

# ERAP NEWSLETTER

July 31, 1965

46 Arch Street, New Haven, Conn.

*people all over the country are organizing*

People involved in many different movements will come together in Washington on August 6th-8th. They will share ideas and discover ways to work together on common programs in a broad social movement. **THEY JOIN TOGETHER TO SPEAK OUT ABOUT THEIR DISSATISFACTION BECAUSE THEY REALIZE THAT THE PROBLEMS THEY ARE WORKING ON ARE CONNECTED.**

See Page 2 for more detailed information, and *come to Washington*

*to begin a real war on poverty to increase student participation*



*to stop the war in Vietnam to bring democracy to Miss.*



PAM  
1716

# more on Washington

For Hayden reports from Newark that a new aspect has been added to the August 5th-6th Washington activities. An attempt will be made to see Sargeant Shriver or some other in on Poverty official. This affair will be coordinated from Newark, and it appears now that a delegation will be able to see Shriver. TOM ASKS THAT ALL PROJECTS INTERESTED IN TAKING PART GET IN TOUCH WITH HIM IMMEDIATELY BY PHONE. His number is 201-243-1825 or 242-6794.

The following additional word has been received from the Washington Summer Action Project office in Washington at 107 Rhode Island St.:

- The workshops to be planned are:
- FOREIGN POLICY
- COUNCIL ON ORGANIZING
- INDEPENDENT CHALLENGE
- JACOBI
- CAREER ORGANIZATION
- PROBLEMS OF POVERTY
- QUESTION OF UNO

Other than what people decide to talk about (see Page 14 for a suggestion from New Haven for a Freedom School Workshop)

## in this issue

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BOSTON--activities on schools, playgrounds and welfare are described, and a poem about a teacher fired for reading Langston Hu. Mas...Page 5-8

CLEVELAND--A description and discussion of a campaign for school board by Dorothy Jones (a welfare worker) is given by Ivan Metcalf. Reprints of the CUFA newsletter...Page 8-10

NEW HAVEN--a discussion of the New Haven Project's involvement in "democratizing" the local war on poverty and the consequences this has for organizing. Also a description of the Freedom School...Page 11-14

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SPRAY--on a trip to Mississippi, by Eddie Smith of New Haven.....Page 17-18

## Newsletter Note

--we've worked out subscription exchanges with Viet-report. Write us other publications--we should do this with.

## make it

at the people's conference!

August 27-29  
Newark, New Jersey

for contact with other people active in community movements to talk about issues and about action, and to plan more action + national meetings.

Some to Newark!  
Contact Mrs. Louise Patterson  
211 Waterloo St., Newark

# CHICAGO JOURNAL NEWS

The following is taken from a press release from the JOIN Office in Chicago at 1100 W. Ainslie.

C6 On Thursday, June 24, 1965, 13 members of an organization known as "JOIN" were arrested by vice squad detectives. Two were charged with possession of dangerous drugs, keeping a disorderly house, and contributing to the delinquency of a minor. Ten were charged with disorderly conduct and being inmates of a disorderly house. A juvenile girl was turned over to juvenile authorities. The arrests resulted in stories in several metropolitan newspapers describing a "beer and 'goof-ball'" party broken up by the police.

The 13 youths claim that they were all asleep when the police arrived.

They contend that the only alcohol in the apartment that evening was a six-pack of beer, brought there by Paul McGowan, Sr. father of one of the arrested youths and instigator of the charges.

They insist that none of them possessed or used any dangerous drugs--except those properly obtained under a prescription, such as penicillin. If any illegal drugs were found in the rooms, they were planted there, according to the youngsters.

The individuals arrested have been in Chicago from 6 months to 6 days. Mostly students, they came here to do community work with the unemployed Appalachian immigrants of Uptown, through JOIN. 2 of them came to JOIN from the civil rights movement of Cairo. The remaining 11 include graduate and undergraduate students from Oberlin, Carleton, Bennington, Williams, MacMurray, Smith, Swarthmore, and the University of Michigan.

The arrests occurred at 5030 N. Winthrop, at 2:30 am, after 2 police officers forced their way into the dark apartment. They did not have a search warrant.

They arrived some 30 minutes after Paul McGowan, Sr. had left. McGowan had spent most of the evening fruitlessly attempting to force his son

to stop working for the community action organization.

Paul McGowan, Jr, 20, explains that he has been subject to repeated harassment from his father, who objects to both JOIN and the boy's impending marriage.

JOIN pays its 30 staff members no salary; rather, many of its workers hold part time jobs to help support the organization. They are provided with room, board and medical expenses, plus \$1 a week. For this reason the 13 staff members were living in a 4 room apartment, one of the several maintained by JOIN for this.

According to JOIN members, the McGowan events leading up to the arrest were as follows:

McGowan, Sr. has been estranged from his son for some time. When Paul, Jr. was 15 years old, his father put him out for adoption.

On Wednesday afternoon, June 23, McGowan Sr. came to JOIN's office looking for his son and for the boy's fiancée, Kathie Roberts. Eventually the 2 returned from their field work, and were informed by McGowan that Kathie's father had lodged narcotics charges against the 2.

The elder McGowan called a police wagon, and together the 3 went to the Summerdale police station. The youngsters were not booked, but were ordered to return to the station the next night. All 3 then returned to the JOIN office.

