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Speak Out For Human Rights, Clergy Urged

Mailing of interfaith appeal preceded York Negroes' protest against police tactics. Human Relations Advisory council sees chance 'to encourage us in York county to set our house in order . . .'

More than 300 ministers and spiritual leaders of all faiths in York county have been asked by a local human relations group to use their churches to effect "positive efforts" for human rights.

"As clergymen," said a letter from York County Advisory council, Pennsylvania Human Relations commission, "you have an almost unique opportunity to speak affirmatively, to encourage us in York county to set our house in order without waiting for a crisis to require us to do so."

A spokesman for York County Council of Churches, through whom the letter was mailed to the clergymen, said the mailing took place on Friday. Later in the weekend a Negro protest developed over the biting of three young men by city police dogs.

John D. Zimmerman, chairman of the advisory council, signed the letter which was sent to 300 Protestant ministers, eight of the Roman Catholic faith, three Jewish spiritual leaders, a Unitarian and a Greek Orthodox pastor.

"The major religious faiths," said the letter, "have pledged renewed efforts to help to bring reality to the American dream."

What the letter asked the ministers specifically to do was "through your regular worship services or through other church groups and in your bulletins, encourage positive efforts for better human relations in our community."

The Community Audit of Human Rights, published several years ago and citing areas of segregation and discrimination, was called to the attention of the clergy. "It tells us what remains to be done," the letter said of the audit.

Zimmerman said persons interested in getting copies of the audit could do so by applying at the courthouse.

Despite the picture of discrimination painted by the audit, said Zimmerman, "some hopeful things have happened, too."

"A few Negro families have been able to buy decent houses in neighborhoods where Negroes have not previously lived," the letter asserted and continued:

"A few Negroes have found 'non-traditional' jobs and are proving themselves effective bookkeepers, saleswomen, engineers, pharmacists. A few organizations have opened their memberships to all qualified persons."

The letter opened by saying that recently "all Americans have had the chance to assess, as perhaps never before, the meaning of freedom in a democracy, as Negro citizens have sought the equality of opportunity which most of us take for granted."

Seek assurance from Snyder that there will be police protection during the planned demonstration tomorrow.

The letter with Snyder's reply was delivered to Peter's home, 2291 Sycamore road, Shiloh, by a police car about 1 p.m.

Peters, a postal clerk, had been credited with organizing Sunday's mass meeting and had been installed as temporary chairman of an executive cabinet.

Members of this cabinet who accompanied Peters to city hall yesterday were Mrs. Marjorie H. Dean, James R. Colston Jr., Hildegarde Breland, Louise Sullivan and Raymond A. Rhoades.

Accompanying the group was Harold Brown, former outstanding basketball player at William Penn Senior High school and now a resident of San Diego, Cal., where he is president of San Diego chapter, Congress on Racial Equality (CORE).

Police dogs were used by police during an incident Friday night at Princess and Newberry streets involving a crowd estimated by police at 150 persons. Two of the men who were bitten were arrested and later fined $50 each by Police Court Magistrate William H. Nickey.

Police told Nickey that the dogs bit the men in self defense. Defense witnesses said the attacks on the men were unprovoked.

Permit Unnecessary

Police Capt. William H. Kapp said later yesterday that no permit is required in York for peaceful picketing except in cases where the flow of traffic on state highways is involved.

The police canine corps was formed less than a year ago. At that time, Jacob W. Hose, director of public safety, said the German Shepherd dogs would be used to control crowds and riots.

"Dogs have a psychological effect over mobs that ordinary men don't have," he said at that time.

Several months ago, a candidate for the corps was returned to his former owner because he refused to bite upon command.

Mayor's Statement

Here is the mayor's statement:

"After listening to the requests made by the referred to Committee of York, I offer the following commentary:

"Let it be said that my office in City Hall and my personal business office have never taken any action against any race. This can be substantiated by the fine citizens of these groups who have known me, have worked with me and dealt with me in various categories throughout our lives.

"During an interview with the Committee in my office, the statement was made by a committee spokesman to the effect that Negroes were referred to as second class citizens. It is unfortunate to have them called thusly because I know so many of the group who well rate first class citizenship. Regardless of race, all of us may choose for ourselves whether to be first class, second class, third or fourth, or whether to become the scum of the earth.

"TO BE RESPECTED — WE MUST RESPECT.

"On the subject of police dogs, it is my opinion that they are one of the greatest assets to any police department. They are not only a real value in tracking down violators of the law, but are also a support to a policeman when necessary to cope with a group. There would be no need for police dogs in a well behaved society. This then is the first requirement to deserve the discontinuance of dogs because peaceful citizens do not require attention of policemen.

"On the subject of demonstrations that are peaceful, there shall be no restraints issued to any group. Where a permit is required, the proper action should be taken. It might be mentioned here, however, that demonstrations in our City are not necessary by any group. Peaceful, mannerly discussions between parties or committees would prove more fruitful. Demonstrations are likely to focus needless attention, thereby creating unfavorable acceptance. It is suggested that you bring your problems to this office for discussion."