

MR. HENDERSON: Mr. Fitch - he wants to get away
as soon as possible.

MR. HAREWOOD: Will you raise your right hand please.

M O R G A N L. F I T C H

called as a witness, having been first duly sworn, was
examined in chief by Mr. Harewood, and testified as follows:

Q What is your name, please ? A Morgan L. Fitch.

Q You are President of the Chicago Real Estate Board ?

A I am, sir.

Q And your address in the City ?

A 7915 Exchange Avenue.

Q Thank you, be seated, please.

SEN. WALLACE: Mr. Fitch, we would like to know what
is the policy of the Chicago Real Estate Board in
reference to restrictive covenants against Negro home
seeker, and if there are any plans being considered for
making new housing units available to colored citizens and
for rehabilitating areas in which they already live -
you can be seated.

A Thank you, sir. The question has two parts.

Q Yes, answer either one first.

A The first one as to the policy of the Chicago Real
Estate Board in respect to restrictive covenants against
Negro home seekers, I am at liberty to say that there is

no established definite policy as to restrictive covenants; the second part as to housing plans, or that part which has to do with plans to develop an area, a plan for building is not considered by us at all, as this is merely an organization of real estate men. If that answers the question.

SEN. WALLACE; These questions are asked, due to the fact that some information has come to us of a definite and determined policy of the realtors in that regard ?

A I never have heard of it, never heard any such discussion. We are not in the construction business, merely an organization of realtors, and we do make suggestions which have to do with practices and things of that sort are concerned, but as far as direction of, or concern with enterprises of that nature, we have not attempted to do that.

Q Well, have you knowledge of these restrictive covenants in certain areas ?

A Yes, we do.

Q Do you have dealings with that situation through your organization ?

A Through the real estate board?

Q Yes ? A No, sir.

MR. HENDERSON: Mr. Fitch, will you state your
74 personal opinion in regard to the feasibility of
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restrictive covenants against a particular race or group of people, or creed - since you have been here this morning and heard certain statements made, relative to such conditions that now exist in a city like Chicago ?

A I feel, and I think most real estate man feel that they have a right to restrict property, and exercise such rights, which is generally as inherent, a right of theirs as in any other policy, in the United States; that such owners or realtor has a right to so govern their property as they see fit and feel free to assert these inherent rights, as to property. I think that is a straight forward opinion, not speaking specifically as to any particular group of people. I feel that property should be operated freely, and that the enactment of legislation as would deny people the right to deal with property as they see fit would be contrary to certain inherent rights people should be or should feel free to exercise, any restriction on an owner of real estate or a realtor would tend to operate otherwise.

SEN. WALLACE: Do you feel that an individual, we will say a member of the colored race should be under restrictions, or conditions that would effect a large number of American citizens within a certain district, what is your opinion on that ?

75 A I think the right of a man to deal with his property

as he sees fit is fundamental, can't take it away without damage to his fundamental rights, inherent rights, if you please.

Q Do you think a handicap is sustained to certain people when then enter into particular agreements, isn't that a sort of handicap against other people who

A (interrupting) Might very well be, I get your point, but still you can't take or deny the right of a man to create an estate, to do with his property as he sees fit.

MR. DICKERSON: Mr. Fitch, you are speaking as if you are a clear and definite advocate of civil liberties.

A I am, sir.

Q It is very gratifying to me to hear you speak in that manner, understanding that you are a keen supporter of civil liberties, to all people, am I right ?

A Yes, most certainly.

Q Is not your position inconsistent, just by the attitude you express, by persons who should be affected by such restrictions, and the inherent rights of people in this particular instance to deal with their property as they see fit. Now this is true, and I am satisfied you still agree with American jurisprudence and

(interruption) Are you an attorney ?

76 A No, sir.

Q I took it that you were - as you were talking about the use of property . . .

A No sir, I am not an attorney.

Q But, you are pretty well in agreement of things of that sort I take it, as you speak of the use of property, and the owner's rights relative to what type of use they would exercise, and we all know the history of property as set out in English jurisprudence, that movement initiated in England wherein people are given the right to enjoy the use of property, the enjoyment of the use of property by the owner of the estate.

