeting that evening, one reporter asked Ricardo to make sure all the members were present and for "everyone to bring their guns."[102] Ricardo seemed perplexed by the request. "We knew [and] we feared that we could get hurt easily based on things we've heard that happened—getting apprehended and getting in a squad car and never being heard from again," Robert said. To combat the harassment, the Brown Berets took extra precautions when staging their protests—holding them in the daytime instead of at night and asking for help from the local news media.[103]

The organizing techniques the Brown Berets adopted speak largely about the nature of the political climate in the city. Using confrontational tactics, they reasoned, forced the city power structure to realize its limited inclusion of Mexican Americans in the broader power structure and gave voice to the working-poor, who were often times neglected by middle-class

[100] Escobar, "The Dialectics of Repression," 1485.
[101] Hernández, "Justicia for Santos," 66.
[102] Hernández, "Justicia for Santos," 64; Ricardo Medrano, "The Search for Common Recognition," Interview by author, 13 June 2015, CRBB https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/the-search-for-common-recognition (Accessed July 25, 2017).
[103] Robert Medrano, "Local Issues," Interview by Moisés Acuña-Gurrola, June 10, 2015, CRBB https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/local-issues (Accessed October 17, 2017).

Mexican American leadership. Though the Berets abstained directly from violence, their confrontational tactics allowed for some within the Mexican American community to distrust their approach. One woman approached Juan Pérez, a Beret member from West Dallas, and told him the Brown Berets had done nothing to help the community and that they were "nothing but drunks, marijuana smokers, and criminals who were used by the Medranos to attack political opponents."[104] It also made them particularly vulnerable to local and federal policing agencies, who monitored, harassed, and attempted to entrap brown activists. In addition, the fact that the Medrano family personally experienced police brutality with the disappearance of Sabas Medrano by police reveals how deeply imbedded the issue of police brutality was—not just to the broader Mexican American community but to the Medrano family personally. The fact that the Medranos adapted their organizing techniques—holding marches or protests in the day and using the media as a resource—reveals the sources of trauma and the legacy that police brutality had on Mexican Americans in Dallas.

The Chicano movement in Dallas built on the organizing traditions of earlier Mexican American civil rights organizers and labor unionists in the city. They drew upon their experiences with racism and discrimination and how the intersections of their identities—both brown and working-class—prevented them from benefiting from whiteness as middle-class Mexican Americans had. The Brown Berets also paralleled their organizing strategies by mirroring the techniques they had learned through their decades of civil rights activism with African Americans. They engaged in protests, picket lines, and organized on the grassroots level to force white city leaders to both recognize the plight of Mexican Americans but also remedy all aspects of discrimination. And in some cases, black and brown worked together. The El Fenix

[104] Rev. Juan M. Pérez, *Through Brown Eyes: A Short History of the Dallas Brown Berets Organization and the Chicano Movement from My Point of View* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2014), Kindle edition.

sit-in and the brief interracial protests at the University of Texas at Arlington had demonstrated that coalitions between African Americans and Mexican Americans were possible.

CHAPTER V:
"WE GOT BLACK POWER AND THAT'S GONNA GO A LONG WAY:" USING BLACK POWER AND THE WAR ON POVERTY TO BUILD A MULTIRACIAL COALITION

The Monday before Thanksgiving in 1968, the downtown Dallas welfare offices received a jolt. Ruth Jefferson, an African American woman and mother of five, led an army of twenty to thirty other black and brown mothers, some with their children in tow, to sit in the welfare office. Sympathetic white students from Southern Methodist University (SMU) lined the sidewalk outside the building, holding signs that read, "Fair Welfare," and "We Students at SMU Support the Welfare Mothers."[1] Just released on bond, Ernest McMillan and Matthew Johnson of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) joined the mothers in the office for protection.[2] Assisted by the National Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO), Jefferson—a twenty-eight-year-old high school educated single mother—brought together a coalition of black and brown mothers, white New Leftists, white lawyers from Dallas Legal Services, and civil rights and Black Power activists in a nonviolent direct-action campaign.[3]

The sit-in spanned sixty hours over three business days in the office. Armed with a supply of bologna, bread, and cartons of milk, the mothers occupied every chair in the waiting room, protesting recent cuts to their welfare checks and demanding an immediate increase in welfare payments. When the welfare office threatened to close for the day, Jefferson made an announcement to the crowd she had gathered. "Before we leave this place, these things are gonna

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[1] "From Reel to Web – November 26, 1968," WFAA Newsfilm Collection, Hamon Arts Library, Southern Methodist University, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7shCCrS0tRU&list=PL8WZP-NbjEoGevfMW8IFz4C07OrARmM0x&index=21 (Accessed April 23, 2019).

[2] Affidavit, Burton Hackney, November 26, 1968, State of Texas, Travis County, Box 43, Folder 18, CORE Papers, Wisconsin Historical Society via ProQuest History Vault (hereafter cited CORE Papers).

[3] For more on the National Welfare Rights Organization and movement, see Felicia Kornbluh, *The Battle for Welfare Rights: Politics and Poverty in Modern America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007); Premilla Nadasen, *Welfare Warriors: The Welfare Rights Movement in the United States* (New York: Routledge, 2004); and Annelise Orleck, *Storming Caesar's Palace: How Black Mothers Fought Their Own War on Poverty* (New York: Beacon Press, 2006).

be done," Jefferson stated. "We are tired. We will sit here. We will stand here until I don't got no power left. And guess what? We got Black Power and that's gonna go a long way."[4]

Ruth Jefferson's multiracial coalition exposed the potency of a cross-race and cross-class collaboration in addressing the shortcomings of twentieth century liberalism and the welfare state. The racist and sexist policies imbedded into the social welfare policies that originated in President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal and continued through President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty led activists to demonstrate inside the Dallas county welfare offices in November 1968. Though the War on Poverty provided some tangible benefits to a select few in the Dallas community, the majority viewed the program as an extension of the city's white power structure, who largely accepted it in an effort to appear concerned for the city's poorest groups. But white city leaders still feared that Dallas remained on top of a racial powder keg in which another instance of police violence would lead the city into a full-scale rebellion. The organizations that Mayor Erik Jonsson invited into Dallas—the Urban League and Block Partnership—to help mitigate these racial tensions, in his mind, had failed to do so. Members of both agencies had actually worked against the mayor when they sided with the black militants of SNCC and formed Black Citizens for Justice, Law, and Order after the Dallas City Council passed the anti-riot ordinance, specifically targeting SNCC. The multiracial demonstration that Jefferson organized following the anti-riot ordinance's passage sparked renewed concerns of potential urban unrest.

The fact that Jefferson managed to incorporate Mexican Americans welfare mothers into her organization despite increasing tension between black and brown also spoke volumes.

[4] WBAP-TV, [News Script: Demonstrators], November 25, 1968; Quote from "From Reel to Web – November 26, 1968," WFAA Newsfilm Collection, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7shCCrS0tRU&list=PL8WZP-NbjEoGevfMW8IFz4C07OrARmM0x&index=21 (Accessed April 23, 2019).

Widespread disfranchisement and the undemocratic at-large election system brought animosity between the two groups and nearly collapsed the possibility of collaboration. The local War on Poverty's focus on uplifting African Americans often at the expense of Mexican Americans further created tension. When the two communities appeared to reach the tipping point in racial hostility, activists from both communities reckoned to set aside their differences and unite in an effort to challenge the white power structure in the city. In doing so, black and brown activists viewed the hiring of Ruth Jefferson to the local War on Poverty would repair the previously damaged rapport. Jefferson and her multiracial organizing abilities became the foundation upon which black and brown activists used the local War on Poverty to address inequality across race and class in Dallas.

Jefferson's ascension to the War on Poverty alarmed local government officials. The dynamic coalition she assembled during the welfare protest and her associations and adherence to Black Power led to unending police harassment and other forms of social humiliation that nearly upended her activism. She persisted, and through her connections in the welfare rights movement and the War on Poverty, she acquired unwavering support from black and brown communities when local government officials questioned her motives, and more broadly the local War on Poverty itself. Amidst this turbulent atmosphere, Jefferson maintained her commitment to community organizing, bringing together a broad base of black and brown civil rights organizations that challenged racial oppression, inequality, and poverty in the city. Her activism helped solidify the multiracial coalition against police violence in the following decades.

The Failures of Twentieth Century Liberalism

President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal accommodated Jim Crow by largely excluding racial minorities from social welfare benefits, creating a growing disparity between communities of color and their white counterparts. The establishment of redlining via the Home Owner's Loan Corporation (HOLC) in 1933 largely prevented communities of color from receiving federal insurance on qualifying mortgages as the Federal Housing Authority (FHA) viewed racially or economically heterogeneous neighborhoods as inherently risky. This process boxed in African American and Mexican American residents into already segregated neighborhoods and prevented them from buying their way out.[5] Labor protections also disproportionately benefited white Americans. In 1938, when Congress passed the Fair Labor Standards Act, which allowed organized workers to barter for higher wages and better working conditions, the legislation excluded women and African Americans by eliminating agricultural and domestic workers from the legislation.[6] As a result of these policies, communities of color found it difficult to break out of impoverished conditions through the worst of the Great Depression.

Racism and sexism also fundamentally shaped the development of the Social Security Act of 1935. Policymakers engineered a two-tiered welfare system by, again, excluding agricultural workers, domestic servants, and home workers from old age insurance. These exemptions resulted in the disqualification of roughly 65 percent of all African Americans and roughly 85 percent of all African American women.[7] The Social Security Act also initiated Aid

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[5] For more on the policies and effects of redlining and the HOLC, see Richard Rothstein, *The Color of the Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America* (New York: Liveright, 2018).

[6] Alice Kessler-Harris, *In Pursuit of Equity: Women, Men, and the Quest for Economic Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 107; Ira Katznelson, *When Affirmative Action Was White: An Untold History of Racial Inequality in Twentieth-Century America* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2006), 51.

[7] Mary Poole, *The Segregated Origins of Social Security: African Americans and the Welfare State* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 22-27; Ira Katznelson, *When Affirmative Action Was White: An Untold History of Racial Inequality in Twentieth-Century America* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2005), 42-43; Jacquelyn Dowd-Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past," *Journal of American History* (March 2005), 1242.

to Dependent Children, later renamed Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), designed to support windowed single mothers to stay home and raise their children. Policymakers intentionally kept aid money low as a deterrent, believing that single women on federal welfare aid would weaken traditional values of a male breadwinning husband and a female stay-at-home wife. Similar to other New Deal programs, the states controlled federal distribution of aid. The federal government matched state funds and provided some regulation and oversight, but state offices and local governments set budget and eligibility requirements for welfare recipients. When people of color could access aid, state offices forced them to rely on the menial funds of AFDC.[8]

The racial and gender provisions set forth by the Social Security Act and the broader New Deal carried into the subsequent decades. Though the Fair Employment Practice Committee held private defense contractors accountable for affirmative action practices during the Second World War, anti-labor sentiments in the postwar period prevented the FEPC from becoming a permanent agency. Furthermore, white Americans disproportionately benefited from extended federal welfare programs such as the GI Bill, whereas African Americans and other racial minorities remained excluded from its benefits, a process that heightened segregation, unemployment, and poverty for people of color.[9] As the wealth gap between white Americans and people of color increased, the association between those living in poverty and on welfare grew racialized and stigmatized.

President Lyndon B. Johnson's administration, in some ways, recognized such discrepancies between black and white Americans. He extended the New Deal state into his

[8] Julilly Kohler-Haussman, *Getting Tough: Welfare and Imprisonment in 1970s America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017), 129.
[9] Katznelson, *When Affirmative Action Was White,* 113-114.

administration when he invoked what he called the "Great Society," an idea that social programs should eradicate poverty and racial injustices. Over the next two years, his administration pushed through Congress a series of bills that spearheaded the federal government into a position of defending the rights and economic opportunities for all Americans.

Though all of the Great Society's programs extended significant benefits to Americans across the nation, the passage of the Economic Opportunity Act (EOA) in 1964 arguably had the most profound effects for community leaders on the ground. The act called for "maximum feasible participation" and authorized the development of local community action agencies (CAAs) all throughout the United States, which would allow the traditionally marginalized to organize politically and become involved in local politics. More than a thousand CAAs were established to directly interact with the community's poorest populations, hoping to maximize the participation of the poor to eradicate poverty. In decaying inner-cities and in rural America, community action projects hired local men and women to establish and manage preschools, community centers, neighborhood councils, and clinics. Residents also received legal aid, job training programs, and remedial education courses. As a result of their new roles, local people learned of their rights under federal law, and more importantly, about how the federal government worked, facilitating their entry into local and national politics. As historian Annelise Orleck states, "Poor people went from conducting surveys about neighborhoods and registering voters to trying to elect those candidates."[10] They also engaged in wide scale protests and confronted public school administrators, unresponsive landlords, and local police departments.[11]

[10] Annelise Orleck and Lisa Gayle Hazirjian (eds.), *The War on Poverty: A New Grassroots History, 1964-1980* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011), 10-11.
[11] Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime*, 53.

Alongside President Johnson's pursuit to eradicate poverty were initiatives to curtail the rising rate of crime in urban centers. Following the urban rebellions in 1964, Johnson spoke on the issue of crime to Congress, insisting that "streets must be safe" and that "homes and places of business must be secure."[12] As historian Elizabeth Hinton has shown, the Johnson administration bestowed the ethos of the Great Society on law enforcement agencies, passing the Law Enforcement Assistant Act of 1965, establishing a direct line of federal policy into local police operations, court systems, and state prisons. A few years later in 1968, Johnson signed the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, setting up the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA), which oversaw federal spending into local police departments across the nation. This money provided local law enforcement agencies with the ability to fund anything from new and sophisticated types of equipment for quieting civil disturbances to police officer training in potential riot control.[13] Instead of focusing on the root causes that led to urban rebellions—a nexus of police violence, poverty, and racism—the Great Society concentrated on black behaviors instead of racist policing.

The ideas behind both the War on Poverty and the War on Crime were largely inspired by a leading social scientists and federal policymakers. Most famously, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, the Assistant Secretary of Labor who built upon Gunnar Myrdal's analysis in his 1944 publication *American Dilemma,* argued that segregation, unemployment, and discrimination destabilized black families, leading to an increase number of single-mother households. In *The Negro Family: A Case for National Action*, Moynihan stressed that these conditions then caused welfare rolls to climb and high levels of delinquency, crime, and unemployment. Moynihan

[12] Quoted from Heather Ann Thompson, "Why Mass Incarceration Matters: Rethinking Crisis, Decline, and Transformation Postwar American History," *Journal of American History* 97: 3 (December 2010), 729.
[13] Thompson, "Why Mass Incarceration Matters," 731; Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime,* 2, 27, 79.

argued that the United States should stabilize the black family structure in order to end poverty and welfare. By framing it in this way, policymakers of the Great Society attributed inequality as a problem of individual behaviors—or a "tangle of pathology"—focusing more on the psychological impact of racism rather than the structural inequalities that perpetuated racism.[14] These prejudices severely limited the effectiveness of many programs within the Great Society. The War on Poverty, for example, committed to vocational training and remedial education programs instead of a federal job creation programs or an overhauling of the public education systems. And while the EOA touted the "maximum feasible participation" model, policymakers actually intended for War on Poverty to create an environment in which "young people will find their own ways toward a constructive rather than destructive life." Or as Elizabeth Hinton states, "Breaking the 'cycle of poverty' by providing services and increasing the supervision of low-income people became an even more pressing focus on the antipoverty efforts during the second half of the 1960s."[15] The War on Poverty thus became more about preventing rebellions that adjusting the structural inequalities that produced them.

The War on Poverty in Dallas

Black civil rights activists facilitated the early development of the War on Poverty in Dallas. According to local NAACP leader Rev. H. Rhett James, County Judge W. L. Sterrett and others routinely criticized the federal program and argued that Dallas didn't need a community action agency because "we don't have no poverty."[16] James disagreed. He had connected with Reverend Leon H. Sullivan in Philadelphia and received a leadership training course to establish

[14] Premila Nadasen, *Welfare Warriors: The Welfare Rights Movement in the United States* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 144; Elizabeth Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Makings of Mass Incarceration in America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016), 58-59.
[15] Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime*, 55.
[16] Rev. H. Rhett James, interview with Bonnie Lovell, December 21, 2002.

an Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC) in Dallas. As part of that training, James received a $275,000 grant from the OEO to the establish the center, but the grant remained contingent upon the development of a local War on Poverty committee in Dallas.[17] A few days later, James reached out to Robert Cullum, a member of the Dallas Citizens Council and owner of a local grocery chain that later became Tom Thumb. Over the years, James and Cullum had formed a working relationship. "He was the type of person who liked to hear the other side," James said of Cullum. In a meeting at Cullum's store in North Dallas, James explained his acquisition of the OIC grant and relayed his trouble with the County Commissioners Court in recognizing Dallas's need for an anti-poverty committee. According to an oral history interview, James asked Cullum to "call the [Dallas County] Commissioners Court together and authorize an official status of the War on Poverty to receive funds from Washington." To Rev. James's astonishment, Cullum came through on his word. "It was taken care of the next day," James declared. "Sterrett calls me, 'Well, Rhett, you got what you wanted.' I said, 'I got what I wanted? It wasn't for me. This was for your community.'"[18]

Instead of working with James and other black and brown leaders to create a CAA, an appointed commission of seven white representatives established ties with the OEO.[19] In May 1965, the committee formed the Dallas County Community Action Committee (DCCAC) and two months later announced that Allan L. Maley Jr., secretary-treasurer of the Dallas AFL-CIO,

[17] For more on the development of the OIC, see Guian A. McKee, *The Problem of Jobs: Liberalism, Race, and Deindustrialization in Philadelphia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008) and Guian A. McKee, "'The Government Is with Us:' Lyndon Johnson and the Grassroots War on Poverty," Annelise Orleck and Lisa Gayle Hazirjian (eds.), *The War on Poverty: A New Grassroots History, 1964-1980* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011), 31; Matthew J. Countryman, *Up South: Civil Rights and Black Power in Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006).
[18] Rev. H. Rhett James, interview by Bonnie Lovell, December 21, 2002.
[19] The committee of seven included Glynne Coker, director of the county welfare department; City Manager Elgin Crull; R. L. Dillard Jr., president of the Community Council of Greater Dallas; Robert Folsom, president of the DISD school board; Allan Maley, secretary of AFL-CIO; County Judge W.L. Sterrett; and Thelma Whalen, executive director of Family Services. "County Set to Pull Anti-Poverty Oar," *DMN*, May 4, 1965.

accepted the post of executive director.[20] Thirty-seven-year-old Maley, a respected labor leader and a liberal Democrat, had hardly acquired a record as a progressive unionist. His own entry into organized labor reveals his cautious approach. In 1948, Maley began working as a pipefitter with the Sinclair Refining Company in Corpus Christi, Texas. In 1952, the Oil Workers' International Union (OWIU) staged a month-long strike that succeeded in getting all workers a 15 percent wage increase. Maley was not a union member and did not participate in the strike but reaped the benefits. He later joined the OWIU after the union straightened out a personal grievance for him.[21] From there, Maley climbed the union ladder, holding a wide variety of elected positions within his local until he got a job in 1954 as a full-time labor representative for the Texas Employment Commission (TEC). He stayed in the position for nearly four years until he ran for and won the secretary-treasurer position for the Dallas AFL-CIO offices in 1958.[22]

Maley's position with the AFL-CIO coincided with organized labor's attempt to strengthen its commitment to the black freedom struggle. According to historian Max Krochmal, the Texas AFL-CIO in 1957 first tried to establish a permanent civil rights committee that would end discrimination within locals and provide equal job opportunities. The measure failed because of fears of alienating white unionists. In 1963, when unionists proposed the civil rights committee again, Maley and the Dallas AFL-CIO Council reluctantly agreed to support its creation but would do so "without publicity." It was "something of a hot potato, here at least," Maley wrote. [We] would be better off at this time without any public statements."[23] Maley and

[20] "Maley Named to Spearhead Poverty Fight," *DMN*, July 15, 1965.
[21] "Good Union Leader Serves Community," *DMN*, June 14, 1959; Tyler Priest and Michael Botson, "Bucking the Odds: Organized Labor in Gulf Coast Oil Refining," *Journal of American History* 99:1 (June 2012), 107. For more on the history of the OWIU, see Emilio Zamora, *Claiming Rights and Righting Wrongs: Mexican Workers and Job Politics During World War II* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2009).
[22] "Good Union Leader Serves Community," *DMN*, June 14, 1959
[23] Max Krochmal, *Blue Texas: The Making of a Multiracial Democratic Coalition in the Civil Rights Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016), 321-323.

the Dallas AFL-CIO's hesitations to publicly support the new civil rights committee demonstrates a continued gradualist approach to civil rights. Fearing a backlash amongst white unionists in Dallas locals, Maley and others opted instead to work behind the scenes.

Having Maley, a gradualist who accommodated Jim Crow, as the executive director thwarted the effectiveness of the War on Poverty in Dallas. He was cautious and had demonstrated that timidity with civil rights activists of the AFL-CIO. He used the same approach as the director of the DCCAC. Under Maley's leadership, the War on Poverty seemed haphazard at best and tightly controlled at worst. Though Maley launched a variety of antipoverty programs like Head Start and Job Corps, his leadership lagged when it came to establishing community centers, which would offer poor residents a host of services like Planned Parenthood, remedial education classes, and food donation centers. He also undercut many of the War on Poverty's programs by withholding money. By February 1967, for example, the DCCAC had received nearly $2 million in expenditures, but a little more than $1 million remained unspent. Maley attributed this surplus to "delays in federal allocation," explaining that when grants arrived, the funds "could not cover the entire period for which they were designed." As a result, Maley hoarded the money and then later rushed to spend it when federal OEO offices threatened to rescind the allocated funds.[24] That trend continued through much of Maley's tenure. An OEO report in early 1969 relayed that the Dallas County Community Action Committee spent on average $10.17 for each of its poor residents, falling well behind other metropolitan areas. Houston, for example, spent $46.65 per person; Atlanta's poor received upwards of $54 whereas poor residents in Los Angeles's acquired as much as $91.65.[25]

[24] "Funds Left in Poverty War Till," *DMN*, February 11, 1967.
[25] "Poverty Program Faulted," *DMN*, January 29, 1969; "Cabell Defends Dallas Program," *DMN*, February 3, 1969.

Maley also used the War on Poverty to police black communities, which in his mind, would prevent an urban rebellion from erupting in Dallas. The city was on the cusp of a revolt in early 1967 when several incidents of police brutality angered black residents. In one instance, Dallas Police Officer W. D. Smith shot and killed sixteen-year-old Howard Daniels after arresting him on a hitch-hiking charge. Officers claimed Daniels tried to wrestle the gun away from Smith but witnesses alleged Daniels never had control of the weapon and was "slaughtered like a hog in a pen."[26] A month later on March 23, police arrested fourteen-year-old Ruby Whitfield in Oak Cliff after receiving a complaint from two white neighbors that Whitfield and her friends were playing kickball in the street. Officers claimed that, upon approaching the teenager, Whitfield used profane language and made obscene gestures toward the officers. They then moved in to arrest her for disturbing the peace, but said that she resisted by biting and punching them. Eventually, the officers managed to wrestle the young girl to the squad car before escorting her to the city jail.[27] Whitfield, however, recounted a much different depiction of events. She alleged that officers confiscated her kickball, kicked and stomped on her, and called her a "nigger gal" before handcuffing her and escorting her to the city jail. A nurse at Parkland Hospital later testified that Whitfield "had the hell whipped out of her." She suffered bruising, muscle spasms of the lower back and neck, and a swollen face, the hospital reported.[28]

Whitfield's arrest sparked fear in DCCAC executive director Allan Maley. But his place of concern did not stem from what Whitfield alleged against Dallas police officers. Rather, he grew nervous with what happened following the arrest. After police apprehended Whitfield, a

[26] "Witness Tells 'Needless' Slaying by Cop," *Dallas Post-Tribune,* March 3, 1967; "Youth Killed in Fight with Dallas Policeman," *DMN*, February 24, 1967.
[27] "Negro Leaders and Police Study Brutality Allegation," *DMN*, April 9, 1967.
[28] "Girl 14 Victim of Police Brutality," *Dallas Post-Tribune*, April 1, 1967; "Negro Leaders and Police Study Brutality Allegation," *DMN;* "An Open Letter to Police Chief Batchelor," *Dallas Post-Tribune*, April 15, 1967.

