

SHEPHERDS VS. FLOCKS

Ministers and Negro Militancy

BY WILLIAM C. MARTIN

"Anyone can be a bigmouth. It's hard to be a pastor." So says one of the tough-minded Rochester ministers who have turned their churches into meeting houses for political activism. Allied with Negro leaders and lay community organizers, these militant "new breed" ministers have battled with corporations and public agencies for better jobs and housing, and have shattered traditional expectations of the ministry in the process. Mr. Martin, a Harvard Divinity School graduate and now a doctoral candidate in Harvard's department of religion and society, is chaplain of the Dana Hall School in Wellesley, Massachusetts.

IF God is dead, the role of the Christian minister is obviously in some peril. But even if He is alive, increasing secularization, the impotence of traditional church programs, and a new breed of young clergy are combining to hammer out new shapes for the ministry that not only depart from tradition but often run directly counter to established patterns. In recent years, laymen have learned to expect their ministers to be sensitive to the social implications of the Christian gospel — to preach on current problems, to work in various action groups, and perhaps even to march on Washington or Selma. Not all laymen approve, but few have seriously opposed their clergymen as long as they were talking and acting in the name of peace, reconciliation, and love. In growing numbers, however, clergymen are turning to a kind of social action whose watchwords are conflict, power, and self-interest. As they move into this new area, they are finding the ground less sure, the directions less well marked, and predictably, the response less tolerant. The results thrill, confuse, distress, and anger, often all at the same time. For the past three years the clergy of Rochester, New York, have been forging one of the most significant developments in this reshaping process.

Rochester is an affluent, progressive city with good reason to be proud of itself. Its homegrown

industries, led by Eastman Kodak and Xerox, have provided an abundance of jobs and a high standard of living. Its Junior Chamber of Commerce, Civic Music Association, and United Nations Association are among the largest in the nation. The city has an honorable tradition of public and private welfare — it originated the Community Chest concept. Rochester has absorbed several waves of European immigrants with marked success and had thought that it was doing an acceptable job with the influx of unskilled Negroes who migrated from the rural South in search of a better life. Then one July morning in 1964, the city awoke to find it had a race riot on its hands, one of the worst the nation had seen at that time.

Rochester had not really had time to assimilate the crush that poured into its center, swelling the Negro population from 7800 in 1950 to 35,000 in 1965. Like other Northern cities, it neither anticipated nor understood the difficulties Southern rural Negroes, with a background of intimidation, ramshackle housing, and infrequent employment, and the attendant meager existence "on the county," would have in adjusting to life in a Northern city built by and for the skilled and the highly motivated. The riots stunned and embarrassed — "The Negroes had no right to do that to us" —

but they did not produce the conviction in civic leaders that anything radically different needed to be done. That conviction came from the clergy.

Soon after the riots the Rochester Ministers Conference, an association of Negro ministers, invited a team from Dr. Martin Luther King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference to visit in the Negro community. Their visit and the standard King approach failed to stir much more than indifference and impatient hostility — "What's all this Jesus crap?" The mood of the young men in the streets called for something more aggressive. At the suggestion of King's men, who were pressed by other commitments, the Negro clergy began to consider seeking assistance from Saul Alinsky's Chicago-based Industrial Areas Foundation.

Saul David Alinsky is a tough professional whose business and pleasure are to unite powerless people into community organizations that attack and demand concessions from established seats of power. He insists that no one gets anything without power and that no one gets power unless he takes it. To motivate people he seeks to organize, Alinsky makes naked appeals to their self-interest. And to make sure they know where their self-interest lies, he uncovers every festering sore of resentment in the community and rubs it raw with a sandpaper tongue. In the heat of a battle, he has the useful ability to sort grays into blacks and whites and to proceed as if all truth and light were on his side and all evil on that of his opponent. Alinsky's critics chide him for his lack of long-range strategy and his refusal, if not inability, to think abstractly, but none doubts his mastery of the irritating tactic.