A meeting of area people (unemployed) was in progress at the office. McGowan, Sr. volubly participated in the meeting, complaining bitterly about the problems of the poor. This was the first JOIN activity he is known to have attended.

After the meeting, the father took Paul and Kathie to a restaurant and then, after buying a 6 pack of beer, accompanied the youths to the JOIN apartment. There he gave away 2 of the cans, and drank the remaining 4. Some empty beer bottles remained in the apartment from a recent party.

(continued next page)

# CHICAGO continued

but no other alcohol was on the scene. Eventually, a phone call th Kathie's father revealed that he had in fact lodged no criminal complaint against the pair. With suspicions aroused, the elder McGowan was asked to leave the apartment. He refused, insisting that he would stay in his chair all night.

Most of the JOIN staff members were now asleep. Paul, Jr. and Kathie slept in sleeping bags on the living room floor, wearing street clothes to bed. McGowan, Sr. remained in his chair. About 2 AM, with the apartment dark and quiet, the father roused his son, told him he was slipping out for a few more beers, and obtained the boy's promise not to leave.

Half an hour later, two members of the Vice Squad knocked on the door. Kathie Roberts arose, and opened the door a crack to see who was there. The detectives forced their way in. They showed no search warrant, and said they had none.

They routed the 13 youths from their beds, invading the bedroom of one married couple. They went on the rifle through books, papers and publications scattered throughout the apartment, seizing some of them.

The police are alleged to have found some barbiturates somewhere in the apartment. The details of the charge are not known to those arrested. The police were not observed finding any such material, and the arrested 13 deny any such contact with such drugs.

The police prevented several of the youths from making any phone calls, but Rennie Davis, 25, oldest of the JOIN staffers involved, was able to make an unobserved call to the organization's attorney. Were it not for this unnoticed call, their lawyer would have remained ignorant of their plight, for they were allowed no authorized phone call until their court appearance, later Thursday.

McGowan, Sr. is strongly opposed to the impending marriage of his son and Kathie, according to Paul, Jr. The pair claim that he has tried on several occasions to destroy their relationship. JOIN did not learn that the pair was not married until the evening of the arrest. (next col.)

JOHN'S STATEMENTS ON R.L. ARREST (taken from the press release)

Paul and Kathie came to JOIN one week prior to the arrests. They told JOIN that they were married. "I wanted to protect Kathie's honor," Paul explained. "Besides, we do plan to be married within a few days."

"Of course we have been hurt by the confusion my father has caused," Paul Jr. observes. "Whatever the cause, the effect comes just like a smear on JOIN. But we will recover, and JOIN will continue with its community programs. That won't stop because it's more important than illegal search and seizure, or unreasonable arrest." "When I was growing up, my father couldn't be bothered with me; now he won't stop bothering."

"I asked several times if they had a warrant, but they said they didn't need one," asserted Rennie Davis, 25, oldest of the JOIN workers involved. "If they found any (goofballs), I don't know where. I know none of us had any. If there were goof-balls in the apartment, I can only believe that they were put there by someone who wanted them found. We have too much at stake and too much to do to get involved with destructive drugs."

"It is most unfortunate that a family vendetta resulted in a night in jail, and wild allegation about liquor and goof-ball parties," said Peter Freedman, a JOIN member.

The group will be arrested July 28th



# BOSTON project news and poetry

## MOTHERS FOR ADEQUATE WELFARE

by Carole Johnson  
Lots of women from broken marriages and other unhappy situations feel deserted by society and stamped with the stigma of being "on welfare." They are confused and scared of losing their very existence if they do the wrong things. The right thing is they shut up and accept every thing that is handed them according to the welfare rules. It seems to ignore the basic fact that these women are human beings who should not be forced to accept without question every cut or change in their checks.

A long struggle of a small group of mothers began. A struggle to help each other and pull together against the indignity forced upon them.

ISSUES WORKED ON  
Naming themselves Mothers for Adequate Welfare, their intent was clear. Already some of the following things have been worked on: what hospitals accept welfare mothers; a surplus food campaign; raising the rent allowance; and a grievance committee.

Hoping that no longer will they be forced to live among the flagrant housing violations these women want to get the Welfare Department to insist on better housing inspectors. All of the things they want to change and improve involve their children. The common denominator is kids, but in feeling united and no longer alone they are getting back some of their pride. With the hope of instilling it in the next generation they are battering against tremendous odds in their fight.



## SCHOOLS GROUP

by Mr. and Mrs. Cook

I recently joined the Parents Association at the Dudley Street Action Center. My husband and myself both feel that this is a worthy cause and a vitally necessary factor for the education of our children. If we can get this fact to the other parents of the area, we feel that all of us together can accomplish the things that the schools will not give us. We also feel that the Parents should have an active part in the Home and School Association, that is, we should be allowed to vote for our own Committees and be able to vote on all issues. If as the Teachers claim there is no cooperation with the Parents, then if we go in a large body up to the schools and insist upon our rights as Parents, we can and will show that we are cooperative and, by so doing, we feel that we can accomplish all that we have in mind for our children. In closing may I say "Let us go forward not backward for our children."

