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DALE E. SODEN

On June 24, 1963, more than 75 pastors, rabbis, and priests, most of whom were white, met at Mount Zion Baptist Church, a predominantly African American church in Seattle’s Central District. The pastor of Mount Zion, Samuel B. McKinney, along with two other black pastors, John Hurst Adams and Mance Jackson, exhorted their fellow clerics to step forward and commit themselves to more visibly supporting civil rights. These three men, along with Lemuel Petersen of the Greater Seattle Council of Churches, asked for a show of hands regarding who would march with them on behalf of an open-housing ordinance that would ensure that persons would not be discriminated against on the basis of color when buying or renting homes and apartments in the city. Raising their hands, these religious leaders indicated that they indeed would support the movement.

Six days later, 84 clergymen, including the archbishop of Seattle’s Catholic Church, Thomas Connolly, and the city’s most outspoken rabbi, Raphael Levine, issued the following statement:

We call on all citizens to consider the seriousness of the hour in which we live—to examine our souls and practices in human relations—to repent of the blindness and callousness (yes, even the sin) of our past attitudes, failures, and oppression—and to become directly involved in one of the most significant moral and social crises in our nation’s history.

This outbreak of religious support for civil rights took place in the summer of 1963, when much of the nation had awakened to the intense racial unrest in the United States, particularly the Deep South. In May, images of Bull Connor’s police dogs and fire hoses being used against civil rights marchers in Birmingham, Alabama, made national news. On June 12, Medgar Evers was assassinated at his home in Jackson, Mississippi, and that same month “Letter from a Birmingham Jail,” by Martin Luther King, Jr., was gaining a national audience. Though Seattle was geographically distant from the events occurring in the South, concerns over housing, employment, and quality schools were beginning to take center stage in the city’s politics.

The gathering of so many of Seattle’s religious leaders during the summer of 1963 and the statement issued by many of these leaders raise several questions. First, how significant was the role that religious activists played in the city’s civil rights movement? Second, to what extent did white and black religious leaders collaborate to find strategies for desegregation and the advancement of the African American community? And finally, was the role played by Seattle’s religious leaders any different from that played by their counterparts in other West Coast cities during this period?

Most important, a large number of Seattle’s civil rights leaders came from the religious community. Black pastors such as Samuel McKinney, John Adams, and Mance Jackson played major roles in shaping the direction of the movement. But white Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish leaders played key roles as well. Together, black and white religious leaders significantly shaped the character of grass-roots activism in the city. Though certainly hundreds, if not thousands, of Seattle’s civil rights activists did not identify themselves with a religious community, a vital component of the grass-roots movement consisted of lay members of the city’s churches.

To date, most of the scholarship on Seattle’s civil rights movement has acknowledged what might be best characterized as a supporting role for the religious community, giving greater credit for the movement’s accomplishments to nonreligious groups such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), and the Urban League. Historians from Quintard Taylor to Doris Pieroth have recognized that both black and white Protestant pastors, Catholic clergy, and Jewish rabbis, as well as laypeople across religious denominations, were actively involved in the movement. However, the role of religious individuals and organizations has been underappreciated and not fully understood by scholars of Seattle’s civil rights efforts. Simply put: religiously motivated people, both black and white, played not just a supporting role but a critical role in the city’s struggle for social justice.

More subtly, religious leaders, and in particular, African American clergy, provided the rhetoric and vision es-
sential to the movement's overall success. Black pastors made this a moral struggle, one deeply intertwined with the history of black liberation. Messages were often prophetic, emphasizing struggle, persistence, and liberation, which differentiated the movement from other liberal reform efforts. Seattle's experience underscored what the historian David Chappell found at the national level when he asserted that the "black movement's nonviolent soldiers were driven not by modern liberal faith in human reason, but by older, seemingly more durable prejudices and superstitions that were rooted in Christian and Jewish myth." Drawing on such figures as David and Isaiah in the Old Testament, as well as the theologians Augustine of Hippo, Martin Luther, and Reinhold Niebuhr, black pastors believed the natural tendency of institutions and individuals was toward corruption. They relied less on a liberal belief in inevitable progress and more on the notion that white society must be confronted by prophets who openly named the "sin of segregation." For Chappell, it was this prophetic character that gave the movement its vibrancy during the 1960s.

In many ways, the struggle for civil rights in Seattle was similar to that in other cities across the country. The familiar issues of employment, housing, and desegregation of public schools dictated strategies of active nonviolent resistance such as marches, picket lines, and efforts to pass legislation. And yet it might also be argued that Seattle was different. The city did not suffer from a major urban riot as did Los Angeles or Portland. Perhaps more significant, in the 1970s Seattle drew national attention for its implementation of mandatory busing without a court order. Religious communities, black and white, Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish, all played significant roles in formulating and promoting what became known as the Seattle Plan, a program designed to desegregate public schools. Finally, while more comparative study is in order, an initial survey reveals that though the religious communities in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Portland certainly influenced civil rights issues in those cities, on balance organizations such as the NAACP played more important roles than did religious leaders. In other words, of the major West Coast cities, the religious community had the strongest influence on the civil rights movement in Seattle.

The religious community's interest in civil rights issues was triggered by World War II. The internment of Japanese Americans prompted major objections from the Greater Seattle Council of Churches, and throughout the war individual pastors provided support and encouragement for those who were forced to relocate. The council took an active role in the struggle to resettle internees in Seattle after the war.

World War II also had a significant impact on the African American community in Seattle and raised concerns among religious groups and other organizations about discrimination. Before the war, the city was home to only a relatively small number of African Americans, but government contracts with Boeing and Seattle shipyards during the war created the need for more labor. Available jobs meant the migration of African Americans to the city in significant numbers for the first time. Seattle's black population increased from fewer than 4,000 before the war to 15,666 in 1950, which was a little less than 5 percent of the total population. Almost immediately, housing proved to be a problem. Most African Americans lived in the Central District, an area just east of downtown Seattle, because housing covenants in other neighborhoods often restricted or prohibited the sale of homes to persons of color. Segregated neighborhoods meant segregated schools. In addition, after wartime employment ended, Seattle provided limited job opportunities for African Americans.