A Yes. What I am trying to bring out, is what you have asked with respect to property and communities - and I submit that property owners should have the right to disposed of their property as they see fit.

Of course, there is a point where the race of persons conflict with society and there has to be some social adjustment, or establishment of a principle.

Q I am trying to point out, if I am clear on the matter, with relation to certain districts, the use of property, from the point of view of the person or persons affected, and the use of the property, or of property, if you will from the type of person within certain confines, you can see clearly that use as a use
77 to the detriment of certain peoples.

A Yes.

Q You get my point ? A Yes, and as I said, of course there is a point where the race of persons would conflict with society, and there is to be some restrictions established.

Q But my point is a point of distinction, and that has to do with the use of the property from a type of person of

A (interrupting) I think there is a distinction, there is, most certainly.

Q And there are two objections right there. Now I think this second objection deals with the use as an instrument, which has to do with the occupancy, on account of either race or creed and more definitely has to do with colored people, simply on account of race and creed, and knowing that, that certainly is not in keeping with the spirit of the institution, it digresses from every thing we hold sacred, in that it denies persons the right to live where they please, further denies persons certain liberties which are inherently theirs, and further denies persons property without due process of law, and without equal participation to the things we hold sacred.

A Yes ?

Q The State operates through the Courts, and the

Court is an instrument of the State.

A In the tearing down of sections

Q (interrupting) And the State operates through the Courts, now in demolition plans, or operations, it is the Courts that lead to enforcement, as well as set boundaries, a line as distinct as a line between Indiana and any other State, and act as an enforcement agency, to prohibit restrictions, as to property, against persons on account of race or creed, and as I see it that borders against public policy.

A You have done a very good job, I might say in pulling this thing down to a ^{fine} final point.

I still think you might introduce a law, to determine who shall be permitted to occupy property, and assume an attitude over property, and might keep it vacant indefinitely too for a life time, but still the ownership would remain the same, the owner would have the right to dispose of it as he saw fit and still

Q (interrupting) I understand, going back to the 19th century manner of dealing with a situation, that people have a right to contract with whomsoever they see fit, so long as they do not operate this right against public policy, the public policy of the State.

A Yes.

Q In this situation, we are confronted with, this

great Democracy we all talk about, ideologically, and point out the benefits of ideology as between Democracy and Facism and Nazism, would be better to put it to work and make it real, rather than practice discrimination in this Democracy so flagrantly. We in America are aglow with indignation as to the principles of other Countries, so do you think that covenants of that sort that restrict use and occupation, occupancy, as against members of certain races are in accord with the principles of what we call Democracy, which tend to deny citizens of equal rights under the law to live where they please, and are able to live, I might say and the right to enjoy this liberty we speak of in such glowing terms ?

A I agree with what you are saying.

REP. GREENE: Mr. Fitch, how long have you been President of the Chicago Real Estate Board ?

A Just about a (1) year.

Q What are the pre-requisites for membership in that organization ?

A Must be a member of, or operating a real estate business for a period of two (2) years; be licensed by the State of Illinois; be of good moral character and several other things, we have them set out.

Q I see - any colored members of this organization ?

A No sir.

Q No colored ? A No sir.

Q Any of the white realtors have property in Negro neighborhoods, of that membership ?

A Some, yes.

Q Any colored persons made application for membership in the Chicago Real Estate Board ?

A Not to my knowledge.

Q If they had made application, you would have information relative to that, in a years time, that is since you have been president ?

A Not necessarily - no.

Q If they made application, how would they go about making application ?

A To the membership committee.

Q And that Committee would pass on this ?

A Yes sir.

Q There is a division of the real estate board, with reference to membership, application would have to go through routine channels, finally that committee would pass on eligibility as to its members ?

A Simply pass on it, yes - the Board uses their discretion.

Q I see - and does the Chicago Real Estate Board have anything to do with refinancing property through the Federal Housing Administration ?

