

PEACE, AT LAST?

Further demonstrations in Chicago neighborhoods by the Rev. Martin Luther King's Freedom Movement have been called off and the scheduled march into suburban Cicero has been "deferred."

This good news was announced yesterday after a conference of business, labor, government, and religious leaders reached an agreement on a program to make progress toward fair housing opportunities for people of all races in the Chicago area. We congratulate the members of the conference, who have worked many hours for this peaceful solution.

Dr. King declared the agreement will make Chicago an "open city." Mayor Daley said it was "a great day in the history of our city."

It remains to be seen whether these high hopes are fulfilled. To attain equality, Negroes need the sympathy and support of white Americans. In recent weeks there was much evidence that the demonstrations held for the stated purpose of promoting open housing were arousing resentment, even among whites who ardently approve of the civil rights movement.

The agreement reached yesterday includes promises by the city Commission on Human Relations, the Chicago Real Estate board, the Chicago housing authority, the Cook county department of public aid, and other groups. A new board composed of leaders from government, commerce, industry, finance, religion, real estate, labor, the civil rights movement, and the communications media is to be formed to promote fair housing.

This peaceful, orderly approach has much more chance of success than a continuation of the demonstrations.