As early as the 1940s, some Seattle leaders had begun to explore ways of raising consciousness about racism and discrimination. The NAACP became increasingly active, and the Civic Unity Committee, established by the Seattle mayor Bill Devin in 1944, played an important role in elevating the issue of race relations within the public discourse. One of the earliest religious groups to emerge in Seattle's civil rights struggle was the Christian Friends for Racial Equality (CFRE). At a meeting in May 1942, 17 people from diverse religious groups committed themselves to fighting discrimination and to fostering better race relations in Seattle. The attendees represented the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), the American Friends Service Committee, the Race Relations Department of the Greater Seattle Council of Churches, and the Anti-Defamation League, along with the NAACP, the Japanese American Citizens League, and the Seattle Urban League. Despite the group having Christian in the name, a number of Jews also joined the group. Women constituted approximately two-thirds of the membership and almost three-quarters of the officers. The CFRE developed into the largest local interracial civil rights organization in the city's history.

The CFRE was conservative in its tactics. From the beginning, the leadership eschewed direct confrontation in the form of sit-ins or rallies. The group would rely instead on moral suasion, believing that investigating and publicizing injustice would be more effective. In the 1940s, the Christian Friends for Racial Equality fought against the restrictive neighborhood covenants that banned homeowners from selling to African Americans and in the 1950s asked ministers to encourage property owners to rent or sell to minorities.

Throughout the 1950s and early 1960s,
Seattle activists were becoming increasingly aware of national events associated with the civil rights movement. *Brown v. Board of Education*, the integration of Little Rock Central High School in Arkansas, the sit-ins at lunch counters in Greensboro, North Carolina, and the attacks on freedom riders in the South all created greater urgency for activists in the Pacific Northwest. In fact, the plight of the freedom riders motivated a small group of individuals to form a Seattle chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality in 1961. Founded at the national level in 1942, CORE espoused nonviolence in the fight against segregation. While not explicitly religious in character, Seattle’s CORE chapter included a number of black and white pastors and lay members from a variety of denominations.11

Among the first issues that CORE’s Seattle chapter focused on was fair employment for African Americans, and several black pastors played key roles in this work. Among the most important were the aforementioned Samuel McKinney and Mance Jackson. McKinney had arrived in Seattle in 1958 to serve as the pastor of Mount Zion Baptist Church. Born in Michigan to a preacher and his wife, McKinney had watched his father fight against discrimination. While not explicitly religious in character, Seattle’s CORE chapter included a number of black and white pastors and lay members from a variety of denominations.11

The Reverend John Adams soon joined Jackson and McKinney in the fight for fair employment for blacks. Adams became the senior minister at Seattle’s First African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church in 1962. He had grown up in South Carolina, where his father, Eugene Avery Adams, an African Methodist Episcopal minister, had been active in the struggle for civil rights prior to the 1950s. John Adams earned his undergraduate degree at Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, North Carolina, and later matriculated at Boston University, where he earned a bachelor of sacred theology degree in 1952 and a master of sacred theology degree in 1956. It was there that he, too, was a classmate and friend of Martin Luther King, Jr. Adams served as president of the all-black Paul Quinn College in Waco, Texas, from 1956 until 1962, when he and his family moved to Seattle.14 Together, Jackson, McKinney, and Adams proved to be a formidable group of African American leaders.

One of the first signs that black pastoral leadership was beginning to affect the city was when McKinney convinced Martin Luther King, Jr., to make what turned out to be his one and only trip to Seattle in November 1961. King made speeches at the University of Washington, the Temple de Hirsch synagogue, Garfield High School (in the heart of the Central District), and the Eagles Auditorium. On each occasion, King electrified crowds with his call for an end to segregation in any form.15 However, King’s last address was mired in controversy. He had originally been scheduled to give the speech at Seattle First Presbyterian Church, but when the church received considerable criticism from both within and outside its congregation, leaders told King the church could not host the event, forcing a change in venue.16

Nevertheless, King’s visit spurred on Seattle activists in their efforts to challenge the status quo and work for racial justice. In the months just prior to King’s visit, CORE, along with the Baptist Ministers Alliance (a predominantly black organization), had targeted the hiring practices of local grocery stores, which employed only a handful of African Americans throughout the city. In August 1961, volunteers began handing out leaflets in the Central District, upon which were printed the following message:

Don’t Shop Where You Can’t Work! You are one of the thousands of non-whites who, each week, spend the largest part of their earnings in grocery stores, where, because of your color, you cannot work. You have been doing this year after year, even when you have been unemployed. Quit buying discrimination.17

First targeting Safeway, CORE, along with McKinney, representing the Baptist Ministers Alliance, began negotiating with store managers. When negotiations proved unsuccessful, CORE and the Baptist ministers called for a boycott of a Safeway store in the Central District in October. Churches helped spread news of the boycott. By the end of the month, Safeway had come back to the bargaining table and agreed to begin hiring black workers and to open a branch employment office in the Central District. Shortly thereafter, negotiating teams met with other supermarket managers and achieved similar results.18

In 1963, CORE set its sights on downtown Seattle’s major department stores. The Bon Marché drew the most attention because it employed no African Americans besides the cleaning and wait staff. After several months of
The Reverend John Hurst Adams (at center) is shown here at a press conference announcing the receipt of funding for the Central Area Motivation Program (CAMP), which he cofounded. The others pictured are (from left to right) Charles Johnson of the NAACP, the Right Reverend Ivol Ira Curtis of the Episcopal Diocese of Olympia, an unidentified man, and Larry Williams from CAMP. (Courtesy of John Hurst Adams)

The assassination of the civil rights leader Medgar Evers in Mississippi on June 12 surely compelled African American leaders to go ahead with the march, though the Bon Marché’s last-minute hiring resulted in a decision not to picket the department store. An estimated 1,200 to 1,300 people, both white and black, led by Jackson and McKinney, along with Reginald Alleyne, CORE’s chairman, marched from Mount Zion Baptist Church to downtown Seattle. “We are serving notice in a peaceful, Christian way that segregation and discrimination must go,” said McKinney, summing up the feelings of Seattle’s African Americans.20 Jackson told the Seattle Times, “This is an occasion of historical importance to Seattle... We declare war on one of America’s greatest enemies—discrimination and racial bigotry.”21

Those early successes helped embolden the leadership of CORE and the black pastors who had been working with the group. In 1964, CORE leaders organized Operation Deeds (Drive for Equal Employment in Downtown Stores) and set a goal of ensuring that 1,200 of the 5,000 projected new jobs in Seattle’s downtown go to African Americans. However, weeks of meetings with downtown employers left the civil rights leaders frustrated. While several federal agencies as well as the mayor’s office indicated a willingness to hire more African Americans, most downtown employers ignored the request. Consequently, on October 19, 1964, CORE organized a boycott of downtown businesses, an effort that national civil rights leaders saw as one of the most ambitious in the country. The Congress of Racial Equality, the NAACP, and Urban League were joined by the Baptist Ministers Alliance, the Catholic Interracial Council of Seattle, the Methodist Episcopal Ministers Alliance, and the Unitarians for Social Justice in the boycott, which lasted until mid-January 1965. Nevertheless, in the end Operation Deeds failed to meet its goals.22 Few stores hired African Americans, and the boycott led to a decline in CORE membership and exhausted its resources. But there was no question that CORE and the other civil rights and religious groups that had worked with it had raised consciousness about the issue of fair employment.23