"gang of Negroes" gathered and allegedly threatened retaliation against the police. Fearing a revolt, Maley ordered anti-poverty workers from Neighborhood Organization, a local War on Poverty program, to form an "anti-riot squad" to gather information from local authorities and broadcast those messages through the loudspeakers to residents in the streets. "The anti-poverty workers got in there, told them the truth, and persuaded them to agree to a meeting with city officials," a report of the incident read. The meeting with city leaders, the report claimed, "cleared the air and the trouble died down."[29]

To Maley, the matter amounted to nothing more than a close-call. Dallas managed to avoid a full-scale rebellion that day and his anti-poverty workers succeeded in alleviating the tension between African Americans and the police. The incident, however, carried with him long after the teenager's arrest. In late July 1967, as urban rebellions in Newark, New Jersey, and Detroit, Michigan, erupted—the catalyst for both were the actions of police officers—Maley remembered the Whitfield arrest and wrote to Dallas City Council and Mayor Erik Jonsson, suggesting that "some of us" draft plans to cope with potential "riot situations." "I am concerned, as I know you are, with the possibility that such a thing could or would happen in our city," Maley wrote. "There have been other less publicized incidents since then; all having to do with police matters that could have easily resulted in violence." He suggested that Neighborhood Organization act as agents of information, in which his anti-poverty workers would gather intelligence from black residents and report their findings back to the city government and police.[30]

[29] Memorandum, September 8, 1967, Box 1, RG 391, Office of Economic Opportunity: Southwest Region, National Archives, Fort Worth, Texas.
[30] Letter, Allan L. Maley Jr. to Dallas City Council, July 27, 1967, Box 064, Folder 5, Jonsson papers.

It is unclear if Neighborhood Organization operated in this manner following Maley's suggestion. Regardless, Maley directed his attention to the behaviors of black residents, arguing that their actions—not habitual police violence—caused urban rebellions across the nation. The fact that he recommended that anti-poverty workers spy on African Americans and report potential riot information reveals that Maley, as did many others within the OEO, wanted to use the War on Poverty as a vehicle for policing blacks and suppressing rebellions. Southwest Regional OEO director Walter Richter agreed. In a September 1967 report, Richter argued that War on Poverty programs and employees helped to "prevent riots and cool explosive situations in several potential riot cities this summer." In a survey of sixty-four Southwestern cities, Richter reported that thirty-two cities, including Dallas, had "no disturbance" and pointed to the actions of Neighborhood Organization after the Whitfield arrest as an example.[31] In that same report, though, he downplayed Whitfield's accusations, calling them "rumors of police brutality," while stressing that "a group from the Negro community gathered with guns and Molotov-cocktail-makings."[32] Richter had actually overstated his claims of these well-armed black residents, exaggerating earlier news reports in which police claimed that Whitfield's younger brother "hit one officer with a pop bottle" and later brandished a ".22-calber handgun" during her arrest.[33] In doing so, he inflated the severity of black reactions to police violence, excused the police from culpability, and applauded the War on Poverty for deterring a supposed rebellion.

Though Maley and other OEO officials commended anti-poverty workers for their roles in preventing rebellions, employees of Maley grew tired of his control over the War on Poverty. Maley's downfall began when he announced that the DCCAC had finally selected a location for

[31] Memorandum, September 8, 1967, Box 1, RG 391, Office of Economic Opportunity: Southwest Region, National Archives, Fort Worth, Texas.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Quotes from "Negro Leaders and Police Study Brutality Allegation," *DMN*, April 9, 1967.

the West Dallas Community Center. Dallas War on Poverty offices chose 3311 Westmoreland, much to the chagrin of West Dallas residents, who had frequently stated that the Ledbetter School in Irving ISD offered the best location for the proposed center. Maley rebuffed their request, and the years of delay and the announced location frustrated many Mexican Americans in the West Dallas barrios. In early May, the disgruntled residents demanded Maley's resignation as the executive director and threatened to picket. Maley refused to step down, and two days later, DCCAC board member and West Dallas resident Macario Martínez led picket lines in front of the DCCAC office on Pacific Avenue downtown, criticizing Maley's leadership. "I don't think he has worked hard enough to help poor people. I think he should work with the people instead of trying to work by himself," Martínez stated.[34]

A month later, more protests erupted regarding Maley's tight governance over the War on Poverty. This time, protesters made their way to city hall to complain directly to the city council. On June 10, 1968, Doris Ingram, a black instructor under the New Careers program, led four other teachers and sixty of their students to ask that the city council put the DCCAC under the control of another agency. "Of the War on Poverty as a whole," Ingram stated, "we can only say that we know it stopped being a community action project a long time ago—if it ever was. It has become the rigidly controlled private empire of Allan Maley."[35] Maley responded to their complaints by suspending all five teachers following their protest. "Their cardinal sin was taking enrollees they were responsible for on a private venture during the time they were being paid to teach," Maley stated. "Nobody around here knew about it. The director turned around and found he was missing five teachers and 60 students."[36]

[34] "Maley's Ouster Demanded," *DMN*, May 3, 1968; "Residents Picket Antipoverty Office," *DMN*, May 4, 1968.
[35] "Poverty War Staffer Raps Maley, DCCAC," *DMN*, June 11, 1968.
[36] "Six Teachers Suspended in Poverty Fight," *DMN*, June 12, 1968.

Less than two weeks after the protests, Allan Maley resigned as the executive director. He notified board chairman Charles Galvin that he had secured a position as Vice President of VanCronkhite and Malloy, Inc., a local public relations company, and his new position would begin August 1. Some speculated that the recent protests forced his decision but not enough evidence exists to suggest that the protests alone led to his resignation.[37]

Nevertheless, his departure came at a critical junction with the War on Poverty on the national level. Pressure had been building within Congress to dismantle the entire OEO program after community action agencies produced controversies by encouraging impoverished residents to organize politically and challenge existing power structures. Even President Johnson hated community action because, in his mind, CAAs employed "gangsters" in Chicago. [38]As historians have shown, national OEO officials retreated from the "maximum feasible participation" component with the passage of the Green Amendment in October 1967. The amendment gave mayors, city councils, or county commissioners the ability to dominate community action agencies. Local governments had until July 1, 1968, to decide the sponsorship of CAAs, and could choose either the existing community action agency or a government entity as the official sponsor of local War on Poverty efforts.[39]

Dallas County officials agreed to keep the DCCAC as the designated agency but decreased the number of board members, scaling down its size from 150 to 51 members, a move that the Green amendment gave them the authority to do.[40] The board now consisted of

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[37] "Maley Quits War on Poverty Unit," *DMN*, June 21, 1968.
[38] Allen J. Matusow, *The Unraveling of America: A History of Liberalism in the 1960s* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009 [1984], 269; Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime*, 52-53; "Gangsters" quote from McKee, "'The Government Is With Us,'" 55.
[39] For more on how the Green amendment to the EOA affected local War on Poverty agencies, see Wesley Phelps, *A People's War on Poverty: Urban Politics and Grassroots Activists in Houston* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2014), 149;
[40] Tyson quote from "Poverty War Getting New Leadership," *DMN*, May 10, 1968; Letter, B. G. Allen to W. L. Sterrett, May 20, 1968, Box 079, Folder 14, Jonsson papers.

seventeen appointed members from the government sector, seventeen appointed from the business/community sector, and seventeen elected members from target poverty areas. The change in board members further increased the power of business professionals and government representatives while diminishing the voices of target area representatives.[41] This in turn would allow the local government and business officials to manage the anti-poverty program however they saw fit and could exercise more local authority over the DCCAC's overall direction.

Though Maley's tenure as executive director of the Dallas County Community Action Committee was fraught with tension, the local War on Poverty succeeded in sustaining the maximum feasible participation ethos despite Maley's tight grip on the anti-poverty programs. Black and brown employees grew tired of Maley's leadership and held him accountable when he failed to incorporate their voices into the planning and execution of various community centers. The passage of the Green amendment, however, eliminated the foundation of community action when it granted local governments the ability to dominate, or even eliminate, local CAAs. Despite these adjustments, black and brown residents maintained their commitment to maximum feasible participation, and did by following the example of Ruth Jefferson and the welfare mothers.

Ruth Jefferson and the Welfare Rights Organization

When Ruth Jefferson organized black and brown mothers into the welfare offices on November 25, 1968, she did so in protest against the two-tiered system of welfare and the state's long history of staunchly anti-welfare policies, both of which reinforced the stereotype that

[41] Government sector members included city councilmembers Sibyl Hamilton and Jack Moser, county commissioners Jim Tyson and Mel Price, Glynne Coker of the Dallas County Welfare Department, and George Looney of the Dallas County Juvenile Department. "Poverty War Reorganized," *DMN*, June 14, 1968.

welfare women were lazy and unwilling to work.[42] To outsiders, Jefferson embodied this stereotype. She became a mother at the age of sixteen in 1956, and had four more children in quick succession by 1960. Her husband Arthur Frederick Jefferson abandoned Ruth and their five children at some point in their relationship, leaving Ruth to care for their children on her own.[43] She moved into the West Dallas housing projects and applied for and received $135 per month in AFDC benefits—the maximum amount allowed to AFDC recipients in the state.[44] But Jefferson was far from the lazy stereotype. She graduated from Booker T. Washington High School and later received shorthand and typing classes from a local business school. Jefferson applied to various secretarial positions in Dallas, but every employer reported that she lacked qualifying experience.[45] Having little income and unable to find steady employment, Jefferson grew wholly dependent on her AFDC aid.

But Jefferson grew determined to overcome her circumstances. By chance, Jefferson first met SNCC organizers at the West Dallas housing projects in 1968.[46] She began a relationship with Donald "Kwesi" Williams and allowed SNCC to use her apartment as a frequent meeting place for the organization. Through SNCC, Jefferson made contact with Marilyn Clark of the Dallas Urban League (DUL) and began using the office, including their mimeograph machine to print flyers, to organize a local chapter of the NWRO. At chapter meetings, black and brown mothers voiced their grievances against the welfare system, comparing war stories about the

[42] Historian Julilly Kohler-Hausman explores this stereotype and its link to the carceral state in her article, "Welfare Crises, Penal Solutions, and the Origins of the 'Welfare Queen,'" *Journal of Urban History* 41:5 (2015) and in her monograph, *Getting Tough: Welfare and Imprisonment in 1970s America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017).
[43] "Rites today for tenant-rights advocate Ruth Jefferson," *DMN*, March 16, 1999.
[44] Marilyn Schwartz, "Negro Mothers Protest At Welfare Offices," *DMN*, November 26, 1968.
[45] "Some Other Reasons for Welfare," *In Sepia*, December 6-12, 1968 located in Box 2.325/Q119, Folder: War on Poverty, Herbert J. Croner Papers, 1963-1984, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, The University of Texas at Austin (hereafter cited Croner papers).
[46] Edward "Tex" Harris, *In the Shadow of Big Tex* (Dallas: Edward Harris and Associates, 2009), 105.

humiliating treatment they received at the downtown welfare office.[47] She also organized picnics, camping trips, and a girls' baseball team so that members' children could engage in activities that were otherwise unavailable because of income restraints. And she often did so on the Urban League's dime. "We were always requisitioning my boss, Felton [Alexander of the Dallas Urban League], to buy stuff…like baseballs," Marilyn Clark recalls. "And he kept saying, 'Now, my board's going to wonder what this is,' and we said, 'Well, put it under furniture.' We had more stuff under furniture coming out of his budget to support those kinds of things."[48]

Through Jefferson's organizing, the Dallas NWRO chapter had successfully established connections with a cross-section of the Dallas community. She not only organized a base of welfare mothers from her predominantly black and brown neighborhood, but she also established ties with the Dallas SNCC chapter. Through SNCC, she connected with white leftist students at SMU in their anti-war campaigns, middle-class black leaders of the Dallas Urban League, and the cross-class organizers of Black Citizens for Justice, Law and Order (BCJLO). It also helped that the Dallas War on Poverty, despite its limitations under Maley's leadership, provided some tangible benefits to Dallas's black and brown communities. In 1966, the DCCAC launched the Dallas Legal Services project, providing legal counsel to the city's poor residents.[49] Through this outlet, the black and brown mothers learned of their rights, and more importantly how the welfare laws in Texas violated federal law. All these connections became critically important amidst the welfare sit-in as well as what happened in its wake.

The catalyst for the three-day welfare sit-in came in September 1968 when the Texas Department of Public Welfare announced an impending cut to welfare payments. Welfare rolls in

[47] Harris, *In the Shadow of Big Tex,* 105; Ernest McMillan, interview by author, July 20, 2017.
[48] Marilyn Clark, Interview by Ava Wilson, 144.
[49] "Grant Provides Legal Services," *DMN*, April 26, 1966.

Texas had climbed dramatically following the June 1968 ruling in *King v. Smith*, an Alabama lawsuit in which the United States Supreme Court overruled state welfare departments' ability to deny aid to legally fatherless children when a "substitute father" lived in the home.[50] The ruling threw the Texas welfare department into disarray. The state had used the substitute father rule to deny aid to thousands of residents. In an effort to remain within the annual budget, the state reduced their total monthly allotment to all AFDC recipients, capping payments at $123 per month. Between September and November 1968, the mothers appealed the cuts to the welfare offices, soliciting Dallas Legal Services to file appeals on more than fifty cases of AFDC benefit reductions.[51] Continually, however, the case workers and the welfare commissioners stated their "hands are tied" and they could do nothing to raise the monthly amount.[52]

By late November, the mothers had grown tired of waiting. On November 25, 1968, Jefferson gathered her multi-racial coalition of welfare mothers, white New Leftists, and sympathetic members of SNCC and filed into the Dallas welfare offices downtown. Jefferson handed welfare officials in the office a list of demands that included $100 per month, per child, an increase of black caseworkers on staff, and the placement of black welfare recipients on the welfare board.[53] Startled by the protest, local and state officials worked in dramatic fashion to undermine the group. Texas Commissioner of Public Welfare, Burton Hackney, ordered the building closed for the day. Dallas City Manager Alex Bickley called the police department and

[50] See Henry Freedman, "Sylvester Smith, Unlikely Heroine: *King v. Smith,*" Marie A. Failinger and Ezra Rosser (eds), *The Poverty Law Canon: Exploring the Major Cases* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2016).
[51] November and December Incidents in Dallas Office: Texas State Department of Public Welfare Concerning Welfare Rights Group, Box 1991/188-2, Folder IV: Welfare Rights Organization, Texas Department of Public Welfare Executive Office central files, Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission (Hereafter cited Texas Department of Public Welfare files).
[52] Quote from Herbert J. Croner, handwritten notes, undated, Box 2.325/Q119, Folder: War on Poverty, Croner Papers.
[53] Affidavit, Burton Hackney, November 26, 1968, State of Texas, Travis County, Box 43, Folder 18, CORE Papers, Wisconsin Historical Society via ProQuest History Vault (hereafter cited CORE Papers).

the Texas Rangers to restore order, but the mothers and their supporters remained unmoved. After refusing to vacate, the Attorney General of Texas, Crawford C. Martin, filed a petition for an injunction and a temporary restraining order against the protesters, claiming that Jefferson, Ernest McMillan of SNCC, and others "have intimidated, harassed, and otherwise interfered with the normal activities." District Judge Dee Brown Walker of Dallas granted the petition for injunction and the temporary restraining order, ordering the group to immediately vacate the premises.[54]

But Jefferson had also armed herself with many supporters from the community. Upon learning of the protest, Bill Stoner of BCJLO, Richard Dockery of the NAACP, Felton Alexander of the DUL, Texas State Representative Rev. Zan W. Holmes, among others joined the mothers in their protest.[55] Ed Polk of Dallas Legal Services agreed to challenge the injunction and restraining order in court. Polk then contacted George Wiley, the national NWRO organizer, who then came to Dallas from Washington, D.C. in support of the protest.[56] In a televised interview, Wiley stated "the National Welfare Rights Organization backs them in every way, on every demand." "They are simply asking for the welfare department to obey the law," Wiley concluded.[57] Jefferson had amassed an army of supporters from varying racial and class backgrounds in support of welfare reform.

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[54] Citation No: 68-10305-H, *State of Texas, for and in Behalf of the State Department of Public Welfare v. Marion Ernest McMillan, et al., in the District Court of Dallas*, November 26, 1968, Box 43, Folder 18, CORE Papers; No. 68-10305-H of the 160th Judicial District, Judge Dee Brown Walker, November 26, 1968, Box 43, Folder 18, CORE Papers; "Welfare Sit-In," *DMN*, November 27, 1968.
[55] "Sleepy Sit-Ins Spend Night in Dallas Welfare Office," *Dallas Times Herald*, November 26, 1968.
[56] November and December Incidents in Dallas Office: Texas State Department of Public Welfare Concerning Welfare Rights Group, Box 1991/188-2, Folder IV: Welfare Rights Organization, Texas Department of Public Welfare Executive Office files.
[57] WBAP-TV, "[News Script: Demonstrators]," November 27, 1968, NBC 5/KXAS News Scripts (AR0787), University of North Texas Special Collections.

After remaining on the premises for nearly sixty hours, Jefferson and her coalition of protestors ended their sit-in demonstration. Jefferson had received word from the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW), the department that oversaw the administration of the AFDC program, that a team of investigators would research their complaints. They packed their belongings and left the office, celebrating Thanksgiving together at Mount Olive Lutheran Church in South Dallas.[58] "We've won a victory here," Jefferson stated. "And it won't be the last one." She promised further confrontations and more victories, and as she did, cries of "Black Power" and applause erupted in the office.[59]

Jefferson's multiracial sit-in led to two big developments. First, the Dallas Welfare Rights Organization and the Chicana Welfare Rights Organization of San Antonio both filed suit against the Texas Department of Public Welfare. Dallas Legal Services and San Antonio Legal Aid combined their lawsuits under Jefferson's name, and fought for reform for all of Texas's AFDC recipients. Dallas courts heard the *Jefferson v. Hackney* lawsuit in late February 1969. Ed Polk of Dallas Legal Services argued that Texas welfare policies violated the Social Security Amendments of 1967, which required state welfare departments to raise welfare payments to account for inflation. He also charged that the state's decision to reduce only AFDC benefits constituted racial discrimination in violation of the Equal Protection clause of the Fourteenth amendment given that the majority of AFDC beneficiaries were women of color. Federal District Judges Sarah T. Hughes and William Taylor ruled that, indeed, Texas had violated the "intent and purpose" of the Social Security amendments by lowering payment levels but remained

[58] "Welfare Protest Attracts HEW," *Dallas Times-Herald*, undated clipping found in Box 2.325/Q119, Folder: War on Poverty, Croner papers; "Negro Welfare Protest Taken to Cotton Bowl, *DMN*, November 29, 1968.
[59] WBAP-TV, "[News Script: Demonstrators]," November 27, 1968, https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc1038077/?q=%22george%20wiley%22 (Accessed April 22, 1968); WBAP-TV, [Welfare Mothers], November 27, 1968 https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc1038179/ (Accessed April 22, 2019). Wilson, "Left in an Unmarked Grave," 76.

unconvinced on the equal protection claim. The judges argued that the state raised its appropriations for AFDC recipients several times between 1943 and 1969, which, in their minds, countered accusations of discriminatory intent. Furthermore, the Texas legislature had submitted a proposed amendment to raise the state's constitutional cap in Social Security benefits to $80 million, of which $11.9 million would go to AFDC recipients.[60] While the ruling in *Jefferson v. Hackney* failed to prove the state's implicit racial discrimination, it did force the state of Texas to adjust its current procedures in compliance with the federal Social Security amendments.

Second, the sit-in demonstrated the effectiveness of Ruth Jefferson as a community organizer. Within a few months, she amassed a coalition of activists who used confrontational methods and the services provided by the War on Poverty to disrupt government offices and change state welfare policies. To city officials, however, Jefferson had engaged in sinister activities by working with the "militants" of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, who had infamously destroyed groceries at their OK Supermarket boycott in July 1968. Not only that, but Jefferson had also furnished the support of many of the respectable middle-class black leaders, including Felton Alexander of the Dallas Urban League and Richard Dockery of the NAACP. What transpired over the following year not only threatened Jefferson as an organizer but also the stability of her cross-race and cross-class coalitions.

Repression and Reprisals

The institutional support behind Jefferson and SNCC nearly came to a screeching halt in 1969. Felton Alexander, the executive director of the Dallas Urban League, resigned eighteen months into his position. Rumors circulated that Board Chairman Tom Shipp despised Alexander's connection with Jefferson and the "militants" of SNCC and forced him to resign.

[60] Failinger, "A Tragedy of Two Americas," 178

Others reported that Alexander left because of "personality clashes" between him and members of the city's power structure.[61] Regardless, Alexander's resignation was a devastating blow to Black Power activists in the Dallas area. SNCC and others found refuge in the office, using the League's resources to organize the black community in Dallas. The departure of Alexander and the placement of Roosevelt Johnson, the executive secretary for the Moorland YMCA, as Alexander's successor signaled that the Dallas Urban League would no longer provide the institutional support the Black Power organizations needed.

