

ERAP NEWSLETTER

May 17, 1965

1100 W. Ainslie Chicago, Illinois

CLEVELAND REPORT

Tenants Organize in Hillbilly Heaven

Shirley
I am a tenant in a furnished apartment building nicknamed "Hillbilly Heaven" which is located on the corner of W. 45th and Franklin. Due to the inadequate living conditions of my apartment, I was forced to withhold my rent. Upon doing this, I found I received immediate action on one complaint. After talking to the other tenants I found they had just about the same condition.

Therefore we organized a type of tenant council. After one meeting of over half of the tenants, plus a visit of the health inspector, plumbing inspector, and housing inspector, our landlord ordered 12 new garbage cans and custodial work picked up slightly. This is only a start; we intend to fight to the very end for adequate living conditions for the tenants and for improvements for the exterior.

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The exterior of the building is a disgrace. Windows need replacing window frames are rotten and falling out, no blinds, permanent screens prevent washing of windows outside so that they look like they haven't been washed in a year. When the front doors are open for ventilation the hallways are a disgrace. They need covering very badly (a little soap and water wouldn't hurt either). The sidewalks are hardly ever swept or hosed. When I read the ad for

*PAM
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this apartment. It read "new furniture and parking facilities". The so-called new furniture was falling apart and looked like 20 families had previously abused it. Old-fashioned stoves that came over on the boat had to double for heating and cooking. Refrigerators that would hardly keep foods from spoiling. Dinette sets with 2 or 3 chairs that the stuffing was coming out. I rented 5 furnished rooms and bath. After the housing inspector came I learned that legally it only had 3 rooms and a storage room. No doors on the bedrooms for privacy. One room had a bed and a dresser in it with no window or ventilation. In this room the ceiling was half torn away and when tenants upstairs flushed the toilet the debris came down all over the furniture. It took me 4 weeks to get that fixed. Now it is leaking again. I've had no use of this room since I moved in yet I continued to pay for it.

With all these filthy conditions I could have moved and forgo the whole deal but what about other families after me with children? My story is only one out of 18 and each one is a little worse. The reason I'm telling this is our fight for adequate living conditions on this corner should be everyone's fight. Not only the tenants in the building but all of our neighbors should fight to better our neighborhood and clean it up. Spring clean-up time is upon us once again and let's really clean up this time.

If you want to join us in our fight we'll be bringing around a petition to be signed, or call or come see us.

Organizing in Glenville By Carole King

The meeting at Susie Moore's home on the 5th day of May 1965 was a prospective meeting. The weather was nice and we had a nice group of people for a first meeting.

Susie Moore is a member of CUPAW and active in the program for organizing people in the Lakeview area (of Glenville). Hattie Cannon has also been organizing people in our area. The Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) is also helping in the organizing.

We have some great possibilities and general problems ~~with which~~ to work. Our neighborhood recreation is very poor. We have large numbers of children. Although we have playgrounds and play areas they are very small and poorly staffed. Our housing is in very poor condition including the yards. The yards are very little and are occupied with garbage cans, dirt and rats.

Our meeting was centered on the above subjects. Carie Cobbard, Betty Simpson, Mary Dozier, Delores Maxwell, and Sharon Jeffery all took an active part in our meeting. Sharon is a staff member of SDS. We discussed to some length the problems that arise in trying to grow grass in our neighborhoods. We thought it would be best to try and organize and persuade the landlords to blacktop the dirt. Mrs. Gates, Mrs. Thomas, Mrs. Freeman and a few others were at this meeting also. This is a beginning to getting the people together.

Our job is to get more people to the next meeting. Our job is to reach our friends and neighbors. Personal visits to all who were at the meeting will be made.

Mrs. Freeman is the executive director of the Glenville Y and seems interested in our problems. It is our problem and should be our decisions on what can and should happen in our meetings. She is not personally affected by our neighborhood recreation, housing and other similar problems.

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CUPAW FIGHTS FOR 100 % WELFARE by Susie Moore

Citizens United For Adequate Welfare has 3 major projects underway. A petition was circulated last Thursday and Monday on the food stamp lines on both the East and West Sides to get a 3rd food stamp center. In addition welfare recipients were asked to sign a letter to be sent to the governor of the state senate asking that welfare checks be raised to 100 % of subsistence. The letters will be put in a huge mailbag and dumped on a state official's desk.

A total of 1000 names were put on petitions for a 3rd food stamp petition and over 4000 letters were signed. We will be out on the lines tomorrow trying to get more names.

We are expecting to go to Columbus soon to buttonhole senators for the raise to 100 %. People will come from all over the state. CUPAW and Paul Younger, Minister to the Poor, are contacting welfare mothers and others in other cities.

At last week's meeting, Don Rothenberg pretended he was Sen. Pepple and shot questions at us that we could expect to get when we go to Columbus. One question was what we would do if we got the raise. The mothers answered by mentioning things that we really needed such as clothes, linen, refrigerators but can't buy now as there isn't enough money in the check. He also talked about the state government and how bills become law.

CUPAW set up a committee to plan a fish fry to raise money to pay for transportation and baby sitting for meetings. We also voted to have monthly dues to help pay expenses. We decided that the dues would be 25¢ and that those who couldn't afford that amount would pay as much as they could while those who had extra money could give more.

NEWARK REPORT

RIOTS -- WHOSE FAULT?