A Well, no - I would say not - not through our organization, some of the members might be mortgagees

Q Now, do any of these members have agreements, limiting, or recommending loans on property in areas, well, in an area located in a colored neighborhood, to the Federal Housing Administration ?

A Yes, I do myself.

Q To your knowledge, any of these loans been accepted by F. H. A. ?

A Well , in colored areas ?

Q Yes ? A I have made some myself.

Q These white realtors in a colored section, do you know if any of these realtors have made any recommendations to F. H. A., as to such loans ?

A I should think that most of the colored realtors in a colored neighborhood have made such arrangements, as well as white real estate dealers.

Q Do you know - - you have heard of the "Slum Clearance Bill?"

A The what Bill ?

Q A Bill which is known as the Slum Clearance Bill; buildings to be torn down, to rehabilitate certain areas so designated as "The Slums"?

A May I ask a question ?

Q I am asking you now ?

A I know of the Bill. I was going to make a statement, that at the point where it is clear as to the tearing down, that it doesn't , or will it tend to make possible rebuilding ?

Q No, this is another movement prior to that one.

A That is a matter of concern to us.

Q I understand it as a move to tear down and put up manufacturing places. I am concerned with the tearing down part, I am reasonably sure they will tear down all right.

A It would have to be re-zoned again as to anything of that sort.

Q Yes, gives them the right to tear down, and do nothing too - and not build anything. None of these bills as introduced in the last session of the General Assembly, with reference to the slum area have any such re-building proviso, everything in it, is to tear down.

A To acquire, not tear down.

Q Acquire through eminent domain, and nothing in the Bill, as introduced in the last session of the General Assembly to rebuild.

A Well, it is to be assumed

Q Never - assume nothing - law gives the right to take away, but nothing which says to rebuild, thats my point.

A Well

REP. GREENE: (interrupting) What, if any, connection relative to this Slum Clearance Bill, has the Chicago Real Estate Board, or interest in the matter and its policies, as to eminent domain and

A (interrupting) That will be determined at the meeting of the Board next Wednesday night. I shall be glad to advise you.

Q The Board meeting, I suppose, is closed ?

A No.

Q Next Wednesday ? A Yes.

Q I'll be there.

MR. DICKERSON: Just this question.

A To the public as a whole, it might be closed.

MR. DICKERSON: Mr. Fitch, I take it that committees of the Real Estate Board have suggestions to make, relative to the value of property in areas over the City, and have a definite policy as to the value of property, the enhanced value, and suggestions in that regard made by this Committee, and by the membership as a whole, and so forth?

A Yes.

Q Results of some of the investigations and so forth ?

A Yes.

Q I see - now, you have an appraisal committee on

-84- buildings ? A Yes.

Q Do you know what the attitude of the appraisal committee is with respect to appraising property in Negro communities ? That is to say, what is your present attitude in appraising property in that section - would you take into consideration, all circumstances, that is the people living there, conditions under which they live, surrounding environments in the district, a general survey as to what the property is worth, based on those facts, to the same extent as you would in a smaller territory, a white community let us say ?

A You know the answer to that, Alderman. We take into consideration naturally all of those things, type of investment, people to determine the value.

Q Yes, take into consideration the type building, the age, physical conditions, ^{accessibility} susceptibility to transportation, all of those things to make up what you would consider a true appraisal, and you would also consider the identity of the persons occupying the property, whether white or colored and

A (interrupting) Not the identity, we consider the type.

Q Well the type as to what identity can be placed upon that - as to whether colored or white, all that would enter into the picture ?

A Might be Italian, might be Polish, Scandinavian, or

Jewish or whatever type might enter the picture.

Q Would that take into consideration the color of a person - assuming a person is colored, in a colored district ? Taking that for example, is it not true that in your estimation, in the estimation of the Board, that would cause the appraised value to go down considerably, as compare with some other people in some other areas, take for example an area, or a section occupied by Italians or people of Polish descent ?

A We generally take all of those factors into consideration, and that the building has depreciated, and the extent of that, we merely get as much information on the building as well as the area as we can.