Alinsky's philosophy and tactics find few parallels in traditional formulations of Christian social responsibility, but he enjoys enthusiastic, at times almost fanatic, support from a growing number of activist clergymen. When the Negro churchmen approached the interdenominational Board for Urban Ministry, a semi-autonomous offshoot of the Rochester Area Council of Churches, they found immediate favorable response. In the weeks that followed, the board investigated Alinsky's efforts elsewhere, and with the blessing of the board of directors of the Council of Churches, set out to raise the \$100,000 fee for two years of Alinsky's services. Local, regional, and national church bodies quickly pledged the money, and Rochesterians began to be aroused to what was happening.

The chief agents of opposition were the public media. The Gannett Press, which holds a monopoly in Rochester, launched an intensive campaign against Alinsky and his approach. The city's most powerful radio station, WHAM, joined the attack with editorial comments and a threat to drop the council's Sunday broadcast of church services if Alinsky accepted the invitation; this

threat was later carried out. Other voices in the community, including representatives of conventional social welfare organizations, also fired criticism at the Alinsky technique.

In the face of this intensive barrage, many laymen found themselves in a quandary over the role their pastors and denominational leaders were playing. For weeks, representatives of the Board for Urban Ministry and the Council of Churches spent their evenings interpreting the realities of life in the ghettos and the dynamics of the Alinsky approach to groups of troubled laymen. A few laymen canceled pledges to the council and their churches, but most got accustomed to the idea that, unpleasant as he might be, Saul Alinsky was going to be part of Rochester's life for at least two years.

IN APRIL, 1965, Alinsky's team began work. Attacks against the radio stations and newspapers, settlement houses, the Community Chest, the poverty program, the urban renewal authority, and any other individual or group that did not offer uncritical support raised the hackles of both blacks and whites. The team produced a "people's organization." At its initial session, the organization elected to call itself FIGHT, an acronym for Freedom, Integration, God, Honor, Today (at its June, 1967, convention, Integration was changed to Independence). It also elected as temporary chairman, and later as president, Franklyn D. R. Florence, minister of the Reynolds Street Church of Christ. Minister Florence — ministers of the Churches of Christ do not use the title "Reverend" — had served as the first vice president of the Rochester NAACP, but he was better known in the streets as a close friend of Malcolm X's. Malcolm's picture hangs on the wall at FIGHT headquarters. Florence wears a hat Malcolm gave him just before his death and plays records of Malcolm's speeches for white visitors in his home. And like Malcolm, Minister Florence bears a deep, flashing hostility toward most whites. From the earliest meetings, Florence made it clear that FIGHT was to be a black group. Most of the white liberals who were part of the original organization were soon squeezed out. Black power became more than a slogan.

FIGHT rocked along for over a year, suffering some defections, registering modest though not insignificant gains, and managing generally to maintain its image of uncompromising militance. In the churches, the pastors most outspoken in their support of FIGHT felt some pressures from dissident elements in their congregations, but more and more laymen seemed to appreciate the role of an organization attempting to speak for the voice-

less poor. Many joined with ministers, priests, and rabbis in Friends of FIGHT, a white group organized to serve as a link between FIGHT and the white community. Then FIGHT took what many felt was a fatal step by mounting an assault against Eastman Kodak.

A confrontation with Kodak had to come eventually. FIGHT wanted jobs, and Kodak employs 40,000 people in Rochester. The company already had a better than average record as an equal opportunities employer and had begun to show interest in training people unable to meet normal employment criteria. But Kodak also has a strong tradition of conducting its affairs from the top down. By keeping its employees happy with generous bonuses, good working conditions, and other benefits, the company has remained free of unions and carefully guards the established prerogatives of management. When Minister Florence and other FIGHT leaders approached Kodak in September, 1966, using terms like "demand" and "negotiate" and outlining the conditions under which they expected Kodak to hire a certain number of "hard-core" unemployed people, Kodak stiffened and repeated its intention to retain control of all hiring. At the same time, it urged FIGHT to refer people to existing programs designed for the underskilled.