## PLAYGROUND REPORT

by Roger Manella

Over 100 adults and 150 kids from a ten-block area in Roxbury met on Monday July 19. They met on a vacant lot on the corner of Julian and Judson streets, amid broken glass and weeds, to demand that their neighborhood have a playground. Present at the meeting was the majority leader of the Mass. State Legislature, who is State Representative from that area. His name is Quinn and he was very sympathetic with the people's demands. He was very sympathetic but couldn't stay for the

whole meeting because there were some important people there from the Fisheries Bureau in Washington. It seemed that these people and their problems about fish were more important than the block meeting because Mr. Quinn left the block meeting shortly after it began.

(continued next page)

# BOSTON *Continued*

PLAYGROUND REPORT continued

He stayed long enough however to tell us how hard it was to get things from the Legislature and about taxes, in fact about everything but playgrounds.

The people got very angry and stayed to talk long after Quinn left. There seemed to be a split in the community between people who live in a large apartment building near the lot and don't have many kids and the people who have large families whose kids need the lot. Several families objecting to the site of the playground argue that the kids--presumably not theirs--would destroy any playground within a year and that the resultant loss of asphalt and iron would depress the value of their property more than the present lot filled with broken glass and an occasional abandoned car.

### MEETING ORGANIZED

Demands for the playground originated two years ago among a small group of mothers. People from the Dudley

Street Action Center along with a number of community people organized the meeting by going door to door and talking to people. A petition was circulated among the people who wanted the playground and a number of people got together and arranged a future meeting with Quinn.

The petition was then presented to Quinn two days after Monday's meeting; a meeting with the Park Commissioner has been arranged. Staff and community people are currently preparing a detailed proposal for submission to the park department and the war on poverty. They plan to demand that Julian Street be closed to traffic while the bureaucracy rumbles and the playground is being built.



## A poem for Roxbury by Yvonne Ruelas

Yvonne Ruelas is a Roxbury Mother on ADC. Jonathan Kozol was a friend of hers, and she wrote the following poem right after he was fired from the Charles Gibson School for reading a poem of Langston Hughes to his class...

You can have your schools, they do not teach by the golden rule.  
You can have your headmaster indeed he is a bastard.  
You can have your books, they only make us feel like a pebble in a babbling brook.  
As a name of Hicks one would think that it came from a primitive country from behind a bushes of sticks.  
You can have your teachers, they should have studied theology because then they would have practised what they preach.  
By all means keep your honor rolls, it only show us what little we know. Indeed Roxbury is a ghetto.  
Please keep your school walls, it only make our spirit fall.  
Your smile and pat on the head has made us take heed.  
And from what we have learn truly makes our heart bleed.  
Don't discredit us for what we do not know when you have taken your time not to teach us so.  
When one did come along to help us sprout, what did you do?  
You kicked him out.  
Should I not be more better off in the North than in the South?  
You said if I could make it across the Mason-Dixie line, my life would be better, I would not be so far behind.  
But now my heart has been made to sink, so now I have to stop and think.  
(Continued next page)

## A Poem for a Jewish Mother

(Say what you like, but the South will rise and stand tall, when the North will be doing what it is doing now, it's too much deceitfulness among the masses of people, not enough of togetherness, this is what you call so close and yet so far. Forgive me, as I'm not good at concealing my thoughts.)

Should I go back to old Vat and tell them that you had no soul in you? Would they say or would they know that they could have told me so? I trust and I believed in you.  
You said that you would see me through, but now I am left out on the limb because you did not trust in him.  
He did not say or do any harm to all of us, he did no wrong.  
He was a man of great means, from him we have taken great heed because we know he didn't want our hearts to bleed,  
Even though he is gone, his precious deeds will linger on.  
Not only me but others know he tried so hard to tell us son.  
We will never forget: from 35 to 75% within six months of time he brought us from behind.  
If he was allowed to give his knowledge, just think how many could go to college.  
If the men asked us, do you know, we would reply yes, we got ours from Mr. Kozol.  
They could not take the front row, all because he taught us so.  
What teachers do you know would take their time to help others so? The first time, he made Langston Hughes rhyme.  
Oh my, is he a Negro?  
Why yes, weren't you ever taught so?  
No teacher, don't forget that we live in a ghetto.



Oh how I wish I could live like you, but then I am a Negro and you a Jew.  
We know you don't mind, it's others that keep us behind.  
They say some Mothers stoned, but deep down inside they know it was no harm.  
Now I wonder could it be too, all this happened because he was a Jew?  
Don't feel downhearted, your kindness and our thoughts will never be departed.  
Where and if any, you're Moses among the many.  
Never did you think about pay.  
You thought only about your duty for the day.  
Some children would cry, and who do you think would be standing by?  
"Oh, do you know?"  
"Yes, Mr. Kozol, teacher what must I do?"  
"Don't worry children, I will see you through."  
"I like fun, but no place to go."  
"Follow me, I will show you so." (continued next page)



# FOR REASON'S SAKE

"Mother dear, I love Mr. Kozol."  
 "My child, what did you do?"  
 "We went fishing, boating, and we stop at the zoo."  
 "May I ask, did you have fun?"  
 "Mommie, he is like no other one."  
 "Wait a minute, I will give you a chair."  
 "Oh nonsense, I will sit anywhere."  
 "Please let me give you a pay."  
 "Please don't think about that, some other day."  
 "Oh sir, I am so poor."  
 "Please never think about that anymore."  
 "You say, sir, you found my child bright."  
 "Why yes, it's clear in sight."  
 "It was never mentioned before, but then you're smart, you're Mr. Kozol."  
 "You went to the best college, do you think my child has such knowledge?"  
 "Indeed yes."  
 "I thought (never mind) he is not that far behind."  
 "Your mother must be proud of you, to have a son so dear and true."  
 "Oh what your father must feel to know you were so kind and real."