Q Would tend to find out if merely because of the occupancy per se of Negro people

A (interrupting) And the area, the adjoining area, the re-saleability, and

Q (interrupting) Do you think it is quite fair to the colored people, who have considerable trouble getting adequate housing, lack of available housing, taking all of those factors into consideration, reducing the value of the property, because they happen to be colored ?

A No, not quite, surely not, still coming back to this - a question of mortgages - we determine that, and

other factors, all go into the picture of a true appraisal, as you know.

Q That is true. You know colored people live in an area adjoining the so called Washington Park area, or subdivision, or what you will - Negroes occupy sections on either side in large numbers, you know that ?

A Very well.

Q Do you get any sales as a result of people moving away ? A Quite a few NOW.

Q More than in years previous ? A Oh, yes.

Q Those properties, for sale we are speaking, were appraised years ago ?

A There were some.

Q Not very many ? A No, no place in Chicago, incidentally.

Q Do you know whether or not the sale of property say over a year or so ago is higher than it is today ? A Thats an open question. My opinion would be that individual needs were higher today than a year ago, yes - if that answers your question.

Q Year or so ago, the market as to property in that area was for whites nearly, wasn't it ?

A Well it was, to some extent, some anticipation by realtors.

Q Well practically, within the limits of that restric-

tive covenanted area, as far as the record shows, were sales made there were whites only as purchasers ?

A Yes.

Q Now people of color are buying in there, due to some reason or other ?

A Yes, I suspect some white people anticipated that it would be included in a colored area, yes.

Q It does then seem significant, that colored people would pay less - you say the market in the colored area is low because of what ?

A Values in the Washington Park go down, because of colored occupancy in a very short time, the same as any other market. It is anticipated that certain changes will take place, and corporations act accordingly.

Q That makes it a fact then that because of the occupancy of a Negro in such property would tend to diminish the value as far as Real estate brokers are concerned ?

A Not the real estate brokers, rather the owners.

Q Matter of pressure then, would it be ?

A Well you can call it pressure, good business, what the market will pay, or what the public will pay, what traffic will bear.

Q Would it take into consideration, eliminating the white occupancy, would it take into consideration the

vacancy of the property ?

A No, but that would be an element I should think.

Q Don't you think that is one of the deterrents in the entire situation, the matter of deserting a Negro area, as to the white people, and the real estate brokers, or the corporations, and the entrance of colored people in the area. I appreciate your liberal human view point, and wish more had it. We are glad to talk with someone with a liberal human point of view like you seem to have.

A I am very human, try to be, and am sincerely interested in colored housing, which I think is one of the most important problems, the matter of housing to the people in the City of Chicago.

You understand, I think, that there are, roughly speaking one hundred and seventy five thousand residents, units in Chicago of sub standard proportions; thirty five hundred and more with no bath rooms, an appalling situation here in Chicago whereby one hundred and seventy five thousand residences now occupied by colored people, which in no way measure up to any standard of measure.

That's the problem, not just in this particular area, but a problem just as vicious with white as colored people I might add further.

Q I see. Now Mr. Fitch, we all know that in the City of Chicago there are about thirteen inspectors, in general, with some aides, to enforce certain laws dealing with the Health and Sanitary Codes of the City ?

A, Yes.

Q Those inspectors, their duties would have to do with housing inspection and so forth.

A Yes.

Q There has been a measure considered, in the City Council, with respect to the 1941 budget, to make allowance only for thirteen inspectors.

A Yes.

Q And it would be humanly impossible for 13 inspectors to cover a City like Chicago so as to do a good job in respect to community sanitation and the like?

A I think it is impossible to do a complete job, and hard to do a poor job, but I think it is possible for them to do a better job than they do.

Q That is when they had thirteen ?

A Yes, and they are doing nothing now.

Q Thats my point.

Q That is where the people of the real estate board can get into action, otherwise

A (interrupting) Not so very much. People don't want strict enforcement of the laws as to sanitary

conditions, and they are still living.

Q Yes, but how ? If the Real Estate Boards are trying to combat this situation, and they have this information, they should get together with the members of the City Council, which has a housing committee, and discuss matters relative to improved housing conditions.

