

Keane Statement on Housing Irks King

The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., president of the Southern Christian Leadership conference, called for an explanation from Ald. Thomas E. Keane [31st] yesterday of Keane's denial of the existence of a city summit agreement on fair housing.

"Also, because Mr. Keane so often seems disposed to speak for the entire city government, I think that Mayor Daley himself should clarify his own position," Dr. King said. "After all, the mayor praised the open housing agreement when it was reached last Aug. 26."

Keane Comments

Keane, the Democratic party leader in the city council and chairman of the council finance committee, asserted Friday that there is no housing agreement. His comments came during finance committee hearings on the city's 1967 budget.

"There were only certain suggestions put down and goals to be sought," Keane told Ald. Leon Despres [5th] when Despres questioned him on the subject.

Dr. King called Keane's statement "distressing" and said he hopes it does not mean the city administration "intends to break faith with all those who reached the agreement."

"Many Are Striving"

"Many people of good will in Chicago are striving to carry out every single point of the agreement," said Dr. King. "To impede this work in any way—by footdragging, by repudiation of the agreement, by order of men in high office—would be a rebuke to all of the people of the city of Chicago and to all of its leaders who are concerned about free and open housing.

"Hundreds of thousands of Chicago citizens live in slums today awaiting the severities of winter. Last summer they

were given the hope that their hardship would come to an end, that the slums could be eliminated, and that decent homes would be made available to all families in all neighborhoods.

"Any attempt to destroy that hope is an act of cruelty and a betrayal of trust. The people will not stand for it."