My son will always know, there is no one like Mr. Kozol.

# CLEVELAND WEST

DISCUSSIONS OF POLITICS--by Evan Metcalf

In talking to people in the community about politics here, one finds it easy to say that the trouble is that poor people aren't represented downtown, that politicians have college degrees only because they're always rich, but that the little people have just as much right to be represented and in fact know more about the city's problems than many politicians, and so ought to feel confident to participate in politics as they are--poor people with little education.

In Cleveland now we are confronted with just such a situation: Dorothy Hammer, a welfare worker and past co-chairman of CUPAW, has decided she wants to run for schoolboard in the November city-wide election. She admittedly has no special knowledge about education, but wants to run as a poor person representing the problems and needs of poor people. Her decision to run, while made by herself (significantly, not by a community organization), stems very much from her working with SDS and CUPAW over the past year; it is interesting that her conclusion from that experience (including a confrontation by CUPAW with an unsympathetic schoolboard) was that she should become a sympathetic member of that same board, rather than, e.g., organizing her neighbors.

### REAL QUESTIONS ARE RAISED

Thus, the questions of how we talk to people about politics, and of how we relate to the political system, are raised in real terms: Should we drop everything else we are doing in order to circulate petitions to get her name on the ballot before the deadline, especially if that means doing a "blitz" campaign and not talking to people in depth when the opportunity arises? Although she cannot realistically hope to win in a city-wide election, will participating in the system's contest inevitably arouse hopes of success, and will this distort our thinking, forcing us into the traditional game of searching for publicity gimmicks, etc.?

(continued next page)

# Politics Continued

Will the publicity and legitimacy associated with running in an election, on the other hand, make it more possible to raise issues to a broad community effectively? Will running in a campaign provide a means of testing our ideas about how much (or how little) actually can be done within the system?

The problem hinges around what we expect to come out of a "no-win" election--one key point is as a way of learning how we can communicate with people our view of politics, and the idea that electing one person will not by itself change things significantly, and in fact can be destructive in absorbing the energies of an incipient movement? One possibility is to hold some sort of counter election. Such an experiment would attempt to contain the elements of a new politics within it--it should respond to the reasons that people don't participate in politics at present; these include both essentially technical obstacles blocking participation of the poor (inconvenience of registration or voting procedure, exclusive requirements, etc.), and the more basic questions of the relevance of politics to people's lives--both the lack of real choices, and the refusal of the system's politics to deal with many vital questions in a way that is accessible to electoral choice (e.g., welfare, housing conditions, urban renewal, not to mention Vietnam). A way should be found to include our concern with the small but vital power in the community, and there must be ways of making a representative responsible to the community--perhaps basing such a campaign on groups involved in rent protests, demands for better recreation facilities, street safety, CUPAW, a community union. A counter-election could be a way to communicate the idea of a new politics to people, confronting them with an "illegitimate" ballot which can elect no one. But such a counter-election seems out of place in a northern urban area like Cleveland at present--there does not exist now a large constituency which both regards politics as important and the system's politics as illegitimate; and in trying to communicate with people around a campaign, the illegitimacy of a counter-election might well serve as a further block to understanding central issues.

Probably the central issue, whether she is on the ballot or not, is to find concrete alternatives to a traditional campaign--one promising activity is having Dorothy come to community meetings along with various other candidates. They all tend to offer to help "you people" by pulling the strings downtown best; she says that she understands the problems of the poor, and that the people need to organize and build a movement so they can get the things they need themselves.

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### CUPAW IN AKRON --by Carole King (Reprinted from "CUPAW NEWSLETTER")



Paul Younger took us to Akron to talk and exchange ideas with people who are organizing in Akron on the same problems. Marion Hall has been elected chairman of that group. The group has a nice membership, and intends shortly to have an issue to work on. This group like CUPAW is made up of welfare clients.

Every month we have as welfare mothers, and with the help of the Students Democratic Society, stood on food stamp lines to try to get you into CUPAW. Join New Citizens United For Adequate Welfare.

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reprints from **CUPAW NEWSLETTER**

(CITIZENS UNITED FOR ADEQUATE WELFARE) --Page 10--

On May 10, 1965, I went to the Franklin Ave. distribution center to get my food stamps, to get around the long line on Hough Ave. (which I later found out was not there). I was so depressed, I didn't know what to do. I had a heavy gas bill, my light bill was overdue and my five kids all needed shoes and clothing. There was not enough money to cover all these things. I was really shook up!

As I walked up the walk, a lady asked me, "do you want more money?" I gazed at her shocked. It seemed to me she was reading my mind. When I said was there any hope, she said Yes. This was music to my ears. I was asked to sign a letter and I was also given an invitation to visit CUPAW. I had gone to the only source I knew of for help (my worker). I didn't get any consideration as she told me that I was getting as much as I could get unless I moved into the Hough. I asked for a washing machine three years ago when my right arm was broken in an accident. Every week that I wash, my arm keeps me awake for at least two nights. I do know that all A.D.C. mothers are not lazy or drunkards. It is simple. They are just plain financially disgusted. When you have a job to do and you don't have the equipment to work with, you don't feel like doing the job. There is just not enough money to go around.