After the City Council meeting the ten NCUP people went to a meeting of the Human Relations Commission just to listen. When we got there the door was locked and everyone that answered our knocks acted very suspicious. They told us we could have one spokesman come in. We said NCUP didn't like to have spokesmen but if we all could go in only one person would talk. After 15 minutes they came back to the door and said O.K. When we got in they all stared at us and told J.C. (our spokesman) that this was a special meeting and it was past 10 o'clock so we would have to come back on May 18.

The next day in the newspaper we found out why they acted so strangely. When we knocked Ralph Zinn, acting director of the Human Relations Committee, was giving a report on NCUP -- saying we were a "no-policy, riot-oriented group from out of town".

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He went so far as to say we had planned Clyde's beating in Klein's to create an incident. How can a commission protect human rights when it sits behind closed doors spreading lies about people fighting for their rights. The commission chairman, Dr. Maxwell H. Kaye, didn't even want to let us in-- but he lost a 4 to 3 vote. On May 18th we'll get our chance to speak-- to tell them where it's at. Everyone should come to that meeting, to speak out or just to listen. Who do you think causes riots? The people who organize and protest injustice or the people who refuse to listen to such protests?

THE TIME HAS COME By Sandra Graham

My friends the time has come when we must ask for your helping hand to fight for our rights. We can't do it alone. We all know that some of the rents that we are now paying are too much when the rats and roaches are running the place. Our people are being put in jail because they're fighting for what they think is right and jail is not the place for them. We need you on the other side to push it back. Then the fight for rights and freedom will be ours. It will have been won by us. So stop hiding, come out and let us know that you are alive and can speak for that you want. Because it's time to stop paying rent for rats and roaches to eat and sleep free. So, come on, come all with open arms and heart willing to fight and speak for what is right. Don't be one who says, "I'll let them do it for me." It just won't work that way. We need you too. Yes, the time has come when rats and roaches in our homes must go.

THE TIME FOR FREEDOM IS NOW!
FOR WE SHALL OVERCOME SOME DAY.

Sandra Graham, 17
242 Seymour Ave.
Newark, N.J.

POVERTY CONFERENCE

On Sunday, May 2, four carloads of NCUP people went to a conference in New Brunswick. Students from colleges in New Jersey, and community people from Newark, Trenton, Jersey City met together at this conference so that the people could tell the students about the problems of poverty in New Jersey and about what the community organizations are doing to fight poverty. There were discussion groups and speeches. Some of the speakers were Louis, Bessie Smith, Melvin Higgins and Terry. At the end, we had a meeting with anyone who was interested in NCUP, and many students said they want to work with us this summer.

EDUCATION CONGERENCE

On Saturday, May 1, Judie Harris, Larry Jefferson and Billy King attended the Board of Education Conference at Central High School. Among the speakers that were there was Mayor Addonizio, Stanley Winters, Senator Sarcone, and Congressman Paul Crapp. The Board of Education is working on a project called "the Head Start Project." This project is for children who are doing poorly and for helping deaf children who have no social life.

Ronald Nicholas

CAIRO REPORT

ENLOE STEPS DOWN

Cairo Mayor Beadles announced Saturday, May 7, that Acting Police Chief Enloe Jones was replaced with Carl Cluttes. Enloe continues on the police department as Assistant Chief.

The Mayor and the Evening Citizen continued their attempt to ignore the protests of the poor people. The demonstrations demanding that Enloe must go were not mentioned at any time in the Citizen or in the Mayor's announcement.

CAIRO FREE PRESS

The Cairo Evening Citizen is the rich man's paper. When poor people protest against the police for the Citizen ignores them. When the druggists declare war on poor people and won't fill prescriptions, the Citizen plays it up big.

Why don't poor people have their own paper so they can know the truth about what is going on in Cairo and around the world.

WAR ON POOR PEOPLE

Herbert Henckell, Goldwater campaign chairman for 1964 has declared war on poor people. He and the other druggists have refused to fill prescriptions for people on Public Aid or Relief.

When the relief found a way to get prescriptions filled outside the county, Henckell and his group attempted to stop poor people from getting any medicine at all.

Why should the selfishness and greed of a few druggists be allowed to destroy the health of poor people?

Why doesn't the government set up its own drug store and sell drugs to poor people at cost?

PEOPLES' COURT ROOM

Because rich people control the police, the courts, and the newspaper, poor people must decide their own cases. The following complaints have been filed -- Hear them out and decide "IS IT JUSTICE"?

About a month ago Emma Walton was charged with disorderly conduct and taken to jail. While in jail, she was accused of shooting a woman. When Mrs. Walton denied this, she was hit in the head with a black-jack by a tall policeman weighing over 200 pounds.

Melvin Walton
The Newspaper didn't print anything about this incident and the courts didn't want to hear about it. You decide-- WAS THIS JUSTICE????

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The program to clean up the Police Department has been most successful. Handbills were followed up by picket lines, a sit in which was foiled by a lockout by the City Council and a visit to the Mayor. The Police Chief has been demoted and rumor has it that he will be off the force in 60 days. We still have gotten no satisfaction on our demand for hearings on our complaints. We have started in our newsletter a section called "Peoples' Court Room" which is headed "Because rich people control the police, the courts and the newspaper, poor people must decide their own cases. The following complaints have been filed -- hear them out and decide, "IS IT JUSTICE?". Under this head come the signed complaints which have been turned in and not acted on by the City.