Kodak's stance seemed reasonable to most Rochesterians, but FIGHT persisted. Finally, in mid-December, Kodak president (now chairman of the board) William Vaughn appointed a new team of men to meet with FIGHT. On December 20, John Mulder, an assistant vice president of the company, signed an agreement under the terms of which FIGHT was to recruit and refer 600 individuals to Kodak for employment over a two-year period. The document was a loosely worded affair, and some doubt it actually bound Kodak to anything. But it was an agreement, and FIGHT clearly regarded it as a major victory.

Two days later Kodak announced that Mulder had not been authorized to make such an agreement and that the company could not honor it. This announcement touched off six of the most bitter and explosive months Rochester had ever seen.

Though stung by the public rebuff, FIGHT quickly turned the December document into a *cause célèbre*. Minister Florence had an issue he could get his teeth into, and he bit to the bone. He painted Kodak as the corporate symbol of the lying white Devil. At his encouragement Stokely Carmichael swooped into Rochester to promise whatever national support might be needed to "bring Kodak to its knees." "When we get through," Stokely boasted, "Minister Florence will say 'Jump!' and Kodak will ask, 'How high?'" Most observers regard Carmichael's visit as a tactical error, but it

assured Negro militants that FIGHT was not knuckling under to Whitey, and it convinced cooler heads that some alternative had to be found before the anger in the ghetto became uncontrollable.

KODAK tried to improve the situation by announcing two new training programs, but in both cases the announcement was handled so inadroitly that, if anything, tension increased. Florence responded with a telegram predicting a "long hot summer" and an announcement that FIGHT planned to take its case before Kodak's annual stockholders' meeting at Flemington, New Jersey, on April 26, 1967.

Efforts redoubled, and in the early spring hope for a settlement began to develop. Since January a small group of influential ministers, including Dr. Gene Bartlett, president of Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, Episcopal Bishop George W. Barrett, and the Rev. Mr. Lloyd Peterson, the executive secretary of the Genesee Valley Presbytery, had been working quietly to find some solution with all the necessary ingredients: jobs for the poor, recognition and victory for FIGHT, and a way of getting Kodak out of the villain's role. The group soon expanded to include employment and industrial relations experts and representatives of local industries. Under the proposal it presented to FIGHT leaders, local industries would train and hire 1500 hard-core unemployed people over an eighteen-month period. All involved parties would cooperate to provide the motivation and discipline so commonly absent in the hard-core group.

FIGHT complained that this was another example of the white establishment's doing something for the poor without giving them an adequate voice in the process, but finally joined the program, called Rochester Jobs Incorporated. Minister Florence was elected a vice president and named to key committees. Clearly, FIGHT had gained an impressive victory and was undeniably, if indirectly, responsible for a precedent-setting partnership between private industry and the poor. Though no hiring quotas were announced, estimates placed Kodak's share at approximately 600. The solution appeared perfect. The poor — not 600, but 1500 — had the promise of jobs, FIGHT had its victory, and Kodak was apparently doing all FIGHT had ever asked of it. Then, to the dismay of the principals in Rochester Jobs, Minister Florence announced that the new program would not affect FIGHT's dispute with Kodak and that the protest at Flemington would occur as scheduled. FIGHT still wanted some kind of direct concession from Kodak.

The Flemington protest began impressively as

seven hundred people, rallied mainly by clergymen throughout the Northeast, marched quietly in a three-block rectangle in front of the small wooden legal office that serves as Kodak's official corporate headquarters. Later, they shifted to the high school auditorium where the actual stockholders' meeting was being held. At the meeting, however, FIGHT was outnumbered and overmatched. Chairman Vaughn explained the company's position, freely admitting that Kodak had been guilty of serious blunders and graciously acknowledging that FIGHT had caused Kodak and the city of Rochester to face its social responsibility more seriously. Vaughn's prepared address and his courteous, straightforward answers to the questions that followed convinced most of the already partisan audience that FIGHT was an unreasonable antagonist. Minister Florence, who had led his followers out of the meeting moments after it began, confirmed this picture with a second disturbance and a declaration of war against the company. The first offensive would be a "candlelight service" in front of Kodak's executive office on July 24, the third anniversary of the 1964 riots.