Following the welfare sit-in, Ruth Jefferson and members of SNCC were habitually harassed by the Dallas Police Department. Between January and May 1969, police arrested SNCC members a total of thirty-one times. In one incident on January 23, Donald "Kwesi" Williams was pulled over for broken headlight in West Dallas. Police removed Williams from the car and "frisked him" before one officer allegedly stated, "He [Williams] doesn't like honkies." Arresting officers then cuffed him and proceeded to search William's vehicle, where the officers allegedly located marijuana and "obscene literature," which, according to the *Dallas Notes*, the SDS chapter at SMU's underground newspaper, was a copy of the *Black Disciple,* SNCC's newsprint in Dallas."[62] The following month on February 25, police arrested Matthew Johnson, James Wells, Mike Dodd, Ed Harris, and Mickey McGuire for "disturbing the peace" at the H. L. Green lunch counter. According to the *Dallas Notes,* the five members of SNCC sat down for a meal at the department store downtown. A police officer approached SNCC and allegedly demanded the men leave the store or face arrest. When the men refused to vacate, the officer responded by calling for back-up, where a swarm of a dozen police officers arrived at the

[61] *Urban League of Greater Dallas, Inc.,* Vol. 1, No. 2, Box 2.325/Q119, Folder: Urban League, Croner papers; "Meet on Urban League Set," *DMN*, February 2, 1969.
[62] "Another SNCC Bust," February 5, 1969; "Grass Rap: SNCC Can't Find Lawyer," *Dallas Notes*, April 16, 1969.

scene. Police arrested the group and escorted them to jail on "disturbance of the peace" charges.[63]

Dallas's SNCC members were also subjected to police raids on their homes. In the early morning hours of April 27, police knocked on the door of Ernest McMillan's apartment, which he shared with his wife Felicia and fellow SNCC member Ed Harris and his wife Jackie. Felicia hesitantly opened the door with the chain lock still fastened, and upon realizing it was police, she closed the door to remove the lock. Officers kicked open the door so forcefully that it barely remained hung by its hinges. Felicia screamed in panic, and Ernest awoke from his slumber and grabbed his .30 caliber Carbine rifle for protection. From outside, dozens more police officers waited and had surrounded the apartment. According to Harris, one officer used the P.A. system and said, "Either you come out or we're going to kill every nigger in there."[64] Ernest threw his rifle to the ground. Police escorted everyone out of the apartment at gunpoint and refused to let them dress before heading outdoors. Jackie Harris was not even allowed to put on a shirt. She stood next to the others bare-chested, wearing only a pair of underwear with a shotgun to her head.[65]

Police arrested McMillan after they tore through the entire apartment, seizing the rifle McMillan had bought. They also raided Ruth Jefferson's home as well. Police turned the apartment upside down looking for weapons, and even pointed a shotgun at Jefferson's ten-year-old daughter's face for "not moving fast enough." Police never located firearms in Jefferson's apartment. Officers also arrested Matthew Johnson, taking from Johnson's possession a 30.06 Springfield rifle. According to Assistant US District Attorney Andrew Barr, who signed the

[63] "SNCC Bust of the Week," *Dallas Notes*, March 19, 1969.
[64] Ed Harris, Interview by Ava Wilson, 170; Ernest McMillan, interview by Tiffany Smith; "Ernie & Matt Busted for Guns," *Dallas Notes*, May 7, 1969.
[65] Ibid.

arrest warrants for both Johnson and McMillan, both had violated the Gun Control Act of 1968, an extension of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, for possessing firearms as "convicted felons."[66]

While Johnson and McMillan remained in jail for a couple of days, other members of SNCC, including Ed Harris, Felicia McMillan, and Ruth Jefferson refused to keep quiet about the kinds of police harassment they endured. SNCC members held a televised news conference at the Presbyterian Center on Harwood Street where Felicia defended her husband Ernest. "What would any man do?" cried Felicia. "He hears his woman hollering and he sees his door getting kicked in so he armored up…This is exactly what the pigs wanted—for him to grab his gun and start shooting so they could wipe out the whole apartment if they wanted to."[67] Ed Harris read a four-point statement charging local, state, and federal officials of racism in the arrest of McMillan and Johnson. He also called for an immediate halt to the "harassment of black people who are working for political change." In his op-ed for the *Dallas Notes,* Harris revealed that since January 1969, nine SNCC members were facing criminal charges and all but two were indicted on felonies. As a result of these arrests, SNCC members had paid in excess of $100,000 in bond and had trouble securing adequate legal counsel.[68]

In addition, local officials treated welfare recipients with increasing disdain. In March 1969, the Dallas Housing Authority (DHA) announced that rent in the West Dallas Housing Projects would increase by $6 every month for its residents, many of whom were AFDC recipients. Ed Polk of Dallas Legal Services filed a lawsuit against the DHA, charging that the

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[66] "2 SNCC Leaders Arrested in Dallas," *DMN*, April 28, 1969; "Ernie & Matt Busted for Guns," *Dallas Notes*, May 7, 1969.
[67] From Reel to Web - April 28, 1969, WFAA Newsfilm Collection, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GbeFPXftQnQ&list=PL8WZP-NbjEoGvbIYbDnkirRte8nzGtvGY&index=21 (Accessed July 25, 2019).
[68] "2 SNCC Leaders Arrested in Dallas," *DMN*; Ed Harris, "Saga of SNCC Bust," *Dallas Notes*, May 7, 1969.

rent in other housing projects were not affected. The case was eventually dismissed in July and the scheduled took effect in September.[69] But on July 18, the DHA struck again when they filed an eviction notice alleging that the welfare rights' activist owed $453 in rent. They also claimed Jefferson used her apartment as a "recruiting place for militants, as a training ground for juvenile criminals, that she kept women in the apartment for immoral purposes, and that her residency was a threat to other tenants who feared injury from their activities." At her eviction hearing, Jefferson's neighbor Ardell Williams testified that he had witnessed visitors frequently carrying firearms and that Jefferson had "successfully induced teenagers to throw rocks at whites and taunt police." He compared the atmosphere of the housing project to that of Watts, Los Angeles, shortly before the uprising. Williams then circulated a petition in which three hundred other tenants in the housing projects signed, demanding that Jefferson and her family be removed from the complex. Jefferson denied all allegations, stating, "This is just another harassment tactic used by the city of Dallas against me and my friends. The notice [and eviction] was served because I speak up for what I think is right." Her attorneys, Doug Larson and Bill Barbish of Dallas Legal Services, offered to pay the manager of the West Dallas Housing Projects what Jefferson owed to end the eviction but the DHA's attorney Richard Hodges refused to accept it. On August 1, the courts decided to formally evict Jefferson from the West Dallas Housing Projects.[70]

Jefferson's close associations with SNCC and her own adherence to Black Power not only amplified police harassment but also local officials' disdain for the welfare rights organizer. The multiracial coalition Jefferson assembled during her welfare sit-in demonstrated Jefferson's

[69] "Tenant Association Makes Plans," *Dallas Notes*, March 19, 1969; "Housing Rent Hike Contested in Suit," *DMN*, April 12, 1969;
[70] WBAP-TV, [News Script: Mrs. Jefferson], July 18, 1969; WBAP-TV, [News Script: Hey Mrs. Jefferson], August 1, 1969; WBAP-TV, [News Script: Jefferson eviction case], August 1, 1969; "Judge Orders Protester Evicted," *DMN*, August 2, 1969.

ability to engage in civil disobedience as well as use of the legal system to force Texas's welfare system to comply with federal policy. And while the lawsuit against the Texas welfare commissioner Burton Hackney failed to demonstrate explicit racial bias, the suit did force the state to adjust its annual allotment for AFDC recipients moving forward. In doing so, Dallas Legal Services' attorneys earned a reputation amongst the power structure as "a bit overenthusiastic," especially after filing suit against the DHA.[71] Jefferson's eviction, however, represented a public humiliation tactic that attempted to not only destroy her reputation as a welfare organizer but also to reinforce the stereotype that welfare recipients failed to use their tax-funded incomes on necessities like rent.

Building a Coalition through the War on Poverty

Following Maley's resignation from the executive directorship of Dallas's War on Poverty, the Dallas County Community Action Agency had transformed. Renamed Dallas Community Action (DCA), the local War on Poverty program hired OEO official Earnest L. Wallace to succeed Maley. A native of Dallas and former school principal, Wallace succeeded in opening five long-awaited community centers. Still, many Mexican Americans, however, continued to resent what they saw as the War on Poverty's preoccupation with eradicating poverty for African Americans. Indeed, Mexican Americans throughout the state of Texas and the American Southwest complained the OEO neglected them. Such disputes erupted across local community action agencies in the nation, and even prompted activists to walk out from an EEOC meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico, in 1966 and in El Paso, Texas, in 1967.[72] In Dallas, Shirley Achor, an anthropologist from Southern Methodist University studying the West

[71] "DCA Curbs Legal Project," *DMN*, June 6, 1969.
[72] Clayson, *Freedom Is Not Enough*, 88-89.

Dallas barrios, referenced this tension when she remarked, "Black and Chicano competition for power created internal conflict and factionalism within several agencies."[73]

Many disputes erupted over accusations of unfair hiring practices within the DCA itself. In April 1969, Assistant Vice President of the DCA Board L. G. "Brownie" Trevino complained that "a greater percentage of the center workers were Negro rather than Mexican-American."[74] The charges of racial favoritism were nothing new. In 1968, for example, Robert Arredondo, a labor organizer from West Dallas, applied for a position within Neighborhood Organization, but contended that then-executive director Allan Maley refused to hire him because of his race. Arredondo later filed a charge of discrimination against Maley with the EEOC.[75] Maley's successor, Earnest Wallace, likewise, continued to downplay Mexican Americans frustrations, arguing that "educated Mexican Americans" often move away from Dallas to secure employment. "As a result, it is very difficult to find a qualified Mexican American willing to take on a job of this nature."[76] Such allegations and explanations exacerbated a rift between Mexican Americans and African Americans.

Tension between black and brown existed within the War on Poverty offices, but it also permeated other places. The power structure designed discriminatory at-large election systems that often times pit African Americans and Mexican Americans against one another as they vied for limited seats on the school board, boards and commissions, and the city council. Indeed, former candidate for city council Frank Hernández had voiced this grievance when he complained that African Americans had been "promised" a seat on the council when the city voted to expand the number of districts. Those who formed the Community Relations

[73] Shirley Achor, *Mexican Americans in a Dallas Barrio* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1978), 64-65.
[74] "Disputes on Centers Disclosed," *DMN*, April 23, 1969.
[75] *Badillo v. Dallas County Community Action Committee, Inc.,* 394 F. Supp. 694 (N. D. Tex. 1975).
[76] "Disputes on Centers Disclosed," *DMN*, April 23, 1969.

Commission tried to rectify this tension. one of the goals of the commission was to increase communication between conflicting groups in times of strain. Though the commission got off to a slow start after its formal organization in October 1968, by the summer of 1969, they had selected Randy Ratliff, a War on Poverty employee, as the executive director, effective July 1. They established an office location, hired a full-time staff, and began investigating grievances in the Dallas area.[77] And the commission played a fundamental role in facilitating conversation between black and brown residents as tensions escalated.

The disturbance that exacerbated conflicts between black and brown began on June 23, 1969, when police arrested SNCC member John "DoDo" Woods at the public swimming pool near the West Dallas housing projects. Officers at the pool received a complaint that Woods, who had been conversing with two women, molested them by "placing his hands on their legs."[78] Upon receiving the complaint, officers moved in to arrest Woods and allegedly grabbed his arm before placing a billy club under Woods's throat, causing him to fall unconscious. The crowd at the pool retaliated. Some picked up rocks and bottles and began throwing them at the arresting officers as they escorted an unconscious Woods in handcuffs to the police car. Witnesses claimed that police proceeded to beat Woods in the backseat. As the crowd of on-lookers grew larger, Dallas police became worried. Police asked SNCC leader Matthew Johnson, who had arrived on the scene minutes after Woods' arrest, to "use his influence to calm down the angered crowd." Johnson rebuffed the police and stated, "the best way to calm down a crowd would be for the pigs to get out of the black community."[79]

[77] "[Ratliff] To Direct Relations Agency," *DMN*, June 6, 1969;
[78] "Cops Bust, Beat SNCC Member," *Dallas Notes*, July 2, 1969.
[79] Quotes from "Cops Bust, Beat SNCC Member," *Dallas Notes*.

But police refused to adhere to Johnson's advice. Instead, they called for backup. When Sgt. H. H. Horn arrived, he witnessed a crowd as large as fifty to seventy-five people. "Rocks were flying from the crowd, hitting squad cars. Then they began chunking rocks and smashing glass in passing cars," Horn told the *Dallas Morning News.*[80] Shortly thereafter, around seventeen riot-trained tactical patrolmen and a dozen radio patrolmen formed an "anti-riot" formation on Singleton Boulevard, preparing to move into the housing project to clear the crowd. As the police formation formed, howling winds followed by a torrential downpour moved in, and many from the crowd retreated indoors. At the end of the fray, police had arrested nine people, including SNCC members Ed Harris, his wife Jackie, Mike Dodd, Duke Barrett, and Lula Scott, who was seven months pregnant, for "investigation of theft" and "disturbing the peace." Police dropped the charges two days later.[81]

After the swimming pool incident, Dallas newspapers reported that "black militants" targeted Chicano families during the disturbance. An eighteen-month-old child suffered from two broken bones in her face and serious eye damage when she was struck by a glass bottle. Her three-year-old brother also suffered from a cut lip.[82] Disturbed by the news stories, West Dallas activist Frances Rizo, her husband Robert Arredondo, and several other organizers from the Mexican American community, formed Mexican Americans for Progressive Action (MAPA), originally an ad-hoc "citizens committee" designed to address the disturbance. About two dozen people from the West Dallas community, including members of MAPA, met at Jaycee Park to discuss the tension between black and brown residents in the area. "There have been a number of minor run-ins [between African Americans and Mexican Americans] in West Dallas in recent

[80] "Cops Bust, Beat SNCC Member," *Dallas Notes*; "Crowd Stones Polices Cars in West Dallas Disorder," *DMN*, June 24, 1969.
[81] "Cops Bust, Beat SNCC Member," *Dallas Notes*; "Crowd Stones Polices Cars in West Dallas Disorder," *DMN*.
[82] "Crowd Stones Polices Cars in West Dallas Disorder," *DMN*.

weeks," Ross Velasquez stated. "We want to let the police know that we're behind them 100 percent," he continued. "But at the same time, we'd like to see more police in the area, especially at night."[83]

A few days later, the Community Relations Commission met with MAPA to get an "overview" of the problems in West Dallas between black and brown residents. Randy Ratliff and fellow commissioner Sidney Stahl spoke with Robert Arredondo of MAPA and others about the disturbance at the swimming pool. In a statement to the *Dallas Morning News*, Arredondo said that Mexican Americans in West Dallas were "trying to do the right thing but it doesn't take much to make them do the wrong thing. Another incident like this would blow this whole thing wide open." He continued, "If Mexican-Americans retaliate, it probably will be aimed at SNCC, which would be in for the long, hot summer." Fearing future disturbances between black and brown residents, the Community Relations Commission held an open community forum at the Jaycee Park Recreation Center. At the meeting on July 1, 1969, Ratliff's first official day as executive director, members of the Brown Berets, SNCC, the NWRO, MAPA, and others attended and aired their frustrations and grievances to one another. Many complaints dealt with alleged beatings of Mexican American children in schools. "Negro children are beating up on Mexican American kids," said Luis Estrada, vice president of MAPA. "I know it's true because I've seen it." Irene Ramirez, another resident of West Dallas, also stated that her son was hospitalized and later dropped out of school after he was beaten up the previous spring.[84]

Robert Medrano of the Brown Berets and Matthew Johnson of SNCC refused to pit African Americans and Mexican Americans against one another. The two argued that the real

[83] "[Ratliff] To Direct Relations Agency," *DMN*, June 6, 1969; "Arredondo Named to Head Citizens' Group," *DMN*, June 29, 1969; "Mexican Americans Ask for Police Protection," *DMN*, June 25, 1969.
[84] "Relations Group Hears Grievances," *DMN*, July 2, 1969.

problem between black and brown children in the schools, and in the broader community, was poverty and a lack of representative leadership in schools and in the city.[85] Rev. Rudy Sanchez seconded this, and issued a five-point resolution. He asked that Randy Ratliff hire more Mexican Americans to the committee staff, including a Mexican American associate director. He also demanded that the commission investigate the lack of Mexican Americans hired as teachers or administrators in predominantly Mexican schools and that the Community Relations Commission meet alternately in the South and West Dallas areas.[86] Still, Rizo and others wanted to clear the air with SNCC. "We said, 'You want to do something against the police? You go ahead and do it. We might even help you. But you don't hurt our people," Rizo remembered. "So, we came to an understanding that day."[87]

That understanding launched African Americans and Mexican Americans to try to halt their differences and grievances. Both middle- and working-class leaders jumped at the chance to find common ground while simultaneously uplifting their own people. City Councilwoman Anita Martínez wrote to Tom Unis, chairman of the Community Relations Commission days after the meeting at Jaycee Park, reiterating the five-point resolution and suggested that Rene Martínez, a bilingual education activist, "would be an excellent choice" for the associate director position.[88] Ultimately, the Commission acted on some of the resolutions. In August, a little over a month after the community meeting at Jaycee Park, the commission hired both Rene Martínez to serve as an assistant director to the commission.[89]

[85] "Relations Group Hears Grievances," *DMN*, July 2, 1969.
[86] Letter, Anita Martinez to Tom Unis, July 16, 1969, Box 019, Folder 11, Jonsson papers.
[87] Frances Rizo, "Being a Uniter," Interview by author, June 10, 2015, CRBB https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/being-a-uniter (Accessed October 16, 2017).
[88] Letter, Anita Martinez to Tom Unis, July 16, 1969, Box 019, Folder 11, Jonsson papers.
[89] "Assistants Named For Relations Panel," *DMN*, August 30, 1969.

Working-class activists, however, bore the brunt of the legwork in addressing other issues in the city. They saw the actions of Anita Martínez and the Community Relations Commission as token gestures. As a result, organizations like Mexican Americans for Civic Action (MACA) led by University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) student Johnny Colunga and the Brown Berets, particularly Robert and Ricardo Medrano, continued to pressure city leaders for substantive changes.[90] On July 2, 1969, a day after the community meeting at Jaycee Park, MACA activists Colunga and Florentino Esquivel, Ricardo Medrano of the Brown Berets, Rev. David Cardenas, Rene Martínez, and Connie Ramirez, a recent graduate of East Texas State University (now Texas A&M University-Commerce), sat down with Anita Martínez and other city council members, including George Allen, Abe Meyers, and Jesse Price, at El Fenix restaurant.[91] This tri-racial gathering was unprecedented given that El Fenix refused to serve African Americans or Mexican Americans and Anglos together at the restaurant six years earlier.

At the dinner, Connie Ramirez relayed that the Dallas Independent School District (DISD) refused to hire her even though she received her teaching certificate. "They [DISD] just told me I was not qualified to teach here," Ramirez stated. Rene Martínez reiterated Ramirez's complaints, revealing that only seven Mexican American teachers worked in the ten schools which had a majority of Mexican American students. The city councilmembers responded in a variety of ways. Abe Meyers, born in Dallas to Jewish immigrants, criticized Mexican Americans for continuing to speak Spanish in their own communities and insinuated that Mexicanas/os should learn to be Americans and speak English. Councilman Jesse Price, an Anglo, criticized Mexican Americans for their lack of participation in city affairs, only to be

[90] Letter, Mexican Americans for Civic Action to Anita Martinez, May 3, 1969, Box 019, Folder 11, Jonsson papers.
[91] Letter, Anita Martinez to Mexican Americans for Civic Action, May 12, 1969, Box 019, Folder 11, Jonsson papers; "Teaching Position Reported Refused," *DMN*, July 3, 1969.

rebuffed by Rev. Cardenas and Ricardo Medrano, both of whom suggested that the present system in which city council meetings occurred on Monday afternoon, thereby preventing most working Mexicanos/os the opportunities to attend and participate. "All Mexican Americans ask is that we be given the opportunities to prove ourselves," Medrano stated. Black city councilman George Allen admitted he felt an "affinity to Mexican Americans although I didn't always feel this way." He explained that when Allen moved to Dallas in 1936, "me and my kids were corralled to the back of the buses so that Mexican Americans, who were considered white, could sit at the front." Through the years, however, Allen stated that he recognized that African Americans and Mexican Americans "come close to being a majority. We can do a lot together if keep our lines of communication open."[92]

Councilman Allen's statement about Mexican Americans being seen as white—allowing them, in some cases, to sit at the front of the bus at the expense of Allen and his family—reveals the complexities of both Jim Crow and Juan Crow systems. Though legally regarded as white, some Mexicanas/os benefited from anti-black discrimination while simultaneously escaping the confinement of Juan Crow. In Allen's mind, and presumably others, these segregation and discriminatory policies often pitted black and brown against one another. The recent tensions exposed by the swimming pool incident and other issues involving black and brown children in schools were concrete examples of the Jim Crow and Juan Crow systems still at work. But Allen recognized that if African Americans and Mexican Americans resolved their differences and worked together, then the two groups could achieve more.

Allen was not alone in his thinking. The community forum held at Jaycee Park the previous day revealed that black and brown working-class communities also wanted to work

[92] "Teaching Position Reported Refused," *DMN*, July 3, 1969.

through their differences. In an effort to achieve this, they used the War on Poverty to renegotiate their relationship moving forward. Robert Medrano helped facilitate this process when he became director of the long-awaited West Dallas Community Center located at 4116 Gentry in mid-1969. A few months later in November 1969, he played a major role in the hiring of welfare rights activist Ruth Jefferson. Poverty officials selected Jefferson out of eighteen applicants. A select committee of six then voted 4-2 in favor of hiring Jefferson. According to Medrano, the committee selected Jefferson based on her "dynamic personality, leadership qualities, and her past work in various welfare causes."[93] Further, he stressed that Jefferson remained the only applicant who had a working knowledge of West Dallas and a strong desire to solve the community's problems. As part of her position, Jefferson received automobile expenses in addition to a $5,400 yearly salary—well above what she earned on AFDC benefits. "I'm sure there will be criticism of our choice, but we feel that the only people who have the right to judge are those living in the area she will serve," Medrano stated.[94]

Medrano underestimated the amount of criticism he or the War on Poverty would receive. A few days after Jefferson's hiring, Councilman Jesse Price expressed outrage. In his statement to the *Dallas Morning News,* Price questioned Jefferson's leadership skills, using her recent eviction and the fact that three hundred of her immediate neighbors signed a petition to remove her from the West Dallas housing projects as evidence of her poor leadership abilities. He further argued that Jefferson lacked "responsibility" in view of her "recent activities and past associations," alluding to her welfare sit-in the previous November and her close relationship with SNCC. He called for the immediate dismissal of Ruth Jefferson and stated if the War on

[93] WFAA News Film, November 1, 1969 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=St7ULWbnx8o&list=PL8WZP-NbjEoG3sfHopqxLhvFvXFHXKKx3 (Accessed March 3, 2020).
[94] "Welfare Protester Gets Poverty Post," *DMN*, November 4, 1969.

Poverty refused to fire Jefferson, then he would ask the city council to "take some action to express ourselves on the matter."[95] Other city officials disagreed. Several councilmembers, including Mayor Erik Jonsson, concluded that the city council did not have the legal authority to remove Jefferson from her post. In a televised interview, Price asked the citizens of Dallas to send letters in favor of or in opposition to the hiring of Jefferson.[96] He also made public that Jefferson possessed a criminal record. According to published reports, Jefferson was arrested in 1964 for shoplifting, a misdemeanor offense, in California. She received two years' probation. Jefferson allegedly failed to disclose this conviction on her application for the community organizer position. The rules for employment with the local Dallas Community Action stated that "no one may be employed who has been convicted of a felony or crime involving moral turpitude."[97] Jefferson's omission was the technicality that many War on Poverty critics hoped to use in order to fire her.

Councilman Price created a public spectacle when he invited Dallas residents to write to Dallas elected officials. Dozens of letters poured into the chambers of city hall, expressing a mixture of hostility, suspicion, and fear of Jefferson's motives in the War on Poverty. DCA board members and County Commissioners Mel Price and Jim Tyson and county welfare director Glynne Coker, joined Price in denouncing the hiring of Jefferson. In the executive committee meeting held on November 6, Coker moved to dismiss Jefferson immediately. Other board members, mainly from the community and target area sector, refused. Dallas Urban League director Roosevelt Johnson stated that a number of black residents supported Jefferson's hiring. A. Maceo Smith, a longtime civil rights activist, also supported Jefferson, and he

[95] "Price Deplores Appointment of Woman to Poverty Post," *DMN*, November 5, 1969.
[96] "War on Poverty Organizer Is Expected To Be Discussed," *DMN*, November 6, 1969; Mayor Says DCA Hiring None of City's Business," *DMN*, November 7, 1969.
[97] "DCA Panel Supports Organizer," *DMN*, November 11, 1969.

motioned to let the executive personnel committee make the final call. The following day, Earnest L. Wallace and the War on Poverty's personnel committee recommended that the board of directors retain Jefferson on the DCA payroll.[98]

On November 14, the War on Poverty's board of directors met in an open meeting in West Dallas to vote on whether or not to retain Jefferson as an employee. Dozens of Jefferson's supporters—including members of the Brown Berets, SNCC, and other working-class black and brown residents—attended, often times shouting and jeering at white city officials who spoke out in opposition to Jefferson.[99] At the end of the meeting, the board of directors voted 22-14 in favor of continuing Ruth Jefferson.[100] County Commissioner Jim Tyson immediately handed in his resignation to the board of directors. A few days later, county welfare director Glynne Coker also resigned from the board. All had expressed frustration at the handling of the open board of directors meeting, claiming the meeting in which Jefferson supporters demonstrated created an atmosphere of intimidation for white city and county officials. "It was sickening and embarrassing to participate in a board meeting of the DCA in which intimidation and fear were the most obvious aspects of the discussions." Other county representatives complained as well. Commissioners Mel Price and John Whittington indicated they feared violence at the West Dallas meeting.[101]

The response to Jefferson's hiring reveals how much power the Green amendment to the EOA gave local governments over antipoverty initiatives at their convenience. Even though the

[98] "Organizer May Stay," *DMN*, November 7, 1969.
[99] "Commissioner Tyson Quits Antipoverty Post," *DMN,* November 15, 1969.
[100] At the time of the vote, the board of directors only had forty-seven members, as several had resigned earlier in the year and were never replaced. Also, Charles Galvin noted that as chairman, he did not vote and only votes in case of a tie. Charles O. Galvin, "Statement Concerning the DCCAC, Inc.," November 24, 1969, Box 064, Folder 3, Jonsson papers.
[101] "Commissioner Tyson Quits Antipoverty Post," *DMN,* November 15, 1969; "Coker Quits Poverty Board," *DMN*, November 19, 1969.