Pressure on the County Commissioners is increasing. We have already asked them for a County Hospital and Dental Clinic, a modified food stamp program and expanded public housing. We also sat in at the County Relief office when the bureaucrats bungled a relief application for a woman who had no food. After about an hour the red tape was cut and the woman, Mrs. Patricia Patterson was given her food order. Two families, immigrants, they escaped from Mississippi and Kentucky, have been fighting deportation. The relief would rather send them back South than feed them. We probably will have a sit-in to have them restored. We expect speedy solution of the problem since the head of the Commissioners is up for reelection this fall. Also we hope to negate the year residence requirement for public assistance.

Work in the white precinct is slow but gratifying. I find a ready acceptance of the ideas of an interracial movement of the poor and have been trying to get a meeting together in the white housing project. Schools seem to be a real good issue among the people I have talked to.

We are having a real hassle raising money, we would appreciate any ideas for getting money from liberals, churches, unions, etc.

George Graham

The ERAP project (Rennie Davis, Harriet Stulman, Leni Zeiger, Lenore Belsky, Don Cole, Peter Rooper) moved into Chicago at 6 am on May 7th. Ann Arbor shut down in the record time of 1 1/2 days moving everything including the Conflict Resolution Center to Chicago which is now located on the corner of Broadway and Wilson right in front of the EL. For those who know us, and our fame for movement around about that huge building, imagine us now confined in reality to a space approximately 8ft. by 30ft. in the JOIN office. For the next month we will be occupying one room of an apartment working on the application process and the institute, about 3-4 hours a day. Most of us are also planning to work in the project as organizers in some capacity. We had a long discussion about the importance of the visibility of ERAP work and the involvement of community people in it being carried on in the JOIN office and decided that the intense demands of the next month made it necessary to work away from the office until after the Institute. Most of us feel that involvement of community people in national ERAP work should be through not initial letterwriting, so we are looking for other ways which can come out of their involvement in their own organization.

The movement of the office and its adjustment to the Chicago project raises some questions about the future of the ERAP office. Much of the internal problems already have begun to break down which separated the office and decision-making from the projects. We are sending out papers to the projects from discussion, evaluation, and decisions about publication. Cleveland has assumed responsibility for developing plans for the Institute and Carol McEldowney is it. People who are working on programs affecting education (freedom schools, day-care centers etc.) are being encouraged to write their own fund-raising prospecti since we feel that the people who are gaining the experience in such work may be best able to prepare a formal presentation of it for funds. Staff applications have been referred to the projects for decisions as much as possible on the basis of non-competitive recruitment procedures outlined in past newsletters. Discussion between projects has increased through a great deal of traveling in the last months and people are beginning to talk a lot more about their organizing experience. Hoboken is getting ready to take over the newsletter after the Institute.

Problem spots needing discussion from everyone still exist. Fund-raising and publicity have to be increased potentially. As much as we would like to have all the projects supported locally with their own fund sources and publicity programs, it is clear that national publicity and fund-raising have got to be developed as well. Ideological discussion around a national movement has decreased enormously throughout the year with most projects communicating their immediate and local analysis of problems to each other. The institute should be able to spark some broader discussions than we have had this year. This is dependent, as always, on people's willingness to plan not only for the summer staff introduction to the specific projects but to give a national perspective as well. It is necessary to decide whether we think a national office can and/or should serve the functions of sparking such discussion or whether we all have to find specific ways between and within projects and at national meetings of beginning to talk about where we are going and what we've learned in a year. Since people may be unable to attend the convention either because it has to come at the same time as the institute or because people have commitments to their project areas, it is clear that the institute has to be the focus for such discussion.

Meantime, we have all become men and women of many hats and are pretty happy about it.

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APPALACHIA

SPECIAL TO THE CITIZENS OF PERRY COUNTY

Word has come down from Washington that all corporations, groups or associations which have organized themselves for the purpose of aiding or assisting the federal government in its "War on Poverty" must divest themselves from all political influence. Word has been received that our county judge and magistrates have voluntarily excused themselves from serving on such associations, but I believe that have been slightly pushed by the powers in Washington.

If this is a general order, this action alone will affect the mechanics of every organization in the state and all such organizations will have to be reorganized. The Appalachian Committee for Full Employment was advised to send a delegate to serve on the Perry County Advisory Committee and the Executive Board selected Rev. Jason Combs who has agreed to serve and represent the unemployed.

It is our impression that the federal government is getting fed up with the actions of politicians throughout the nation who are trying to divert federal appropriations away from the "people in poverty" and set up political machines to perpetuate certain candidates in office and to build up their own personal fortunes.

This directive is a great victory for the poor people and the people in all communities should take advantage of it and organize themselves into community action committees and place a representative on these committees. The Appalachian Committee for Full Employment has the necessary material, sent us by the office of Economic Opportunity, to teach the people how to organize, what kind of projects are acceptable to the government and how these projects should be prepared. If there is any group in any community interested in a general discussion of the contents of this material, we would be glad for such interested persons to come to our office or we will be glad to attend your local meeting and share with you the contents of this material.

Everette Tharp
Secretary A.C.F.E.

