

# ERAP NEWSLETTER

June 30, 1965

46 Arch Street, New Haven, Conn.

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### MAYOR TO DISCUSS "A NEW UPTOWN" BUT WILL IT INCLUDE POOR PEOPLE?

Mayor Daley is coming to the Peoples Church this Thursday to discuss "The New Uptown." He wants to get rid of poverty in the Uptown area. We are wondering if he also wants to get rid of poor people.

The Mayor is now pushing "urban renewal" for Uptown. That is why he is coming here this Thursday. In other poor communities of Chicago--like Old Town--where he has pushed urban renewal, he has pushed out the poor people by destroying their houses and building new ones they could not afford to live in.

A lot of big shots think this meeting is very important. Mr. Dobbeck, a vice-president of the Uptown National Bank said "this without doubt will be the most important meeting of the Uptown Chicago Commission in 10 years."

We think this will be an important meeting too. We think it could be the beginning of an effort to get rid of us in Uptown. Making it impossible for us to live here.

On Wednesday at 8:00 at the JOIN office, we will plan how we can have our own news at this important Uptown meeting. We are going to have to work fast. The more poor people we can get to that Tuesday meeting. Bring a friend to the Wednesday night JOIN meeting and lets talk about what we should do to make urban renewal for the poor instead of for the rich.

JOIN leaflet: "Mayor Daley, we have some questions"

JOIN is a community of poor and working people who support the idea of a "New Uptown." We are grateful that Mayor Daley is here to talk about this idea. We present these questions not in protest but in the hope that all of us can help build the "new Uptown."

1. Mayor Daley, will any of the poor people be represented in the decisions that could change Uptown?
2. What's going to happen to Uptown? Is it going to be the same as Old Town with rents jacked sky-high or will it be a place where we can continue to live?
3. We support urban renewal if it means better housing for poor people. What we fear is urban renewal for middle income and rich people.
4. Will urban renewal plans be drawn up by experts and supported by the better-off people as in the past? Or can poor people draw up the plans for the kind of community they would like to live in?

SERIES 4.A - NO. 8



**THE WELFARE DEPT. SHOULD ASK  
PEOPLE WHAT THEY WANT, NOT TELL  
THEM WHAT THEY NEED**

--by Phronie Simpson

I got a letter from the Welfare Dept. It said I was to go to school down on Montrose for reading, writing and arithmetic. I went to high school for 3 years. Two years ago I went to night school for typing and steno. I bought my own books and paid my own carfare.

My sister didn't get a letter. None of my girlfriends got one. No one on Winthrop got one. I got another letter at another time saying that I had to go to school for cooking and homemaking. I know how to cook. I got seven kids and they don't look like they're starving!

In the letter I just got, they wanted me to go 3 or 4 nights a week for 8 weeks, during the summer. My kids and I have our summer planned. It's not fair to them. It breaks up our whole day and you can't do anything. The letter said I was "assigned." A girl from the JOIN office, Casey, found out for me that I didn't have to go, but I didn't know. My welfare worker didn't tell me anything about it.

On welfare, you don't know your rights. You don't know what you're coming or going

**THE POOR'S JUSTICE**

--poem by Chuck Welborn

The poor and needy cried  
in the darkness of depression  
for justice,

justice,

The poor cried in the darkness  
of despair for justice,

no one heard

no one heard.

The great white father in D.C.

was blind as a bat to the  
suffering of the poor

in the night of Vietnam

**WHAT'S TO BE DONE?**

--by Ralph Rowell

Last week's meeting it was decided that something should be done about the closed meeting of the community for a war-on-poverty program at the Urban Progress Center. Last time they had a meeting three of us was allowed to go in. So seeing that each person has his own opinion on what they want, it was decided (BY JOIN) that at the next war on poverty program meeting that we all go in and sit down and be heard or at least have the right to pick our own Board member to represent us and not to let persons decide for us. They don't even know what we need.

**WE NEED EVERYONE**

--by Lill Tiger

If anyone reads the newspaper you will find that if we want help we have to fight for what we want. In the Chicago American there was a few statements, in which will show what some work can do.

In one paragraph it was stated After the group's efforts attracted attention, official help soon followed. So if we all pitch in, and the word gets to the right people, we will receive help.

So let's not sit back and let others get the advantage of every thing. Let's stand up. Put in our share, and help fight for a better community in which we all may live equally.

**NEW STAFF JOINS J.O.I.N.**

About 20 new members will begin working for J.O.I.N. this Thursday. Some will work at the Lincoln Street office. Other will help strengthen JOIN on the 4200 block of Lawrence. Some will organize for J.O.I.N. around the 4200 block of Lawrence, and a new project will open on the new South side of Chicago.

SERIES 4.A - NO. 8



## WEDNESDAY MEETING

--by Ray Rowell

JOIN had a very good meeting Wednesday night with a few surprises. Marge Andre was there from the advisory board on the Urban Progress Center.