Undaunted by the boycott’s failure, Seattle’s religious leaders pursued other strategies for improving African American employment opportunities in the city; indeed, African American pastors played a major role in two of the decade’s most significant employment programs. In 1964, the Reverend John Adams of First African Methodist Episcopal Church and the former minister Walter Hundley founded the Central Area Motivation Program (CAMP).24 Established just as the Johnson administration was gearing up for the War on Poverty, CAMP was the first community-inspired program in the country to receive funding from the federal Office of Economic Opportunity. The program focused on job counseling and training, family support services, university recruitment, and housing rehabilitation. Hundreds of unemployed workers were trained through the program to work on dilapidated homes in the Central District. In 2013, CAMP (now called Centercote) was recognized as the oldest
surviving independent agency in the country to have originated during the War on Poverty. The most energetic and successful effort to address the employment issues of African Americans took root at Mount Zion Baptist Church, where McKinney preached. It was in the church basement that the Seattle Opportunities Industrialization Center (SOIC) was started in 1966. Modeled after a program initiated by the Reverend Leon Sullivan in Philadelphia two years earlier, the center took shape under McKinney's guidance. The intent of the center was to provide prevocational and vocational training to economically disadvantaged individuals throughout the city. By 1970, the school had trained and placed into employment more than 900 students. As the SOIC's chair and principal spokesperson, McKinney often discussed his belief in the importance of vocational training. "We are telling people that integration without preparation equals frustration." Throughout the 1970s, the center provided a major source of training for the African American community. Although employment gains were modest during this period, McKinney, Adams, and Jackson stand out for their persistent and creative efforts to change hiring practices across the city.

Access to housing in Seattle had also emerged as a major issue by the early 1960s. Seventy-eight percent of all African Americans in Seattle lived in four census tracts in the Central District. Restrictive covenants had long been in place, and though they technically did not have the force of law, according to the historian Quintard Taylor, "tradition, income, geography, changing land use patterns, and discrimination proved equally effective in limiting black residence to the Central District." Seattle Unitarians, under the leadership of their pastor, Peter Raible, provided the initial energy behind the drive to establish fair-housing practices. Beginning in June 1962, members of Seattle's University Unitarian Church organized a fair-listing service that identified individuals who would sell their home to any qualified buyer regardless of color. With the support of churches both in Seattle and on the east side of Lake Washington in the Bellevue area, the list grew longer and longer.

During that same summer, civil rights groups, along with the black religious community, convinced Seattle's mayor, Gordon Clinton, to appoint an advisory committee on housing. The Citizens' Advisory Committee on Minority Housing concluded that the city needed an enforceable open-housing ordinance that would prohibit discrimination on the basis of race for both homebuyers and renters. However, after encountering significant resistance from the real-estate and business communities, Clinton refused to endorse the open-housing ordinance, instead supporting only the creation of a human rights commission charged with monitoring the various forms of racial discrimination against those attempting to purchase a home.

The mayor's opposition to the housing ordinance spurred increasing numbers of white religious leaders to openly support the city's black leadership. On May 31, 1963, the archbishop of Seattle's Catholic Church, Thomas Con
nolly, issued a letter to all priests in the diocese, encouraging them to attend the Conference on Race and Religion the following week:

The racial question is undoubtedly our nation's most critical domestic problem... The Church leadership in the City of Seattle must come out on the side of justice and equality for the Negro. It is most imperative that we as priests take a definite role of leadership in this most crucial field.32

Many of the priests likely heeded his call. The conference attracted approximately 400 priests, pastors, rabbis, and laypeople, who participated in various workshops focusing on the problems of housing, employment, and education. The Catholic bishop Thomas E. Gill delivered the keynote address, in which he said, "The heart of the race question is moral and religious. It concerns the rights of man and our attitude toward our fellow man."33 The conference culminated with the passage of a series of resolutions directing Mayor Clinton to implement the proposals of the Citizens' Advisory Committee on Minority Housing, which included the adoption of a housing ordinance that would prohibit discrimination in the sale or rental of all public and private housing on the basis of race, color, or creed.34

After the conference, black religious leaders throughout the city expressed their agitation over what seemed to be delaying tactics on the part of the mayor and city council in regards to acting on discrimination in housing. At a demonstration at city hall on June 17, Jackson told Mayor Clinton, who was in attendance, "We have had enough hearings. We are saying to you, sir, that the time for action is now." He and John Adams also both denounced Clinton's decision not to support an open-housing ordinance; they believed that the proposed human rights commission would be totally inadequate. Adams accused the mayor of simply putting "a Band-Aid on a city cancer." Jackson told Clinton, "We are going to pray for you, Mr. Mayor, but we are going to do more than pray until the vestiges of his false Jericho come down." Nevertheless, Clinton held his ground: the city would endorse only a human rights commission.35 "The mayor," stated Jackson, "is not willing to take a strong moral position without being concerned where the votes will come from."36

Over the next two weeks, McKinney, Adams, and Jackson rallied much of the city's religious leadership on behalf of civil rights. In many ways it was a remarkable moment of cooperation, when whites and blacks organized around a vision of racial integration founded on a moral commitment to social justice. Adams told his fellow ministers that they needed to "be prepared to take some chances for what is right." He added, "You must realize that we are not going to stand for any more indignation." McKinney asserted, likely with the white clergy in mind, "The mood is that we are going to get there with or without your help." These warnings certainly seemed to have some effect. The Reverend Robert Munger, pastor of University Presbyterian Church, for one, responded, "I believe that the time for real action is now. This is a problem far more serious than most of us realize."37 Nevertheless, the business community, in general, and representatives of the real-estate industry, in particular, continued to pressure both the mayor and city council to resist the open-housing ordinance. One real-estate agent was so irritated at the clergy that he told the Times, "It is disheartening for us to see clergymen jumping on the bandwagon for forced housing." He added, "If the clergymen fail to achieve a change of hearts in their own congregations, how can they expect to bring it about by law?"38