LOOKS LIKE IT HAPPENED AGAIN

Well we've had another bubble to burst. The people for several years now have looked forward to having roads, at least something close to the roads they have in the other parts of the State. But again Eastern Kentucky seems to get what's left after the other parts of the state are through. There are our grand promises we have all been believing for so long. One of the former Governor's said there's not anything after you pass Jackson in Breathitt County. Now it seems there are others that think the same way.

I'm sure the people here pay taxes and feel they are entitled to at least a decent road. The road was one of our hopes of getting industry into the Eastern part of our State. I just wish the people would wake up and stop listening and falling for the false promises of every new politician

that comes along. I'm sure Eastern Kentucky will think about our grand four-lane turnpike for a long time to come. These promises only make the mountain people feel a little lower when they pick up the paper and read that they are not worthy. The roads here now are so badly in need of repairs that you can barely get by in need of repairs that you can barely get by in some places without dragging the bottom out of your car. I think we might as well go back to Jeeps or every one buy a pickup truck instead of pretending to have a car.

I think we deserve as good as the section from Jackson to Lexington or from Lexington to Prestonsburg or any of these other places. Come on Citizens of Eastern Kentucky, stand up and be counted. We want the roads that we were promised.

by Mrs. Bernard Gibson

CHICAGO NEWS

A PLAYGROUND FOR THE CHILDREN

We the people demand that the city parking lot on the 4800 block of Winthrop must be turned into a playground because the kids haven't got no place to play except on the streets.

We're going to have a vote on the street to turn it into a playground. The people must be with us to make it so. If the kids don't have a place to play besides the street, the biggest part of them will wind up getting hit by cars or go to the lake and get lost or wind up getting into some mischief.

We're having a parade for all the children who can get together this Saturday at 2pm, and would like to parents to get in on it too. We're parading to get the playground in this neighborhood.

Right after this parade, all the JOIN members will go around taking votes on this street to see how many people really want the playground.

By Junior Ball

SIT-DOWN AT THE URBAN PROGRESS CENTER

About five of us left the JOIN office. When we got down there (the Urban Progress Center) there were about fifteen of us. We had a hard time finding the office. They kept putting us off where it was at. And when we did find it they said just three of us could go in. Then they called the police.

When the three came back they sat down with us. When the committee meeting was over, we went in the room. We told them that their meeting was illegal. They told us we had to bring our demand to the advisory board. We left after that.

We're going back to the next meeting with a couple of hundred.
By Junior Akres

FOOD STAMPS

At our last Wednesday night meeting Mr. Goldman from the Food Stamp Office located at the Welfare Building on Madison Avenue visited with us to explain the food stamp program.

I feel sure all appreciated his visit, but I for one cannot appreciate the program as it was explained to me. It is clearly not designed for the poor but for the farmers, since no items are allowed for except those raised by the American farmers. I do think it is a find plan for the Agriculture Department, though. Such items as soap, toilet tissue, laundry bleach, detergents, tooth paste, razor blades, first aid supplies, cleansers, and all others not raised on farms are not allowed for.

I can't imagine a family not having all the items listed in the home. General assistance recipients have no choice but to use the stamps. Is this democracy? What are we to do about this?

I have a plan that could and I'm sure would clear up this mess. I say that everyone connected with the Welfare, from the case-worker up, including

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No Dickey
Larkin
any more
-M. Miller-
DM*

*5
entirely
Blair
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the last man or men who decided this was such a damn good plan for us--let each and everyone of them move into apartments similar to ours and remove from their homes all items not allowed for on the general assistance budget. Living under these conditions for thirty days or more, they then could decide about things they knew about instead of guessing at. The let the people who have to continue on welfare day after day work out a decent plan.

By Dorothy Perez

WHO SHOULD DECIDE?

I went down to the Urban Progress Center because we didn't want them to make the people's decisions. We wanted to get them to let us make the decisions because that's the way it should be, because the people of Uptown should make the decisions about what they know. Ninety percent of the people up here don't know the people who are making the decisions. We ought to know what's going on.

They wouldn't let us in to talk to the committee, so we decided to sit there until the committee was over so they would have to talk to us. So they brought the police and the Fire Department up there. They told us we had to keep an aisle clear in case of fire. That's all they could say to us.

We waited till the committee was over, and spoke to them. We just told them what we thought about their committee. That we do believe it is illegal. If it wasn't, they would let the people make the decisions.

By Junior Brown

*OK
Knowledge
+ pass over!
(links)
9-5*

NOTE NEW PHONE NUMBERS

JOIN-ERAP OFFICE: 334-8040

APARTMENTS: 784-2174
728-7199

DUDLEY ST. REPORT

CITY HOSPITAL IS NOT THE ONLY PLACE THAT PEOPLE ON WELFARE CAN GO FOR MEDICAL HELP!!!

City Hospital is for the birds. If you are a bird, go there. But if you are on ADC I would advise you to call any hospital and see if they will accept you. I am on ADC and I go to ANY HOSPITAL that I want. My choice is Mass. General. My social worker wanted me to go to the City Hospital, but I called the Mass. General and they said: sure they take ADC people. I have also gone to private doctors which you can also do. The treatment or mistreatment which we get at City Hospital are known to all of us.

