

STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

March 11, 1965

The meeting was called to order and the Chairman stated the rules that would be followed in the hearing of proponents on H.B. 720; that those desiring to speak would clear first with Mrs. Shechter who would act as spokesman, that after each speaker the members of the committee would be given the opportunity to ask questions, and that committee members should limit themselves to questions without comment. Thereupon, Mrs. Shechter was introduced, and she in turn presented Mr. Glatt who is Director of the Commission on Civil Rights in Kansas.

Mr. Glatt stated that the bill passed in 1964 was a step in the right direction, but that it is too weak; particularly, that the lack of subpoena powers hampers the Commission greatly in that they must spend weeks sometimes securing testimony that could be secured immediately if subpoena powers were available; that time is of the essence because of limitation clauses in the Federal law. He discussed lack of accommodations in recreational areas, stating that this is a real cause of delinquency in many cases because there is just nothing the negro youngster can do; that the umbrella clause in the bill takes care of this type of thing rather than enumerating the places that will be affected. Mr. Glatt covered the proposal by sections, explaining the desired changes and their effect. He states that this is the only agency required to conduct their hearings and investigations under a "court of law" procedure, and that it needed to be changed from this strict requirement. Mr. Rogers inquired who had drawn the proposal, and Mr. Glatt replied that it is structurally about the same as drawn by his office and advisors. Mr. Unruh inquired if this would have any effect on the Railroads, and Mr. Glatt stated that they have had railroad complaints, but that it has occurred in all states and also against the Continental Air Lines in Colorado. Mr. Unruh then inquired if it was felt that a picture on a job application is a form of discrimination, and Mr. Glatt replied under the present law, that it violates the statute.

Mr. Emmet Blaze, an attorney from Wichita, appeared in favor of HB 720, stating that he came simply as an interested citizen. He too spoke of the need for subpoena powers, stating that it is almost impossible to conduct an investigation without it. He states that the agency has no power to impose penalty for refusal to comply; also, he states that people who might otherwise testify are afraid to do so because of employment penalties to themselves. Mr. Griffith and Mr. Turner made inquiry concerning appeals to the District Court, which Mr. Blaze states is the present only recourse. Miss Jacquart inquired if this is designed to settle cases out of Court, and Mr. Blaze

replied that he considered it a "conciliary" law.

Representative John Bower appeared, stating that he feels this is a good bill; that a stronger statute is needed and that this removes loopholes which were not intended to be present when the present public accommodations bill was passed.

Chris Policious of Newton appeared and stated that he is one of the many Mexican-Americans who are veterans who pride themselves that they have served their country and have never had a defector. He states however, that on the homefront their prestige has deteriorated, in that even the service organizations will not grant them membership; that even though they are property owners and voting citizens and taxpaying citizens they are still obviously considered not "full-fledged" citizens. Mr. Marshall pointed out the exceptions and inquired if he thought this would help induce the clubs to accept their membership and Mr. Policious stated that by opening the community facilities to them, they would have a chance to get acquainted and thereby find that they were no jeopardy to the "society" and therefore would be included.

Raymond Martinez of Newton, a member of the American GI Forum, stated that they have problems, especially in barbershops; that many of their people had been recently refused service in the local shops.

Rev. Dale Turner, speaking for Dr. Walter Fisher of Manhattan, appeared to submit documents for the use of the Committee--letter from Dr. Bascomb, document by Rev. David J. McGown (see attached) concerning barbershops in Manhattan; Comments of Dr. McCain, President of KSU.

Rep. Davis recalled some of the testimony presented in 1959 when the present bill was being considered. He states that it is important that Kansas enact a stronger law or the Federal Government will move in and take over the way it has in some other fields.

Mr. Sam Jackson, an attorney from Topeka, and President of the local chapter of NAACP, talked about inequality in certain fields of endeavor--barber colleges, beauty schools and in many of the trades. He states that there is even discrimination in cemeteries, and that many times the negro must go out of state in order to find a mortician; that the biggest deficiency however is in recreation for the youth--bowling, swimming, etc; that something must be provided to protect them, and cited so-called private clubs as a "dodge". Mr. Jelinek inquired what this bill would do to a certain type private organization to preserve the culture of certain people such as his own "Czech" club which meets to talk the language and keep the culture in the community?

Rev. A. E. Freeland, a Baptist minister from Kansas City, Kansas, spoke concerning the moral aspect of this law. He states that the Baptist ministers are behind this proposal. He states that it is the job of the U.S. Information Service to create an image abroad and that it is our responsibility to help in this regard; that when we treat our dark-skinned visitors in an unequal manner, they go home to influence their people to feel as they do.

Dr. Cortes of the Central Baptist Seminary in Kansas City, stated that he supports this proposal; especially the subpoena powers proposed.

Fred Strickland, a student at Southwest College in Winfield, stated that he not only was refused service in a local barbershop but had a gun pulled on him.

Derald Huddleston of Southwestern College stated that members of the pre-ministerial group made a visit to the local barbershops asking them to integrate; that five were willing and two refused. He states that after considerable difficulty, the local businessmen recognized the problem and got behind the move.

Dr. Charles Rocquemore of Wellington stated that they have a barbershop problem; that for 15 years he has driven 75 miles every two weeks for a haircut; that even though there is a negro barber in town, he too will not cut negro's hair for fear of losing his white trade. He states that he is a veterinarian and that there are laws to protect animals that are being transported, etc. that if laws can be passed for animals, certainly they can be passed for people.

George Caldwell of Lawrence stated that he is the president of LLPD; that the group attempts to reduce discrimination and improve opportunities for everyone in town. He discussed particularly the swimming pool situation in Lawrence, stating that they are membership concerns that exclude negroes; that because of this some youngsters have tried swimming in the Kaw and have been drowned.

Rev. Robert Nelson, a Methodist minister of Kansas City states that he is a member of the Metro-Planning Committee in Greater Kansas City and presented a resolution (see attached) dealing with this matter.

Rabbi Julian Miller discussed the Wichita situation, stating that their problems dealing with unruly youth, stem directly from a lack of recreational facilities.

Father Maurice Murray of St. Mary's College, spoke briefly favoring the proposal, stating that the key is the subpoena power.

Mr. James Dean, a student at Ottawa University, appeared in behalf of the proposal, stating that their problem was one of barbering also; that he students had set up their own shop to cut each others hair because the local barbers would not take care of their foreign and negro students.

The Rev. Niece, pastor of Faith Luthern Church in Kansas City, Kansas, stated that he is a member of the Greater Kansas City Council of Race and Religion, and urged the passage of this measure. He states that equal opportunity must be provided.

Mr. Chester Lewis, an attorney from Wichita, stated that the present Act has been effective in hotels, motels and restaurants and has made many changes throughout the state. He states that when the president speaks of poverty, he talks directly to the negro; that public accommodations and fair housing is involved; that you can't have these things unless there is equal opportunity; that it is all tied up together.

Mrs. Shechter stated that there were many people and many organizations present, but that time would not permit everyone to be heard. She stated that their remarks would be filed with the Chairman.

Meeting was adjourned.