DCA remained the designated agency, government sector board members could cause a fuss about the handling of the War on Poverty. Until Jefferson's hiring, government sector board members had rarely attended monthly board meetings. Those who complained the loudest about Jefferson's hiring, for example, were the ones who had the poorest record of attendance. County Commissioners Jim Tyson and Mel Price were appointed to the board when it reorganized in June 1968. Price attended only eight of eighteen total board meetings between June 1968 and November 1969 whereas Tyson attended seven.[102] Still, the Green amendment provided the local government with the opportunity to restructure the War on Poverty. U.S. Representative Jim Collins, a Republican representing Dallas who succeeded Representative Joe Pool, wanted to dismantle it entirely and went to Washington D. C. with County Judge Lew Sterrett and Commissioner Mel Price to try to persuade the federal OEO offices to launch an investigation into Jefferson's hiring. While Price and Sterrett disagreed with Collins' pursuit to dismantle the OEO, they did, however, argue that the War on Poverty in Dallas had come under the control of certain people "who undermine the very foundation of our government." Sterrett continued, "I've given many an ex-convict a job in the county but I would never hire anyone who would take over a government office by force."[103]

Jefferson's hiring also reveals how black and brown communities united in support of the welfare and poverty organizer. Black city councilman George Allen, Earnest Wallace, and new Dallas Urban League director Roosevelt Johnson all publicly supported Ruth Jefferson.[104]

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[102] "Board of Directors Attendance Record: Dallas Community Action," Undated, Box 064, Folder 4, Jonsson papers; "Critics Among Least Involved on DCA Board," *DMN*, December 14, 1969.
[103] "Council Invited to Poverty Showdown," *DMN*, December 2, 1969; "Cabell, Collins Split on Poverty War Issue," *DMN*, December 7, 1969. Quote from "Sterrett Renews Criticism of OEO," *DMN*, December 5, 1969.
[104] George Allen and Roosevelt Johnson both expressed their support publicly as reported in "DCA Body to Discuss Mrs. Jefferson's Record," *DMN*, November 8, 1969. Anita Martinez never spoke out in favor of or in opposition to Ruth Jefferson. Attendance records also do not indicate how she voted, though she attended the November board of directors meeting.

Similarly, working-class activists from black and brown communities indicated their overwhelming support. Rene Martinez of the Community Relations Commission said it best when he stated that Jefferson was "elected by the people" and her position "will be to attempt to create cooperation between Negroes and Mexican Americans." He further resented the comments made by county and city officials, who had described the atmosphere of the board of directors meeting as "intimidating." "Their [black and brown residents] voice was threatened by the intervention of city officials and county officials."[105] For Dallas's black and brown poor, the War on Poverty not only facilitated their entry into local politics, but it also brought the two groups closer together.

[105] Martinez quotes from "Sterrett Predicts More Resignations," *DMN*, November 20, 1969.

CHAPTER SIX
FORMING THE 'TRIUMVIRATE ALLIANCE:' THE MULTIRACIAL COALITION AGAINST POLICE BRUTALITY, 1970-1987

In the early morning hours of April 20, 1970, Michael and Kenneth Morehead, two African American brothers from East Dallas, broke into a North Dallas restaurant and began stealing food. Kenneth, the elder of the two, broke the window facing the alley, where eighteen-year-old Michael waited for his brother to retrieve hamburger meat, buns, and cheese. Unbeknownst to the Morehead brothers, breaking the window triggered a silent alarm that alerted police to the burglary in progress. Patrolling nearby, Dallas police officers Darrel Cain and Jeffrey Kirksey confronted the brothers in the alley way. Michael ran to escape. The police officers yelled for Michael to halt, and when the teenager stopped and put his hands up, one of the officers fired his weapon and hit Michael at least once in the back, knocking him to the ground.[1] In a desperate attempt to save his life, Michael climbed to his feet and continued running from the police officers down the alley and into the backyards of nearby residents. The darkness of the night prevented Michael from seeing a low-hanging clothesline as he ran from pursuing officers, and the line caught him around the neck, tripping him and causing him to fall to the ground. Officers Cain and Kirksey quickly caught up to Michael who laid injured from the bullet wound that pierced his back. According to several reports, the officers then unloaded their firearms into Michael's body again as he laid on the ground, pleading for his life. The officers then transported Michael's body to Parkland Hospital, where he was pronounced dead.[2]

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[1] Digital File, WFAA_1970_05_17_18_19, WFAA Newsfilm Collection, Hamon Arts Library, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas.

[2] The *Dallas Express* noted that Morehead was shot three times; Rev. Peter Johnson of SCLC reported to *Dallas Notes* that Morehead was shot at least five times, twice while Morehead laid on his back. Johnson later remembered in an oral history interview that the teenager was shot at least nine times. The *Dallas Morning News*, however, revealed that Officer Cain fired his weapon at least five times and Officer Kirksey discharged eight bullets but stated that Michael Morehead was struck three times, including "once in the left leg, back, and under the chin…" "Youth Killed," *Dallas Express,* May 2, 1970; Peter Johnson, interview by author, September 29, 2017; "Dyson Disputes Youths' Statements," *DMN*, May 27, 1970.

The death of Michael Morehead by a Dallas police officer set in motion a vibrant protest movement to end police brutality. Following the dissolution of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee in 1969, former SNCC members continued their activism under the reigns of the national Black Panther Party. Police infiltration and harassment stymied their efforts early in their organizing, but the death of Morehead in 1970 rejuvenated their pronounced commitment to ending police brutality in the black community. They joined forces with the newly developed Southern Christian Leadership Conference under the direction of Rev. Peter Johnson, whom many labeled an "outside agitator" for his provocative and confrontational style of protest. Together, SCLC and the Panthers forged a cross-class alliance that displayed to outside audiences the depths and support of their organizing efforts, even as their tactics, strategies, and philosophies diverged. The issue of police brutality drove these two groups together.

But African Americans were not alone in the struggle against police violence. Similarly, Mexican American residents in Dallas reported abusive law enforcement practices in which police harassed, assaulted, and terrorized their community. The presence of such policing, particularly following a dramatic police raid in February 1971, inspired the city's largest racial minority populations to build bridges in solidarity. They were joined by white working-class activists who similarly resented discriminatory policing practices as well as the exclusionary political system that disfranchised white working-class residents. Altogether, these groups merged into what Dallas newspapers called a "Triumvirate Alliance," a multiracial coalition with a dynamic presence in the streets and in the chambers of city hall.

The "Triumvirate Alliance" did not limit themselves to street demonstrations and protest. The multiracial coalition similarly inserted themselves into the political system, seeking to

eliminate the at-large voting system that allowed the Citizens Charter Association to dominate municipal politics for decades. While the CCA boasted its commitment to diversity and inclusion, their practices hardly resembled the core principles of representative democracy. Members of the "Triumvirate Alliance" filed suit against the city government in an effort to redraw the electoral maps. In this process, black and brown political inclusion in the body politic centered upon the issue of police brutality. Through their political campaigns, black and brown activists worked to establish a police review board with investigative and subpoena powers throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

The City of Excellence

Following Erik Jonsson's appointment as mayor in 1964, corporate leaders dubbed Dallas the "City of Excellence." Jonsson helped revitalize the city's image following the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. He took the lead role in developing the Greater Dallas-Fort Worth Regional Airport, initiated plans for a new city hall designed by renowned architect I. M. Pei, and launched *Goals for Dallas*, a series of civic programs designed to modernize and promote the city of Dallas as a burgeoning, safe, and well-rounded metropolis. As a result, white leaders boasted not only Jonsson's economic expansion policies but also his ability to mitigate racial strife. His forward-looking vision of Dallas promised an idealistic outcome that would recognize what Dallas had to offer—and not as the "City of Hate." Near the end of his tenure, Jonsson had transformed Dallas's image so much so that *Look* magazine awarded Dallas the "All-America City" title in 1971.[3]

As Mayor Jonsson's third term was coming to an end in early 1971, discussions brewed amongst the CCA about an acceptable successor. After much deliberation, the CCA selected

[3] Darwin Payne, *Big D*, 379.

Avery Mays, the president of his own construction firm. At fifty-nine years old and resident of Oak Cliff, Mays represented the CCA's best chances at securing the mayoral position. Though he had a favorable record of civic involvement, including one term as CCA president, he had never held a publically elected position and was considered quiet and non-assertive.[4] When he entered the race, Mays was already facing challenger Wes Wise, a famous local sportscaster, who had defeated CCA-backed nominee Henry Stuart in the city council election as an independent candidate in 1969. Wise announced early in 1970 his bid for mayor, and his public persona and confidence spilled over into his political campaign. Accustomed to the limelight from his broadcasting career, Wise boasted his commitment to continuing Jonsson's vision as an economic booster, declaring that he would finish construction on both the new city hall and DFW airport and outlined his vision for a new convention center downtown. Mays lacked the same charisma and confidence. He refused to publicly debate Wise, who then capitalized on Mays' hesitations by carrying an empty chair to his numerous speaking engagements.[5]

The 1971 mayoral race proved an exceptional race. Seven candidates filed as contenders for the top political position, including black activist Al Lipscomb. Born in 1925 and a native of Dallas, Lipscomb as a young child understood the humiliation of the rigid racial caste system in the city. "My grandfather would have to get off the sidewalk and doff his hat to anyone who was Anglo," Lipscomb recalled. "[Whites would say], 'Hi Uncle,' talking to my grandfather like that. Oh, that was so hurtful." Upon his graduation from Booker T. Washington High School, Lipscomb joined the Army Air Force during the Second World War, in which he served in Squadron C, the "colored squadron." In 1947, he was honorably discharged and returned home

[4] Payne, *Big D,* 404.
[5] "Wise, Mays Talk on Issues," *DMN*, March 10, 1971; Payne, *Big D*, 406.

to Dallas, where he worked as a waiter in many of the city's finer restaurants.[6] His interest in community activism inspired him to seek employment with the War on Poverty initiative. In 1966, he quit waiting tables and was hired to work for the Dallas County Community Action Committee (DCCAC), where he fostered close relationships with Pancho, Ricardo, and Robert Medrano. Two years later, the Greater Dallas Council of Churches recruited him for Block Partnership, a community organization that matched predominantly black and impoverished neighborhood blocks with church or civic groups from more affluent parts of town. His time there kept him in close quarters with the Dallas chapter of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Dallas Welfare Rights Organization—as Block Partnership and the Dallas Urban League shared the same office space.[7] He joined Black Citizens for Justice, Law and Order (BCJLO) in 1968 after the Dallas City Council passed the anti-riot ordinance, targeting black organizing in the city. The same year, Lipscomb organized the South Dallas Information Center (SDIC) at the home of black activist Elsie Faye Heggins, another employee of Block Partnership and member of BCJLO.[8] The SDIC became an invaluable resource for African Americans who needed information about their political and legal rights dealing with zoning, evictions, domestic violence, and police brutality.

Lipscomb had earned a reputation among elected officials as a fierce and troublesome rabble-rouser. He frequently appeared at city council and school board meetings, where he often condemned the local government's discriminatory policies in education, housing, employment, and policing. Lipscomb recurrently clashed with Mayor Jonsson and the city council, which regularly led to his removal from council chambers by police. Despite his assertive demeanor,

[6] Al Lipscomb: An Oral History Interview, Interview by Bonnie A. Lovell, September 17, 2002, Dallas Public Library.
[7] Lipscomb, interview by Bonnie A, Lovell; Marilyn Clark, Interview by author.
[8] Lipscomb, Interview by Bonnie A. Lovell.

Lipscomb was an affectionate and charismatic leader. Known as "Lip" to the South Dallas community, Lipscomb galvanized widespread support among black residents by taking the lead on various issues. In August 1969, he organized a tenants' rent strike after the Dallas Housing Authority raised rents on West Dallas Housing Projects, in which many of its tenants were AFDC recipients.[9] While an employee of Block Partnership, he worked with Rev. Peter Johnson of the local Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in challenging the proposed Fair Park expansion. After negotiations failed and the city moved forward with demolition in mid-1970, Lipscomb chained himself to one of the houses in dramatic fashion and refused to move as the bulldozer inched closer. "People were driving by, 'Lip!' and giving me the [Black Power fist]," he recalled.[10] Such activism made Lipscomb a viable and popular leader among many in the black community.

Lipscomb's frustration with the limited power of African Americans inspired his mayoral campaign. He announced his intention to run in early January 1971 and became the first African American in the city to ever run for such a position.[11] His campaign slogan, "Accountability," addressed not only the present electoral system but also his own reputation as an activist in the community. He charged that the at-large elected officials in Dallas were not representative of their districts; that city councilmembers often abandoned their promises to their constituency and ignored the needs of the most vulnerable in the city. Lipscomb contended that his commitment to social justice and his record as a community activist provided the city with an alternative to the status quo politics. "[Through] the constant efforts of Al Lipscomb, more changes have come about in the Dallas Police Department than through any elected official on the Dallas City

[9] "Tenants OK Rent Strike," *DMN*, August 10, 1969.
[10] Lipscomb, interview by Bonnie A. Lovell.
[11] "Negro, Latin May Run for Mayor," *DMN*, January 21, 1971.

Council," Lipscomb wrote. He also noted that his time as an employee of Block Partnership and as director of the SDIC allowed him to address other issues, including tenants' rights, employment discrimination, and economic development in South Dallas. "As the director of the South Dallas Information Center, Al Lipscomb works with the people who face every possible problem that poor and minority people have been forced to live with daily," his campaign brochure read. "[The] Dallas City Council needs the presence of Al Lipscomb as a councilman, a duly elected official, at every session."[12]

Lipscomb's activism against discriminatory policing and police brutality was long and robust. After joining BCJLO in 1968, he appeared before the city council nearly a dozen times to complain of officers who mistreated, verbally abused, or assaulted black residents.[13] But he also sought to be part of the solution. In June 1969, Lipscomb and Don Johnson, the director of Block Partnership and chairman of BCJLO, attended the National Institute on Community-Police Relations in Los Angeles, where the two formed a black caucus and presented recommendations to the group of mostly white police officers. Recommendations included community awareness training for all officers, the development of local community advisory committees selected by the community to report to the chief of police, and that police departments hire formally incarcerated persons to act as community liaisons.[14] The day after the black caucus presented their recommendations, the white police officers formed their own caucus, adopted all their

[12] Campaign Brochure, "Accountability: Al Lipscomb for Mayor," Box 2.325/Q119, Croner papers (unprocessed collection).
[13] The author counted eleven appearances in front of the city council between 1968 and 1970 in the city council indices. See City Council Minutes, Dallas Municipal Archives, Dallas, Texas.
[14] Other recommendations included the following: "That, along with law and order, justice be emphasized;" salary increases commensurate with duties and responsibilities; and that "the institute go on record favoring reforms to make the present criminal justice system 'more responsive to the black, brown and poor white people.'" "2 Dallas Men Lead Black Caucus," *DMN*, June 15, 1969.

recommendations, but added an additional clause: "a total rejection of criminality and of criminal violence as a means of social justice or social order."[15]

The unanimous approval of Lipscomb's and Johnson's recommendations suggests that police officers understood that a breakdown between police and communities of color existed. But the addendum to the recommendations reveals the two caucuses disagreed on the root causes for that breakdown. In other words, white policemen still held that black behaviors—not racist policing—served as the catalyst for poor relationships between black and brown residents and the police. Furthermore, Lipscomb's persistent appearances in front of the city council and his determination to expose the root problems with policing practices in Dallas certainly made an impression upon African American residents—so much so that Lipscomb listed his activism against police brutality first on his campaign literature and before his other well-known and touted causes. His activism against police brutality, Lipscomb reasoned, would garner him the widespread support he needed to make his mayoral run more successful.

For the most part, the city election held in April proceeded in an undramatic fashion. The majority of all CCA-backed candidates, including Anita Martínez and George Allen, were elected easily. But the seven candidates who entered the mayoral race split the victory, in which no clear winner emerged. The two with the highest number of votes—Avery Mays and Wes Wise— were forced into a runoff. Wise later defeated Mays by more than 17,000 votes.[16] Lipscomb came in at a distant third with 5,061 votes, and his attempt to dethrone the CCA cost him his job. Shortly after his announcement to run for mayor, the board of Block Partnership voted to suspended Lipscomb from his position for ten weeks, citing Lipscomb's "inefficiencies

[15] "2 Dallas Men Lead Black Caucus," *DMN*, June 15, 1969.
[16] Dallas City Council Minute Book 193, 37; "Runoff for Mays, Wise; CCA Slate Wins Most," *DMN,* April 7, 1971; "Wise Wins Mayor's Contest in a Walk," *DMN*, April 21, 1971; Payne, *Big D,* 406.

in community work" as the basis for his suspension. According to published reports, Lipscomb would be allowed to return to work on April 12, a week after the city election.[17] After the election, however, the board of directors fired Lipscomb. Some in the black community suspected that the board of directors' intended to fire Lipscomb all along, but believed that doing so in February would have created "too much sympathy" for mayoral candidate, causing him to receive more votes in the election.[18]

The 1971 election in which mayoral candidate Wes Wise defeated CCA-backed Avery Mays hardly changed the makeup of representation in Dallas. More than likely, Wise won the race based on his lively personality and his promises to continue Mayor Erik Jonsson's booster vision of the city—not because he represented a strict departure from the old guard of politics. The fact that the majority of all other CCA-backed contenders won in their districts demonstrates that, despite the CCA losing the top political position, the Anglo-majority favored the association's nominees. The election also meant that the CCA appeared to strengthen its commitment to diversity by re-endorsing George Allen and Anita Martínez, ushering them easily into their second terms. Two years later, the civic association further congratulated themselves when they endorsed an unprecedented three persons of color—George Allen, Lucy Patterson, and Pedro "Pete" Aguirre—in the 1973 city elections.[19] The CCA had successfully thwarted off any attempt to seat an African American or Mexican American candidate without their permission, and the 1971 city election was no different.

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[17] "Lipscomb Suspended for 10-Week Period," *DMN*, February 4, 1971.
[18] "Lipscomb's Firing No Surprise," *Dallas Post Tribune*, undated clipping found in Box 2.325/Q121, Croner papers.
[19] Allen served three terms on the city council and later became mayor pro-tem before resigning in September 1975 to accept his appointment as Justice of the Peace. Martinez sought reelection in 1971 and won, but refused to run for a third term. CCA-backed candidate Pedro "Pete" Aguirre, a Dallas architect, was chosen as Martinez's successor. Payne, *Big D,* 412; "CCA Unveils Slate," *DMN*, February 25, 1973. For more on Lucy Patterson, see W. Marvin Dulaney, "We Still Love Lucy: Lucy Patterson, Dallas's First African American Councilwoman," *Legacies,* 25:2 (Fall 2013), 42-51.

The NCCF and the Dallas SCLC

Cross-class coalitions between Black Power advocates and civil rights activists continued in Dallas, despite city leaders' efforts to stymie black militancy in the city. In 1969, LeRoy Haynes, a black college student, reinvigorated the Dallas Black Power Movement. A native of Austin, Haynes had joined the Austin chapter of SNCC in 1967 when he enrolled as a student at Huston-Tillotson University. Due to financial constraints, Haynes left the all-black university in 1968 and moved to Dallas to study at El Centro College, a newly established community college designed to serve and educate students from working-class families. At El Centro, Haynes employed the organizing tactics he had learned from his years belonging to SNCC. He became president of the college's Student Organization for United Liberation (SOUL), the black student union, in 1969 and served as the organization's president for nearly two years. In serving SOUL, he came into contact with the remaining Dallas SNCC members, who had expressed interest in merging together to form a chapter of the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense (BPP).[20]

The Black Panther Party emerged in 1966 in Oakland, California, when Bobby Seale and Huey Newton drafted the Ten Point Program in an effort to "capture the imagination" of Oakland's black community.[21] The aftermath of the Watts uprising, the failure of antipoverty programs to address high black unemployment rates, and increasing police brutality prompted black activists like Seale and Newton to take action. Nonviolent passive resistance popularized by the southern civil rights movement seemed outdated and ineffective, but Stokely Carmichael's ascension to the chairmanship of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

[20] Ava Tiye Kinsey and Judson L. Jeffries, "From Civil Rights to Black Power in Texas: Dallas to Denton and Back to Dallas," Judson L. Jeffries (ed), *The Black Panther Party in a City Near You* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2018), 154-155.
[21] Quote from Donna Jean Murch, *Living for the City: Migration, Education, and the Rise of the Black Panther Party in Oakland, California* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 127.

in 1966 drew new inspiration after his declaration of "Black Power" reverberated across black communities. The Black Panther Party built on black traditions of civil rights activism, armed self-defense, and promoted black community control. Newton and Seale adopted the black panther as a militant symbol for black political power, deriving it from the Lowndes County Freedom Organization, an independent political party founded in 1965 in Alabama by SNCC activists.[22] The imagery of the panther and their iconography against "the pigs" soon captivated the attention of black Americans across the nation.[23] Throughout the late 1960s, the Black Panther Party established chapters throughout the United States, from Chicago to Baltimore and Los Angeles to New York City and numerous cities in between.[24]

In the summer of 1969, Dallas's aspiring BPP members drove to Los Angeles, California, to request a chapter formation from David Hilliard and Masai Hewitt of the Central Committee. Their aspirations were short-lived when Hilliard and Hewitt refused to grant them formal status. Heavy infiltration from police and federal agents prompted this decision. The BPP's brazen Leftist rhetoric, their legal carry of guns on "community patrols" against police, and their success in captivating black women and men all throughout the nation heightened law enforcement scrutiny. As part of the Counterintelligence Program (COINTELPRO), FBI agents investigated every Panther chapter and all 1,200 members in an effort to "obtain evidence of possible violations of federal and local laws."[25] By the late 1960s, infiltrators filled the ranks of the BPP, manipulating tensions within the party and arresting dozens of Black Panthers on conspiracy

[22] For more on the Lowndes County Freedom Organization, see Hasan Kwame Jeffries, *Bloody Lowndes: Civil Rights and Black Power in Alabama's Black Belt* (New York: NYU Press, 2009).
[23] Robyn C. Spencer, *The Revolution Has Come: Black Power, Gender, and the Black Panther Party in Oakland* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016), 22.
[24] For more on Black Panther Party chapters in the US, see Judson L. Jeffries (ed), *Comrades: A Local History of the Black Panther Party* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007); Judson L. Jeffries (ed), *On the Ground: The Black Panther Party in Communities across America* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2010); Judson L. Jeffries (ed.), *The Black Panther Party in a City Near You* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2018).
[25] Quote from Spencer, *The Revolution Has Come*, 88.

charges to incite riots or commit murder. Police departments in cooperation with FBI agents harassed, infiltrated, arrested, falsely accused, and killed Black Panther Party members.[26] As a result, BPP officials kept a tight lid on establishing new chapters.