I took my little girl to the hospital one day. She was running a temperature of 104 degrees. They gave her an alcohol bath and prescribed aspirin. I took her home and her temperature went right back up, so I took her to the Mass. General. There they told me she had an infection in her lung and an infection in her ear. She was put in an oxygen tent for three days and was in the hospital for two weeks. I very nearly lost her because of their incompetence. Another time I took my little girl to the hospital at ten o'clock in the morning and she had a temperature of 103. I went to the accident ward and they told me I had to wait in the hall. So I waited and waited until eight o'clock at night for someone to see her. By this time she was running around playing and the Doctor said that she wasn't acting sick. I said, "She's all right now, no thanks to you!"

By Judith Morris

CHILDREN OF AREA SCHOOLS SPEAK OUT ON SCHOOLS

What I think of the Mason School: They still need a refrigerator, and I think that they should get more supplies for the kids and give them a pencil and eraser when they want it. The teachers shouldn't punish the kids by keeping them from recess. The teachers know that they can't keep all those children quiet because classes are too crowded. I think that the Mason school has improved a little. They have a place to play ball and hopscotch by a child at the Mason School

SUMMER PLANS AT DUDLEY STREET

We're going to have a much larger full time staff this summer. Most of our part-time volunteers will be living in the neighborhood starting in June; and together with new people, we'll have about twenty organizers here to work with you on old and new issues.

Our MAW (Mothers for Adequate Welfare) group will be starting another campaign for their rights by insisting that anyone has the right to go to any hospital. They're tired of sitting in the waiting room of City Hospital.

The school group will be fighting for better programs, books, and small classrooms at the Emerson and Mason schools. And some parents from the Dearborn school have asked us to organize something there.

And we're going to fight the BBA's urban renewal plan for Lower Roxbury that is scheduling 75% destruction of houses. We know that means the poor

people will be thrown out without any place to go. We don't intend to let it happen.

We want your suggestions and participation. The action center is always open to you. Bring your kids; come in for coffee any time.

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CORRESPONDANCE

RIGHTS --- WHOSE FAULT?

LETTER TO CARL MITCHELL FROM SARAH STAFFORD (Cambridge, Md.)

Dear Carl,

We have been quite busy what with watching the "War On Poverty" program (trying) and fighting the battle of the port. This is how things stand as to now. We have written (long hand) to so many people and finally to Mr. Meany himself. We have gotten the run around from the Union on up to the Governor's Committee On Interracial Problems, Parrin Mitchell, exec. sec. You know, the Mitchell clan, Baltimore NAACP.

It seems we must do things in a prescribed way or else no one will consider your petitions. But they have reckoned without the Negroes of Cambridge- we just keep right on over their heads to some one higher up. Now we've sent the mass of information (long hand) of all our communications registered mail with "signed addresses requested" to Adam Clayton Powell. They accepted it.

Yesterday, April 24th, a man came from George Meany's office of Civil Rights to Cambridge and took down our story. We are to hear from him by Friday. We had the men here and the session lasted about five hours. We will meet with a representative of the National Labor Relation Board Wednesday, April 28th at this house and then we will send you the results. We cannot be too optimistic, but we feel that we have gone a long way because people seem to be interested in our story.

The white towns people are quiet as a mouse. I think (we hope) they are on our side. We are attacking the power structure Mrs. Todd can't make up her mind whether she is on our side or not, but she is still doing her bit. I think we scare her for we are very violent. That is how we have shaken the other committees off of us. They really should learn a lesson from this. Everyone seems to feel some Civil Rights organization should hold our hands, but they soon gets the message. After we "smacks them down" with our mouth then we tell them we are SDS and ERAP.

They might not respect us, but all that have had dealings with us will never forget us. We'll let you know the results as soon as possible.

APPALACHIAN COMMITTEE FOR FULL EMPLOYMENT

Dear Sirs,

April 13, 1965

At present I am engaged in a very important political struggle. The Appalachian Committee For Full Employment has endorsed me and I am running for the office of High Sheriff of Perry County on the Democratic ticket, subject to the primary on May 25, 1965. If I can win this race we feel our biggest battle here in Eastern Kentucky will be won. At present

sent it looks as if I will surely win, although the opposing forces are throwing money right and left. I believe that the good people, the people that want to see Perry County prosper, the Union men and also the people we've helped so much will turn down their money.

I need your financial support very, very badly. Please see what you can do to help me, as the Appalachian Committee are hard pressed to pay rent, etc. that they must pay. At present I have no income whatsoever. Thanking you in advance, I remain,
Yours sincerely,
Berman Gibson

Cleveland Community Project

(This paper is the speech I wrote on the Vietnam crisis. This speech was made at Western Reserve University in Cleveland before we left for Washington.)

CAROLE KING, MEMBER OF CUPAW

I have a sincere belief that our U.S. government has no right to send American fathers, sons, grandsons, uncles, and brothers that are in military services to fight and die for another country. I feel this is ridiculous when we have enough problems and prejudices especially in the south of our own country to send all the troops we have to try to straighten out United States' problems. I don't understand what it is about our government officials that make them feel they have the right to go in another man's country and tell him how his country should be run when their own country is in such a turmoil of hate, greed, prejudices, and selfishness. If our officials would spend as much time feeding our poor, taking care of our people standing up for the fights of humanity, fighting and enforcing the laws of our country, they would not have time to meddle in Vietnam's business. Our country has a beautiful name, "United States". I feel that until our country is fully united as its name it has no right to think about any country's problems but our own. No country should meddle in affairs that don't concern them. Economic help should be given but not the help of our troops. Our troops should be brought home immediately. We need our men home to straighten affairs out here. We don't need or want our troops in Vietnam being killed for something that isn't any of our country's business. I believe that the majority of our soldiers in the Vietnam crisis don't want to be anywhere fighting someone else's war, dying for reasons unknown to them as to why they are even fighting in somebody else's country. I say bring our men home! Keep our men home for they have a job to do to make the United States as united as the name sounds.