A Yes, the President is very much interested in that.

Q Takes a little more than the President, members of the Board should interest themselves.

A Yes.

Q And set out the fact, as to the lack of staff of inspectors in the City of Chicago, suggesting an increase and such other suggestions.

A The Board will not ask for more inspectors, but incidentally will ask for thirteen inspectors to do a job.

Q Isn't that quite a paradox ?

A No.

Q That 13 men can't do a job, because even if they did attempt the job, there wouldn't be enough, the thirteen couldn't do the job any way ?

A Well, yes - we can't anticipate them doing any kind of a job until they make an attempt to do a job, do something about what they are supposed to, and do
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a job of that.

Q I see. A As I see it, we cannot anticipate them doing a large job until they do the job that they already have. My experience develops that they have not done anything in white housing, where that problem might even be more accute. That is where most of the difficulty rests.

SEN. WALLACE: We thank you very much for your information Mr. Fitch.

MR. HENDERSON: Just this question, would you consider one of the main reason for depreciation of buildings in Negro sections, areas in the City thickly in habited by Negroes due to the fault of the owner, the person who owns the property and do not live in the section ?

A Might live next door.

Q Might live next ? A Yes.

MR. DICKERSON: My further view on this matter, is that those who own the property, hold title to it and live outside of the community are out of sympathy with any development program. As a result, we find Kitchennettes by the hundreds, and the people who hold the mortgage, or who own the property, or have title are not in the neighborhood and effect an attitude which does not help the situation any, but tends to demoralize the neighborhood, in fact, it is difficult to even trace

ownership, or the best qui. trust, in order to find out the owner, you would have to find a Philadelphia attorney, and Pecora and a terrific staff to trace down the ownership, to find out who the owner of the property is. You get my point of view.

A Yes.

Q That is the fruits of these absentee landlords - and that is the thing we are trying to avoid.

A Yes, and the condition of which you speak exists now within a half a block of where you are sitting.

Q Yes I know, because some times, - well the effect is obvious, they haven't been doing any building down this way for maybe fifty (50) years.

A Yes, you work at Randolph and Clark, just look it over.

Q Have you any recommendations as to this case of absentee landlords, or any other case of similar nature that would tend to relieve this situation?

A Yes, I have some recommendations, I would like to make for your record. I would like to make a statement in that regard in brief.

Q Yes.

A It is pointed out to me so that I and the other real estate men throughout the City know the conditions, and I feel a careful study of the situation should be made, and

and an investigation made into this problem. Only by discussion and exchange of views, as to conditions and problems that the people in certain areas understand, to the end that those conditions are to be remedied, and there will be improvements on this.

Nothing very definite that you can put your finger on, but the situation should be gone into carefully, whether by Legislative Act or otherwise, whether by a specially appointed State commission, but it should be gone into, as the problem is acute both as to white and colored housing.

I think you have made a good start in that direction, not considering this from a selfish stand point. I think the whole housing matter should be gone into quite thoroughly for the benefit of all the people of the City of Chicago. I don't think that we should attempt to draw a line, but attempt to do something that will benefit the colored people and at the same time made available to white people. I think the proposition should be approached from that broad angle, rather than confined to a certain group.

Q I see. A I want you to be interested in proper housing in all sections, not only for the benefit of colored people, but more for the improvement generally here in Chicago.

Q Yes?

A The problem today is bad housing, and there is no question as to that bad condition, and our course of action is to remedy that. I know we have bad conditions and there is not special area as to that. We take into consideration the question of construction and maintenance, and because there are, as I know in Chicago definite artificial barriers, all of which has to be overcome if progress is to be made in that direction. We want to raise standards, subject ourselves to rules and regulations and maintain housing beyond a question of a doubt that ordinary people can maintain.

Now there are certain definite remedies that can be applied to this situation, and one is to eliminate the artificial restrictions imposed on building generally and its progress, building construction, - and the other is an enforcement of the laws regarding sanitation and health - sanitation and hygiene, which I think could be done with the assistance of probably the police department, the health department and fire department, and such other departments as might be necessary .