At the same time, however, the Black Panther had recognized that the broader New Left was turning toward the party for leadership. Disheartened by the acceleration of the War in Vietnam and the continued racism and repression of communities of color, the Black Panther Party emboldened a multiracial coalition that used anti-fascist rhetoric to criticize the United States' imperialist policies. In May 1969, the BPP called for a "Revolutionary Conference for a United Front Against Fascism," or the UFAF, to be held in Oakland in July 1969.[27] When the Dallas contingency arrived in June, a month before the scheduled UFAF conference, Hewitt and Hilliard permitted their development not as a Black Panther Party chapter but as a branch of the National Committee to Combat Fascism (NCCF). Under the supervision of Elmer "Geronimo" Pratt, the deputy minister of defense of the Southern California chapter of the BPP, the Dallas NCCF received instructions to apply again for official Panther Party status later.[28]

The former SNCC members and college students of SOUL returned to Dallas as an official NCCF chapter, choosing Curtis Gaines, a former SNCC member, as deputy chairman and Charlie Paul Henderson as second in command. From an early stage, the group struggled to confront police harassment. FBI officials surveilled the group as early as October 1969 when informants reported that "Curtis Gaines, Eddie Harris and Charles Paul Henderson have recently

[26] Interview with Dr. LeRoy Haynes, 2003: A History of the Development of the BPP in Texas," undated interview, *It's About Time: Black Panther Party Legacy & Alumni* http://www.itsabouttimebpp.com/Our_Stories/Where_Are_They_Now/Dr_Leroy_Haynes.html (Accessed March 24, 2020).
[27] Joshua Bloom and Waldo E. Martin, *Black Against Empire: The History and Politics of the Black Panther Party* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2016), 299-301.
[28] Kinsey and Jeffries, "From Civil Rights to Black Power in Texas," 156.

become active in a group calling themselves the Black Panther Party (BPP) in Dallas."[29] To avoid detection, the party bounced around from location to location, settling in a small house near Fair Park before moving to Curtis Gaines' apartment in Oak Cliff. They also used the offices of Texas State Representative Rev. Zan Holmes, black real estate agent J. B. Jackson, and the basement of Mount Olive Lutheran Church as secret meeting places. They held meetings at night and always kept a watchful eye for police, who often stopped and shined their lights in the windows.[30] Dallas Panthers also avoided police detection of *The Black Panther*, the organization's official newspaper, by selecting "different ports of entry" for delivery. They sold newspapers downtown near H. L. Green's department store and at the Lancaster-Kiest Shopping Center in South Oak Cliff. Police on occasion intercepted the newspapers, and either intentionally damaged them or forced the carrier to throw the copies away.[31]

The frequent police harassment and the group's association with Black Power prevented the Dallas NCCF from successful implementation of its survival programs. While the Panthers had found important networks of support from some middle-class black and white individuals, they had trouble translating their message to the broader black middle-class. They implemented the free breakfast program with Rev. Mark Herbener's permission at Mount Olive Lutheran Church, but the mostly middle-class black congregation disapproved and kicked them out.[32] In addition, police infiltration and harassment played a significant role in mitigating the party's effectiveness in the Dallas area.

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[29] Quote from Dallas SNCC FBI files, October 22, 1969, located in Kinsey and Jeffries, "From Civil Rights to Black Power in Texas," 159.
[30] Skip Shockley, *Mother's Son* (Xlibris Corporation, 2009), Kindle edition.
[31] Shockley, *Mother's Son*, Kindle edition; Kinsey and Jeffries, "From Civil Rights to Black Power in Texas," 158.
[32] Mark Herbener, interview by W. Marvin Dulaney, September 29, 2011, *Documenting the History of the Civil Rights Movement in Dallas County*.

Despite their slow start, the local NCCF chapter found an unlikely ally with Rev. Peter Johnson of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). Johnson, a twenty-four-year-old self-described rebel within SCLC, had come to Dallas in October 1969 to promote *King: A Filmed Record…Montgomery to Memphis*, a documentary made in commemoration of Martin Luther King Jr.'s life after his assassination in April 1968.[33] While promoting the documentary, Johnson met Ruth Jefferson of the War on Poverty and the NCCF's second-in-command Charlie Paul Henderson, who led Johnson on several tours of black neighborhoods in West and South Dallas, where they revealed the dire conditions under which young children and the elderly lived.[34] Johnson also learned about the Fair Park controversy from Al Lipscomb and Elsie Faye Heggins. They took him to meetings, where residents begged Johnson to stay in Dallas permanently to help with their cause. Initially reluctant to stay, Johnson changed his mind when Gideon Johnson, a displaced back homeowner, protested to the civil rights worker. "[Gideon Johnson] told me, 'If Martin Luther King was alive, he would help us,'" revealed Johnson. "He shook his finger in my face. I really wrestled with that."[35]

Johnson stayed in Dallas and committed himself to working for the larger civil rights struggle in Dallas. In early December, Johnson made his intentions known to the public. At a press interview held at Love Field on December 1, 1969, Johnson informed the media he intended to work in Dallas to address the housing situation, police brutality, as well as to sponsor

[33] The Martin Luther King Film Project in conjunction with SCLC planned to distribute the documentary to over a thousand theaters in three hundred cities across the world. Peter Johnson, "Going to Texas," interview by Marvin Dulaney, September 21, 2011, *Documenting the History of the Civil Rights Movement in Dallas County*, CRBB https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/6503/going-to-texas (Accessed September 16, 2019); "Movie to Honor Dr. King," *New York Times*, October 23, 1969.
[34] Rev. Peter Johnson, interview with Ava Wilson, "Left in an Unmarked Grave," 245.
[35] Peter Johnson, "Deciding to Stay in Dallas," interview by Marvin Dulaney, September 21, 2011, *Documenting the History of the Civil Rights Movement in Dallas County*, CRBB https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/6507/deciding-to-stay-in-dallas (Accessed September 24, 2019).

SCLC's Operation Breadbasket.[36] Founded in 1962 by SCLC, Breadbasket began as a program to desegregate jobs and to fight economic discrimination against African Americans. It later expanded its goals by advocating for open housing laws and desegregated public housing when Rev. Jesse Jackson, who became the national director of the operation in 1967, moved to Chicago to run the city's Breadbasket campaign and associated it with the broader Chicago Freedom Movement.[37] Undoubtedly, Breadbasket's expanded goals influenced Johnson's decision to stay in Dallas. He had spent nearly two months attending meetings with Fair Park homeowners and had toured impoverished black and brown neighborhoods. What he discovered troubled him, and he hoped Operation Breadbasket would help.

Throughout the month of December, Johnson made connections across class and racial lines to put together a united front of activists against the city. Ruth Jefferson, who worked at the West Dallas Community Center, introduced Johnson to the Medrano family, including Pancho, a well-respected and national labor leader. Together, they organized several provocative demonstrations and boycotts, including a pilgrimage march on December 5, 1969, in which members of BCJLO, Block Partnership, and Chicana/o activists working with the United Farm Workers (UFW) filed out of Mount Olive Lutheran Church singing freedom songs and protesting the poor living conditions across South and West Dallas. "We're going to pull the cover off of the 'City of Excellence' and show the poverty, racism, and starvation in the city," Johnson said. The following week, Johnson led "blacks, Mexican Americans, and poor whites" in an effort to end "poverty, racism, and oppression" by boycotting downtown businesses. Johnson warned the city council that Dallas had thirty days to restructure the municipal government or else further

[36] "SCLC Visitor Assumes Role of Observer," *DMN*, December 2, 1969.
[37] For more on Operation Breadbasket, see Enrico Beltramini, "SCLC Operation Breadbasket: From Economic Civil Rights to Black Economic Power," *Fire!!! Expanding the Narrative: Exploring New Aspects of the Civil Rights Movement Fifty Years Later* 2:2 (2013), p. 5-47.

demonstrations would ensue.[38] In his most provocative stunt, Johnson, the Fair Park homeowners, and other civil rights activists threatened to disrupt the Cotton Bowl Parade, held annually on January 1, in protest of the Fair Park expansion plans.[39] Such activism across class and racial lines thrust him into a position in which both black and brown turned to his leadership and support.

The police shooting of Michael Morehead in April 1970 also disturbed the young SCLC worker. He learned of the teenager's death from Rev. Jesse L. Lott, a black funeral home director in South Dallas, who summoned Johnson to Lott's funeral home. "When [Rev. Lott] turned the body over, it made me throw up," Johnson recalled in an oral history interview. "The back of this boy's head was gone." Johnson wanted to conduct his own investigation of the shooting. He called three black physicians to examine Morehead's body; the physicians relayed to Johnson that "whoever shot this child was standing over his body."[40] He brought this evidence to both city and county officials, hoping that the evidence would inspire officials to file charges against Officer Darrell Cain and remove him from the force. He met with Dallas County District Attorney Henry Wade, whom Johnson recalled stating that Wade "can't indict no white policeman for killing a Negro." In a similar meeting with Frank Dyson, the Dallas Chief of Police, Dyson told Johnson that the Dallas Police Department would not fire Cain because the Dallas Police Association, the officers' union, "will have a fit."[41] White officials in Dallas coordinated to protect the police.

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[38] WFAA_1969_12_05, WFAA Newsfilm Archive; "SCLC Leaders Tours Dallas Slum Areas, *DMN,* December 6, 1969; WFAA_12_11, WFAA Newsfilm Archive; "Boycott Looming, SCLC Aide Asserts," *DMN*, December 11, 1969.
[39] Peter Johnson, "Cotton Bowl Parade in 1969," interview by Marvin Dulaney, September 21, 2011, *Documenting the History of the Civil Rights Movement in Dallas County*, CRBB, https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/6510/cotton-bowl-parade-in-1969 (Accessed May 6, 2020).
[40] Peter Johnson, interview by author, September 29, 2017.
[41] Peter Johnson, interview by author, September 29, 2017.

Johnson's months of organizing and research in the Dallas area for Operation Breadbasket provided an opportunity to sound the alarm on the routine abuses of police officers against black residents. In doing so, Johnson attached the issue of police brutality to the broader mission of Operation Breadbasket, arguing that police brutality acted as a larger symptom of poverty and economic disadvantage.[42] In late May, Johnson called a news conference in which the local WFAA station broadcast his speech. He criticized the Dallas Police Department for Morehead's death and the local government for failing to charge Officer Cain in the shooting. He also relayed that an eyewitness was being "harassed and intimidated by the police department right now—that if he testifies based on what he saw, they're going to get him next."[43] Following the press conference, Johnson circulated a petition throughout South Dallas in which he demanded the city of Dallas to address "the most immediate issues" at hand. "Police brutality in the ghetto," he wrote first. "Michael Morehead was shot three times in the back and twice through the head while lying on the ground by police. We indict the police department." The petition further lamented the "atrocities of hunger in the City of Excellence" and the "dual system of real estate," referring to the Fair Park controversy.[44]

Johnson worked throughout the summer of 1970 to activate his campaign for economic justice and to end police violence. He drew upon his established network of black and brown organizations, including the Fair Park Homeowners Association, BCJLO, Block Partnership, the United Farm Workers, the Brown Berets, the NCCF, and the War on Poverty's Ruth Jefferson, to raise awareness. On May 23, Johnson led a two-hour March Against Repression in which

[42] Rev. Jesse Jackson also used Operation Breadbasket organizing to address police brutality in Chicago. For more on this, see Jakobi Williams, *From Bullet to the Ballot: The Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party and Racial Coalition Politics in Chicago* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 82.
[43] Digital File, WFAA_1970_05_17_18_19_tc.wm.mov, WFAA Newsfilm Collection, Hamon Arts Library Archive, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas.
[44] Rev. Peter Johnson, untitled petition, undated, Box 020, Folder 14, Jonsson papers.

Johnson invited Willie Bolden and Rev. T. Y. Rogers from the SCLC headquarters in Atlanta. "The real criminals in this country are not the Black Panthers and not the little people who are shot down by police and the National Guard," Rogers stated to the crowd. "They are the rich folks in Dallas, Texas, who eat too much from those who do not have it!" From Cumberland Faith Presbyterian Church, the demonstrators marched thirty-eight blocks to the steps of City Hall, where Johnson placed a black wreath, donning Michael Morehead's name, on the front steps. Upon their arrival, the marchers found that white City Councilman Jesse Price had laid a tripod wreath of a dozen red roses in front of the building, commemorating the twenty-nine Dallas police officers killed in the line of duty. Unmoved by Price's attempt to upstage the protest, Johnson then led the marchers to the construction site of Dallas's new federal building, leaving behind twelve black wreaths, representing those recently killed by law enforcement at Kent State University, Jackson State University, and Augusta, Georgia.[45]

Despite the display, city officials and the Dallas Police Department continued to downplay accusations. Throughout the month of May, the FBI conducted an investigation into the Morehead shooting, but concluded it after they contended that eyewitnesses had changed their stories upon questioning. They received support and backing from the Greater Dallas Community Relations Commission and the Southwest Regional Office of the NAACP, both of

[45] On May 4, 1970, the Ohio National Guard opened fire against a group of protesting white students at Kent State University, killing four and wounding nine others. A week later on May 11, police in Augusta, Georgia, responded to a group of angry black protestors, who were protesting the death of sixteen-year-old Charles Oatman, by shooting and killing six. Eleven days later on May 15, two black students at Jackson State College in Jackson, Mississippi, were killed after police responded to calls about "rioting" on campus. "SCLC Plans to Protest Slayings," *DMN*, May 19, 1970; "Dallas Marchers Protest Slayings," *DMN*, May 24, 1970; "SCLC Continues to Gather Strength for Summer," undated clipping, *Dallas Post Tribune* located in Box 2.325/Q121, Croner papers. For more on the police shootings in 1970, see Kenneth J. Heineman, *Campus Wars: The Peace Movement at American State Universities in the Vietnam Era* (New York: NYU Press, 1994); Stephen G. N. Tuck, *Beyond Atlanta: The Struggle for Racial Equality in Georgia, 1940-1980* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2003); Nancy K. Bristowe, *Steeped in the Blood of Racism: Black Power, Law and Order, and the 1970 Shootings at Jackson State College* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020).

whom resolved that "a thorough review of files, photos, diagrams, medical reports indicated justifiable homicide under the law."[46] Police officials also accused Johnson of exploiting Morehead's death, stating the civil rights group had distorted the facts and turned the shooting into "a kind of celebrated cause."[47] Unbeknownst to city officials, however, the issue of police brutality became one of the major foundations upon which Black Power and civil rights activists united and sought to organize together.

Though the NCCF found it difficult to organize survival programs in the Dallas area, the death of Michael Morehead angered members of the organization. They attended the SCLC march in protest of Morehead's death, in which their attire—all donning black leather jackets, dark sunglasses, and black berets—caught the attention of several black protestors in the crowd, and especially when Curtis Gaines lambasted the "pigs" in one of his lengthy speeches to the crowd. According to James "Skip" Shockley, a twenty-two-year-old black resident from South Dallas, Gaines shouted, "We are not taking this abuse and murder by the hands of pigs anymore. The next body they'd be carrying out here is a dead pig because the people are tired of the murder of black people by the hands of police." The Panthers then passed out flyers for political education classes that sought "to educate to liberate and learn how to take back one's community from the racist police and from the oppressive system of this government."[48] These words inspired more black women and men, including Shockley, to join the NCCF to become Panthers.

The march protesting Michael Morehead's death led to a cross-class coalition with the Black Power group and the nonviolent SCLC. In August 1970, members of each organization

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[46] Quote from Richard Dockery, Southwest Regional Director of the NAACP, Monthly Report, May 15-June 15, 1970, Region VI Southwest Field Staff Files: Richard Dockery Reports, 1970, Papers of the NAACP, Part 29: Branch Department, Series A: Field Staff Files, 1965-1972; "Commission Says Officer Acted in Line of Duty," *DMN*, May 28, 1970.
[47] Digital File, WFAA_1970_05_25_26_tc_wm.mov, WFAA Newsfilm Collection.
[48] Quotes from Shockley, *Mother's Son*, Kindle edition.

participated in boycotts against Safeway, a Southwestern chain of grocery stores, as part of Operation Breadbasket. NCCF members participated in mandatory nonviolent training sessions, even though several members disagreed with the principles of nonviolent direct action.[49] But rather than antagonize Johnson and the broader SCLC movement, NCCF members joined them and worked together. Their activism against police brutality drove these two groups of differing ideologies to cooperate.

SCLC and the Panthers continued to collaborate even after a cleavage developed among the local NCCF chapter. LeRoy Haynes and Skip Shockley distrusted Curtis Gaines' leadership as Gaines seemed uninterested in the goals of national Black Panther Party. Instead, they revealed other NCCF members waited on Gaines "like a king" and that Gaines would make verbal threats to police and authorities, exposing the rank and file to harassment and arrest.[50] The rift widened when Gaines was arrested for assault to murder in mid-November 1970 after Gaines allegedly fired a barrage of shotgun blasts into the apartment of Johnny Harrington, one of Gaines's neighbors, at his Oak Cliff apartment complex. Gaines was held on $2,500 but later released, and authorities dropped the charges against him. Shortly thereafter, rumors began circulating within the Dallas Panthers that Gaines had become an FBI informant.[51]

The organization completely fell apart after the December 1970 arrest of Elmer "Geronimo" Pratt, the national BPP's deputy minister of defense and leader of the Los Angeles Panther chapter, in a sting operation in Dallas. As historians Joshua Bloom and Waldo E. Martin have shown, Pratt went underground in August 1970 after skipping an appearance in the Los

[49] Shockley, *Mother's Son*, Kindle edition.
[50] Shockley, *Mother's Son,* Kindle edition; Kinsey and Jeffries, "From Civil Rights to Black Power in Texas," 160-161.
[51] "Witness to Panther Attack Disappears," *DMN*, November 14, 1970; "Judge Agrees to Cut Black Panther Bond," *DMN*, December 3, 1970.

Angeles Superior Court for charges of possession of a bomb, leading the court to issue an arrest warrant.[52] Pratt and fellow Panther Melvin "Cotton" Smith met up in Marshall, Texas, a small town 150 miles east of Dallas, where the two allegedly received orders to hide at the NCCF safe house in Dallas. On December 8, 1970, police raided the safe house in Oak Cliff and arrested Pratt on federal unlawful flight to avoid prosecution warrants.[53] Pratt's arrest led others to suspect Gaines had played a role. Hours leading up to Pratt's arrest, Gaines had approached Skip Shockley and Norris Bates, who were selling Panther newspapers downtown, and instructed them to go to the one of the Panther's safe houses and spend the night. The two followed Gaines's orders. When they arrived at the apartment, they saw "a large cache of weapons…AK-47s, M16s, pump shotguns, .30-06s, and other weapons…just lined up along the wall out in the open." They stayed in the apartment all night but "didn't dare go to sleep…because we knew there was some weird stuff going on." Fortunately for Shockley and Bates, police never stormed into their safe house. The following morning, the two learned that Pratt had been arrested. "Curtis never explained to us why he wanted us to spend the night at that apartment," Shockley revealed. "But you can't tell me that the two incidents weren't connected."[54]

The arrest of Geronimo Pratt increased tension not only between Dallas NCCF members but also with the national Black Panther Party. After Pratt's arrest, Huey Newton purged the entire Dallas NCCF chapter in February 1971, accusing Curtis Gaines of using the breakfast program money for "liquor, entertainment and narcotics" and of being a "pig agent."[55] Those

[52] Bloom and Martin, *Black Against Empire*, 356-357.
[53] Police also arrested other Panther Party members, including Will Stafford, Wilfred "Crutch" Holiday, George Lloyd, and Roland Freeman. Jack Olsen, *Last Man Standing: The Tragedy and Triumph of Geronimo Pratt* (New York: Anchor Books, 2001), 71-72. See also Kinsey and Jeffries, "From Civil Rights to Black Power in Texas," 161.
[54] Quotes from James "Skip" Shockley, phone interview by Judson L. Jeffries, June 16, 2015, located in Kinsey and Jeffries, "From Civil Rights to Black Power in Texas," 162, *fn*145.
[55] "Dallas NCCF Disbanded," *Black Panther*, February 20, 1971.

who distrusted Gaines continued to organize under the Black Panther Party ethos, forming the Black Intercommunal Party, which focused on organizing black students at colleges and universities across the state. They moved their headquarters to Denton, Texas, after Haynes began attending North Texas State University (now the University of North Texas), and operated out of the Dreamland Apartments in Southeast Denton, a predominantly black neighborhood.[56] Those loyal to Gaines, however, remained in Dallas, where they rebuffed the national party's accusations against him. In a press conference in the mayoral candidate Al Lipscomb's campaign headquarters, Gaines along with Lipscomb, Rev. Peter Johnson of SCLC, and Fahim Minkah, head of the newly formed Angela Y. Davis Liberation Committee, formed a united front and vowed to support Gaines despite the accusations.[57]

The accusations also did little to stop committee members from organizing. Gaines joined Lipscomb to form Grassroots, Inc., a social services organization dedicated to providing a free breakfast and clothing programs for kids and a bail bonds service. They later published a newsletter called *The Grassroots News*, a counter to the *Dallas Morning News* and the *Dallas Times Herald,* in which they wrote editorials exposing the "contradictions in a pig controlled society."[58] They also expanded their operational base when, in December 1971, a white civil rights worker Mary Jo Vines sold the group her home for $10 in the affluent Highland Park. She also gave them shares of her stock in the State Fair of Texas, which, according to Lipscomb would give the organization some say on the fair's board of directors who "make decisions that affect many black and poor people in the community neighboring the Fair Park grounds."[59]

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[56] Kinsey and Jeffries, "From Civil Rights to Black Power," 166-167.
[57] "Gaines Says Charges Prompted by Jealousy," *DMN*, March 7, 1971.
[58] *The Grassroots News*, Volume 1, 1st Edition, October 1, 1971, located in Box 2015-229/2, Paul Ragsdale Collection, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, Austin, Texas (hereafter cited Ragsdale collection);
[59] WBAP-TV, "[News Script: Crazy Lady]," December 15, 1971 https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc1421135/m1/1/ (Accessed May 11, 2020).

While Lipscomb and others worked closely with Gaines, Minkah refused. The former SNCC member, who was held responsible for the bank robbery in Ladonia, Texas, in 1968, was released from Leavenworth penitentiary in October 1970. Federal Judge William Wayne Justice of East Texas issued a writ of habeas corpus, declaring the FBI's arrest and search warrants of Minkah invalid.[60] Released on bond, Minkah returned to Dallas and continued his community activism. He distrusted the local NCCF chapter under the leadership of Curtis Gaines. "I respected Curtis as a family man, but as a community organizer, no," Minkah remembered. "Turned out for good reasons," he stated, alluding that Gaines was a police informant.[61] Instead, Minkah took a job as the assistant director of the Harwood Presbyterian Community Center in South Dallas, where the center's director and Colored PTA president Kathlyn Gilliam allowed Minkah to use the space to organize the black community. There, he founded the Angela Y. Davis Liberation Committee, which later changed to the Angela Y. Davis Liberation Party (AYDLP).[62] Minkah's founding of the AYDLP in Dallas was part of international movement to free Angela Davis, a black scholar and a member of the Black Panther Party, for her arrest in connection to an August 1970 revolt led by black prisoners in a Marin County Courthouse in California.[63] Primarily an organization advocating the immediate release of political prisoners, the Dallas AYDLP adhered to the Black Panther Party philosophy. Minkah adopted all ten of the Party's Ten-Point Platform, using it as the basis for his political agenda.[64] At the Harwood

[60] Flyer, "Free Fred Bell," Box 2.325/Q118, Croner papers.
[61] Fahim Minkah, "Undercover Agents in BPP," Interview by author, August 26, 2017, CRBB https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/7417/undercover-agents-in-bpp (Accessed April 9, 2020).
[62] Fahim Minkah, "Angela Davis Liberation Party," Interview by author, August 26, 2017, CRBB https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/7145/angela-davis-liberation-party (April 9, 2020).
[63] Not much literature exists on the movement to free Angela Davis. For a personal and historical account of the movement, see Bettina Aptheker, *The Morning Breaks: The Trial of Angela Davis* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975).
[64] Fred Bell, "About the Angela Y. Davis Liberation Committee of Dallas," Box 2.325/Q118, Folder: Black Militants, Croner papers.