Throughout the summer, Seattle's religious community continued to raise consciousness about the housing issue. On the first day of July, Jackson and McKinney organized yet another march on city hall, which ended with 35 young people from the Central District Youth Club staging the first sit-in of the mayor's office, lasting nearly 24 hours.39 Four days later, Archbishop Connolly told the Archdiocese of Seattle's official organ, Catholic Northwest Progress:

In these troubled times, the cause of the embattled Negro should receive no less than our active support. The entire City of Seattle and all its citizens have a definite role in eliminating the above-mentioned abuses [in housing, employment, and education]. Now is the time for action. We urge all citizens to pay special attention to the housing issue which seems to us to be the key to the dissolution of segregation as it appears in our community.40

On July 17, ignoring the wishes of local religious leaders, the city council passed an ordinance establishing a human rights commission. The mayor appointed to the commission two African Americans, one of whom was McKinney. Though McKinney, Adams, and Jackson had originally opposed the mayor's idea, once the commission became a reality, they decided that the best they could do was to influence its composition. But even though McKinney was on the commission, a new round of protests erupted over the fact that only 2 of the 12 members were black.41

On July 25, civil rights activists organized another sit-in, this time at city council chambers during the swearing-in ceremonies for the new commission members. On this occasion, one of the demonstrators apparently grabbed or touched the ankles of the councilman Charles Carroll, who went sprawling.42 Though black leaders were apologetic, they refused to be distracted from their goal of improving conditions for the city's African Americans. Mance Jackson, clearly frustrated with the city's lack of responsiveness to civil rights issues, told the Seattle Times:

The mayor has convinced us he is not
seriously concerned about the racial problems of our city.

We are on the verge of more demonstrations today than we were last month. Seattle can easily become a city ridden with military troops if you do not take seriously that which we are telling you.

We are going to insist more and more that Negroes take their rightful place in the life of this city. We are not playing a game of which we will soon grow weary. This is not just a little fever which will subside next week.

We are simply trying to bring to Seattle the realities of American democracy.\(^43\)

By the time the sit-in ended, police had arrested 23 demonstrators. Again, Jackson was heavily quoted in the newspaper. He called the incident in which Carroll was tripped "unfortunate," but said he believed that "what the young people did was heard louder than all the speeches we have made in presenting the Negroes cause for equality and representation." Jackson criticized white Christians in general: "So many Caucasian brethren claim to want to help, but when the time comes that we need their support, they can't be found."\(^44\)

By August, Jackson had had enough. His house had been firebombed on two occasions, and he announced that he was leaving the Northwest for Atlanta to attend seminary. His final public comments excoriated both the black and white communities for their failure to show courage.

Too many Negroes who are long-time residents are afraid of rocking the boat, or disturbing the relationships they think they had.

I am not sure attitudes are changing much.

I don't know how long it will take for the transformation of the Negro, for him to attain a better way of life.

I do know that even if doors are opened and opportunities become more equal, we still have the job of getting the Negroes ready.

They aren't ready now. They have psychological barriers of racism that date back to the beginning of this country.

When you constantly are relegated to the low end of the economic scale; when you constantly are told that you are fit only for menial jobs; when you picture yourself as inferior, then you are inferior.\(^45\)

Jackson spoke poignantly of "job barriers" that existed in Seattle in the various trades and "even in truck driving, where Negroes aren't considered good enough to take the wheel."\(^46\) As discouraged as Jackson sounded, he never gave up. He spent the next 44 years working for civil rights causes in the state of Georgia, and upon his death in 2007, the Georgia State Senate honored him for his lifetime of work on behalf of racial justice.\(^47\)

Jackson's departure did not lessen the fervor of that summer of 1963. Both John Adams and Samuel McKinney traveled back to the nation's capital to participate in the famous march on Washington, D.C., and were present when Martin Luther King, Jr., delivered his riveting "I Have a Dream"
In spite of the efforts of the religious community and other civil rights activists, Seattle's open-housing ordinance was firmly defeated in the election held on March 10, 1964, largely because of the opposition of the Seattle Real Estate Board. (Harvey Davis, P-I Coll., MOHAI, 1986.5.9654)

speech. Both returned to Seattle with renewed energy for continuing the fight.

By late summer, the council had finally decided to put the open-housing ordinance on the ballot. Far from considering it a victory, however, civil rights leaders expressed disappointment that the ordinance would be put to a vote. They feared, for good reason, that most whites would vote against the measure. Black leaders challenged the city council to dispense with the election and instead declare an emergency, which was its prerogative under the city charter, and approve the open-housing ordinance: ordinances passed with an emergency clause cannot be appealed by referendum. But the mayor and council remained firm; an election would be held on March 10, 1964, to determine the fate of the ordinance.

Now faced with an election, many from the religious community and other civil rights activists stepped up efforts to expose discriminatory practices in the real-estate industry. Under the leadership of Joan Singler, CORE compiled the “Report of Housing Discrimination by Real Estate Industry” in August. When representatives from the Seattle Real Estate Board denied the alleged discrimination, CORE and NAACP members, along with an estimated 19 ministers and rabbis, both black and white, picketed the Six State Real Estate Conference held at Seattle Center on September 11-14, 1963. A few weeks later, Father John Lynch, Rabbi Jacob Singer, Petersen, and McKinney issued a statement urging both laity and clergy to become more involved: “If there are to be advances in human rights and equality in Seattle, they will come about, in part, because of the moral revulsion over the inequalities...
of our present discriminatory practices as articulated by religious leaders, lay members, and institutions.51

Other church groups joined in the fight to pass the open-housing ordinance. An umbrella organization, Churches United for Racial Equality (CURE), included Baptist, Episcopal, Lutheran, Methodist, United Church of Christ, and Presbyterian congregations. In the months before the election, CURE activists, wearing I Believe It's Right buttons, encouraged people to vote for open housing.52

On March 6, 1964, the Catholic Northwest Progress dedicated much of an issue to open housing and highlighted a speech made by Archbishop Connolly at a civil rights mass held a few days earlier under the auspices of the Catholic Interracial Council. Connolly called for a complete commitment to racial justice, telling the 700 priests and laypeople in attendance that the Archdiocese of Seattle wanted “it distinctly understood that we are totally involved in this proposal, that we are totally committed to the obligation of securing racial justice in the fields of housing, employment, education and recreation for all our fellow citizens, irrespective of race, creed, color or national origin.”53 Connolly stated further:

We believe that the conscience of this great city of ours is on trial before the entire country in connection with the successful passage of the Open Housing Ordinance at the election on next Tuesday, March 10th. Remember that the most crucial test of the love of God is the love of neighbor.54

Three days before the election, Father Lynch and ministers including McKinney, Adams, and Paree Porter (pastor of Ebenezer AME Zion Church) led an estimated 1,500 people in a march to support the ordinance. On the day before the election, volunteers picked up pamphlets supporting the ordinance from Plymouth Congregational Church and fanned out across the city to hand them to people leaving work.55

But the real estate board was also well organized. They ran newspaper ads and produced leaflets that claimed a yes vote would mean “forced Housing, and the loss of your rights.”56 Representatives of the real-estate industry warned constantly that property values would decline if the ordinance passed. Their tactics worked. The election results were devastating: voters defeated the open-housing legislation by a margin of more than two to one—115,627 to 54,448.57 Civil rights leaders both black and white were despondent.

