

# PRIEST LEADS 1,000 IN PROTEST MARCH

## Milwaukee Demonstration Marred by Clashes

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Special to The New York Times

MILWAUKEE, Sept. 9—Haggard and hoarse, Father James E. Groppi led 1,000 civil rights marchers into the heart of the Polish-American South Side today, assuring them:

"Ain't no bigots gonna bother you."

It was a day of mounting tension for this racially disturbed city. Hostile crowds gathered at street corners on the South Side and greeted the invaders with hoots and cat calls. There were occasional fist fights.

However, the riots that had been feared did not materialize as the marchers from the predominantly Negro North Side paraded all the way through the Polish section to Humboldt Park.

The white crowds aimed their most insulting taunts at Father Groppi, the white Roman Catholic priest who has been leading civil rights demonstrations here for two years.

Some held up a placard that read "Burn Groppi, Burn." Others yelled, "White nigger" and "Let Groppi kiss a nigger." He was also called a "white punk."

### Other States Represented

Answering Father Groppi's requests for support, scores of whites from other states joined the Negro marchers who are demanding city open housing ordinances.

Meanwhile Mayor Henry W. Maier proposed an open housing ordinance, conditional on adoption by more than half of the 28 municipal areas. Father Groppi said, "Our first impression is that he is passing the buck. We want a fair housing ordinance for the City of Milwaukee. We will be satisfied with nothing else."

It was 3:30 P.M. when the marchers reached the 16th Street viaduct that links the North Side and the South Side.

It is a local joke that the half-mile long viaduct is the "longest bridge in the world because it connects Africa and Poland." On their trek across the bridge, the marchers were greeted by shouts of "Sieg Heil, Sieg Heil" from a carload of white men who sped by giving the Nazi raised arm salute.

Continuing into the South Side, the marchers passed Crazy Jim's Used Car Lot where last week a crowd burned Father Groppi in effigy.

There were few spectators on the streets until the marchers reached Lincoln Avenue where there are many bars. As they paraded by, men poured out and yelled, "Hey, Polish Power!" The marchers responded by singing, "We ain't gonna let no cracker turn me around."

At one corner two white teen-agers held up a black power sign. Someone from the line of marchers grabbed it from their hands, threw it on the sidewalk and danced on it.

Finally, a member of the Youth Council of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People picked up the placard and handed it back to the white youths.

In the heart of the Polish-American community, marchers stopped at Kosciuszko Park, which is hallowed ground for local residents.

There, Father Groppi shouted hoarsely through a megaphone: "You see the bigots won't bother you — there are too many of you. Ain't no bigots gonna bother you. The Ku Klux Klan and the other bigots only attack when they have us outnumbered 25 to 1. So we got nothing to worry about. We're gonna keep marching deeper into the South Side."

The 30-minute pause in the park gave the whites a chance to mobilize their forces. They stayed out on the street so that when the marchers reformed on the sidewalk they were confronted by several hundred whites standing across the street, on the other sidewalk.

The two sides exchanged taunts and obscene gestures. The police kept them separated, but when the march continued, the civil rights demonstrators suddenly made a turn of direction that took them directly into the white crowd. There was a brief flurry of fighting that was quickly broken up by the police.

### Brawls on Return Trip

Darkness overtook the marchers before they could get back across the viaduct, and the homebound trip back down Lincoln Avenue was marked by several brawls between Negroes and whites. Five men—four Negroes and one white—were arrested.

A food store window was smashed when policemen charged into the line of marchers to make an arrest. A Commando lay on the street, blood streaming from a head wound, while his comrades stood around screaming that he had been clubbed by the police from behind.

The injury to the Commando, one of the elite disciplinary corpsmen of the Youth Council, inflamed the marchers. One Commando took off his sweat-shirt, which was emblazoned with the word "Commando," and said he was resigning immediately. "I'm fed up with nonviolence," he said. "They'll be some burning tonight, baby. You'll see some burning and dead police."

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