Presbyterian Community Center, Minkah and the Party organized a food pantry for poor black residents, a tenants' association to address slumlords, and a "stop-and-watch" program, a variation of the Kaka Tayari that he and Charles Beasley organized when working with SNCC.[65]

The alliance between SCLC, a black political candidate, and two Black Power activists was an affront to the policing practices in Dallas. Police harassment had stymied the effectiveness of the NCCF's programs and the threat of police infiltration made activists suspicious of one another. But the shooting death of Michael Morehead not only lit a fire in Dallas's NCCF chapter, but it also provided them with an unlikely ally in Rev. Peter Johnson of SCLC. Johnson had stayed in Dallas to launch Operation Breadbasket and to investigate claims of police brutality. When Morehead was killed and neither the district attorney or the chief of police seemed to bat an eye, Johnson expanded his vision of the Breadbasket campaign, casting a wide net in an effort to appeal to as many different groups as possible. Police harassment drove Black Power activists apart, but it also drew others together.

Policing Black and Brown

Discrimination in law enforcement was evident for both African Americans and Mexican Americans in Dallas and across the state of Texas. Complaints ranged from police indifference— in that officers failed to arrest drug users, thieves, vandals, and domestic abusers— to outright hostility. According to the Texas Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights in 1970, both African Americans and Mexican Americans in Texas reported that police officers often verbally abused them or used excessive use of force when making arrests. Others reported that officers harassed residents, employing "stop and frisk" tactics in the streets.[66] And

[65] Minkah, "Angela Davis Liberation Party."
[66] United State Commission on Civil Rights, Texas State Advisory Committee, *Civil Rights in Texas: A Report*, 1970.

many complained that Mexican Americans and African Americans were underrepresented in the police ranks. In 1971, for example, the Dallas Police Department employed twenty-three Mexican American officers—only 1.3 percent of the entire 1,788 officers on the police force—and thirty-five African Americans, accounting for about 2 percent of total officers.[67]

Police violence against black and brown residents was not a new issue. Over the decades, African Americans and Mexican Americans reported a plethora of beatings, shootings, sexual assaults, unlawful entries, and random disappearances of loved ones.[68] As both the black and brown freedom struggle unfolded and intersected in brief instances of organizing in the labor movement and the War on Poverty, the issue of police violence united black and brown activists together, prompting them to form broad-scale coalitions in their shared struggle for police accountability.

The catalyst for the multiracial coalition was the death of three sheriff's deputies in early 1971. Late in the evening of February 15, five sheriff's deputies were investigating a potential home invasion in West Dallas at the home of two Mexican American residents on Ingersoll Avenue. Amidst the investigation, the two residents managed to disarm and kidnap the deputy officers and drove them to the river bottom of the Trinity River. Once there, the men shot and killed three deputies when they tried to escape. Deputy A. D. McCurley managed to flee, and identified the perpetrators as René Guzmán and Leonardo López, two well-known offenders who often supplied their drug habit by stealing.[69] Within hours of the shooting, the Dallas County

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[67] Annual Police Report, 1971, Dallas Police Department, Box 3, Folder 2, Dallas Police Department Historical Reports, Records, and Newsletters, 1930-Current, Dallas Municipal Archives, Dallas, Texas.
[68] Dallas's two black-owned newspapers, *Dallas Express* and *Dallas Post Tribune,* reported numerous instances of police brutality throughout the decades of the twentieth century. Similarly, *El Sol de Texas*, the only Spanish language newspaper in Dallas, reported police violence.
[69] "Santos Rodriguez Case, Part One," from Frances Rizo, oral history interview with Katherine Bynum, June 10, 2015, CRBB, https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/santos-rodriguez-case-part-one (Accessed July 25, 2017); Hernández, "Justicia for Santos," 69-70.

Sheriff and the Dallas Police Department launched an expansive manhunt for the two suspects. In the process, police terrorized members of the Mexican American community, arbitrarily pulling over motorists for *looking* Mexican. "I saw where, justifiably or not, we were screened," former Dallas LULAC president Richard Menchaca recalled.[70] "Every tip they got, they wouldn't go and knock on the door, they'd go kick doors in," Frances Rizo of MAPA recalled. "They would pull shot guns in front of kids' faces and elderly people. They would knock over furniture like they were looking for drugs."[71]

A few days after the murders, the police department received a tip on the whereabouts of Guzmán and López, whom investigators presumed were hiding in an East Dallas apartment complex. Early in the morning of February 18, 1971, plain-clothed police officers stormed into the apartment of Tomás and Berta Rodríguez (unrelated to Santos Rodríguez), a married couple with eight children. Fearing a burglary, a startled Tomás grabbed his revolver and shot toward the intruders. The police returned fire, wounding Tomás in the chest and a pregnant Berta in the leg. After an extensive search of the Rodríguez home, the officers realized they mistakenly kicked down the wrong door. About thirty minutes after the police raid, officers located the two fugitives in the apartment next door to the Rodríguez's. Guzmán admitted to the killings and informed officers that he and López stayed in Dallas to be close to their heroin supplier.[72] Meanwhile, Dallas police transported Tomás and Berta to Parkland hospital, held the couple under arrest, and eventually charged Tomás with attempted murder. Law enforcement denied any wrongdoing even after Guzmán confessed to the killings. As a way to cover their mistake, law

[70] "Suspects Arrested in Trinity Slayings," *Dallas Morning News*, February 16, 1971; "Racial Profiling," from Richard Menchaca, oral history interview with Moíses Acuña-Gurrola, June 13, 2016, CRBB, https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/racial-profiling-in-dallas (Accessed April 10, 2018).
[71] "Santos Rodriguez Case, Part One," from Rizo interview, CRBB.
[72] "Authorities Nab Guzman: Apartment Search Also Nets 2nd Man," *DMN*, February 18, 1971; "Confesiones," *El Sol de Texas*, February 26, 1971.

enforcement officials crafted a far-fetched story that supposedly linked the Rodríguez family to Guzmán and López, stating that Tomás was their drug supplier.[73]

The police harassment of Mexicanas/os and the assault on the Rodríguezes outraged Mexican Americans across the city. To compound matters, the *United Press International* (UPI) reported that a sheriff's deputy shortly after the deputies' kidnapping stated that "the whole damned neighborhood [of West Dallas]" knew of the abduction and alleged that a resident of West Dallas "even went to a grocery store and told a customer they had five federal agents in there and were going to kill them."[74] Residents of the Ledbetter neighborhood of West Dallas resented that statement. They contacted the Dallas news media to release a unified declaration, asserting "it is absolutely preposterous to accuse an entire neighborhood of having had a hand in the matter." They continued: "We in no way condone senseless violence and brutality. But we also must say that if such news items continue to be distorted like this, the Chicano community will continue to be stigmatized by much of the Anglo-oriented society. This is not good for the Mexican American nor for the society as a whole."[75] Following the press release, city councilmember Anita Martínez downplayed the accusation, referring to it as "an unfortunate remark" and clarified that Sheriff Clarence Jones commented that "without the cooperation of the Mexican American community, the arrest [of Guzmán and López] might not have been made."[76] Still, the damage was done. Not only did Mexican Americans have to fend off police harassment and accusations, but they also had to refute the press coverage that failed to vet the credibility of the officer's statement.

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[73] "Rodriguez Named as Supplier: Defendant Says Shooting; Sold Heroin to Suspects," *DMN*, February 24, 1971; The District Attorney eventually dropped the charges against Tomás due to lack of evidence. Hernandez, "Justicia for Santos," 72

[74] "Mrs. Martinez Raps Deputy's Remarks," *DMN*, February 23, 1971.

[75] Press Release, Undated, Box 26, Folder 5, Martinez collection.

[76] Press Release, Councilwoman Anita Martinez, February 22, 1971, Box 26, Folder 5, Martinez collection.

Drawing upon their own past and present experiences with law enforcement, African Americans were similarly incensed. Mayoral candidate Al Lipscomb approached the city council and alleged that Dallas police officers had continually engaged in harassing behavior of his campaign staff. In one incident, he reported that a policeman stopped one of his workers and placed her under arrest before letting her go after a black reporter arrived and began taking pictures. "Police harassment and intimidation are merely a tactic to control the people," Lipscomb stated. "The people in the community resent these tactics by police."[77] Fahim Minkah of the Angela Y. Davis Liberation Party approached the city council as an unregistered speaker and told the councilmembers the deaths of the sheriff's deputies were "poetic justice." Minkah continued, "It was the same river bottom where traditionally police took blacks, Mexicans, and poor whites and beat them up," he remembered saying. "Often times they didn't even arrest us, just beat [us] up and let us go. Or sometimes beat us up and then take us to jail." He then stated that the "blacks, brown, and poor whites would work together to resolve this issue of police abuse of citizens."[78]

That declaration led to the creation of a multiracial coalition against police brutality. On March 6, nearly one hundred Mexican American and African American residents gathered at Kennedy Memorial Plaza to protest the shooting and the criminal charges against Tomás and Berta Rodríguez. Following the impromptu gathering, the Medranos planned a larger candlelight vigil the next weekend at the same location, where Pancho reached out to mayoral candidate Al Lipscomb and Fahim Minkah as well as other sympathetic supporters to attend. Pancho spoke to

[77] Quotes from Albert Lipscomb, Untitled speech, February 22, 1971, Box 023, Folder 16, Jonsson papers; "Black Party Leader Defies Mayor, Finishes Speech," *DMN*, February 23, 1971.
[78] "Poetic Justice," from Fahim Minkah, oral history interview with Katherine Bynum, August 26, 2017, CRBB, https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/poetic-justice (Accessed January 16, 2018); "Black Party Leader Defies Mayor, Finishes Speech," *Dallas Morning News*, February 23, 1971.

the crowd of nearly 150 on "how we are suffering from bad government in Dallas" and offered his support to Lipscomb in his campaign.[79] In addition to black and brown protesters, a group of white working-class activists, including Charlie Young of the Bois d'Arc Patriots, also attended. A native of Grapevine, Texas, Young had moved to Dallas in 1970 after finishing up his degree at UCLA in political science. He had accepted a job offer from Channel 13 to work on a new show called Newsroom, a local program reporting on the social and political culture of Dallas. Working for the station exposed him to racial injustice in the city. In one example, Al Lipscomb reached out to Channel 13 to film a story about an arson attempt on the South Dallas branch of Dallas Legal Services. Young showed up to cover the story and filmed eye witness accounts from a nearby security guard and a neighbor who both witnessed a white man pulling back boards from the side of the building, lighting paper on fire, and shoving them under the wall. But the fire department and police declared the fire was the result of an electrical shortage. When Young presented the story to his bosses back at Channel 13, the station manager refused to run the piece, arguing that the story lacked accuracy. A frustrated Young quit as a result.[80]

At the time, Young was living in an old four-plex in East Dallas, a white working-class community. Young noticed the dwelling was infested with roaches and rodents. When he and other tenants approached the landlady to complain, she refused to spray pesticide on the roach infested property. In protest, Young took his .22 birdshot pistol and started shooting the roaches and rodents and sweeping their remains into the communal hallway. The landlady and other tenants didn't find the protest amusing, and he was forced to vacate. Still, he noticed that in every place he lived as a tenant, each dwelling had issues with pest infestation. As a way to make

[79] "Latins, Blacks Hold Vigil for Rodriguez," *DMN*, March 7, 1971; Pedro Vasquez, "Raza Rallies against Repression," *Papel Chicano,* n.d. [March-April, 1971],8 located in Krochmal, "Chicano Labor Politics," *fn*32.
[80] Charlie Young, oral history interview by author.

money, he began offering low-cost pest control services and his conversations with other frustrated tenants led him to organize the Bois d'Arc Patriots, a tenant's rights organization, in early 1971.[81]

Young decided to attend the Rodríguez rally because of his own dissatisfaction with city politics and the Dallas Police Department. About a month before the Rodríguez raid, Dallas police officer J. W. King shot and killed Jerry Ray Taylor, a twenty-two-year-old white man from East Dallas. The *Dallas Morning News* reported that Taylor had offered a hitch-hiker a ride and that King suspected Taylor had robbed the man. Upon pulling the car over, King ordered the Taylor out of his car. Not wearing a coat, the young man obeyed and placed his hands in his jean pockets to keep warm. King ordered Taylor to remove his hands from his pockets before firing three shots at Taylor. Dallas police later claimed that Taylor was reaching for a knife in his pocket, prompting King to fire his weapon.[82] The Patriots led their own investigation into Taylor's death after the grand jury no-billed the officer for wrongdoing in the case. Young interviewed the hitch-hiker, who stated the knife that police located in Taylor's pocket was actually an old and rusty two-and-a-half-inch Swiss army knife.[83] Upon hearing the hitch-hiker's testimony, Young and others organized to demand justice from the Dallas Police Department and for the city council to hold the officer accountable in Taylor's death.

In the midst of his campaign for justice, Young decided to attend the rally in support of the Rodríguez family. There, he met Pancho Medrano and told him of Taylor's untimely death. As a result, Pancho invited Young to speak on the police abuse of poor whites to the crowd of

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[81] Pronounced "bo-dark." Charlie Young, phone interview by author, September 9, 2017; Susanne Starling, "Stopping the Bulldozers: The East Dallas Community Design Committee and Urban Renaissance in the 1970s," *Legacies: A History Journal for Dallas and North Central Texas* 25:1 (Spring 2013), 42; "Bois d'Arc Patriots, Part One," from John Fullinwider, oral history interview with Katherine Bynum, July 7, 2017, CRBB https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/activism-part-one (Access October 20, 2017).
[82] "Man Killed By Policeman," *DMN*, January 18, 1971.
[83] "Taylor Killed By Police 1 Year Ago—Justice Pending," undated, Charlie Young personal collection.

black and brown protesters. "From there," Young began, "people just started meeting each other."[84] A week after the vigil, African Americans, Mexican Americans, and white working-class activists developed a long-lasting relationship in which they supported each other in their organizing. A week after the vigil, the black, brown, and white activists infiltrated the annual Shriners parade, marching down the blockaded streets with a police escort. When the marchers reached city hall, Pancho Medrano addressed the multiracial crowd of protesters, leading *El Sol de Texas* to declare, "What countless injustices have not achieved, the Rodríguez case accomplished—it united Mexican Americans, Anglos, and Negroes."[85] The public display of unity that *El Sol de Texas* recognized was actually a coalition years in the making. The Medrano family, for instance, had developed relationships with African American activists throughout their organizing in Dallas via the labor movement and the War on Poverty. While they often staged public protests together, particularly with Rev. Peter Johnson of SCLC, the coalition appeared to lack the same dynamic until the aftermath of the Rodríguez raid.

Black, brown, and white protesters had marched in the streets and demanded accountability from the police department and the broader city government. Not long after, however, a crucial member of the coalition was sidelined with reprisals. Fahim Minkah lost his job as the assistant director of the Harwood Street Community Center after the Presbytery of Northeast Texas voted to close the center. During his time there, Minkah organized a free food program, a rental tenants' union, and a cooperatively owned clothing factory. The chairman of the board, who initiated the center's closure, deemed the center "had not fulfilled the purpose for

[84] Charlie Young, phone interview by author, September 9, 2017; "Man Killed by Police," *Dallas Morning News,* January 18, 1971.
[85] Quote from "El 6 de Marzo: Chicanos, Anglos, y Negros Protestaran," *El Sol de Texas*, March 5, 1971 located in Krochmal, "Chicano Labor Politics," *fn* 39; "Protesters March in Shrine Parade," *DMN*, March 21, 1971.

which it was established."[86] Minkah also faced additional legal trouble. In June 1971, US District Judge William Steger of East Texas overturned Judge William Wayne Justice's ruling that Minkah's arrest and search warrants were invalid and ordered Minkah to stand trial again. In the new trial, Minkah was found guilty and sentenced to ten years in prison—four years more than his original sentence of six years in 1968. On appeal in April 1972, the court reduced Minkah's sentence to six years, which counted three years as time served. He concluded his sentence in December 1972.[87] Minkah's imprisonment meant that the multiracial coalition lost an invaluable organizer.

The Brown Berets also suffered a series of setbacks following the Rodríguez raid. Juan Perez, a Beret from West Dallas, grew disenchanted with Brown Berets because of ideological differences. Perez had joined the organization in 1970 at the young age of eighteen. Initially, he worked as the driver for Pancho Medrano, escorting him to various meetings and demonstrations across the Southwest. Through their travels, Perez met national Chicano leaders like United Farm Worker's Cesar Chavez and Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, leader of the Crusade for Justice in Denver, Colorado.[88] His conversations with Pancho and other Chicano leaders inspired Perez to learn more about Chicano ideology. "When I learned about Aztlán—that really created a fire in me," Perez stated. "I thought that that was the answer." Over time, he grew frustrated with Ricardo Medrano's leadership of the Berets, asserting that both Ricardo and his other brother Robert wanted to use the Brown Berets for their own political purposes, especially when Robert decided to run for school board in 1972. "It [the Brown Berets] wasn't even an organization, it

[86] "Church Center on Harwood to Be Closed," *DMN,* May 12, 1971; "Free Fred Bell: The Story of the Railroading of Fred Bell: The Bizarre Case of a Political Prisoner in Texas,"
[87] "Racist & Political Repression of Fred Bell Continues: Indicted on New False Charge on May 24, 1973," loose leaflet, Fahim Minkah collection, Dallas Public Library Archives, Dallas, Texas; United States *v.* Fred Louis Bell and Charles Lavern Beasley, 457 F.2d 1231 (5th Cir. 1972).
[88] Bill Hendricks, "Marching to Aztlán," *Parade Magazine-Dallas Morning News*, undated, reprinted in Rev. Juan Perez, *My Search for Importance: An Autobiography* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2017), 53-67.

was just a group of us who would get drunk and do stuff," Perez recalled.[89] Ultimately, Perez led what he called a "coup d'état" against Ricardo, in which Perez took over leadership of the Dallas chapter, becoming both the Prime Minister and the Minister of Information. While Ricardo and Robert still remained active members of the Berets, the change in direction stagnated the group as Perez adjusted both to his leadership role within the organization as well as in front of the news media.[90]

Still, the ascension of such activists changed the political dynamic of police brutality cases. In decades past, black and brown leaders largely resorted to using behind-the-scenes negotiation, arguing that such discourse provided the best route in addressing the inequities in policing and in resolving police brutality cases. Now, black and brown residents rejected backdoor negotiations and refused to keep quiet the routine abuses they faced from local law enforcement. Michael Morehead's death in April 1970 and the Rodríguez raid in February 1971 similarly inspired black and brown activists to rally together in an effort to challenge discriminatory policing practices that brutalized communities of color. They were joined by white working-class activists who also distrusted such police practices.

Chief Dyson and Police Reform

The protest movements following Michael Morehead's death in 1970 and the Rodríguez raid in 1971 made a significant impression upon Chief of Police Frank Dyson. Though he refrained from admitting officers engaged in terroristic practices against both black and brown communities, Dyson was open to reform. Hired as chief at the age of forty-two in December 1969, Dyson was a nineteen-year veteran of the Dallas Police Department. He started as a patroller in 1950, rising through the ranks first as a division supervisor and later as head of the

[89] Quotes from Perez, interview by author.
[90] Perez, interview by author.

vice squad before his promotion to captain in 1961. Upon his hiring as chief, he envisioned to modernize the DPD. He remained committing to reducing the city's high crime rates by soliciting federal money in aid. In 1972, Dyson received more than $6 million in funding from the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA), which he hoped would turn the DPD into "one of the best equipped agencies in the nation." With the money, Dyson purchased eight police helicopters and a fixed wing airplane. He updated and computerized the departments communication systems and installed burglar alarms for businesses in high crime areas.[91] But Dyson also understood that fancy gadgets alone could not reduce crime in the city. Nearly $1 million of LEAA money funded a program called Impact, which worked to reduce the high recidivism rates in the city.[92]

At first, the rank and file of the DPD supported Dyson as chief, but the tides turned early into his tenure. The 1970 protest movements against police brutality played a significant role. A month after Michael Morehead's death, Dallas police officer E. E. Newsome shot fourteen-year-old Glen Sullivan, a white teenager from North Dallas, amidst a burglary investigation. Sullivan survived, but the shooting only amplified accusations that police engaged in a "Shoot-to-Kill" mentality. Facing enormous pressure from both the news media and black activists, Dyson submitted Newsome to testify before the grand jury and further implemented a new policy that prevented officers from using lethal force in suspected criminal cases. While the grand jury no-billed Newsome in the shooting of Sullivan, the gesture irritated the Dallas Police Association (DPA), who argued that Dyson failed to support police officers in cases of alleged brutality.[93]

[91] "Dyson Says LEAA Funds Help Dallas Police," *LEAA Newsletter*, 3:1 (February-March 1973), 31.
[92] Ibid.
[93] "Jury No-Bills Patrolman in Death of Boy," *DMN,* June 9, 1970.

While he protected the DPD from charges of harassment and misconduct during the Rodriguez ordeal, the year 1972 proved to be a trying time for Dyson in which the DPA continually questioned his leadership. Under Dyson's tenure as chief from December 1969 to June 1972, five police officers died in the line of duty—three in 1972 alone. The *Dallas Morning News* reported that officers remained bitter over the slayings and that their "angry talk indicated police may be prepared to shoot first and ask questions later."[94] Shortly after the most recent officer death, Dyson fired Officers John M. Young Jr. and Donald Welch while another two resigned over the assault of S. J. Johnson, owner of Big Man's Café in South Dallas. Johnson had complained to investigators that police struck Johnson with the butt of a shotgun and kicked him while handcuffed in his restaurant.[95] He also stated that the officers looted the café's cash register before taking Johnson to jail. Following Johnson's arrest, more than thirty African American activists led by Al Lipscomb filed into Dallas City Hall to protest rampant police brutality in South Dallas. Several black women reported that police often asked them if they were prostitutes and would enter women's restrooms "for no discernible reason."[96] Upon learning of the complaints, Dyson conducted an investigation into the charges and found that not only did Young and Welch admit to beating Johnson but that they, along with two other vice officers, falsified their reports in an effort to cover up the beating. As a result, Dyson fired the two and filed assault charges against them.[97] More than likely, Dyson intended to send a message by firing the two officers who admitted wrongdoing in Johnson's arrest. But the deaths of three officers in 1972 and Dyson's firing of Young and Welch despite their confessions of police

[94] Quote from "Department Bitter Over Slayings," *DMN*, May 3, 1972; "Wade to Attack Police Assaults," April 7, 1972.
[95] "Two Policemen Fired, Two Resign," *DMN*, May 13, 1972.
[96] "Residents Appear at Council to Charge Police Brutal [sic]," *DMN*, April 25, 1972.
[97] "Two Policemen Fired, Two Resign," *DMN*, May 13, 1972.

abuse led to an increased atmosphere of mistrust between the Dallas Police Association and the police chief.