My eyes fill with tears sometimes when my kids ask me why they have to wear shoes with holes in them. I think this is one of the reasons there is so much delinquency. The kids are among other kids looking different and they resent it.

I am very glad I found out about CUPAW and I am proud to be a member. Maybe if some of the top officials had to survive on the income that we have, they would see what I mean.

--by Mrs. Hazel Williams

**CUPAW'S LAST TRIP TO COLUMBUS**

A delegation from Citizens United for Adequate Welfare went to Columbus the middle of June to be in the Senate Finance Committee meetings that were discussing whether they would do anything for welfare clients in the next two years. With deep regret because I am also on welfare, they didn't or wouldn't give us a raise through legislation until 1967. This is only one reason for you to support CUPAW's principles. We need more mothers, father, sisters, brothers, uncles, cousins concerned with problems to join CUPAW. Our organization should be a mass number of people to show how many are suffering because of Ohio standards. The letters many of you signed were strewn on Governor Rhodes desk to show him how we detest the idea of such inhuman budgets. We will not stop now. We will go back and back again until they realize we are people that suffer hunger, get cold without proper clothing, and suffer other things because of an inadequate living, and we want to live like people and not like statistics!

Don't you? Then come join us!

**LET THE PEOPLE DECIDE** --by Brian Glick, NH

Several New Haven Project staff members have been deeply involved in the past 10 days in a struggle for resident participation in Community Progress, Incorporated (CPI), New Haven's poverty program community action agency. Our experiences provide useful insights into the war on poverty and the dangers of coalition-building. In addition important questions about organizing strategy are raised.

**COMMUNITY PROGRESS, INC.**

CPI was the initial Ford Foundation "grey areas" project, started with a 2 1/2 million dollar grant in 1962. In the words of its prospectus, it added "human renewal" to New Haven's pioneer, "progressive urban redevelopment" program. It now serves as the model for community action agencies in the war on poverty, receiving most of its funds from the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) in Washington. Mitchell Sviridoff, the former UAW leader who runs CPI, is president of the National Committee for Community Development, the recently formed association of heads of community action agencies.

CPI is governed, nominally, by a board of 9 directors. The Mayor chooses three; his present appointees include a partner in the law firm which receives almost all CPI's legal business, assistant pastor of a catholic church which receives over 75,000 annually in CPI grants, and a Negro minister who heads an Urban League which operates almost entirely on funds from CPI. Boards of Education and Redevelopment, appointed by the Mayor, each add one of their members to the board. The board of the urban renewal Citizens Action Commission (mainly business leaders) names a 6th. The Community Council (another recipient of CPI funds drawing most of its board from agencies which receive CPI money) and the United Fund, which share staff and office space, each name a director. Yale names the last, the only one with any semblance of independence. In all there are 3 clergymen, a lawyer, a lawyer's wife, 3 corporation and bank executives, and a Union executive.

**NAACP AND CORE DEMAND RESIDENT PARTICIPATION**

The local NAACP and CORE had met with Sviridoff early in the summer to demand resident participation on the board. Sviridoff offered a policy advisory board of 2 people from each of the 7 neighborhoods CPI serves. Members of this group would be selected by neighborhood conventions of delegates from organizations invited by CPI neighborhood staff. They, in turn, would select two of their members to join the present nine-member Board of Directors. When both organizations demanded more than this, Sviridoff said his staff would consider the matter and meet with the groups again late in the summer or in September.

**SNOOPING PAYS OFF**

Some of the New Haven Project staff discovered 2 weeks ago, however, that before these meetings CPI had submitted an OEO application for a grant of \$1.4 million to cover September 1965 to June 1966, and expected acceptance of this application by the beginning of August. To get representatives elected by neighborhood people on the CPI board something had to be done quickly. Fearing the weakness of our group, the Hill Neighborhood Union, standing alone--especially in light of its flimsy community base, staff tried to put together a coalition of civil rights groups,



the New Haven Staff discovers

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*Handwritten notes:*  
③  
present statement on will made  
- evidence  
present statement on will made  
- evidence

*Handwritten note:*  
Agreement  
on 7/17/65?

*Handwritten note:*  
103

*Handwritten note:*  
76  
War

*Handwritten note:*  
05

## NEW HAVEN CONTINUED

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city ministers, and Yale people. In a hurried meeting on July 20, demands were agreed upon: Board majority for people elected by residents of CPI neighborhoods, elected neighborhood boards to review programs, public hearings on proposed programs, a hearing procedure for aggrieved employees, job applicants, program applicants and participants, and organizations and freedom of research and evaluation from control of program staff. Project staff members folded these into a formal complaint under the OEO regulations set out in the Community Action Program Guide. (This guide is available from OEO. Copies of the New Haven complaint, in limited quantity, are available from Brian Glick, 17 Vernon, New Haven).

### COALITION-BUILDING

Coalition-building proved far more hazardous than preparing a complaint. Although CORE and the Hill Neighborhood Union wanted simply to call a press conference and file a complaint, they accepted NAACP and Human Relations Council (local fair housing group) requests for one final meeting with Sviridoff. It was agreed, however, that submitting the complaint would not be negotiable, that the meeting was only a gesture of courtesy, that Brian Glick of the New Haven Project would speak for the group, and that in a press conference immediately after the meeting Haywood Burns, a CORE member on the project staff, would announce submission of the complaint.

