

ERAP NEWSLETTER

451 Dudley St., Roxbury, Mass.

November 22, 1965

NAT'L ERAP OFFICE

—by Rich Rothstein, Chicago

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Rennie and I had a long talk today, after which we decided that it is imperative that we open up the national ERAP office again. I am prepared to do this, beginning the first of the year.

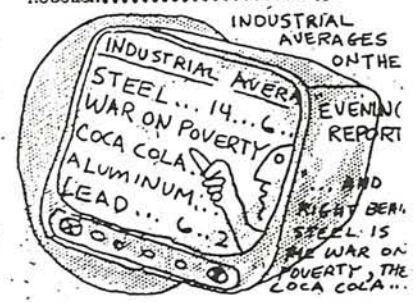
This would be an ERAP office, not an NCU office of any kind. It would not be a means for confederating the projects, but a means for providing services to projects which they and the movements sorely lack at this point. It would also be able to undertake certain political work which it would not be realistically possible to exact either the projects or a confederation of the projects to be prepared to handle at this point.

We see the following functions as critical:

- 1) Doing political education for the campus on domestic political issues, on the movements, on power and wealth in America. This is a task which SDS has defaulted on, and it looks like they will continue to default here.

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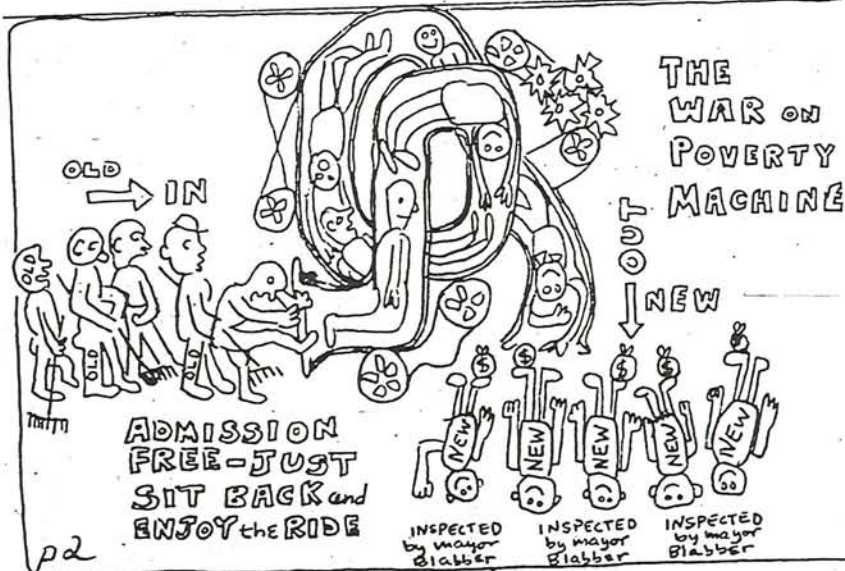


NAT'L OFFICE, CONT'D

- 2) Communicating ERAP directly to students to recruit staff.
- 3) Training of staff and arranging specific exchanges of staff (Eg it appears that someone to arrange it is the only thing holding back what is a desperately needed visit to Cleveland by some experienced Southern white organizers in Chicago.)
- 4) Fund raising
- 5) Maintaining and building contact with those labor and church groups whose support may well be critical for ERAP movements. We have, over the last few months, let these people slip away from ERAP due to their hostility to SDS. This particular coalition must be salvaged soon or it will be too late.
- 6) Initiating contact with the plethora of community organizing, very similar to ERAP's, being done all over the country by churches, by settlement houses, even by unaffiliated college groups.
- 7) Stimulate research on domestic power, wealth, and bureaucracy, and contract for specific studies which are seen at any given moment as important.

8) Do strategic analysis of movement activity for the benefit of organizers. Just off the top of my head, it seems to me we need, at this moment, clear discussions of: freedom labor unions, the role which cooperatives play in a movement, electoral politics, relationship to community power structures, (and a long overdue examination of exactly what is the difference between us and Alinsky), the uses of law, medicine, etc., on communities, etc., etc., etc.

I want to talk to you people at length about all of this. Can any of you come to Washington over Thanksgiving? If so, come on Friday to Shelley Blum's, 250 Manor Circle, Tacoma Park, Maryland (587-3962) where the December conference committee will be meeting.



PLANS FOR JAN. CONFERENCE

Report of National Community Union Meeting to Plan Washington War on Poverty Conference, Nov. 6 and 7 in Princeton, N.J.

Representatives from Newark, New Brunswick, New Haven, Hoboken, Cleveland East and West, Baltimore, Chicago, and Boston projects were there. We first set up a schedule for the week of the State of the Union Speech. Emphasis was placed on having both local and national plans. We felt it was important to see the conference as both a boost for local activity and the creation of unity among different projects.