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The New Independent Committee
for Jobs, Homes, and Schools
425 West 3rd St.
Chester, Pa.

Hon. Adam Clayton Powell, Chairman
House Education and Labor Committee
House of Representatives Office Building
Washington, DC.

Dear Mr. Powell:

It has come to the attention of the New Independent Committee that your subcommittee on poverty has begun investigations of anti-poverty programs in various areas.

We are anxious that you investigate the Greater Chester Movement (GCM)--the local anti-poverty agency in Chester, Pa.

GCM has consistently failed to allow residents in the poverty target areas to have any voice in planning or running programs which are supposed to affect them.

This stems from the exclusion from policy-making of all community elements other than the local Republican Party Machine and individuals elected by that machine.

There is no voting representative of lower-income Negroes or whites on the GCM Steering Committee, which makes policy for the entire anti-poverty structure.

Also, the GCM has refused to allow any bonafide representative of the local minority party (the Democrats) to participate on any level of importance.

The NIC is a group composed entirely of lower-income individuals and families in Chester's target areas. We are soon to become affiliated with the National Congress of Racial Equality.

NIC has been in existence since the inception of anti-poverty programs. We have submitted our own program to the Federal OEO and to GCM; however, we have been put off by OEO and rebuffed by GCM, although we have consistently expressed and manifested interest, ability, and desire--as poor people, to participate at all levels in Chester's program.

Specifically, we charge that the GCM has violated the anti-poverty statute Congress enacted in 1964 by failing to include any poor people in the development and administration of the City plans, in spite of the legal requirement that programs "be developed, conducted, and administered with the maximum feasible participation of residents of the areas and members of the groups served."

Our viewpoint has been publicly echoed by the Chester NAACP and by the Chester City Democratic Committee.

We are volunteering any number of witnesses and any information from our organization that would facilitate an investigation of Chester's monolithic, elitist structure.

Further, we are asking you to do all within your power to delay any funds to Chester until your committee can investigate the situation here.

Sincerely,
Donald Jackson
Executive Director

FACT AND HISTORY SHEET ON GCM

Our primary concerns with the GCM focus on four parts of the GCM structure: the Steering Committee (or policy-making body), the Citizens' Council on Urban Renewal, the Opportunity Center (the training center), the Community Action Centers.

The laws governing the proper establishment of these four include the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (the War on Poverty Law), the Housing Act of 1964 (the Urban Renewal Law), the various legislation relating to the departments of labor, area redevelopment, etc.

The crucial aspect of these laws and the policies that have been derived from them is simply this: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS, such as the WAR ON POVERTY, MUST INCORPORATE MAXIMUM PARTICIPATION BY THE CITIZENS WHO ARE DIRECTLY AFFECTED.

At this time, Federal monies to Chester for the War on Poverty have been delayed because the GCM Steering Committee does not represent people from the anti-poverty target areas.

At this time, Federal monies to Chester for Urban Renewal have been delayed because of insufficient allowances for participation by citizens of redevelopment areas in urban renewal decision making. This is a direct indication that the Federal Government recognizes the unrepresentative nature of the GCM Council on Urban Renewal.

The Opportunity Center has been in the planning stage for months without any visible progress being made or any public presentation of information as to the nature of the program being planned. However, salaries have been paid for Opportunity Center personnel in, at least one case, without any public notice of employment possibilities or definition of job requirement.

To date, at least three organizations of widespread influence in target areas have been completely denied official representation at any decision-making levels in the GCM--those include the NAACP, the City Democratic Committee, and us, Chester CORE. However, representation has guaranteed to organizations and persons closely affiliated with the "power structure."

On one occasion, one individual suggested for participation in policy-making because of his semi-professional experience in community organization of poverty-level neighborhoods was denied consideration on the grounds that Mayor James H. Gorbey threatened to resign if that individual were permitted to participate.

Moreover, the situation has worsened until the CPA, CCRC, and one individual (John Polk) have pulled out over the past few weeks.

We cite the incidents above at random simply as an indication of the state of affairs of the anti-poverty mechanism that is currently seeking the use of public funds.

LIFE WITH LYNDON IN

THE GREAT SOCIETY

By Jack Minnis

Lyndon sent about 500 marines into the Dominican Republic at first. He said he sent them in to evacuate 2,000 or so Americans who wanted to get out. It made sense to send the marines in for that purpose, but it didn't make sense that that's why Lyndon sent them in.

A couple of days later Lyndon made it pretty clear that the marines had a lot more to do in the Dominican Republic, than just evacuate Americans. He kept upping the number of marines, and, then, he brought the U.S. Army into it, until, at this writing, there are about 11,000 US servicemen in the Dominican Republic, and another 5,000 or so on ships waiting to see if they're needed.

No matter how much Lyndon and his official try to deny it, it keeps coming through the news dispatches from Santo Domingo that the US forces linked up with the right-wing general, Wessin y Wessin, as soon as they got there, and that they've been fighting on his side against the rebels ever since.