There is another matter I want to touch briefly, and that has to do with Government control, rather Government competition, which has its effect as against private enterprise. There are certain economies, but this should be under their direction, with the assistance of and by

private enterprise. I have in mind now the Ida B. Wells homes which is a Government enterprise, which is good, fundamentally, serves a great need, the construction of it will be a sort of "lift", those homes which doubtless will benefit a great many people, but at the same time indicates the type of Governmental competition I had in mind, they will accomodate two or three thousand families in Chicago in a short time, but we have yet ten or twelve thousand families with no places to occupy, but this will relieve the load somewhat maybe ten to fifteen percent I believe it is in the area called the near south side of Chicago.

Now with respect to the piece of legislation, to that piece of legislation the so called "Re-Development Bill" - that Bill has its advantages, and I judge from what I have heard here today too, that it has some disadvantages. The proposed measure, called the neighborhood redevelopment corporation bill has merit to it, and tends to alleviate some of the shortage with respect to people in this area, a reconstruction program, designed to afford better housing. The Real Estate Board is in sympathy with the Bill to that extent, we want to be helpful to this, we want to of service to the community. All of these matters I have mentioned are fundamental rights we enjoy and are inherent rights at that.

MR. HENDERSON: Mr. Fitch, according to what you have suggested as recommendations, are we to understand that you are in favor of private persons acquiring property adjoining or close to the slum area, and building on this and run up, I mean rather rent it at a price, of course with a profit

A (interrupting) I get your point too, and I am in favor of private enterprise, rather impressing private enterprise so it can take these properties.

Q (continuing) I was saying, these properties near the Government properties be available to colored persons of low income, in the low income group, that will enable him to have a home meeting all the necessary qualifications as to standards and so forth ?

A Yes, I am in favor of improving private enterprise, so it can take this property, or these properties, and I think the Government is running in competition with private enterprise in that respect.

MR. HENDERSON: Rather than a situation whereby realtors will run these prices up whereby people in this particular group, the low income group, will be deprived of these advantages, in that these prices will be more than these people can afford, not being able to pay high rents ?

(no response)

MR. HENDERSON: (continuing) Now back in your statement you made reference to the value of property in this area of which we speak. In that respect, how do you account for the enormous increase in rentals for this same property, when purchased by or rented to colored people ?

A That is a positive fact, and my assumption would be that occupancy by colored people tends to give it abnormal depreciation, and abnormal obsolescence; I don't like it and maybe I don't agree with it. One other reason, I think colored people can afford to pay it, that's one.

Q Is that a fact, that assumption

A (interrupting) That is a fact in my own experience and also in the experience of others I ^{have} talked with about this.

MR. DICKERSON: Mr Fitch, getting back to that question, going into it a little further. By the way, are you a Chicago product ?

A Very much so.

Q I see, and do you know any colored professors, persons of that calibre with whom you come in contact, or do you ever come in contact with colored attorneys, doctors, business and professional persons in the City of Chicago ?

A I have had some contact, yes.

Q You know then, that we have Negroes who have finished

various Universities and colleges, and find themselves in high position, as a result of finishing these various universities with honors ?

A Yes, I have some very good friends who fall in that category, yes.

Q And you will admit that Negro people have made some progress since the emancipation proclamation ?

A I am sure of this.

Q Let us say that a colored man came up with you, colored man had the same advantages, same back ground, experience, only he was colored and you were white - that condition existed over a period of years; thought the same things you thought, lived as you lived and all of that - do you say occupancy of property by him would tend to give that property abnormal depreciation ?

A No sir. When I speak of that, I do not speak of individuals I speak of a class.

Q Isn't that the viciousness of the restrictive covenant, when it prevents that man occupying property next door to him.

A I think a restrictive covenant is a limitation on property, and has its good points, I guess you would call them.

Q What is that ? A Back to what I said at first, that I do not think you should deny one the right to

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enter into any kind of agreement as to their property, which does not directly, or is not directly antagonistic to the social welfare.

Q And "social welfare" is to effect twelve million over thirty ^{two} millions who are given this stigma, would you say ?