After this defeat, CORE leaders and African American pastors decided to take direct action, to conduct sit-ins and picket the real-estate offices of Picture Floor Plans, which had reportedly been unwilling to show African Americans homes in the neighborhoods in which they were interested. Porter led the demonstration against the company in April 1964. In the end, Picture Floor Plans obtained a restraining order that prevented CORE from continuing to picket.58

Over the next three years, the effort to integrate Seattle housing rested primarily with individuals committed to supporting the fair-listing service organized by Seattle’s University Unitarian Church. Seattle voters had indicated very clearly that they were not ready for a law that would mandate the integration of housing. Nevertheless, religious activists did not retreat. Civil rights legislation at the national level, along with the ongoing efforts of Martin Luther King, Jr., and other leaders, continued to inspire Seattle’s religious activists.

In the mid-1960s, the integration of Seattle’s public schools surfaced for many as an equally important objective, and once again, black and white clergy played a critical role. A census conducted by the Seattle School Board in 1957 had indicated that 81 percent of Seattle’s African American pupils went to nine elementary schools, of which eight were in the Central District.59 Seattle’s African American pastors and civil rights leaders believed that such de facto segregation severely compromised the quality of education for students of color.

The Reverend John Adams took the lead in the struggle to integrate the city’s schools, putting relentless pressure on the Seattle School Board beginning in 1963. Until Adams started pressing the issue, most board members did not think that Brown v. Board of Education had any relevance to Seattle. Adams, however, did. Frances Owen, former president of the school board, remembered that Adams used to come to every School Board meeting. . . . I think he began to wear us down more than anything else. I don’t think he changed our thinking so much—except that he must have—because something, and I don’t remember what it was, brought us to this feeling that we must open things up, and allow students to go to other schools if they wanted to.60

In an era of exceptionally strong black leadership in the city, Adams was described by the historian Doris Pieroth as “eloquent, forceful, and influential.”61

Sometimes in 1962, a new organization, the Central Area Civil Rights Committee (CACRC) was organized to coordinate the effort to integrate the public schools as well as to work on other civil rights issues. Led initially by Mance Jackson and subsequently by John Adams, the committee also included Samuel McKinney, Walt Hundley, and the NAACP’s Charles Johnson and E. June Smith.62 Later, the Reverend Mineo Katagiri, a United Church of Christ minister, joined the CACRC, the group’s only Japanese member. The historian Quintard Taylor noted that “this self-appointed leadership cadre reached a remarkable consensus on strategy and tactics which eluded their national counterparts throughout the
In May 1963, the CACRC and various civil rights groups threatened to file a lawsuit against the Seattle School Board if it did not take more significant steps to desegregate Seattle schools.

In the meantime, Adams and other clergy and civil rights activists kept the pressure on. They warned that if the school board did not take direct action, citizens would resort to more confrontational tactics, such as “study-ins” at predominantly white high schools. On August 28, the same day as the march on Washington and King’s “I Have a Dream” speech, the CACRC helped organize a march in Seattle and urged participants to attend the school board meeting that afternoon. An estimated crowd of 250 attended the meeting, during which the president of the school board, Frances Owen, announced what was called the Voluntary Racial Transfer Program. The transfer program encouraged black and white students to voluntarily attend a school where they would be a racial minority. However, the school board made no provision to cover the transportation costs, which severely limited participation in the program.

Over the next few years, proposals to desegregate Seattle schools surfaced, such as the Urban League’s Triad Plan, but none were accepted by the school board. Undeterred, civil rights activists continued to raise consciousness about the degree of segregation in Seattle’s schools. In June 1965, volunteers from CORE and the NAACP, with support from African American churches, leafleted 10,000 homes in the Central District with the message, “All Seattle children need quality integrated education.”

During the following school year, the concept of a citywide school boycott emerged. The NAACP, CORE, the CACRC, African American pastors, and the Greater Seattle Council of Churches supported the idea of a boycott. But it was CORE and Adams who provided the key leadership and frequently addressed the press. Scheduled for March 31 and April 1, 1966, the boycott aimed to provide an alternative educational experience. The plan involved organizing eight “freedom schools” that would hold class for two days largely on African American history and culture. Organizers hoped that a substantial number of white students would participate in the two-day experiment.

In the weeks leading up to the boycott, more support came from Seattle’s religious leadership. The Reverend Peter Raible from the University Unitarian Church was particularly vocal in favor of the idea. His congregation ended up passing a resolution urging the Seattle School Board to take the necessary steps to end racial imbalance within the public schools. Archbishop Connolly advocated strongly for the boycott, as did the Catholic Interracial Council, which raised $200 for the purchase of milk for children attending the freedom schools. The Seattle Presbytery, with 63 member churches, spoke in favor of the freedom schools but did not endorse the boycott.

However, this support soon fractured. On March 16, the Greater Seattle Council of Churches triggered a backlash among the more conservative churches when it sent a letter, directed in large part to white churches in both the city and the suburbs, endorsing the boycott and stating that it was “the only form of protest which will bring this issue sharply” to public attention. In response, 15 ministers, mostly from the major downtown churches, rejected the council’s position and refused to support the boycott. Among the churches rejecting the boycott were First Presbyterian, Trinity Episcopal, Gethsemane Lutheran, First Covenant, First Baptist, and Plymouth Congregational.

The ministers issued a statement listing their reasons for refusing to support the boycott:

1. In this instance we do not accept the technique of boycott because it calls for illegal action.

2. It is a deliberate attempt and treacherous
use of undiscerning young people as the tools and victims of the motives and objectives of adults.