Another thing that is fairly well shown in the news dispatches (if you read enough of them carefully enough) is that the rebels who are supporting the return of the constitutionally elected president, Juan Bosch, were winning the military action until the US troops arrived to give Wessin and his boys a hand.

How do you suppose Lyndon decided that Wessin was the one to support in the Dominican Republic, rather than the followers of Bosch? Well, unless you can get inside Lyndon's head, it's pretty hard to say for sure. But we can do some informed guessing, based on what we know is true.

First of all we have to clear up this business of "communism." For the moment let's say (and the evidence for it is overwhelming) that communism is not some kind of world-wide conspiracy of political devils to take over everything, but, rather, that the only sensible way to look at communism is as a set of basic ideas about how people can run a country so that everybody gets his equal share of what there is to get.

Some of the followers of Juan Bosch, the man the Dominican Republic rebels are trying to put back into the president's office, are communists and some are non-communists. But they all believe that drastic changes have got to be made in the economy of the Dominican Republic before it will be a decent place for all its people to live. That is, they all believe either that privately owned business and farming has to be taken away from the owners, or that the private owners have to be severely regulated by the government.

Who are the people who own the economy of the Dominican Republic? Some are Dominicans, some are Americans, and some are from other countries. The only ones we know much about are the Americans. When we look at them we run into some familiar names.

The Aluminum Company of America, which is controlled by the Mellon family of Pittsburg, owns mines in the Dominican Republic from which it gets about 1 million tons of aluminum ore per year.

The South Porto Rico Sugar Corp., whose board of directors inter-

locks with the Rockefeller's Chase Manhattan Bank and with Corn Products, Inc. (makers of Karo and other corn syrup products-- the Dominican Republic produces a great deal of corn and that is one of their biggest exports to the U.S.), America's 59th largest corporation owns, along with other things, 3000,000 acres of sugar cane land in the Dominican Republic. Sugar is the Dominican Republic's chief product. (Ellsworth Bunker, Lyndon's Ambassador to the Organization of American States, who explained how benevolent the U.S. feels toward the Dominican Republic, and how the U.S. really doesn't mean any harm to anyone there, is a director of the National Sugar Refining Corp., 331st largest company in the U.S.)

The United Fruit Co., which has for years been famous for owing govts. of South and Central American countries and for mercilessly exploiting the people and the production of these countries, owns 2,300 acres of banana cultivation in the Dominican Republic. United Fruit also owns other properties there, with respect to which it has "entered into a contract with the Dominican Government for construction of railroad lines and port facilities which will allow development of properties." (Woody's Industrial Manual-- 1962-- written before the current rebellion)

If Lyndon had sent the troops into the Dominican Republic to help the rebels restore the legal president, Juan Bosch, to his office, he would have been going against the interests and the wishes of these Americans who control not only the Dominican economy but the American economy.

The New York Times carried an interesting story last week on the way the FBI and the Justice Dept. protect informers and witnesses. The story was written by Cabell Phillips.

Phillips was talking about the KKK informer, Gary Rowe, who is presently giving testimony on the killers of Mrs. Liuzzo. Phillips says that "buried out of sight in each annual budget of the Dept. of Justice is a confidential fund of a few thousand dollars available to the Attorney General with which to shield such persons from the revenge of their enemies." Phillips mentioned one case in which an informer in a racket prosecution was sent to Central America and a new job and a new life were established for him there at U.S. govt. expense.

Contrast this treatment of some witnesses for the U.S. Govt., with the consistent refusal of the FBI and the Justice Dept to provide protection for other persons involved in civil rights cases.

Lewis Allen, and countless others, might well be alive and happy today if Lyndon's policy of protection were not so selective. We wonder how Lyndon explain the difference between protecting Gary Rowe, who sat there in the car and let Mrs. Liuzzo be killed, and protecting Lewis Allen, who was an innocent witness to the killing of Herbet Lee.

Jack Minnis
Research Director, SNCC

SERIES 4 A NO 8

FREEDOM SCHOOLS

By Jimmy Garrett
LA Friends of SNCC

The history of the American high school system is one of molding young people to fit in the society, to advance the system. The idea of challenge to the existing structure is thwarted early. If there is little academic freedom in colleges, there is none in high schools. The possibility of intellectual curiosity is "channeled" into academics and abstractions so that real questions aren't related to the lives of students. They are directed to look at things "objectively" and "practically" rather than as things really affect their lives. In the end, there is perhaps little difference between the high schools in Mississippi and those in Los Angeles. There is a thread between those students who have been intimidated in Mississippi for raising questions with teachers about their ability to vote or about segregated schools, and those who are intimidated and isolated in Los Angeles for raising questions about loyalty oaths for teachers, the students role in choosing a curriculum, what student government really is, or who determines policy for school newspapers. And there is a final thread perhaps, between those students and others whose only protest is to drop out of these schools because they can't fit into the mold.

To challenge that authority which is set up to direct the lives of the people who are the subjects of the system is, of course, a very dangerous undertaking. But this was the basis for the Mississippi Freedom Schools, and seems reason enough for the establishment of similar schools in Los Angeles.

My idea of a Freedom School is an area, atmosphere, situation--any place where young people, whether black or white, rich or poor, can come to deal with real questions as they relate to their lives. The aim of this part of the Freedom School would be to let young people challenge not only the authority which stifles them, but also to challenge themselves, to bring about basic changes within the system so that the stifling ends.

