

MJC
DRAFT STATEMENT ON SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION
March 9, 1967

The Milwaukee Jewish Council today expressed its deep concern with the apparent appeals to racial prejudice and fear which appeared during the recent primary election for Milwaukee School Board Directors on March 7, 1967.

Mr. Eliot M. Bernstein, President of the Milwaukee Jewish Council, noted that some of the candidates have based their campaigns on the promise to "Keep our Neighborhood Schools." They also posed the nonexistent issue of "Mass bussing" of students to achieve racial integration. Materials distributed by these candidates appear to be designed to create fears concerning the presence of Negro citizens in the city of Milwaukee.

It was pointed out that the neighborhood school and mass bussing issues are transparent appeals to racial fear and prejudice because, in fact, no candidate has suggested an end to the neighborhood school system, nor has mass bussing been proposed to achieve racial balance in the schools.

"A great disservice is done to the people of Milwaukee, and more particularly, to the children in our educational system, if we appeal to the most base emotions in our community, said Mr. Bernstein. Thus a meaningful discussion of the real educational issues in our schools is prevented and results only in invoking fear and hate as a means to win an election," added Mr. Bernstein.

The Milwaukee Jewish Council therefore CALLS on all candidates for office to avoid appeals to fear and prejudice and to discuss the basic issues confronting the school system.

The Milwaukee Jewish Council is the nonpartisan human relations agency of the Milwaukee Jewish Community. Its constituent organizations are the American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Congress, Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, Jewish Labor Committee, and the Jewish War Veterans, in addition to membership at large from the Jewish community.