She tells us about the new Uptown which she says will take at least 18 months. What is going to happen no one knows. Some of the JOIN members went to the People's Church to hear Mayor Daley speak on the new Uptown. Again there was nothing to indicate we would be helped.

After the meeting with the mayor we had a welcoming party for the new staff members from the Students for a Democratic Society.

We have an appointment with Mr. Woodward at the Center Wednesday. We will talk to him about the letters we wrote to the advisory committee and to Yates and Dirksen.

So come Wednesday night and the progress will be discussed.

## WHEN THE WELFARE INSPECTORS CAME

--by Phrenic Simpson

They knocked on the door and showed me their badges and said they wanted to come in. And they came into the kitchen and asked if I knew Paul and I said yes and then they went through all my things and started making remarks about my razor because they said it was a man's--but I've got a razor and shave my legs like any other woman. They kept on asking how much money Paul gives me--as though I were you know what.

When they started looking through my stuff I got mad and asked them what the hell they were doing here and then they even started looking through my daughter's personal stuff.

I got sick and tired of it; they act like they're doing me a favor and begrudge it. But nobody's going to begrudge me anything. I worked hard before I got on (next column)

welfare and the only reason I'm on now is because I've got to take care of my babies.

What I do is none of their damn business. They act like if you have a friend it's a sin. But I've got as much of a right to do anything as the next one. And if I want to sleep with a man I can.

If a woman's by herself and ain't got her husband with her, they never leave you alone and a act like it's a sin or something.

When I was in the hospital getting three operations and a blood transfusion the welfare called me at the hospital and made them let her talk to me. The homemaker from the welfare department would take my groceries downstairs and sell them and buy wine with it. And then the welfare worker called me to complain about my home but I was in the hospital so I asked the welfare what could I do about it.

When I got out of the hospital I wasn't supposed to do any work or any lifting or anything for six months--but the welfare took the homemaker out after three days and then they make me go to school.

## HEARING MR. DALEY SPEAK

Last Thursday night about 25 of us sent down to People's Church to hear Mayor Daley speak about the "New Uptown." Below is a letter we got from a person afraid to sign his name:

To JOIN Community Union:

As I looked around me at the meeting I noticed that the poor people that you're bleeding about didn't even make an effort to be at this meeting, they were home getting drunk or outside breaking bottles.

If you look around you, you might notice that the residents of this area are trying to pull themselves up by their bootstraps which is the American way. We the reliable people of Uptown resent your attitude and your loud mouths.-- a long-time Uptowner

SERIES 1A NO 8



# NEW HAVEN

In the Hill neighborhood in New Haven, the New Haven project has established a freedom school. It hopes to free people from all the propaganda and falsehoods that are constantly around them. That the poor are not new free is shown by some of the remarks written by young people reprinted below. Discussions about values and how they relate to the existing local, national and international situations will be encouraged and hopefully articulated through movies, role-playing, records, newspaper clippings and other means of communication. We may also try to build a park on an abandoned railroad track in the neighborhood.

Question: Do you agree with what Booker T. Washington said about Negroes at the Atlanta Exposition in 1895? (it was read) Mary Jenkins, age 15, wrote: "Yes I agree that the Negro people should try to build themselves up before integrating. Because they should be educated, know something about government and to organized at what they really want. They should also be sure that most of the people want the same thing. In no way no too because they people should get their rights so they can get the other things they need in life and then decided on what the people really want."

Clarence Ulmer, age 15, wrote: "I think that since the Negro is on such a low social standard they could work among themselves until they have fully reached the social level in which they belong. I also which to take this time to point out that the Negro is a race that is said to be inferior to the white race. In other words when a Negro is born he is in such a lowly predicament that he has to go out of his way to better himself. So in conclusion I repeat the Negro should work among themselves in an effort to raise himself to the level in which he belongs."

The New Haven project would like to receive for itself and for the newsletter information on Freedom Schools being run in other areas.

Question: Would you be surprised to hear Mayor Lee (of New Haven) say that Negroes are inferior? Roberts Green, age 14, said: "I think he tries to help the Negro people of New Haven. I personally think he is a nice man and doesn't try to be better than everyone else. He lives among the people of New Haven just as they do which is among the Negro and White. I think he feels everyone is equal." Calvin West, age 14, said: "Yes! I would be very much surprised because Mayor Lee has more brain than to talk like that. Because he would be only starting a fight in New Haven with the White and the Negro."

The Freedom School



William Horn of New Haven

# 5) force in the SAN FRANCISCO

## EDITORIAL FROM FREEDOM HOUSE'S "Fillmore Stand"

There is now in the making a unity of forces of some integrationist and Black Nationalist groups. The reason for this unity is, of course, immediate and full freedom for the American black man and the strengthening and enriching of Negro culture.