3. It fosters disrespect for law, condones insubordination thinly veiled by the problem of civil rights.

4. The resultant ferment is destructive of the educational process and is a perversion of the strength most needed in an evolving integrated society.73

This group of 15 asserted that the problem of segregated schools in the Central District reflected “the deeper problem of our restrictive housing and employment opportunities for minority groups.”74

The Seattle Association of Evangelicals, representing 150 churches, also opposed the boycott.75 The Reverend Robert Munger of University Presbyterian Church argued that “dramatic steps” must be taken to awaken the community to growing segregation, but he disagreed that “the ends justified the means.”76 Another clergyman stated, “I support the cause wholeheartedly, but not the method.”77 A number of other white clergy, including the Very Reverend John Leffler, of Saint Mark’s Episcopal Cathedral, were also “whole heartedly in support of integration in schools” but objected to truancy as a tactic.78

Twenty black ministers responded by holding a news conference, during which John Adams did most of the talking. He shot back at his fellow clergy, maintaining that their opposition “to the proposed boycott is another example of clerical cowardice in the face of the need for justice and social change.”79 Adams angrily asserted,

These ministers of a diluted Gospel say that the boycott is illegal and disruptive. I would remind these custodians of the status quo that these segregated schools against which we boycott have been illegal for 12 years and they never have said a mumbling word.

I would remind them that this same segregated school system has been immoral for the lifetime of their congregations in this city.

As soon as we propose action which disturbs their comfortable pews and ask them to put their commitment on the line they sell out the Gospel to preserve their big comfortable and irrelevant churches.80

Rabbi Raphael Levine, assuming the role of peacemaker, called for a conference of concerned citizens and leaders, and in a final attempt to negotiate a compromise, a meeting was held on March 29 in the mayor’s office. A Seattle Post-Intelligencer reporter wrote that attendees hoped that “the Negro” would “be assured that the white community does have his interests at heart.” But the effort failed to impress the black leaders who were present, and the reporter described Seattle as “a city of tortured consciences and divided churches.”81 Clearly, ministers from both sides believed they were acting in the best interests of the community. Tensions were the highest they had been since the open-housing vote in 1964. Both of Seattle’s daily newspapers sided with the more conservative ministers and rejected the boycott. The Post-Intelligencer opined on the eve of the boycott that civil rights leaders would gain a much greater degree of respect from the community if they called it off.82

However, the boycott went ahead, and quietly the NAACP filed suit against the school district, thus requiring the district to submit a desegregation plan. On March 31, the boycott came off without a serious hitch. Freedom schools opened with approximately 100 teachers and two principals at each site. Elementary schools opened at
First AME Church, Madrona Presbyterian Church, the East Madison YMCA, Goodwill Missionary Baptist Church, Saint Peter Claver Center, and Cherry Hill Baptist Church. Sites for junior high schools opened at Mount Zion Baptist Church and the Tabernacle Baptist Church. And senior high schools held classes at the Prince Hall Masonic Temple, the East Side YMCA, and Woodland Park Presbyterian Church. An estimated 3,000 students participated in the boycott the first day and nearly 4,000 the second day. Rates of absence in Central District schools were as high as 50 percent. White students constituted approximately 30 percent of the participants. Classes focused primarily on African American history and race relations. Children wrote moving statements about what the experience meant to them. Several white teachers risked their own jobs in support of the boycott, among them the social studies teacher Dick Warner of Ballard High School, who was featured in the Seattle Times. Organizers declared the boycott an unqualified success. Nevertheless, the fundamental problem of segregation remained. The voluntary transfer program continued to be the only live option for integrating the school system.

The Central Area Civil Rights Committee actively encouraged parents within the Central District to participate in the voluntary racial transfer program. During the summer of 1966, the black leaders John Adams, Samuel McKinney, Edwin Pratt, June Smith, Charles Johnson, Walt Hundley, and John Cornethan (chairman of the Seattle chapter of CORE) all signed a letter to parents asking them to allow their children to take part in the program. “We feel,” the letter’s authors stated, “that minority group children learn better and become more motivated when they attend schools with children from all other backgrounds.” But participation remained minimal because of the lack of a system of transportation.

In that same year, 1966, the civil rights struggle in the Pacific Northwest became more complicated with the rise of the Black Power movement and the idea of black separatism. The consensus around racial liberalism as embodied in the desire to integrate public schools began to break down as a younger generation of African Americans challenged the city’s black and white leadership. Malcolm X had been the most outspoken black critic of racial liberalism and the strategy of integration. After his assassination in 1965, more African Americans expressed their belief that white society would always be racist at its core and that the most important statement a black person could make was one of black pride, black identity, and black power. Separatism rather than integration should be the goal. Stokely Carmichael became chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in 1966, and in the following year wrote a book with Charles V. Hamilton entitled, Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America. Carmichael helped transform SNCC from a multi-racial organization into an all-black social change organization. In the meantime, Huey Newton and Bobby Seale organized the Black Panther Party in October 1966.

The concept of Black Power began to gain traction in the Pacific Northwest almost immediately. In Seattle, the most dramatic expression occurred on April 19, 1967, when Carmichael spoke to students at the University of Washington and then later addressed an audience estimated at nearly 4,000 at Garfield High School. In his electrifying speech at Garfield, Carmichael urged black students to throw off the shackles that had been placed on them by white “honkies,” reminding them, “You are black and beautiful! Stop being ashamed of what you are!” Carmichael asserted that the educational system had provided neither black nor white students an accurate picture of African history and underscored that few Americans knew how deeply indebted they were to black culture. Carmichael took aim at the civil rights moderates, many of whom were black clergy. “Integration is meaningful only to a small chosen class,” he asserted. “The fight is against white supremacy and that’s where the fight has always been.” Carmichael stated bluntly that integration and busing should be rejected and encouraged Seattle blacks to demand their own teachers, their own curriculum, and their own schools. In addition, he vigorously opposed a proposal from some activists to close Garfield in order to better disperse black students throughout the city. Those in attendance reported that middle-aged blacks as well as youths cheered Carmichael’s riveting speech.

Just two weeks after Carmichael spoke, the Greater Seattle Council of Churches, of which McKinney was now president, organized a forum on May 4 at Mount Zion Baptist on the subject of Black Power. The overall tone was moderate, with the speakers at moments acknowledging the critique that Carmichael and others were leveling against integration. John Adams gave the keynote address. He declared sympathetically that Black Power “is one of the many youthful expressions of judgment upon the phoniness and emptiness of our commitment to the values we claim. . . . Life for the American Negro has become worse, not better in the last few years.” Black Power “was a revolt against the whiteness of American cultural values[,] . . . a result of the failure of the white community to respond to the civil rights efforts of the last several years.”