Tensions escalated again when Dallas police shot and killed two African American men within days of each other in mid-October. The two shootings in October had followed nearly a year of police terrorism and harassment in South Dallas, in which the DPD shot and killed nine African American men and wounded several others over the course of 1972.[98] In response to the shootings, Dallas's SCLC chapter now under the leadership of George Holland, sponsored a march in protest.[99] More than a thousand African Americans took to the streets in late October and early November in which a coalition of middle-class black organizers from the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance and the Urban League joined forces with activists belonging to SCLC, the Nation of Islam, and Dallas Legal Services and demanded a stop to police violence in the city. On November 20, civil rights veteran A. Maceo Smith led the coalition to a demonstration at city hall during a regularly scheduled council meeting. Smith presented a list of demands that included major changes in the police department to eliminate racial discrimination. Smith advocated the hiring and visibility of more black police officers, the creation of a special grand jury to hear police brutality cases, greater minority participation in police-community relations programs, and subpoena powers for the Community Relations Commission.[100]

In response to the coalition's demands, City Manager George Schrader and Chief of Police Frank Dyson investigated the charges of police brutality and the coalition's

[98] "Dallas Man Killed in Police Confrontation," *DMN*, October 12, 1972; "2 Slayings of Blacks Draw Fire," *DMN*, October 17, 1972; Dulaney, "Whatever Happened in Dallas, Texas," 88.
[99] Rev. Peter Johnson went back to Atlanta in early 1972 to work on an assignment there. He did not return to Dallas permanently until 1975. Rev. Peter Johnson, interview by author.
[100] "Black Leaders Speak Out," *DMN*, November 21, 1972.

recommendations. In response, Dyson outlined what he called the "Five Year Plan" in an effort to demonstrate his receptivity to concerns about racist policing. Dyson's "Five Year Plan" called for the decentralization of the Dallas Police Department by establishing district commanders in designated precincts throughout the city. Dyson also called for improving police and community relations through the LEAA-funded Impact program. He further implemented mandatory sensitivity training for police officers and vigorous minority recruiting efforts with the goal that, by 1977, officers of the Dallas Police Department would reflect the broader demographics of the city—25 percent African American and 8 percent Mexican American. He also lowed height requirements and allowed prospective officers to take the civil service exam in Spanish.[101] Dyson and the city government seemed dedicated to curtailing accusations of police violence. Despite this, they rejected one of the most important demands of the coalition: granting the Community Relations Commission with subpoena powers. Fearing this would alter the independent structure of the commission, Schrader revoked such a suggestion, stating "we would strenuously advise against a [civilian review of police service]."[102]

Dyson's efforts to reform the Dallas Police Department following the demonstrations further strained his relationship with the Dallas Police Association. To the DPA, Dyson's missteps were plenty. In their minds, he had liberalized the civil service exams, lowering the standards and allowing unqualified officers to join the force. His eagerness to accept federal dollars through the LEAA conflicted with conservative attitudes within the association, in which many argued that the federal funds would bring unnecessary red tape to local police practices. The DPA most ardently resented Dyson's gun regulations following the shooting deaths of

[101] George Schrader, Official Memorandum: Law Enforcement in the Black Community, December 18, 1972, Box 2, Folder 16, A. Maceo Smith Collection, African American Museum of Fair Park, Dallas, Texas; "Dyson Says LEAA Funds Help Dallas Police," *LEAA Newsletter*, 3:1 (February-March 1973), 31.
[102] George Schrader, Official Memorandum: Law Enforcement in the Black Community.

eighteen-year-old Michael Morehead and fourteen-year-old Glen Sullivan in 1970. As a result, some officers adopted their own "shoot first" policies, killing nearly a dozen African Americans throughout 1972. When black residents protested the shootings in October and November, the DPA considered Dyson's stand-down orders against black protestors as "selling out the department and law enforcement."[103]

Dyson contemplated resigning from his position. His even-tempered demeanor and his pragmatic approach to policing controversies earned him a national reputation as well as the consideration for several positions with other law enforcement agencies, including as an administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration, a Chicago police commissioner, and even J. Edgar Hoover's successor as director of the FBI.[104] Despite varying career possibilities, Dyson continued as Dallas's chief of police into 1973, but his relationship with the DPA remained strained, and especially so after the police shooting of twelve-year-old Santos Rodríguez. On July 24, 1973, Officers Roy Arnold and Darrell Cain suspected Santos and his older brother David had burglarized a vending machine in the Little Mexico barrio. According to the officers, the brothers were known to cause trouble in the neighborhood, having frequently visited their grandfather's residence, where the boys lived, to reprimand them. At around three in the morning, the officers arrived at their grandfather's home, barged into the house without a warrant, and demanded the grandfather turn over Santos and David. Speaking little English, the grandfather allegedly granted permission for the officers to take the brothers. Both were handcuffed; David was placed in the backseat of the patrol car while officers placed Santos in the front.[105]

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[103] "'Dyson's Years' Enveloped by Reform, Controversy," *DMN*, October 26, 1973.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Eduardo Celis, "The Ghost of Santos Rodriguez," *Dallas Observer* July 16, 1992, p. 14, Vertical Files, Dallas Public Library.

Darrell Cain was a five-year veteran of the Dallas police force. He had recently been transferred to his beat in Little Mexico following numerous complaints of brutality. In April 1970, Cain shot and killed Michael Morehead. Eight months later in December 1970, Cain shot and severely wounded Willie Earl Thompson, a black resident of East Dallas, after claiming that Thompson charged him with a knife. The grand jury no-billed Cain in both shootings.[106] He was also the subject of a complaint filed by an unnamed American Indian resident, who identified Cain as one of several officers who allegedly beat him after stopping him for a traffic violation.[107] And on July 24, 1973, Cain accused both David and Santos of a burglary and demanded the brothers confess their involvement. According to Cain, he took the bullets out of his gun, spun the cylinder closed, and pointed the gun to Santos's forehead, demanding he tell the truth. When Santos denied involvement, Cain pulled the trigger and the gun clicked. The officers still demanded a confession but Santos maintained his innocence. Cain pulled the trigger again and this time the gun fired, instantly killing Santos.[108]

Chief of Police Frank Dyson suspended Cain from his position. He referred the case over to the Internal Affairs Division, who conducted an investigation into the shooting. Cain was later arrested and charged with murder with malice, but freed after posting $5,000 bond.[109] Meanwhile, crowds of angry Mexican American residents gathered on the baseball fields of Pike Park in Little Mexico. Chicana/o activists from the Brown Berets and MAPA met with established Mexican American leaders like City Councilman Pedro Aguirre and René Martínez of the Community Relations Commission. Together with other Mexican residents, they

[106] "Suspect Wounded by Officer," *DMN*, December 6, 1970.
[107] "Police 'insensitivity' to minorities charged," *Dallas Times Herald,* July 25, 1973; Shirley Achor, *Mexican Americans in a Dallas Barrio* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1976), 148-149.
[108] Celis, "The Ghost of Santos Rodriguez."
[109] "Officer Suspended, Charged," *DMN,* July 25, 1975; Hernandez, "Justicia por Santos," 82.

expressed outrage over the shooting and demanded to know why Cain's bond was set so low. The group of protesters then established the Pike Park Committee, an ad hoc committee serving as a point of communication with the community. The committee, consisting of both middle-class and grassroots organizers, condemned the Dallas Police Department for its racist police practices and further demanded that Officer Roy Arnold also be charged in Santos's death.[110] Shortly thereafter, the Pike Park Committee met with Chief Frank Dyson, who assured the committee that the department planned to implement new policies to investigate claims of police harassment. According to the *Dallas Times Herald*, Dyson knew that racism played a factor into the shooting of Santos Rodríguez as well as others in the city. "I know—I'm not that naïve—that we do have some officers who exercise dual standards in law enforcement," Dyson stated.[111]

The admission did little to calm black and brown residents across the city. On July 28, 1973, several hundred Mexican Americans, African Americans, and sympathetic white residents and activists gathered at Kennedy Memorial Plaza and journeyed down Main Street toward Dallas City Hall in their "March for Justice." There, the crowd listened to speeches from Councilman Aguirre and others. When the marchers left City Hall and trekked back toward Kennedy Memorial Plaza, they were joined by younger activists who grew agitated and jeered toward the Dallas Police Department on the sidelines. City Councilman Pedro Aguirre climbed on top of a squad car, hoping to restore order but his bull-horn broke amidst his speech. Suddenly, a black woman climbed atop the same cop car. "Kill the pigs! Kill the pigs!" she wailed toward the crowd. "The police killed my son! Kill the pigs!"[112]

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[110] Hernandez, "Justicia for Santos," 81.
[111] "Dyson Hits Dual Standard," *Dallas Times Herald,* July 29, 1973; Achor, *Mexican Americans in a Dallas Barrio*, 150.
[112] "Protest at first more like picnic or school rally," *Dallas Times Herald,* July 29, 1973; "City March Dissolves into Random Violence," *DMN,* July 29, 1973.

What started as a peaceful demonstration to protest the police shooting of Santos Rodríguez ended in a full-scale rebellion. Protesters knocked over two police motorcycles, causing them to burst into flames. They broke windows of nearly fifty businesses downtown, looted jewelry and shoes from Neiman Marcus, and overturned street newspaper racks. Police standing on the sidelines waited to disrupt the destruction. In their riot gear, officers moved into the crowd, wielding batons the size of baseball bats, striking passersby and protesters alike. At the end of the disturbance, police arrested thirty-eight individuals and injured dozens more. Nearly two dozen policemen were injured with an estimated five seeking medical attention. The destruction downtown caused an estimated $1 million in damages.[113]

The rebellion in protest of police violence served to enhance the power and influence of the Dallas Police Association. Though the city council commended Dyson for the department's "restraint" at the demonstration, the DPA lauded the chief of police. Nearly five hundred police officers signed a petition circulated by DPA President Lt. Charles Burnley, charging a "lack of support from city officials and our chief of police" and that Dyson bowed down to "pressure from militant factions" who chanted "We Want Justice" and "Kill the pigs" at police during the demonstration. They alleged they were "ordered to [watch] their fellow officers beaten…and forced to remain passive while rioters destroyed and looted businesses." Most of all, the officers resented Dyson's announced intention to "weed out" or issue "reprisals for the alleged dual standard of law enforcement." They continued, "Our chief is asking us to suffer charges of extreme prejudice, brutality and psychological insufficiency."[114]

[113] "Dallas Police Estimate Cost of Disturbance," *DMN*, August 24, 1973.
[114] Quotes edited for clarity and found in "DPA Attacks Dyson Tactics," *DMN*, August 4, 1973; Quotes edited for clarity. Quotes found in "Text of Police Association Letter," *DMN*, August 4, 1973.

Over the next two months, the DPA and the Chief of Police Frank Dyson continued to hash out their differences. Responding to the DPA letter, Dyson ordered the DPA to prove their accusations and to "put up or shut up." Further, he resented the DPA's criticism of his intention to eliminate the "dual standard of law enforcement." "[If] you're saying to me that I'll weed out those officers who are unfit to wear the uniform, who take action against citizens unjustifiably and against the constitutional rights of those citizens, you are exactly right."[115] Dyson's statement only worked to inflame the situation more. A month later, the DPA responded by listing twelve grievances with the Dallas Police Department, charging that social and political pressures prevented police from "enforcing the law" at the demonstration downtown and in the marches against police violence the previous fall.[116] Tensions finally came to a boiling point when on September 13, Dyson broke relations with the DPA. A little over a month later, on October 17, Dyson resigned as chief of the Dallas Police Department. "His struggle with the police association, and I think, the realization he was losing support of the men just completely drained him," stated one police official.[117]

Dyson's resignation of the police department signaled a major win for the Dallas Police Association. The DPA recognized that the political pressure that arose because of black and brown complaints was forcing Dyson to respond in ways that, in their minds, jeopardized their safety. Over the course of two years, Dyson altered gun practices following two shootings in suspected criminal cases. He implemented new hiring policies after Mexican American activists argued that height requirements and the English-language civil service exam prevented Spanish-speaking officers from joining the force. And he promised, following the shooting of Santos

[115] Quoted from "Dyson Challenges DPA," *DMN*, August 10, 1973.
[116] "Charges Against Dyson Related by DPA," *DMN*, September 12, 1973.
[117] "Dyson Breaks Relations with DPA," *DMN*, September 14, 1973; "Police Chief Dyson Quits Force," *DMN*, October 18, 1973.

Rodríguez, to "weed out" officers who practiced that "dual standard" of law enforcement, having developed a record to show for it. Not only were members of the DPA fearful that they might be held responsible in police brutality cases, but also that Dyson held the interests of "lawless protestors" above those of his officers. Ultimately, the DPA was able to force out the police chief who had done more than any other to hold officers accountable for police misconduct.

The shooting of Santos Rodríguez also rejuvenated the public face of the multiracial coalition, allowing for the development of what Dallas newspapers called a "triumvirate alliance," consisting of the Brown Berets, the Black Panther Party, and the Bois d'Arc Patriots. The Brown Berets remained active in the community despite Juan Perez's proclaimed "coup d'état" following the Rodríguez raid in 1971. Members participated both in the spontaneous protests at Pike Park and the planned demonstration downtown, and the Medrano patriarch, Pancho, helped file the lawsuit for single-member districts in April 1971. Similarly, Charlie Young and the Bois d'Arc Patriots remained active in organizing East Dallas, a predominantly white-working class community. They began a newspaper called *Community Voice*, ran an in-home daycare center, and fought the city against urban redevelopment and gentrification policies.[118] The Black Panther Party, now led by Fahim Minkah, received its official chapter status in October 1973. After Minkah was released from prison in December 1972, he immediately began his community activist work. He became a writer for the Patriots' newspaper *Community Voice*, operated as the Minister of Information for the United Defense for Political Prisoners, working for the release of incarcerated and former SNCC members Ernest McMillan and Charles Beasley, and was elected as the Vice Chairman for the National Organization

[118] John Fullinwider, "Bois d'Arc Patriots, Part One," interview by author, July 7, 2017, CRBB https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/6887/activism-part-one (Accessed May 15, 2020); Charlie Young, phone interview by author.

Against Racist and Political Repression. Along with Charlie Young and Juan Perez, Minkah participated in the demonstration protesting the death of Santos Rodríguez in July 1973.[119]

The march for justice in honor of Santos Rodríguez pushed the three organizations into working with one another and staging public demonstrations against police brutality and class and racial antagonism. In April 1975, the triad demonstrated in the streets of downtown Dallas, protesting the police shootings of black men in South Dallas and the "need for more jobs and better work benefits."[120] Three years later, the triumvirate alliance reunited to march in protest against the Department of Justice for failing to indict Officer Darrell Cain in the shooting of Santos Rodríguez. Cain was found guilty and sentenced to five years in prison. Cain appealed his sentencing, but the Supreme Court upheld it in 1977. Still, many pressured President Jimmy Carter's administration to file federal charges against Cain—but the Department of Justice refused. In response, protesters held a rally on July 16, 1978, in honor of Santos Rodríguez.[121]

The coalition that formed in response to police violence at the beginning of the 1970s had significant effects. First, the black and brown protest movement forced the chief of police to adopt new policing practices as their complaints against law enforcement bore significant weight. Activists used whatever outlet needed to protect themselves and others against the police. They pleaded in front of the city council, marched in the streets, and ran for political office. Ultimately, the pressure that activists placed upon Police Chief Frank Dyson resulted in the first conviction against a Dallas police officer in a brutality case in the history of the Dallas Police Department. At the same time, however, the protest movement also inspired the Dallas Police Association to use their strength as a police union to suppress their opposition. They had

[119] Fahim Minkah, "Santos Rodriguez and Michael Morehead," interview by author, August 26, 2017, CRBB https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/7293/santos-rodriguez-and-michael-morehead (Accessed May 15, 2020).
[120] "City Activists Groups Plan for Demonstration," *DMN*, April 26, 1975.
[121] "Marchers shout 'Viva Santos!' *DMN*, July 17, 1978.

developed their potency in 1968 when they prevented the creation of a city-run human relations commission, arguing that it would amount to a police review board. Similarly, they managed to oust the reform-minded Dyson after the police chief, in their minds, fell to the political pressure of black and brown activists. The DPA would continue to act as a formidable opponent against black and brown organizers going forward.

The 8-3 Plan and a Police Review Board

The coalition that had formed as a result of police shootings also transferred their public protests from the streets into the political arena. The implementation of the council-manager system in 1931 forced candidates to run at-large and on a non-partisan basis. The Citizens Charter Association, however, acted similarly to a political party in that the CCA's endorsement of a candidate and funding of the political campaign increased the likelihood that such candidate would be elected. Despite frequent attempts throughout the decades, no person of color had ever been elected to the city council without the backing of the Citizens Charter Association, preventing black and brown residents with substantive minority representation. In April 1971, Al Lipscomb became the lead plaintiff in a class action lawsuit, challenging the at-large election system. Pancho Medrano originally considered filing as the lead plaintiff in the suit but grew uncomfortable filling out the lengthy questionnaire, which contained "all kinds of personal questions, and some were very embarrassing."[122] Instead, Al Lipscomb agreed to serve as lead plaintiff, beginning the legal proceedings of *Lipscomb v. Wise* in 1971.[123] Other plaintiffs in the suit included Lipscomb's wife, Lovie, Elsie Faye Heggins, Rev. Peter Johnson of SCLC, and

[122] Quoted in Roy Williams and Kevin J. Shay, *Time Change: An Alternative View of the History of Dallas* (Dallas: To Be Publishing, 1991), 103.
[123] The first lawsuit, *Lipscomb v. Jonsson* was filed in March 1971 in an effort to halt the city council elections in April 1971. The courts dismissed it, prompting Lipscomb to refile after Mayor Wes Wise was elected. For more on the earlier case, see Ruth P. Morgan, *Governance by Decree: The Impact of the Voting Rights Act in Dallas* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004, 124-126.

Pancho Medrano. The suit alleged that the at-large system had the "invidious effect of diluting the vote of the Ghetto residents" and that residents of the area "have virtually no political force or control over Members of the city council…" Additionally, they charged that the at-large election system exacerbated economic discrimination because of the high cost of campaigning and that it denied equal protection to racial minorities.[124]

In 1974, Federal District Judge Eldon Mahon ruled in favor of Lipscomb and ordered the city to devise a new and "constitutionally acceptable plan." The city then presented a combination plan of eight single-member districts and three at-large positions, commonly known as the 8-3 plan. Judge Mahon deemed the plan acceptable and it went into effect in 1975.[125] The ruling in *Lipscomb v. Wise* hardly implemented a more democratic election process in Dallas. Proponents of the system argued that the 8-3 plan, which initiated residency requirements for candidates in the eight single-member districts, provided black and brown candidates the ability to run and win in the precincts in which they lived. The 1975 election of former NAACP Youth Council director Juanita Craft to the city council, replacing George Allen after his appointment as Justice of the Peace, evidenced their point. But the election did little else other than exchange one black representative for another. Furthermore, the ruling eliminated the number of racial minority council members by keeping Place 9, which covered most of West Dallas, an at-large district without residency requirements. Pedro Aguirre, a Mexican American architect, who won Place 9 in 1973 to replace Anita Martínez, ran for reelection to retain his position after the 8-3 plan went into effect. He lost to Garry Weber, a white councilmember who was deemed ineligible to refile in Place 4, which he held previously, because of the new residency

[124] Quoted in Morgan, *Governance by Decree*, 127.
[125] Williams, *Time Change*, 105; *Lipscomb v. Wise*, CA-3-4571-E (1975); "8-3 Ruling Reaction," *Dallas Morning News*, February 9, 1975.

requirements.[126] Not only did the combination plan fail to address the routine exclusion of black and brown candidates, but it also actively worked against Mexican Americans of West Dallas by keeping Place 9 an at-large district.

Still, black and brown activists found other ways to ascend politically. In 1980, black community activist Elsie Faye Heggins, who ran a tight campaign against Juanita Craft in 1975, and black real estate agent Fred Blair both won seats on the city council. Former Brown Beret and labor organizer Ricardo Medrano formed an alliance with LGBTQ residents, helping him secure his position in Place 2, representing the Oak Lawn neighborhood, the developing "gay-borhood."[127] Medrano, Heggins, and Blair all secured their positions without the political backing of the CCA or the Dallas Citizens Council, the first councilmembers of color to do so.[128] Their ascension also came at an important time in the struggle against police brutality. In 1979, police killed nine individuals and wounded seventeen. By April 1980, police shot nineteen people, six of whom were killed.[129] The alarming escalation of police violence inspired Councilman Blair upon his election to motion for a police review board with investigative and subpoena powers. Activists had advocated the creation of a police review board for years, but council members in previous decades frequently ignored or rebuffed such a recommendation. Medrano seconded Blair's motion, arguing that "anything less than a citizen review board is non-

[126] "Court upholds Dallas districting," *Dallas Morning News,* June 23, 1978.
[127] For more on politics in the gay-borhood, see Karen Wisely, "When We Go to Deal with City Hall, We Put on a Shirt and Tie": Gay Rights Movement Done the Dallas Way, 1965-2003," (PhD Dissertation, University of North Texas, 2018).
[128] "Run for City Council," from Ricardo Medrano, oral history interview with Katherine Bynum, June 13, 2016, CRBB https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/my-run-for-city-council (Accessed January 17, 2018); "Running for City Council," from Diane Ragsdale, oral history interview with Marvin Dulaney, October 21, 2011, Documenting the History of the Civil Rights Movement in Dallas County, CRBB https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/running-for-city-council-2 (Accessed October 28, 2017).
[129] "Rise in police shootings sparks investigation," *Dallas Times Herald,* April 28,1980, Vertical Files, Dallas Public Library.

negotiable." The board was ultimately rejected by an 8-3 margin in which Medrano, Heggins, and Blair, the only three members of color on the council, voted yes.[130]

Activists over the decades had grown impatient with the Dallas City Council, who had the authority to launch investigations into the operations of the police force when alleged incidents of misconduct occurred. Diane Ragsdale, a seasoned activist in her own right, engaged in such a battle against the city. "At some point in time you want to move from direct action to progressive public policy," she argued.[131] Ragsdale was an individual who worked extensively as a community organizer and transitioned into an effective woman in the local political arena. She was born in 1952 in Dallas, where her activism began as a young child. At the age of nine, she and her older sister Charlotte joined the NAACP Youth Council under Juanita Craft and sold memberships to the Maria Morgan YWCA chapter. While in high school, Lipscomb recruited her and Charlotte to volunteer for the South Dallas Information Center. Shortly after graduating high school, she joined the Dallas chapter of SCLC, participating in Operation Breadbasket and anti-police brutality marches. Ragsdale was also active during her college years both in Dallas and in Denton, located forty miles north of the city. While attending Texas Woman's University, she formed the campus NAACP chapter and staged a sit-in with two hundred others on the lawn of university president John Guinn's estate because of frequent abuses toward black students on campus.[132] On weekends, she returned home to Dallas and sold copies of the Black Panther

[130] "Hispanics expect council to reject police review plan," *Dallas Times Herald,* May 24, 1980, Vertical Files, Dallas Public Library; "Hernandez decides not to work with police review board group," *Dallas Times Herald*, June 3, 1980, Vertical Files, Dallas Public Library; "Police Review Board Fails," *Dallas Morning News*, June 26, 1980.
[131] "Police Review Board, Part One," from Diane Ragsdale, oral history interview with Katherine Bynum, July 12, 2017, CRBB, https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/police-review-board-part-one-2 (Accessed October 24, 2017).
[132] "Protesters Camp on Guinn's Lawn," *Denton Record-Chronicle*, March 10, 1972; Skip Shockley, *Mother's Son* (Xlibris, 2009), 255.

newspaper in front of H. L. Green's department store downtown.[133] In the late 1970s, she joined the Black Women's United Front. "We were anti-sexism, anti-imperialism, anti-capitalism, anti-economic exploitation," she says with a laugh. "Those [are the] things that tend to oppress."[134] As a child of the movement, Ragsdale developed a political voice that echoed the militancy of Black Power politics but sustained the relatability with the majority of the black community. Her ambition in altering the status quo and her determination to fight for the disfranchised were crucial in her rise to politics in the 1980s.