Certain specific issues are making the need for this unification more and more urgent. These issues are police harassment and brutality, the so-called "War on Poverty," and the redevelopment program.

CORE and the Fillmore Community Action Committee are hashing out plans to end police brutality. Petitions are being circulated throughout the community and fact sheets are being distributed about citizens rights and police. Much of the pavement pounding is being done by the Nationalists. FOR THE COPS HAVE TO BE STOPPED BEFORE THEY START ANOTHER HARLEM!!

The uniting of minority organizations into an ad hoc committee Citizens United Against Poverty was to stop Mayor Shelley's proposal for funds in Johnson's so-called "War on Poverty" because of the lack of community participation in the planning of the program.

I am worried that the redevelopment crisis will soon be starting again. If we intend to hold on to our neighborhood and force landlords to fix their buildings--if we don't want to be crowded into the Haight-Ashbury and Hunters' Point--we're going to have to get ourselves together.

WE MUST UNITE...FOR THERE IS VICTORY IN NUMBERS!!!

Pleasant Gerson  
Field Project Director  
Fillmore Community Action Center

## CITIZENS UNITED AGAINST POVERTY

The poor are supposed to be the policy makers and program formulators for the War on Poverty. If they are not this in their community they should raise hell about it!

So said Sergeant Shriver and Hubert Humphrey at a conference of the poor in Arizona some months ago. Representatives from Hunters' Point took these words to heart and returned to look at the local poverty picture.

They found that with the possible exception of one person the anti-poverty decision-makers were very comfortably well-off.

A number of interested individuals and groups met at Hunters' Point and again at Macedonian Missionary Baptist Church. It was at this second meeting that Freedom House became involved in the movement, to become known as the Citizens United Against Poverty.

In light of the fact that the Federal Economic Opportunity Act states that the community action program must be...developed, conducted, and administered with the maximum feasible participation of residents of the areas served" CUAP passed a number of demands:

1. That the neighborhood action committees of poverty areas be selected by the poor of that area;
2. That a majority of the members of the San Francisco Economic Opportunity Council (EOC) be selected by this neighborhood action committee rather than appointed by the Mayor.

At present the Mayor is still refusing to yield control of the poverty program to the poor people for whom it was intended.

Freedom House is represented in this effort by Audrey Smith, Kenneth Simmons, Ed Rice, Cecil Williams. Mrs. Smith is Corresponding secretary, Simmons is second Vice Chairman.



SOME REACTIONS TO THE SDS AND ERAP CONFERENCES IN MICHIGAN

THE MICHIGAN MEETING

--by Ray Rowell of Chicago

I am writing this letter so that the great number of people who does not know what JOIN and other projects are trying to do to help the people what wants to live a democratic form of life. After attending the SDS national convention at Kewadin, Michigan I am wholly aware of what this great movement is trying to do. So many people has centered their thoughts around the idea that this is only to build up a political party, but they are wrong; this movement is for you, not the politicians in this world today. But I am sure if you would attend a meeting of one of these unions you would get a better point of view. This is like a giant vacuum. After you see what is trying to be done, you will be drawn into this great movement.

In my own personal thoughts it works like a great separator. First it separates the poor people from the clutches of poverty, second it keeps the middle class people from ever getting into the poor class, and last, trying very hard to separate some of the money from the rich.

FROM TWO NEW HAVEN PEOPLE

The most exciting event at the ERAP Institute for us was the marriage of George and Dorothy. During a meeting on the second day, George got up to speak. He said that he wanted to marry Dorothy because he loved her, but he did not want to be married in society's corrupt legal terms. He proposed that the people of ERAP recognize his marriage to Dorothy because he recognized them as his society that he felt a part of.

People were awed at first and did not know how to respond. In the grand old ERAP tradition, they suggested that they have time to think about it before they reached a decision. But then George explained why he wanted to marry Dorothy and what he thought marriage was and what his objections were to a societal one. He said that society's legal marriage was a financial contract which essentially crippled man and woman (for example, George said, a married man can't go out of state to get a job.) He said that he would feel freer if we recognized his marriage because he respected us more. People started to express enthusiasm about George's and Dorothy's marriage because it made them think about this institution in a different and serious manner.

While everyone was thinking, someone came in, asked George what was going on, and then shook his hand and said, "Man, let me be the first to congratulate you."

Thus they were betrothed and we all sang "Do What the Spirit Say Do" and "We Shall Overcome." The songs were especially meaningful this time.

P.S. We left out four pages of the newsletter so that we could send this issue first class, they will be in the next issue.

FROM: ERAP Newsletter  
New Haven Project  
46 Arch Street  
New Haven, Conn.

FIRST CLASS

FIRST CLASS MAIL



Please Forward

SERIES 4 A NO 8