These precautions proved insufficient. On the 21st the Human Relations Council officers decided they could not act without formal approval from their 40-member Executive Board which could not meet until August 2. Half-a-day later the NAACP began to balk at the demands and procedure. Their President--who is a CPI employee--and the chairman of their negotiating committee, an employee of the renewal agency, apparently had been reached.

### NAACP DROPS OUT

On the 22nd the NAACP asked us to wait 3 extra days for their board to meet. We refused and they dropped out. When their board did meet, the President and the Negotiating Committee Chairman submitted a moderate counter-proposal which opposed joining the complaint. Pro-complaint NAACP-ers forced another meeting, at which we'll probably lose.

Meanwhile, since the meeting with Sviridoff already had been scheduled, we went through with it. Sviridoff called in the press and held forth in a near-monologue. When we finally broke the meeting off, NAACP people who had attended as "observers" stayed on for further discussion which Sviridoff extended well into our press conference time. As a result, we had no press conference and the New Haven papers--unsympathetic in any case--covered the meeting and what Sviridoff said rather than the complaint.

### OEO SPEAKS--BUT WHAT DID THEY SAY?

This week the papers reported that an anonymous OEO official--probably one of Sviridoff's Washington allies--said OEO would investigate, but would not hold up on the application and did not require very many neighborhood people on poverty program boards. The papers will not report or print a letter to the editor about conversations in which regional OEO officials in New York told us they will not approve CPI's application until they investigate. Probably this will eliminate whatever chance we had of gaining NAACP and Human Relations Council.

We have developed little community support on this issue. Staff organizers hesitate to raise the issue in early discussion. Many community people don't see it as immediately relevant to their own lives, and since we felt forced to act in a very great hurry, there has been little time for discussion with community people. At a meeting on the 20th I secured Hill Neighborhood Union endorsement of the demands and procedure and two community people joined 3 staff members at the coalition meeting.

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## NEW HAVEN CONTINUED

--Page 13--

### COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IS SLIGHT

The community people did not participate in the coalition meeting, however, and initial Union approval was based primarily on Union members' relationship with staff rather than on their understanding of the issue, and independent, informed decision. There has been some discussion of a petition signed by community people and of community people seeing Sargeant Shriver and other OEO officials during the August 6th-9th Washington activities, but neither of these seems very likely to materialize. If they were to take place, moreover, probably they would simply increase the extent to which we have manipulated people "for their own good." For this, ultimately, has been our justification. We have thought both our organizing and people's living condition and sense of power would be helped if we won most of what we sought.

The dangers of this sort of approach are obvious. The choice we faced will not be limited to poverty board representation struggles; during the years it takes to build a community union which people really can run for themselves, the temptation to use the organization and the people in it for ends they don't share or comprehend at the time will recur time after time (Vietnam may be a prime example). The temptation--indeed the dilemma--is accentuated when, as in New Haven, many of the staff feel part of the community and members of the Community Union in their own right. Once staff are identified with the Union, it is hard to see how they can join inactions of this sort without involving the Union. Probably neither Union members nor press and public (surely less important) will understand such independent action.

### WHAT'S THE ANSWER?

Is the choice then between manipulation, on the one hand, and impotence regarding pressing issues, on the other? There can be no pat answers. Perhaps there isn't even potential discussion. I think the latter might be possible, however, and I hope some people will try by replying. Especially helpful would be information and reactions from Newark, Cleveland, Boston and any other projects which have been involved in action around poverty programs. Eventually, perhaps, we can up-date Ronnie Davis's paper and draw some important generalizations.

### NEW HAVEN'S FREEDOM SCHOOL --by Jake Blum

## PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS + SOCIAL ACTION

I always find it difficult to take a step back and examine what I'm doing. This problem with New Haven's freedom school is especially complex because it has become almost a way of life. I'd just like to talk about one kind of dilemma I've sensed in our work.

It seems to me that in a freedom school situation, the organizer or staff member has a good deal of influence over what goes on and on the kinds of relationships that develop. Because he is the one who took the primary initiative in getting people together, people look to him to set a "style of action" since they are not sure what they're supposed to be doing. But since what they do should be guided by what they want to do, this will hopefully cease to be a problem in time. This requires that the organizer be willing to abdicate the initiative more and more and that the kids gain more confidence in the group.

But at least in the initial stage the organizer has a lot of influence. Relationships in the group seem to take two forms. The first involves a common concern for personal problems concerning sex, the family, and other kids. It is possible for an organizer to be sensitive to these problems, to consciously demonstrate concern for them and to build a relationship based on understanding and compassion. The other kind of relationship is based on a common commitment to social change and the

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# FREEDOM SCHOOLS

achievement of certain goals. It is difficult for this kind of relationship to last without direct relation to some kind of movement. What we do not kids can build their own movement and sustain it is another question that should be discussed.

The two kinds of relationships outlined above are not mutually exclusive. In fact, I think both are necessary and are the crux of what we're doing here.