A Yes, but I think time will come when colored people as a race, will raise themselves to such a level, economically, socially and otherwise, that would eliminate restrictive covenants.

Q Yes, and maybe a few Hitler's might come along and level us all down ?

A Never can tell, you know the reestablished rule of Hitler.

Q One other question I wanted to raise in your statement, was that portion which had to do with building in Chicago. You said you didn't think the Government should enter into competition with private enterprise ?

A That's right.

Q Do you know, at the present time, what it would cost private enterprise, in the construction of, or building home so as to make available to people of low income ?

A Well, there are homes and homes.

Q That is true too - I am speaking of home that could be made available for people of the lowest income group -
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minimum suggestion ?

A As to the present building rate ?

Q Yes? A Residences for people of low income ?

Q Yes, like for instance the Ida B. Wells homes ?

A I see.

Q And also smaller individual dwellings - the very lowest figure you can quote?

A A structure of about 800 rooms ?

Q Yes, and you want to rent that building to a person for about ten, twelve or fifty dollars ?

A Well

Q Would it be about \$12.50 per room per month ?

A No way to get it at that

Q You mean no way to make a profit ?

A Well that would be considered, I would say Alderman about \$5.50 per room per month would be fair .

Q And people of low income can pay that ?

A Thats right.

Q A man would find himself paying that and not too much consideration - of course these are people assuming this is a clear case of this social equality and when they have raised themselves to such levels as you mention, people of low income.

A (interrupting) We would have to take away those artificial barriers, I am afraid.

MR. DICKERSON: (continuing) How long do you think that will take ?

A I don't know, but we won't find a solution until that day - a temporary panacea - have got to be together for a permanent solution.

Q Well in the meantime, should we fiddle while Rome burns ? A No, I shouldn't think so, but I do feel that

Q (interrupting) The Federal Government has made some progress in the building trades, you will grant that ? A True.

Q And that is a step in the right direction ?

A Yes.

Q That's what I mean.

MR. FOSTER: Mr. Fitch, are Negro brokers, who qualify general as to membership, be eligible for membership in the Chicago Real Estate Board ?

A Financially I think they are ?

Q And there is nothing in your constitution that would prevent Negro membership ?

A So far as I know, there is not.

Q And it would be a matter of the disposition of the membership committee and recommendations made on their part, as to whether or not a Negro might obtain membership ?
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A Yes.

Q I raise that question because Negro real estate dealers and brokers have not been able to break down that barrier, which might be an artificial barrier too. But if they qualify otherwise and pass this Committee, they might become members, is that right ?

A Well that would be the procedure.

Q And is there any other channel, speaking of eligibility now

A (interrupting) I think in fairness to everybody it might well be said, it would be unlikely that a Negro broker would be considered.

MR. DICKERSON: And in this spirit of Democracy, which we so proudly boast of, do you think, particularly of a real estate board that deals with citizens in such a manner, in a City like Chicago, a real estate board that assumes a policy of well we'll say restriction, based solely upon the color of people, to bar him from membership solely because he is colored, do you think such a policy is in keeping with the spirit of Democracy ?

A Thats true.

Q Your answer is yes ? A No sir.

Q Are there colored members in the association ?

A No.

Q Have there ever been colored members in the association

A No.

Q And the liklihood is that there will not be any in the association, at least no ways soon ?

(no response)

Q Of course, you are not free to tell us what you might want to say, but you are merely answering our questions as to the policies of the Chicago Real Estate Board? A Yes.

Q I think, however, that there is not ^a better place, nor no better way for Democracy to start, truly, than right here .

(no response)

SEN. WALLACE: We thank you very much for coming out, and for the information you have given us.

A I thank you for your courtesy.

(witness excused)

MR. HENDERSON: Mr. Keenan.

MR. HAREWOOD: Raise your right hand and be sworn.

J O S E P H K E E N A N

called as a witness, having been first duly sworn - was examined in chief by Mr. Harewood and testified as follows:

Q Your full name, please ? A Josqh Keenan.

Q Mr. Keenan, you are Secretary of the Chicago