

# Open Housing Drive Increases Pace

The campaign pro and con for the proposed state-wide open housing bill has picked up during the past few weeks.

Some indications of the local drive:

- City Councilman John Allen asked his fellow Council members to adopt a resolution supporting the proposed legislation. "To have private opinions different than public opinions is hypocrisy," he asserted.

- Less than one percent of Greater Farmington's 45,000 residents turned out last weekend to hear about the proposed legislation. That really isn't a bad attendance figure when you stop to think that 120 people is a pretty good turnout for a Sunday afternoon meeting.

- In Farmington's churches the congregations have been urged to make their views known over the past few weeks.

All these are indications of the state wide push on the controversial bill.

**WHAT ABOUT Farmington?**

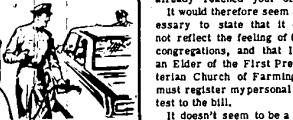
Allen's proposal at the Council session Monday night took courage. It's always refreshing to see an elected official go out on a limb on an issue that seems to be unpopular with many of the voters.

The fact that the City Council refused to support the resolution is unfortunate. However, the proposed bill does have some loopholes and we can sympathize with Mayor Wilbur V. Brotherton when he says that "I personally cannot come to a decision on this bill."

Last weekend's meeting sponsored by the clergy was significant in that there was not one person present who was opposed to the measure.

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**FRIDAY, Dec. 15**

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**editorial**

not only wrong morally, but in opposition to the Constitution which makes it legally wrong.

In the township the matter hasn't even been discussed at the Board level. A year or so ago a proposal for the creation of an area-wide human relations commission was turned down by the township when Attorney Joseph T. Brennan ruled that a township had no authority to participate in such a group. However, since the state law seems to rule out township action, our quarrel is not

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**Con**

EDITOR: It is my understanding that the declaration signed by some Farmington area ministers has already reached your office. It would therefore seem necessary to state that it does not reflect the feeling of their congregations, and that I, as an Elder of the First Presbyterian Church of Farmington, must register my personal protest to the bill.

It doesn't seem to be a civil rights issue, or even an open housing issue, but rather a further encroachment of the rights of citizens, by Government. Even the word "fair" is misused. Fair to whom?

Most certainly it would be declared unconstitutional at some future date, because it denies individual rights, and Race, Color, or Creed doesn't change the "individual" status.

**Pro**

EDITOR: Until your article on the silence of suburbia on the issue of fair housing I rather naively hoped to see Farmington take a positive stand and extend the welcome to our black brethren.

I say "naive," because one of the reasons I moved to Farmington, three years ago from what became the ashes of the ghetto was its LACK of reputation for bigotry which many neighboring suburban areas wear like a Purple Heart.

I began to get an inkling of the nature of Farmington-style racism during Brotherhood Week last year when The Observer urged readers to commit themselves to action and involvement in intercultural and human relations programs. I believe there were two responses.

As a teacher of black (and beautiful!) children in the central city I have been told categorically to go where the "missionary" work needs doing — the lily white suburbs that team with cultural deficiencies.

Can a policeman who refers to Afro-Americans as "jungle bunnies" be trusted? Can a child taught from textbooks which portray a white man's world "make it" as an adult worker in a black city which will still be the economic heart of our megalopolis in a few short years?

I think not — unless we are ready to accept our responsibilities as human beings concerned with the dignity of other human beings. How many of you will join me in urging fair housing in Farmington and begin to make Brotherhood a way of life instead of an annual event?

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