Most of the Negro Mississippians who were last summer's freedom school leaders have left the state. One reason is that the people who brought them into the movement have left the state themselves in many cases. The importance of the one-to-one relationship probably can't be overstated, which means that people working in freedom schools must make a long-term commitment. Another reason why people left Mississippi is that the solutions that they sought to social problems never came about. A similar kind of disillusionment about "all talk and no change" will also come after a while in a situation where you talk about social change in a vacuum--i.e., where no movement or action takes place. It is always possible that people will lose faith in the whole idea of social change. The possibility is probably greater in a place like New Haven where the movement is embryonic. It is therefore important that people in freedom schools are aware of things going on in other places; that they meet other people and exchange ideas and experiences; that they begin to work together on solutions to the problems that they present and discuss. I guess that such a program is not a real substitute for direct action on a local level.

## TOWARDS MORE DISCUSSION

As a partial solution, I'd like many young, unrepresented people to meet in Washington on August 7th and 8th in conjunction with the Assembly of Unrepresented Peoples. Since there is little time and limited resources, perhaps some groups can only send representatives, but we can have some good discussions, go to see a few federal officials about our problems, do something about the war, and lay the groundwork for a large Young People's Conference at Newark in August in conjunction with the People's Conference to be held there at the end of the month.

Ideas on the Washington part of this should go to: Parris, 107 Rhode Island Ave. NW, Washington, DC.

Ideas about freedom school activities at the Newark Conference should go to Jake Blum, 46 Arch, New Haven, and to Louise Patterson, 117 Hunterdon, Newark, NJ.

## Why I Like Freedom School

by Calvin West Jr.

- Freedom school is a place to learn about your own kind and that's black.
- The reason why am writing because I'm getting sick and tired of my people being not put in big thing.
- And I'm getting tired of having my people being beate for the first little thing they do.
- The only time were put in big thing is sports.



# OAKLAND: back fences + phone-ins

Friday night

We just heard that the Housing Commissioners have written to the tenants league regarding their promise to hold a special meeting on the backyard fence issue. This means some kind of demonstration will be held Monday. It will be a joint demonstration between the tenants at Peralta where we work and at Lockwood in East Oakland.

*Q*  
*W*

It's hard to give a full sense of all that's been going on since we last wrote. Since the Housing Commission meeting Monday the 12th there has been a lot of trouble due to accusations of outside agitation. The Commission at its last meeting used that as an excuse to avoid confronting the problem. Mrs. Clayton, who lives in the project and is head of the Peralta Civic Club, has been going door to door attacking activists in the tenants league (the Peralta Improvement League) and SDS people.

## MRS. CLAYTON AND THE TENANTS

None of this had any effect on committed people. At the third tenants meeting Tuesday the 13th Mrs Clayton came, delivered a denunciation, and was thoroughly put down by the tenants. But other tenants are very suspicious and are swallowing her red scare. This has been reported especially by tenants who have been going door to door (first with a bill for damages we presented to the Housing Commission, and then to promote the phone-in). We're having a workshop Sunday to talk at greater length about door-to-door work; the bulk of this is now being done by about ten of the active housewives.

The Housing Commission is hoping to wait out the protest. Until the conference between Mr. York and Mrs. Johnson of the tenants league and Gatchard (Housing Director) on Wed. the Housing Commission had been tearing down fence back of vacant apartments, hoping to slowly whittle us down. This is now stopped, but there is no indication that the fences will start to go up. However, they are pleading with the tenants to permit the work crews to come back and finish the job soon; the work is being provided by war-on-poverty youth corps kids who go back to school in September. Our picket lines and sit-ins have scared the war on poverty away.



Beyond the 20 folks most involved in the protest, general interest among tenants is lagging. Only 30 came to the Thursday meeting (22nd). We have circulated a petition asking for a traffic signal at 10th and Cypress.

## SIT-IN AND PUBLICITY

The sit-in happened Monday the 12th and since then the work crews haven't been back. About two dozen tenants sat down in the middle of the work and the union men who are running the program hustled the kids out before the TV could get any pictures. The press is on our side and is making it seem like the unions are at fault when it is really the housing authority at fault.

The following Monday, just to let the Housing know we are still around, we had a phone-in. People called the commissioners at their businesses and the Housing Director all day, causing busy lines and much consternation (about 20-30 calls each).

Meanwhile the staff is going through real soul-searching. We haven't been doing as much work as it sounds. We've been sort of carried along in (continued next page)

# Oakland's back fences cont'd

the excitement of the fence dispute, work on the blocks doesn't have a real direction; its problems will be talked about in our next report. We also have a real swarm of small fry all over the house every day, demanding and needing attention. Lots of other things are going on: Danny Benson of San Francisco SNCC is organizing for an area Peoples Conference in October; the Unemployed Rights Committee is going to picket a Bay Area Rapid Construction site for not hiring local labor on its tunnel project.