But Adams walked a fine line between affirming the central message of Black Power and warning of the “dangers inherent in the Black Power Stance.” He asserted, “There is a real danger of excesses by Negroes in this new found sense of manhood and strength,” a
danger that was ever present "because human perversity knows no color." He continued,

There is the danger that this new racial definition and its unsettling overtones will cause too many whites to use it as a rationalization to withdraw and escape duty on a tense and unpopular front. I plea that the Church not take this course. . . . There is the continuing danger that in the emergence of Black Power the white community and situations will be neglected and further alienated. . . . There is the danger that the Black Power Position will not work. 90

The dialogue between Black Power and American culture, Adams stated, had just begun.

I admit that I am perplexed in regard to where this meeting is going and how it will finally come out. But I do know that the Negro's anguished cry of long endured pain and his hopeful offer of unused possibilities have been unheeded by the Church. Manhood and inclusion denied, he looks inward for identity and the strength he needs to be fully human in a world of powers and principalities, primarily white. 91

As the Black Power movement gained influence, African American pastors together with CORE and NAACP leaders attempted to keep Seattle from implooding. African American leadership in the Pacific Northwest was in an extraordinarily tenuous position during the summer of 1967. Just weeks after Carmichael had raised the consciousness of young blacks in Seattle, race riots broke out in Detroit and Newark and made front-page news across the country. Seattle seemed ripe for some kind of riot itself. Several anonymous threats were made against the annual Torchlight Parade, part of Seafair, the city's summer festival. Many citizens argued that the mayor should cancel at least the parade if not the whole event; however, the mayor, James "Dorm" Braman, resisted, and no rioting occurred in Seattle that summer. That September, the mayor spoke to the press and thanked the city's black activists for their efforts to prevent a riot. Braman singled out the Reverend John Adams for his helpful suggestions regarding the transportation of kids to neighborhood pools at the city's expense and a summer jobs program. 92 "The big thing that happened to these summer kids," said the mayor, was that they found there was someone that would hire them and give them an opportunity to do something. And this breaks down, at least to a degree, the biggest wall and barrier which they have sold themselves. The Negro people have over the years convinced themselves that nobody will have them. 93

Though Seattle did not unravel during the summer of 1967, concerns over de facto segregation remained. In February 1968, the Seattle School Board presented the Central Area Civil Rights Committee with a proposal for the integration of schools that would have required Garfield to remain open. The CACRC approved all the ideas with the exception of the decision regarding Garfield. The committee believed that Garfield would soon be 90 percent black, and Adams specifically remembers being concerned about the level of drug dealing near the high school. He and others on the CACRC believed Garfield should be closed. 94

Adams and his CACRC colleagues decided that the black community needed to determine once and for all whether integration or separatism should be its overall objective. They organized a meeting for March 6, 1968, to be held at the East Madison YMCA. Adams, who wanted to use the meeting to challenge the idea of black separatism, hoped to make this a "water shed evening," said one of the attendees, Roberta Byrd Barr, a black school administrator who would soon be the first female secondary school principal in Seattle. 95 An estimated crowd of some 400 assembled that night. Members of the CACRC kicked off the meeting by presenting their own integration proposal, which included the closure of five Central District schools, including Garfield. Adams and the CACRC hoped that this would force the district's hand and result in its sending neighborhood students to better-funded predominantly white schools. Though several individuals spoke in support of the CACRC's proposal, younger and more militant African Americans vigorously objected to it; indeed, before the meeting, the newly formed Seattle Association of Black Student Unions, comprising mostly students from the University of Washington and Seattle University, had quietly gathered 1,100 signatures on a petition opposing the CACRC plan. They believed that Adams and the CACRC failed to understand the need for maintaining black culture and identity. From their perspective, Garfield provided an important opportunity for the development of black culture in the city. 96

Roberta Byrd Barr and Ed Banks, a highly respected black grassroots leader who had also attended the meeting, both believed that Adams lost some of his influence that night. In fact, Banks had warned Adams not to call the meeting in the first place because the tide had been turning against the pastor and other more moderate integrationists. 97 Ultimately, the school board decided not to close Garfield. It soon shifted its focus to the middle schools and the proposal that both white and black students should be bused. The decision provoked ongoing resistance that ultimately delayed mandatory busing until 1977.

However, in 1968, the future of desegregation remained unclear. And though Adams and the CACRC had lost some standing within the black community, the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., on April 4 thrust both Adams and his fellow CACRC member McKinney back into positions of leadership. Days of rioting around the country followed the shooting in Memphis. The Northwest was spared most of the overt violence, but there was collective grief on an unprecedented level within the African American community and certain elements
of the white community. The press turned to Adams and McKinney for their reactions to King's death. Said Adams, "I feel like a lot of me died tonight. You don't follow a man's leadership for 12 or 13 years, or know a man of his kind of personality without his death having a traumatic effect." He hoped that King's death would "turn on" all those "who are indifferent or unconcerned about their fellow man not only in the white community but the black." McKinney stated, "Dr. King was an apostle of love. While the mood of America today has been one of hate and anger, he brought to it a dimension of love."

On April 8, an estimated 10,000 marchers made their way from the intersection of East Madison Street and 19th Avenue East to the Seattle Center Arena for a memorial service for Dr. King. So many people joined the march that the event had to be moved to an adjacent outdoor high-school stadium that could accommodate up to 14,000 individuals. Singing "We Shall Overcome," the crowd assembled to hear a number of speakers. Adams delivered the eulogy, which was a version of King's own eulogy of John F. Kennedy at the time of his assassination in 1963:

This cannot be dismissed as the isolated act of a madman[,] . . . Martin King was assassinated by a morally inclement climate. It is a climate filled with heavy torrents of false accusation, jostling winds of hatred and raging storms of violence.

. . . The death of Martin King challenges each one of us to set aside our grief and go forward with more determination to rid this city, this state and this nation of every vestige of prejudice, every evidence of discrimination and every kind of injustice practiced here.

Taking the opportunity to address one of those injustices, Adams called for passage of the open-housing bill, receiving a standing ovation. Organizers passed out some 5,000 petitions at the memorial service. Just a few days after King's assassination, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1968 with a provision that guaranteed

Religious leaders from various denominations participated in the march and memorial service for Martin Luther King, Jr., on April 8, 1968. Adams led the march; he is the man at the center of the top photo, holding hands with his daughter. In the bottom photo, Walter Hundley stands at the podium, and behind him stand various religious leaders, including Katagiri, Petersen, Levine, and Connolly. (Archives of the Archdiocese of Seattle, VR1200.032, VR1200.035)
fair housing. Perhaps out of guilt, or perhaps out of fear, on April 19 the Seattle City Council unanimously passed its own fair-housing ordinance, the object of such controversy earlier in the decade. This time it was passed with an emergency clause, making it impossible to appeal the ordinance by referendum.