In the aftermath of Flemington, most observers agreed that Florence had done FIGHT's cause serious damage and that the chances for a full-scale riot were higher than at any time since 1964. Even the Council of Churches, in its first official criticism of FIGHT, passed a resolution criticizing the organization's intemperance and urging a cancellation of the candlelight demonstration. Fortunately, both sides recognized the situation was intolerable, and after a brief series of secret meetings, announced on June 23 that a mutually satisfactory agreement had been reached. FIGHT gained no promise of a specific number of jobs, but Kodak did agree to send recruiters into the ghetto alongside FIGHT workers. Perhaps most important of all, Kodak acknowledged FIGHT as "a broad-based community organization [speaking] in behalf of the basic needs and aspirations of the Negro poor in the Rochester area." FIGHT had finally won what it had sought so long — not just jobs, but jobs with recognition.

IN THE course of this ambiguous contest, some ministers found it impossible to continue in uncritical support of FIGHT's attack. But most who had backed the organization to this point fell in step and spoke out against Kodak from the pulpit, in church bulletins and newsletters, and in a variety of special meetings. Some denounced Kodak for everything from racism to cynicism to outright moral turpitude. The more moderate lamented the tension and wondered aloud if Kodak would have

been wiser to accept Mulder's blunder, if it was a blunder, and learn to live with the agreement.

This created severe strains and caused laymen to wonder if their pastors were really wolves in shepherds' clothing. Virtually every clergyman interviewed reported that the mood of his congregation turned sharply against FIGHT in the Kodak struggle. It is inaccurate to think of Rochester as a company town, but he who underestimates the devotion Rochesterians feel toward Eastman Kodak does so at his own peril. One minister, relatively new to the city, who took FIGHT's side of the controversy and found himself cut off from his people, said, "I had, without knowing it, attacked their grandmother. I didn't know that any American industry had so successfully fostered the 'Mother of us all' image. I had shot a mortal blow into their beloved."

The main target of the laymen's hostility has been the Area Council of Churches, even though it was the Board for Urban Ministry and not the council that was actually responsible for bringing Alinsky to Rochester. The distinction between the two, often overlooked, is strategically important. The council is composed of more than 200 member congregations and is ultimately answerable to them. The Board for Urban Ministry is composed of representatives from eight denominations and is thus not directly answerable to individual churches. According to the polity of the two organizations, the board could have invited Alinsky without the council's approval, and the council was not obligated to poll its member churches as to their desires in the matter. But polity and legal obligation aside, critics feel the council's failure to do a better job of informing and interpreting served to arouse lasting suspicion and hostility. Its reluctance to criticize anything FIGHT did served to intensify these feelings even further. Several members of the council's board admit this probably was a fault — "We assumed the only way we could support FIGHT was virtually uncritically; I'm not sure we owe that to anybody."

Letters and telephone calls — some reasonable, others obscene and threatening — poured into the council office. Numerous churches and individuals decided to "teach the council a lesson" by lowering or canceling contributions for the coming fiscal year. One church, recognizing that FIGHT was only one part of the council's activity, raised its contribution \$500, but accompanied its pledge with a letter strongly critical of the council's stance. Others were not so charitable. At the final tally, the council's annual fund drive for the coming year missed its goal by \$20,000. Ironically, the attempt to punish the council has had no effect whatever on FIGHT, which has in fact been guaranteed third-year funding by the various de-

nominal bodies and church agencies, nor on the Board for Urban Ministry, which is also funded denominationally and has never been more secure financially.

Denominational authorities came in for their share of flak as well. At one point in the spring, the Rev. Mr. Peterson's presbytery office had received letters from twelve of eighty-one churches in the area protesting Presbyterian involvement. In one week twenty-five families left the Presbyterian church in protest over a resolution issued by a Presbyterian-affiliated conference. In his career as a church executive, Peterson said, this was an unprecedented response. Still, the presbytery, which includes a high percentage of laymen, voted 114 to 20 in favor of third-year funding.