# Oakland's phone-in: a call

WEDNESDAY -- MONDAY -- 11-1-72

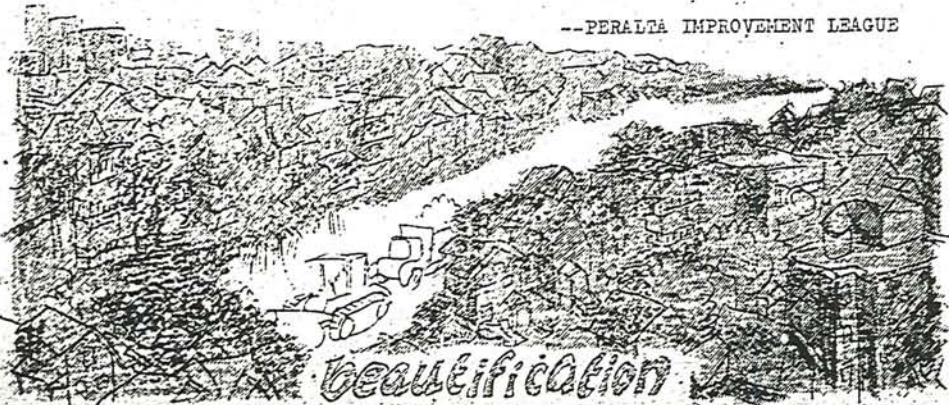
Why? These questions have not been answered by any of the Housing Authority officials. Our spokesman at the Board of Commissioners meeting last Monday was out off after only five minutes. Mr. Pete Taylor has told us to call in with our questions anytime. Let's take him up on it. We want to let them know we're still concerned, and we want them to answer our questions. The Housing Authority is really shock up. We can win if we keep pushing.

Call the Housing Authority and the individual commissioners all day Monday until they know we all want answers.

### Suggested questions:

1. When is the special Board of Commissioners meeting you promised?
2. Why were the fences taken down?
3. Why were we not notified well in advance?
4. Why were the opinions of the people not consulted?
5. Why were the tenants refused a copy of the so-called "beautification" plans?
6. Do you plan to reimburse the tenants for their losses in flowers, plants and fence materials?
7. Will the fences be rebuilt?
8. Commissioners: How can you make decisions like this if you never come to find out how we live and how we feel?

--PERALTA IMPROVEMENT LEAGUE



# A PERSONAL STORY

--by Eddie Smith, a New Haven staff member from the Hill

When I was in Mississippi, it was a good experience for me. I met a lot of interesting people, and we had good talk. I had a good talk with Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer, and she's a wonderful woman. She does wonderful things for them people down there in Mississippi, and when we went out to get the people to register to vote she helped everybody that wasn't used to the work to show them how to talk to the people, which was very nice because when I went down there I didn't know the first thing about it. When she told me what to do I felt more important to the people down there, and when I wasn't doing nothing, all done for the day, we went on parties and drank Colt 45 malt liquor.

### THE BOMBINGS

The night that the houses started to get bombed, the Freedom House got burned first, but that didn't go off too good. One of the girls that went down from Newark, New Jersey, we dropped her off at this house in Mississippi, and we went around the corner and turned right back around and when we did that the house that we dropped the girl off in was on fire. They started the fire by throwing homemade bombs. The fucking Ku Klux Klan did that. That night everything was in an uproar, and that made me mad about the whole thing was when them stupid fire engine people came and set up the hose in the fire hydrant, put the hose on the ground and stood there and looked at the fire and laughed. And some of the cops down there hit the girl that was from Newark, New Jersey, and the girl from New Jersey was named Betty Morris. J.C. from Newark was pissed off about it, I was pissed off about it, Linda S. was pissed off about it, but there was nothing we can do, because the cops down there belong to the Ku Klux Klan. And while this fire was going on they started another fire in the store which me, Carl Johnson and some other guys that live in Mississippi put out the fire before the fire engine came. That's how damn fucking slow they was. And when we got that fire out there was another one, way out. There was no hope for that fire. Nobody could save that house. But at that time I got hurt jumping off the fucking house so I could run to the other fire.

### A MEETING IS HELD

After all this excitement we had a meeting and talked about what happened. Two of the guys that was in the Freedom House that the first bomb was thrown through seen a cop leaving the scene and picked up two of the kids that were throwing the bomb. And that's what made us feel mad, but we never did get to bed that night because we wasn't sure if they would come back or not, so we stayed up all night walking the streets. Next morning we all got in front of this house that was burned completely and started singing freedom songs and started raising a lot of hell but one of the cops that was watching the house told us if we didn't shut up we would have to move. And then we said where the hell can we move to? Our house just been burned down, so they brought this big police bus along and parked it on the side in case they had arrested us, but there was no arrests and so we went to some friends' house, ate and slept a little. And then we went over to Drew, Mississippi, to organize for to register people to

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*Mississippi welcome, etc. - Pub. 15-*

vote. Barry Kalish, Jesse Allen, and two other guys were arrested. The two guys from Mississippi, one was arrested for impersonating an officer and the other one was arrested for disturbing traffic. Barry Kalish and Jesse Allen were arrested for standing in front of the police station and they were locked up, and the day they were locked up they only had a cold hamburger to eat and a half a glass of milk. And then the next day they were tried and sentenced. Jesse and Barry were sentenced 2 months on the county farm, and the other two guys were sentenced 3 months on the county farm. Mrs. Hame got some lawyers to get them out, and they got out.

ca  
CMI 8

CHASED HOME, ARRESTED AGAIN

On the way back from Mississippi we were being chased. The guys that were chasing us, one of them was standing up with a rifle but he didn't shoot. And then they stopped following us and then another one took over and we lost them. Meanwhile Linda S. and I and Fannie Lou Hamer and some other people that were in the car were on the way home when Lt. Floyd stopped us and arrested Linda for passing a stop sign. She was in jail for 3 hours and we got her out on bond for \$100. And then we had an accident on the way back from Mississippi. Betty Morris hurt her ankle but was taken to the hospital after 3 hours. The car wasn't hurt really bad enough that we couldn't drive. We made it to Newark all right, and from Newark we came home and told the people of our project about our experience in Mississippi.



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