Seattle activists continued to work to desegregate public schools in the following decade. Federal courts were beginning to mandate integration of schools through court-ordered busing. In 1974, Boston was the first northern city to implement citywide court-ordered busing, and it went poorly, with significant violence and white resistance. Against this backdrop, Seattle’s educational, civic, and religious leaders hoped to develop a plan that would accomplish the goal of integration without the city being ordered to do so by the courts. The Church Council of Greater Seattle (formerly, the Greater Seattle Council of Churches) and the Black Clergy United for Action ended up playing key roles in the development of what became known as the Seattle Plan, a program to desegregate the city’s public schools.

A major step toward the creation of the Seattle Plan occurred in 1976, when Don Daughtry, a white pastor from the Beacon Avenue Church of Christ, convinced the Church Council of Greater Seattle to form the Task Force on Racial Justice in Education. Daughtry and Peter Janero, a Roman Catholic layperson, were named as cochairs. The task force did three things primarily. First, it brought representatives from the white, black, and Asian communities together so that they could reach a consensus on the approach to desegregation. Second, the task force formulated a philosophy of integration that was specific to the demographic uniqueness of Seattle. And third, it urged the council to apply pressure to the Seattle School Board by threatening to join the NAACP and the American Civil Liberties Union in a lawsuit if the board did not accept the plan.

After months of study, the task force concluded that mandatory busing should include all schools in the district and that the burden of busing should not fall simply on the African American community. The task force asserted that Seattle should be a multicultural city with a pluralistic character and that white students also needed to come into contact with significant numbers of persons of color, particularly from the African American and Asian communities. In other words, all students, not just blacks, must learn how to interact with members of other racial and ethnic groups. The council's task force believed that the old model of closing predominantly black schools and dispersing African American students throughout the white communities should be abandoned. For the task force, integration did not necessarily mean assimilation into a majority white culture—members wanted to move the city toward a more multicultural social environment.

The task force presented its findings to the Seattle School Board on December 22, 1976. In order to represent the vision of a multicultural city, the statement was jointly read by Edward Iwamoto, the Japanese American pastor of Blaine Memorial Methodist Church; Cecil Murray, pastor of First AME Church; William Cate, president and director of the Church Council of Greater Seattle; and Ann Siqueland, the council’s desegregation project director. The council then took an active role in attempting to convince people throughout the city of the merits of busing. More than 100 churches offered educational programs intended to explain the reasons that it had become necessary. The council issued a statement expressing its commitment to action as well as hopes for the city in general: “We intend to be advocates for racial justice in education.... If we apply our best energies we may ultimately be moving to the realization, in Seattle, of a truly pluralistic society.”

On December 14, 1977, the Seattle School Board voted to adopt the Seattle Plan, which reflected much of what the council’s Task Force on Racial Justice in Education had recommended. The plan included mandatory busing for all schools in the district and developed a complicated formula that defined segregation in terms of the ratio of white to nonwhite students in the district. The action made Seattle the largest city in the United States to undertake voluntary districtwide desegregation through mandatory busing. The plan went into effect in September 1978 and did not engender the violence or conflict that Boston and other cities had experienced. Across the country, various media noted the role that the Church Council of Greater Seattle played in the process. A Philadelphia Inquirer headline read: “In Seattle, Church Group Swings a Desegregation Plan.” The newspaper acknowledged the influence of key religious leaders on the plan and quoted David Colwell, pastor of Seattle’s Plymouth Congregational Church: “We’re old battlers from way back, and we insist education for this day be multi-racial and cultural.”

As a postscript, it must be noted that the effort to make Seattle truly multi-racial and multicultural has been fraught with difficulty and complexity. By 1980, the district determined that all Seattle schools except for Cleveland High School were racially balanced. Yet white families had fled the public schools in significant numbers (white enrollment fell by 28 percent). By 1989, the city had scaled back its busing program, and eight years later the city had ended it altogether. Finally, in 2007, the U.S. Supreme Court nullified the last modest component of the plan, the racial tiebreaker, a policy that stipulated that when a school had more ap-
licants than seats, applicants who would improve the racial balance of the school would get preference. Nevertheless, the idea of fostering diversity without mandating it remains a high priority for the Seattle school district.\textsuperscript{108}

When the Seattle Plan went into effect, it had been nearly 20 years since Samuel McKinney and John Adams had arrived in Seattle with hopes of changing the racial dynamics in the city. And in those 20 years much had changed. Employment and housing opportunities for African Americans had improved, and Seattle schools were more diverse, even if the goal of a truly multicultural configuration of enrollment remained elusive. In spite of those changes, structural racism persisted in the form of discriminatory loans and hiring practices and economic poverty. White flight to the suburbs in order to avoid mandatory busing would continue to present challenges in the succeeding decades. Nevertheless, Seattle had changed in both its racial and ethnic composition and had become more aware of what it meant to be a multiracial and multicultural city.

At the center of much of the effort to change the city were religious individuals and organizations. People like Samuel McKinney, John Adams, Mance Jackson, Lemuel Petersen, Thomas Connolly, Raphael Levine, and Peter Raible challenged the city to improve the treatment of African Americans in a number of ways. These religious leaders shared the belief that the Bible mandated them to work for the end of discrimination and for social justice. At no other time in the city's history did more cooperation and collaboration exist between white and black communities. These individuals, and many members of their respective churches, worked with CORE, the Urban League, and the NAACP to try and achieve a more integrated city.

Was Seattle's experience different from that of other cities on the West Coast? More detailed analysis is surely warranted, but an initial comparison of Portland, San Francisco, and Los Angeles with Seattle suggests that there was less involvement from the religious communities in those other three cities. Portland did in fact have several black and white members of the clergy who were very committed to civil rights in the city. But it was not on the same scale as Seattle. It is less clear in the case of Los Angeles and of San Francisco, but it seems evident that the NAACP and CORE were the two principal organizations that provided civil rights leadership in both cities. Seattle indeed may be unusual for the degree of religious leadership.\textsuperscript{109}

Whether Seattle was significantly different from other western cities remains to be determined. However, what is unmistakable is the importance of religious leadership in helping guide Seattle through the tumultuous '60s and '70s. The city benefited from a critical mass of religious activists who were willing to advocate direct political action in order to change hiring practices, improve access to housing, and increase educational opportunities. McKinney and Adams managed to advocate for integration while also validating the concerns of younger, more militant African Americans, helping to steer the city away from violence and despair. Seattle's story is an important one in the larger context of civil rights in the West, and it cannot be fully understood until the role of religious leadership is more fully appreciated.

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