One result of this struggle at the denominational level is increased awareness of the significance of polity. A Presbyterian minister who has been under heavy fire said, "I never really appreciated the value of a 'connectional' church until now. I don't see how men without this kind of denominational support hang in there." Many of them do not. In churches without a strong local-level organization — Methodist, Lutheran, and United Church of Christ — support for FIGHT has been noticeably less enthusiastic. Some ministers in these churches have been heavily involved, and others have been inactive or opposed out of personal conviction, but men who might have backed FIGHT if they had received strong denominational support have proved more vulnerable to congregational pressure than have, for example, Presbyterians or Episcopalians.

In virtually every church of every participating denomination, discussion, tension, and strain have occurred. Some churches have managed to discuss the issues, take positions, and contain opposing viewpoints without disruption of their congregational life. The leaders of one old church with a long history of involvement told its young minister, "If you think this is rough, you should have been here when we argued prohibition." Others, many others, have not been so resilient. Several ministers reported a drop in attendance and a few withdrawals of membership. More widespread was the cancellation of pledges, sometimes running into thousands of dollars. One elderly lady probably speaks for many who responded this way: "I'm not spending Kodak's money [her pension] to support FIGHT." Another parishioner informed his pastor that he was withholding his pledge until August; if there had been no riots by that time, he would make it good. Resentment of church involvement ran so high in some congregations that church leaders would not pass out brochures presenting FIGHT's request for third-year funding until after the annual pledge drive.

The loss of members and money affects a minister because they are tangible signs of his professional "success," however much he may wish they were not. But the confusion, bitterness, and hostility that he sees in his people cause him the greatest pain. The most common response of parishioners to their pastor's espousal of FIGHT's cause was a withdrawal of friendship and communication. "They just won't talk to me," one pastor said. "They walk right past me on Sunday morning without speaking or shaking hands." In another case, members made a point of telling the minister's children that the church could never make progress until their father left. In some churches dissident laymen organized attempts to get rid of the offending minister. In others, leaders withheld salary increments or warned the pastor not to spend too much of his time in activities related to FIGHT.

Even the pastors who basically agree with their people feel the strain. The pastor of a large church said, "I worry about people who are trying to take the Christian faith seriously but are not mature enough to understand this and start worrying about their whole faith." Another expressed special concern for the elderly. "They deserve to die in some sort of peace. It hurts me to see them mad and suffering. It really doesn't make much difference what they think about FIGHT. I hate to raise doubts in their mind. There's always a chance I may not have the strength to bring them through." Another young pastor, not long out of seminary, summarized his experience neatly: "Anybody can be a bigmouth. It's hard to be a pastor."

Some clergymen, including men who have received death threats and bribery offers, appear to thrive on the conflict, or at least not to be seriously troubled by it. For others, the pressure is almost too much to bear. One young pastor explained, "I came out of seminary with the idea of helping people. I had some avant-garde ideas and I realized some people would resist them, but I had no image of people trying to sink both me and the church. It raises hell with a guy's feelings to have his self-image of Friend and Helper swapped for Enemy of the People." Several expressed concern for colleagues who had developed ulcers or who suffered from heart trouble. And none could forget the tragedy of last December when the pastor of the First Baptist Church in suburban Brighton, after intensive harassment for his social and political views, was found hanging in the church basement, an apparent suicide.