Her determination to implement a police review board gave rise to her political career. In June 1980, Ragsdale and former Black Panther Party members Fahim Minkah and Marvin Crenshaw formed the Citizens United for a Review Board (CURB) and attempted to collect enough signatures to propose a city charter amendment that would create a citizens' police review board with investigative and subpoena powers.[135] The petition failed largely because of the Dallas Police Department and the Dallas Police Association. DPA President Dick Hickman placed half-page advertisements in both the *Dallas Morning News* and the *Dallas Times Herald*, encouraging voters to oppose the city charter amendment. Hickman argued that the city council was not hearing from the "law-abiding, tax-paying citizens" and that the council had only seen the "vocal radicals" on the issue.[136] He also told *Texas Monthly* that police confrontation with

[133] "Working with SCLC," from Diane Ragsdale, oral history interview with Marvin Dulaney, October 21, 2011, Documenting the History of the Civil Rights Movement in Dallas County, CRBB https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/working-with-sclc (Accessed October 28, 2017).
[134] "Black Women's United Front," from Diane Ragsdale, oral history interview with Katherine Bynum, July 10, 2017, CRBB, https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/black-women-s-united-front (Accessed January 17, 2018).
[135] "Organizers planning new petition drive for police board," *Dallas Times Herald*, September 20, 1980, Vertical Files, Dallas Public Library; "Police panel proponents call for vote," *Dallas Morning News*, June 27, 1980; "Review board petition effort falls short," *Dallas Morning News*, September 23, 1980.
[136] Dick Hickman was cleared in the 1972 shooting of Napoleon Vinson, an unarmed African American. According to reports, Hickman and another officer were patrolling the South Dallas neighborhood in plainclothes when they were apprehended by Vinson with a gun. "Dallas Man Killed in Police Confrontation," *Dallas Morning News*, October 12, 1972; "Police ask public to oppose board," *Dallas Morning News*, June 24, 1980.

black and brown people was "regrettable but also inevitable." He continued, "Thirty-five per cent of our citizens are minorities, but 65 per cent of the felonies are committed by them. They are more exposed to being killed."[137]

The DPA had become a formidable opponent in the creation of any kind of police review board with investigative powers. They appealed to the white majority by using crime statistics to assign responsibility for individual actions to the entire black and brown population, and recounted their ideas of crime and race to the local officials and the general public. "I tell you what," began a former police officer to the city council, "if I was out late at night, I'd much rather have a policeman come up to me than some of these people who are proposing a citizen review board," he said.[138] Police officers drew upon centuries' old notions that inextricably linked race and crime together, justifying their use of force as ethical and fair given the high levels of crime in black and brown neighborhoods.

The defeat of the police review board ended the multiracial coalition's strength in the political arena. As a compromise, the city council approved a police advisory committee, later renamed the Dallas Citizens/Police Relations Board. As an independent nine-member organization, the board could make recommendations to the Dallas Chief of Police and the grand jury regarding police brutality, but it could not "interfere with an investigation by the police department" or conduct an independent investigation of its own. The advisory board had little influence on policy changes within the police department and most African American and Mexican American activists resented its creation, calling it "a joke." [139] Its development,

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[137] Passion Play," *Texas Monthly*, October 1980, 131.
[138] "Hispanics expect council to reject police review plan," *Dallas Times Herald*.
[139] "Racism and Police Brutality in Dallas," from Roy Williams, oral history interview with Marvin Dulaney, October 6, 2011, Documenting the History of the Civil Rights Movement in Dallas County, CRBB, https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/racism-and-police-brutality-in-dallas (Accessed October 28, 2017); "DPA frowns on police panel," *Dallas Morning News*, June 30, 1980; Dallas City Council Ordinance No. 17418, September 30, 1981, Dallas Municipal Archives.

however, inspired the Dallas Police Association to limit the influence of the councilmembers who proposed the review board. When Ricardo Medrano ran for a second term on the city council in 1983, he lost to twenty-seven-year-old Paul Fielding, a white candidate who received support and backing from the DPA.[140]

As the multiracial coalition emerged in the early 1970s in response to police violence, the alliance not only protested and marched in the streets, but also challenged the discriminatory election processes. Though the 8-3 plan circumvented activists' desires to enable substantive representation, they still ascended to the city council despite such inequities. When police violence continued to escalate, the multiracial coalition strived to create a police review board to ensure police accountability. The white-dominated city council and the Dallas Police Association, however, obstructed their overall mission. To complicate matters, Heggins and Blair later resigned their terms to run for county commissioner in 1984, a position that black activist John Wiley Price secured. In special elections, Al Lipscomb and Diane Ragsdale were elected in April 1984 to replace Heggins and Blair respectively.[141] As the councilmembers of color, Ragsdale and Lipscomb were forced to make adjustments in their strategies against police violence moving forward.

Police violence continued in the same fashion. Between 1980 and 1985, Dallas police shot and killed thirty-five African American, twelve Mexican Americans, and twelve Anglo Americans. The years 1983 and 1986 both tied for the record number of police shootings in Dallas since the department began keeping count in 1973. But the shooting death of Etta Collins, a seventy-year-old South Dallas resident, by officer Mark E. Kraus disturbed black city officials.

[140] "Pancho Medrano says ad for Taylor tries to fool voters," *Dallas Morning News*, March 29, 1983.
[141] "Running for City Council," from Ragsdale interview, CRBB; Al Lipscomb, interview by Bonnie Lovell.

Collins had called police to notify the authorities about a burglary at the duplex next door. Kraus claimed Collins refused to stop pointing a revolver at officers responding to her call, but some neighbors disputed Kraus's statement, alleging that Collins was shot while still inside her home.[142]

As a result of the shooting, Ragsdale and Lipscomb joined forces with Marvin Crenshaw and local activist Roy Williams, and invited U.S. Representative John Conyers of Michigan, a member of the U. S. House Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, to visit Dallas. After much urging, Conyers agreed to hold a Congressional Hearing in the city.[143] The all-day hearing took place on May 8, 1987 and included testimonies and recommendations from black and brown activists, elected officials, and members of the Dallas Police Department. Ragsdale and Lipscomb both charged the DPD and the Dallas Police Association with racism, arguing that police officers perceived all African Americans as criminals and used those stereotypes to "justify the unacceptable number of blacks being shot by white police officers." They both argued for more black and brown officers on the force, especially in supervising positions. They also advocated more hours of training that focused on "preservation of life" and a system of checks and balances that would help identify problem officers before they kill someone.[144]

As elected officials, Ragsdale and Lipscomb largely stood alone in their convictions against the Dallas Police Department. Other officials from the city government, including Councilmen John Evans and Craig Holcomb, Mayor Annette Strauss, and City Manager Richard Knight all recognized the need to "improve communication and understanding between the

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[142] "Wade to Review Shooting," *Dallas Morning News*, October 29, 1986.
[143] "Police Brutality Congressional Hearing," from Roy Williams, oral history interview with Marvin Dulaney, October 6, 2011, Documenting the History of the Civil Rights Movement of Dallas County, CRBB, https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/police-brutality-congressional-hearing (Accessed October 28, 2017).
[144] Quote from "Statement of Al Lipscomb," *Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Criminal Justice of the Committee on the Judiciar*y, House of Representatives, May 8, 1987, 338.

police department and our minority citizens," but also commended the Dallas Police Department for its seriousness in "protecting and serving all our citizens." The only elected official to side with Ragsdale and Lipscomb was white city councilmember Lori Palmer, who testified she agreed that officers needed more sensitivity training in the field and that more black and brown officers should be hired on the force.[145]

Testifying police officers also denied wrongdoing. They pointed to officers' high levels of education, in which more than 40 percent of all police officers held a bachelor's degree, as a sign of their success. "The Dallas Police Department is truly one of the best educated in the nation," stated Captain John Chappelle.[146] Others defended their policing practices by arguing that the department has been "unjustly criticized by the public and officials for slight and sometimes accidental errors." Captain Rick Stone pointed to the heroism of Officer J. D. Tippit and his apprehension of Lee Harvey Oswald forty-five minutes after the assassination of President John F. Kennedy as one of the triumphs of the DPD—a patriotic deflection from the issue of police brutality.[147] Dallas Chief of Police Marlin Price grew frustrated at the accusations lamented against his department and even more so at the witnesses' recommendations. In his supplementary statement given to the hearing panel, Price argued along the same lines as former DPA President Dan Hickman. "It is evident," Price wrote, "from the data on who is committing violent crime, who is being arrested for violent crimes, who is being arrested for offenses involving weapons, and our response times in minority areas, that the reason police are using

[145] "Statement of Lori Palmer, Member, Dallas City Council, Dallas, TX," Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Criminal Justice of the Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives, May 8, 1987, 331-333.
[146] Statement of Captain John Chappelle, Dallas Police Department, Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Criminal Justice of the Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives, May 8, 1987, p. 377.
[147] Rick Stone, Captain, Dallas Police Department, Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Criminal Justice of the Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives, May 8, 1987.

deadly force against minorities more often than whites is because we encounter minorities more often in violent situations."[148]

The denial and deflections of the Dallas Police Department signified their indifference to the issue of police misconduct. Police continued to blame entire communities and populations for individual acts and subscribed to racist notions to back their claims and justifications for abuse. Ten days after the Congressional Hearing, for example, two Dallas police officers fatally shot eighty-one-year-old David Horton, an African American resident of South Dallas. Officers claimed Horton fired his rifle at police but nearby residents stated Horton, a Crime Watch volunteer, was trying to protect cars in the parking lot when police approached him. Regardless of the circumstances, Horton's death set off a chain reaction among local officials. Dallas County Commissioner John Wiley Price stated the Horton shooting "made a mockery" of the hearing and requested an investigation from the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Justice Department. Diane Ragsdale said the shooting evidenced the need for better training of police officers. "The fact is that these officers threw themselves into a position that forced a deadly conflict instead of a peaceful resolution," Ragsdale stated.[149]

Two weeks after the shooting on May 30, 1987, Ragsdale, Lipscomb, and County Commissioner Price organized a demonstration they called, "The March for Human Dignity." Several hundred people gathered at the home of David Horton in South Dallas before marching toward Dallas City Hall to protest Horton's death and the increase in police abuse against black and brown residents. On the steps of city hall, Ragsdale urged the crowd to attend the following city council meeting to support the need for police department reforms. "The mayor, the City

[148] Marlin R. Price, Supplemental Testimony, Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Criminal Justice of the Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives, May 8, 1987, p. 260.
[149] "Police Killing of Man Angers Minority Leaders," *Dallas Morning News*, May 20, 1987.

Council, and the city manager have lost total control with respect to the issue of police abuse," Ragsdale stated. "We cannot continue to dialogue and dialogue and dialogue and die and die and die."

Horton's death following the Congressional Hearing on police brutality embarrassed many of Dallas's city officials into action. Dallas Police Chief Billy Prince created the Office of Minority Affairs within the police department, which sought to improve police-community relations and work with investigators in the Internal Affairs Division to resolve complaints between officers and residents of color. Furthermore, Dallas Mayor Annette Strauss created an advisory committee on crime, in which she appointed black leaders to form a subcommittee and submit recommendations to the Dallas City Council and the Dallas Police Department.[150] In accordance with the Congressional Hearing, the advisory committee submitted a recommendation to create a Citizens Police Review Board, which passed in November 1987. But the majority white council voted against granting unlimited investigative and subpoena powers. Instead, the board could request subpoena power through a majority vote, which would then need a two-thirds majority to conduct an investigation.[151] Still, after more than a decade of protests, picketing, and political activism, black and brown residents finally received their review board that had the potential of holding officers accountable in cases of police brutality.

The black and brown civil rights movements, which had run along parallel lines for some time, intersected in new ways that birthed a vibrant and potent cross-racial collaboration. Though Mexican Americans and African Americans had worked together previously in the labor movement and through the War on Poverty, their intimate conversations between themselves on

[150] "Police React to Concerns – Minority Affairs Division Established," *Dallas Morning News*, May 30, 1987.
[151] "City Council Panel OKs New Police Review Board," *Dallas Morning News*, November 24, 1987; "Council OKs New Police Review Panel," *Dallas Morning News,* December 17, 1987.

the issues of police violence provided a new energy to the overall movement. The deaths of Michael Morehead, Jimmy Ray Taylor, Santos Rodríguez, and the assault on the Rodríguez family were watershed moments for all three. Suddenly, they found themselves amongst other activists whose living and employment conditions were not dissimilar. The fact that all three also had experiences with police brutality provided activists with the extra ammunition they needed to take to the streets, demanding that the city government provide better opportunities for working-class peoples and to stop police-related assaults.

Their entrance into city politics also signified a crucial turning point in the movement to end police brutality. As police violence continued to escalate throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s, black and brown activists first challenged the discriminatory at-large election processes of the city government. Even when the 8-3 plan further limited black and brown ascension to elected positions, they still managed to win important seats in the municipal government and did so to motion for the creation of a police review board. Despite the white dominated city council, the Dallas Police Department, and the Dallas Police Association banding together to prevent its creation for several years, black and brown activists prevailed after another police shooting following the Congressional Hearing. After nearly two decades of multiracial organizing, black and brown activists had transformed city politics in an effort to end police brutality.

CONCLUSION

Botham Shen Jean, a twenty-six-year-old accountant originally from Saint Lucia, sat comfortably on his leather couch in his South Side Flats apartment just south of downtown Dallas. It was late in the evening on September 6, 2018, and Jean had finished a long day at work. He grabbed a bowl of ice cream and decided to unwind by watching television before turning in for the night. Meanwhile, Dallas Police Officer Amber Guyger ended her thirteen-hour shift and was returning to her apartment in the same complex as Jean. Allegedly tired from a long day at the office, Guyger parked her car on the fourth floor of the complex's parking garage and proceeded to walk down the corridor to her apartment. According to published reports, Guyger believed she reached her door and noticed it was ajar. When she pushed it open, she saw Botham Jean sitting on his couch, eating his ice cream, and watching his TV. In her sworn affidavit, Guyger reported seeing "a large silhouette" and thought someone was burglarizing her apartment. She drew her gun, gave "verbal commands that were ignored," and fired twice, striking Jean once in the torso. Guyger then called 911 and reported to the emergency operator that she believed she was in her apartment when she shot Jean. Paramedics took Jean to Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas, where he was pronounced dead.[1]

Three days after the shooting, Dallas Chief of Police U. Renee Hall requested District Attorney John Creuzot to file manslaughter charges against Amber Guyger. Jean's family joined critics who argued that Guyger should have been arrested hours—not days—after the shooting.[2] Still, Creuzot charged a Dallas police officer in the shooting of a person of color for the first time

[1] "'We will find out exactly what happened,' Dallas mayor vows after off-duty cop kills man in his own apartment," *DMN*, September 8, 2018; "Amber Guyger shot Botham Jean after 'silhouette' in apartment ignored commands, affidavit says," *DMN*, September 10, 2018.
[2] "Dallas officer Amber Guyger charged with manslaughter for shooting Botham Jean at his apartment," *DMN*, September 10, 2019.

since former DA Henry Wade charged Officer Darrell Cain in 1973. Two months after Jean's death, the Dallas County grand jury indicted Guyger on charges of murder, in which she faced the possibility of ninety-nine years in prison.[3] In her trial the following September, Guyger was found guilty. She was sentenced to ten years in prison.[4]

The convictions of both Darrell Cain in 1973 and Amber Guyger in 2019 were decades in the making. Black and brown activists established their quest for social justice to end the violence and subjugation brought on by Jim Crow and Juan Crow. Equitable treatment by law enforcement and the larger criminal justice system would not be achieved through backdoor negotiations with white leaders or in the same breath as integrating lunch counters and department stores. Rather, the conviction of Darrell Cain came at a time when activists relentlessly pressured city officials and the chief of police to hold officers accountable in cases of brutality. They played upon white fears of black rebellion, calling out the city's conjectured "City of Excellence" declaration by exposing the vicious cycles of poverty, discrimination, and police violence—all of which made Dallas a powder keg waiting to erupt. In marches, picket lines, sit-ins, news conferences, and at the ballot box, activists demanded change and for the city and law enforcement to hear them.

Chief of Police Frank Dyson also shares credit for bringing a Dallas police officer to court. At the start of his tenure in December 1969 through the end of it in October 1973, Dyson went from upholding the traditional white supremacist notions of law and order to promising to fire racist cops. That transformation took shape because black and brown activists routinely

[3] "Dallas grand jury indicts Amber Guyger, fired officer who killed Botham Jean in an alleged apartment mixup," *The Texas Tribune*, November 30, 2018, https://www.texastribune.org/2018/11/30/dallas-indicts-amber-guyger-cop-botham-jean/ (Accessed May 27, 2020).
[4] "Amber Guyger Is Sentenced to 10 Years for Murder of Botham Jean," *New York Times*, October 2, 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/02/us/amber-guyger-sentencing.html (Accessed May 27, 2020).

exposed what Dyson later referred to as the "dual standard of law enforcement" in the Dallas Police Department. But Dyson was hardly the only political force that needed convincing of biased policing and wrongdoing. The Dallas Police Association, using long held perceptions that linked race, class, and crime together, forced Dyson out of his position and continued to reign terror across black and brown communities in the city. In the DPA's view, Dyson was nothing more than a traitor who bowed down to political pressure from perceived lawless criminals.

Black and brown activists also understood that their struggle against police brutality was, indeed, a battle for political power. Though connected from labor organizing networks and the War on Poverty, the multiracial coalition solidified their partnership because of shared experiences with police brutality. Using the momentum from those collaborations, black and brown activists challenged the local election system that intentionally weakened their influence. Their entrance into municipal politics, despite continued efforts to dilute or dismantle their power, brought them closer to forming a system of tangible police accountability. The creation of the Police Review Board following the Congressional Hearing and the shooting death of David Horton in South Dallas was significant in its own right.

By the time of the review board's creation in 1987, nearly fifteen years had passed since the conviction of Darrell Cain. Since then, no other police officer was ever charged with a crime despite numerous shootings and assaults. The board's creation, however, came at a time of intense emotional scrutiny. Race relations between the Dallas Police Department and the city's black and brown communities were at an apex of distrust and disdain. Following the police review board's creation, two Dallas police officers were shot and killed by African American men within the span of two weeks. The deaths inspired the Dallas Police Department and the Dallas Police Association to lash out against the city council, which, to the members of the DPA,

approved the board's formation and encouraged black and brown residents to antagonize and kill police officers. In a statement of the *Dallas Morning News*, Chief of Police Billy Prince charged that Al Lipscomb and Diane Ragsdale created an atmosphere of "hate and hostility" in the city. "This is very tough on the officer in the street," Prince stated. "The constant bashing of the department…has created a volatile situation."[5] Though Prince defended his fellow officers in the field, he struggled to temper relations between the city council and the DPA. Similar to Frank Dyson, Chief Billy Prince retired from his position in May 1988.[6]

The racial tension following the creation of the police review board had other significant benefits. It helped initiate the second lawsuit against the city of Dallas, challenging the at-large election system. Following the police shootings in early 1988, Dallas Mayor Annette Strauss formed the Dallas Together Commission, which she charged with "the difficult task of finding ways to reduce the racial tensions in our community." The seventy-nine-member commission would focus on public housing, the growing crime rate, and the strained relationship between the Dallas Police Department and racial minorities in the city.[7] Not long after Dallas Together formed did two of its commissioners, former Black Panther Party member Marvin Crenshaw and local black activist Roy Williams, file suit against the city of Dallas in May 1988. The plaintiffs argued that the city's 8-3 plan for the city council violated the Voting Rights Act because it "dilutes the votes of African Americans." Three months later, the Ledbetter Neighborhood Association in West Dallas represented by local attorney Domingo Garcia joined the lawsuit, arguing that the 8-3 plan also discriminates against Mexican Americans.[8] Both groups pointed to

[5] Quote from "Officer slain as he begs for his life – gunman killed in shoot-out," *DMN*, January 24, 1988.
[6] "Police Chief in Dallas Resigns After Months of Controversy," *New York Times*, April 14, 1988.
[7] "Strauss Names Panel on Poverty, Racial Tension," *DMN*, February 10, 1988.
[8] Williams v. City of Dallas, 734 F. Supp. 1317 (N.D. Tex. 1990); "Hispanics Call for New Council Election System," *DMN*, August 3, 1988.

that fact that since the 8-3 plan went into effect, no African American and only one Mexican American "due to unusual circumstances" had been elected to the city council. The "unusual circumstances" referred to the 1987 city election when, according to the plaintiffs, then-mayor Starke Taylor held a meeting with Mexican Americans leaders to endorse a candidate for one of the at-large seats to avoid a lawsuit. According to court documents, Taylor allegedly pursued this route because "he felt strongly that the Hispanic community was going to sue the city" and didn't want "a Hispanic to challenge the 8-3 system."[9]

Crenshaw and Williams were regulars at the Dallas City Hall. For eight years, the two attended nearly every regularly scheduled city council meetings and were also consistently escorted out by police for their protests. During those eight years, Crenshaw and Williams both had tried their hands at public office. Crenshaw ran three times for mayor while Williams ran for the at-large city council position and neither of them ever won. But on March 28, 1990, federal courts ruled in their favor, declaring that the 8-3 election system was inherently discriminatory and violated the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The ruling determined that Dallas should expand the size of the Dallas city council, increasing the number of districts from eleven to fifteen seats—fourteen single-member districts and the mayor, elected at-large.[10] In 1975 and again in 1990, federal judges ruled in favor of two Black Panther Party activists—Al Lipscomb and Marvin Crenshaw—instead of the Dallas municipal government. And they did so with multiracial support.

This dissertation invites us to rethink the parameters of several historiographies. The black and brown freedom struggles emerged to fight racial violence. Though each dealt with

[9] Williams v. City of Dallas, 734 F. Supp. 1317 (N.D. Tex. 1990).
[10] "Metropolis Marvin and Roy, We Hardly Know You," *D Magazine*, July 1990, https://www.dmagazine.com/publications/d-magazine/1990/july/metropolis-marvin-and-roy-we-hardly-know-you/ (Accessed May 29, 2020).

particular issues according to race and class, the two movements nevertheless incorporated voting rights and eliminating all kinds of discrimination as central to ending police brutality. The coalitions they formed with their white working-class allies in the post-civil rights era counters the conventional narrative that the Black and Brown Power eras undermined the main objectives of the African American and Mexican American civil rights movements. Some historians understand the 1970s as a period of liberal declension, in which the white working class abandoned the Democratic Party in favor of color-blind conservatism.[11] The focus on the white working class in this period erases the political activism of working-class communities of color. Black and brown politics centered on the issue of police brutality, and they joined together with white working-class allies and addressed these issues through coalition-building and political maneuvering during this period of fragmentation.

[11] For this argument, see Jefferson R. Cowie, *Staying Alive: The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class* (New York: The New Press, 2012); Mary D. Edsall and Thomas Byrne Edsall, *Chain Reaction: The Impact of Race, Rights, and Taxes on American Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1992).

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ABSTRACT

CIVIL RIGHTS IN THE "CITY OF HATE:" GRASSROOTS ORGANIZING AGAINST POLICE BRUTALITY IN DALLAS, TEXAS, 1935-1990

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This dissertation examines the history of grassroots organizing against police brutality in Dallas, Texas, between 1935 and 1990. It demonstrates that police brutality drove conversations among black and brown activists in their fight for social justice. Organizers understood that acquiring political power and eliminating all forms of discrimination were central to curtailing police violence. Class differences, however, often drove wedges among activists, but the issue of police brutality united African Americans and Mexican Americans, prompting them to form broad alliances in their shared struggle for police accountability. Confronting state-sanctioned violence then mobilized activists to engage in additional avenues of protest, including voting rights, access to housing and jobs, and social welfare reform.