The center of the Freedom Schools would be the students and their freedom of expression would be the life of the school. They and their teacher (or more closely, leaders) would have equal parts in determining curriculum. Perhaps, even the student may rotate as leaders of the schools.

This possibility of challenge, no matter what the level or what the issue, through questions, was a vital force in last summer's project. The only failure of the Mississippi Freedom Schools was its teachers. Most of the Freedom School teachers were college students who were taught that the only way to learn was to have information poured into their heads--mostly dates, places, events, names--most of which is lost and cannot be used in their lives. The idea of the Freedom Schools was in the question "why" or more deeply, how does it "relate" to this thing or that situation, or your life, or being poor or rich, free or slave, American or Rockefeller. Finally, the schools were based on the concept that seeking information must be related to need so that all the information can be used.

The Mississippi high school students were not as caught up in abstractions, academics and looking at things "objectively" as their teachers, so they not only raised their own questions; they taught the teachers how to relate. Many students had no education in the proper sense to what they gave to the white students from the North was themselves. The ideas, as it turned out, not to give what you have (time, money, philosophy, etc.) but to give what you are. They did not need college degrees to do that. People are called "ignorant" if they know about everything except their own lives? That was the

question which related the young Mississippi Negro to their northern teachers.

RANDOM NOTES ON THE SCHOOL, STUDENTS, AND TEACHERS (LEADERS)

I would think that a most important part of the Freedom School would be to try to make each session complete so that people can see that each session was its own, (develop one question and deal with it so that it won't carry over until it becomes meaningless).

In areas where people may want part of the Freedom School to be a tutorial, they may want to tutor each other in math, English, social studies, etc.

Art, music, drama can all be related to people's lives. When I was in high school I was instructed to paint farms not slums, or faces and not what I really was in faces.

MUSIC CLASS: Why are many young white (especially those close to the Movement) interested in folk music and young Negro people like rhythm and blues? Don't need psychiatrists to discuss that, it may be a good way to get students to open up.

DRAMA and CREATIVE WRITING: What does it mean to create? Who decides what creating is? What is acting? Who Acts?

Newsletters which display writing of Freedom School participants without censoring. People may want to find their own school. They may want to talk about ways of getting classrooms: 1. Through the structure (Principal, Board of Education, etc.) 2. Not through the structure (ask the janitor for a key)

There may be seminars where lecturers who can bring fruit for discussion (not necessarily respected experts--example, try 5th st. downtown Los Angeles or Synanon House). People can come in and relate their experiences. The ideal is to give information as a point of departure.

The possibility of interschool conferences may be good to draw closer ties between young people. This might be particularly good if the schools were held in different areas within Southern California, (Watts, East Los Angeles, San Fernando Valley, Long Beach, West Los Angeles). There may be several conferences where people may check their own growth in the schools. The largest reasons for the conferences may be to break the controlled conferences held in regular schools.

ART SUPPLIES, BOOKS, CRAYONS, ETC: What can they be used for and where and how can they be gotten?

Can students feel free to talk about themselves in high schools--their fears, shames, guilts, God happiness, joys. I don't think so. Most schools seem to try to make people ashamed of what they are so they'll want to be something else, (more pliable to the system). That's what my school tried to do to me. It got so bad, the only reasons I went to school were because of the dances and sports events, and because there was no place else to go. I couldn't talk about my life because it had little to do with the teachers. I certainly had nothing to do with what my country wanted me to be.

I think people can talk about themselves in Freedom Schools but only if the atmosphere is right, only if they feel that they can do that freely--that atmosphere can ultimately be set by the leader. The leader's role in my mind is to challenge the challengers. The leader must continually ask questions, ultimately, what am I and why. It is not accidental that the leaders of the Free Speech Movement at Berkeley came out of the Freedom School experience last summer. Students who had gone South to help free other people saw, when returning to their universities, that they were more deeply slaves than the people in Mississippi.

Can young people, who've been told that they're too young, not qualified not fully educated, that they have to mold and develop and have to administered, make decisions about their own lives just as they are? Can they, the following semester, run their own school newspaper, student government, Board of Education? Maybe by the end of the Freedom School session some of these questions will have been dealt with.

In a large sense, very few of the people in this country make decisions which affect their lives. Our government is set up to represent property--not people, (the few people they do represent are those who own all the property). What would have happened if we had a referendum to decide whether or not we went to war in Viet Nam? What would Rockefeller say to that?

My idea of a Freedom School is that it would not be directed simply to young Negroes to get them involved in civil rights activities, (although that may be one outgrowth). The Freedom Schools would be open to include all those who are considered in "the mainstream of American life." What does it mean to be in the mainstream of a cesspool? What does it mean to be called a "normal" American in a decayed society?

If you must have slaves--call them free men, and call their society free, so that they can keep their dignity--then you rigidly and subtly control the context under which they live, vote, work and love. This is what I think, the few people who run this country--this machine--do to all of us.

The Freedom School, in my mind, would be an atmosphere to begin to challenge all our myths of freedom and to develop whole new concepts about people as they relate to each other.

Jimmy Garrett,
L.A. Friends of SNCC

ECONOMIC RESEARCH and ACTION PROJECT
1100 W. Armitage
Chicago, Illinois



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