Many, of course, have remained uninvolved. Fundamentalist and evangelical churches not associated with the Council of Churches generally avoid participation in social or political controversy as a matter of theological conviction — Negro churches, in Rochester and elsewhere, are frequent

exceptions to this rule. Most of these groups believe that the mission of the church is to win souls to Christ and to prepare individuals for life after death. A few see no relationship between what happens in the street and what happens in their churches. The deed of one church prohibits the discussion of social or political issues anywhere on church property. And some are simply not aware of what is going on in their city. One insisted that Negroes "are basically a happy, satisfied people who like to work as servants and live in a haphazard way." He doubted many in his church would object if Negroes tried to become members, "but, of course, if too many came, then we'd start a colored work." Another admitted he was not too well informed about FIGHT, but he hoped Hoagy Carmichael would not get to be its president. Most, however, are as concerned as their more liberal colleagues but cannot reconcile conflict tactics with their understanding of the gospel. "We feel," one evangelical minister said, "that you will never get rid of slums until you get rid of the slum in men. You have to start with the individual man, and you don't start by teaching him to hate."

Besides these, there are other Protestant clergy who have elected not to back FIGHT, either because of disagreement with its goals and tactics or because of individual circumstances such as age, health, or special situations in their churches.

Roman Catholic involvement has been a late but significant factor in the controversy, especially since Bishop Fulton J. Sheen named Father P. David Finks as his Vicar for Urban Ministry. Finks is a member of both FIGHT and Friends of FIGHT. Though far less vulnerable to congregational pressures than are their Protestant colleagues, priests have also felt indications of disfavor ranging from sharp criticism to the lament that "our priests would never have gotten mixed up in this thing if they hadn't started hanging around with Protestants."

WHEREVER the credit or blame lies, there is no question that Rochester's clergymen, Negro and white, are primarily responsible for having brought major rearrangements to the city's standing order. The most tangible result has been more jobs for the poor. Much remains to be done in housing and education, but a dent has been made. Several nonprofit corporations, including one begun by the Council of Churches and another apparently inspired by Rochester Jobs Incorporated, are preparing to erect new housing for low- and middle-income families. It is still too early to assess FIGHT's somewhat limited attempts to affect educational policy, but one can safely assume that no school board or superintendent, or for that matter

any shaper of community policy, will ever overlook Rochester's Negro population again. That, perhaps, is FIGHT's most significant achievement. It has given a voice to those who had none. Even middle-class Negroes who dislike FIGHT's tactics and who doubt the validity of some of its claims admit they are now heard more readily.

For men of God to champion the cause of the poor and oppressed and to stand alongside them in their attempts to secure goals such as these is, of course, nothing new in the Judeo-Christian tradition. The prophets of Israel railed against those who "trample the head of the poor into the dust of the earth," and Jesus' critics reviled Him for keeping the company of society's outcasts. But Christian ministers have seldom interpreted their responsibility to the have-nots in terms of using deliberate conflict to organize them into power groups able to demand concessions from the haves. What has made the difference in Rochester?

Two factors, closely related, emerge as particularly important. The first is the role of church agencies that are relatively free to initiate and execute action on their own. The Board for Urban Ministry issued the invitation to Alinsky and led in providing his fee. Over half the fee came from church agencies such as the Presbyterian Board of National Mission. Much of FIGHT's most articulate support at Flemington came from similar denominational offices. These agencies and their staffs are ultimately responsible to a constituency, but even if that constituency opposes a policy decision strongly enough to try to countermand it, it is likely to move too late or hit the wrong target.

The second key factor is the small group of activists who formed a close-knit team during the period when the invitation to Alinsky was being considered. This team, which included most of the staff of the Board for Urban Ministry and the Council of Churches, plus a handful of parish ministers, established its leadership at the outset by selling the Alinsky program to the governing bodies of their respective denominations. Once this core group got things under way, they were joined by others who shared their aims, if not their innovating spirit.

The enlarged team is certainly not a homogeneous group, but discernible patterns do emerge. Most are young and relatively new to Rochester. Most studied at liberal interdenominational seminaries, often under men considered too radical for the parish ministry. They talk of the church's mission primarily in this-worldly terms — "bringing about authentic relationships," "making people whole," "making human beings truly human." One explained half-apologetically, "I'm not old enough to think in otherworldly terms. I've just lately become aware of my own finitude."

The theologians they cite most often are men like Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Harvey Cox, who speak of the desacralized role Christians must play in the secular city. Another favorite is Joseph Fletcher, whose "situation ethics," with its sweeping aside of hard-and-fast ethical rules, has eased the strain of defending Alinsky's controversial ethical statements (an example: "If the end does not justify the means, what the hell does?"). To a man, they accept the doctrine that power is necessary to bring social change and that change comes from the bottom up. Some concede the existence of a sizable reservoir of goodwill in Rochester, but they doubt its gates would ever have been opened voluntarily. "Don't underestimate the intransigence of the privileged," one man cautioned. "Nobody with four aces ever asks for a new deal."

Ten years ago, these same men might have been more reluctant to run the risks of controversy, out of fear of endangering their careers. A note of encouragement from the denominational social action board is scant compensation for a parish in the boondocks. As leading denominations have identified with the civil rights movement, however, sanctions and rewards have been rearranged. Now, the man who attacks social problems aggressively may stand a better chance of career advancement than his more cautious colleague. One activist explained, "This is where the action is going to be for the next few years. Sure, some churches wouldn't want me, but most that I would be interested in will be looking for men with experience in this area." As evidence that this is not just wishful thinking, several key members of the "team" who were under heavy pressure from their churches left Rochester during the past summer for more attractive positions in other cities. And for those who prove too radical for the parish, there is always the possibility of a good staff job at the denominational headquarters.

This clear-eyed appraisal of the potential benefits to oneself of involvement in controversy, though certainly a minor motivating factor, is part of the same pragmatic spirit that makes the Alinsky approach appeal to these clergymen in the first place. Alinsky's current romance with church leaders does not stem from a courtship of praise and flattery; he never misses a chance "to rub their tails raw with the crucifix." They like him because he enables them to feel they are doing something concrete, however small, about real problems, however large. They pepper their conversation with phrases like "gut issues," "nitty-gritty," and "telling it like it is," and are convinced they are "where it's at." They are fascinated by Alinsky's tactical cleverness, though

some think him excessively crude on occasion. And they believe he is a winner. Winning is terribly important to these men. By abandoning cheek-turning for techniques of aggression and conflict, they have risked their identity as Christian ministers. They cannot afford to lose.

This quest for victory has produced its distortions. Kodak supporters feel the company has been the victim of irresponsible and sometimes dishonest attacks by local and national clergymen. They complain that articles in some church publications smack of having been researched at the airport, with no attempt to get both sides of the controversy. Some of FIGHT's strongest backers think that the tendency to put all the blame on the opposition did little credit to the clergy's powers of discernment or sense of fairness. One complained, "I think Kodak is wrong, but it doesn't help to picture FIGHT as completely virtuous and Kodak as the archetypical bitch. It just isn't true and people won't buy it." Others have criticized the clergy for not taking issue with FIGHT statements which they knew to be inaccurate or misleading and for remaining silent at such offenses as an anti-Semitic remark Minister Florence made in an exchange with School Superintendent Herman Goldberg.

Those who support FIGHT generally but have questioned some of its tactics or the "team's" uncritical support have been regarded with almost as much hostility as outright opponents. A minister who tried to stay in contact with both sides reflected, "It's hard for one man to be an innovator and a reconciler at the same time. I wish we could understand and appreciate each other instead of acting like enemies, but I guess that's too much to hope for."

Most "team" members are aware of these faults and concede that participation in conflict requires great personal discipline—in securing technical competence to speak responsibly on matters of employment, housing, and education; in sorting out legitimate goals and finding means of obtaining them that do not do violence to the values represented by the goals; and in developing an understanding of the Christian ministry that enables them to participate in conflict situations without fragmenting their self-understanding. The clergymen of Rochester are acquiring this discipline, and they look forward to using it again. "I expect to be involved in conflict the rest of my life," one of the "team's" young leaders said. "It's rather exhilarating. This is the most exciting time in the world for a minister. When I left seminary, the big question was, 'Is the ministry relevant?' Nobody asks that anymore in Rochester."

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