Tuesday, January 4. Local activity protesting the State of the Union for poor people should take place in all the cities and states where people concerned with the Conference are located. The activity is up to the initiative of the individual projects. Suggestions were: (1) to focus on city hall through a march or appointment with mayor or other officials about the bad conditions of the city or the failure of the poverty program; (2) to protest local War on Poverty's failures at area War on Poverty offices, city hall, or homes and offices of prominent citizens on the city-wide Poverty Boards. It was hoped that those projects not wanting to have major project activity in their cities would at least send telegrams to Congress protesting poverty and the state of the union. Any press coverage could emphasize that people from around the country will be going to Washington at the end of the week to hold a conference and possible demonstration on the state of the union for poor people and specifically the poverty program.

National Activity should consist of sending several representatives from each project to Washington by January 4 to either hold a press conference about the state of the union, visit congressmen and the OEO, or possibly stage a small demonstration in front of Congress. None of these alternatives was decided on as people seemed as yet unclear whether we could have any impact on that particular day or even get into Congress or congressmen's offices. Project representatives might also be helping to finish up plans for the conference during the week.

Friday, Jan. 7. Arrivals of conference participants. Opening meeting of the Conference, 3 PM. People felt that the topic of the conference should go beyond just talking about what was going on in their different areas in welfare, housing, politics, etc. In addition, people felt the need to go beyond specific criticisms of the War on Poverty and to begin to talk about what they thought the country had to do in order to end poverty. Titles for the Conference were suggested, such as, "Beyond the War on Poverty," and "What is Poverty?" We want to spend some time talking about how each city's War on Poverty is set up and what local projects are doing. We decided to ask local projects to write short papers on that subject to be distributed at the Conference. Two general areas which seem most likely for discussion might be (1) what is needed to end poverty, (2) what national focus or action might unify the local fights each project is waging against poverty and for control of local and national programs affecting them. We also discussed inviting OEO people, congressmen, etc. to the Conference and decided to wait until other projects responded before we made a decision. Some people thought they might

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be invited to speak. We also decided to invite anyone we thought might be interested in participating with us, which would include students, other groups not yet affiliated with NCU but fighting the same war we are, and anyone else wanting to come.

Saturday, January 8

Morning - Conference Session. No definite subject areas have been set yet and will remain open to all suggestions from the projects.

Afternoon-Demonstration from OEO to White House

The only hesitation people felt about the demonstration was whether or not there would be enough people to have an impact. It's important for projects to send estimates on whether or not they can bring people to the conference and how many. Projects should also indicate size of demonstration they think necessary to pull it off. Some opposition to the demonstration was around the feeling that Americans are tired of demonstrations and can't be convinced by a demonstration of 300,500 that the Great Society isn't working well. Mainly, people felt the need to plan the demonstration before the Conference rather than in the midst of it as in Newark.

We decided to focus on the OEO largely because it was felt that those in charge of the War on Poverty aren't able to carry out the Bill as it was decided on in Congress. We want to march to the White House to make it clear that Johnson and his Congress aren't beginning to solve the problems of poverty through their bill. Specifically, the people decided to demonstrate 1) against local political control on the War on Poverty 2) to call for control by the poor 3) to demand real programs to fight poverty 4) to protest the existence of poverty in abundant America.

Evening - Conference Sessions? Party? preference should be stated.

Sunday, January 9, Meeting of National Community Unions.

Discussion of NCU was limited. Some people felt they still didn't understand what NCU was supposed to do. Others felt its purpose was to abolish poverty throughout the nation. Still others felt it would work to help out local areas through support actions when a local area was up against a tough situation. Some also felt the need for a staff and newsletter, but that was postponed for discussion until January. But there was general agreement that people sharing the goals of NCU should be able to join. The members from projects saw themselves as a provisional committee and expected some time to elapse before discussion of who was NCU and what was ERAP occurred. Generally people seemed to feel that NCU already existed because it was planning a national meeting and that the session on NCU at the Conference should be devoted to discussing the purpose and possible actions NCU could make. There was a suggestion that a Constitutional Convention might take place in April if people agreed to it.

Conference ends after dinner 2 P.M.

Arrangements

Phil Hutchings from Newark has agreed to do work on the conference. This might entail spending December in Washington if it's necessary. All responses to this mailing should be sent to him. Phil and Harriet Stulman will go to talk with the Institute of Policy Studies people this week about fund-raising, meeting and housing arrangements, publicity, and action on January 4. We plan to talk with the understanding that the scope and actions of the conference might change within the next few weeks. In order for the conference to happen, each project has to try to come up with one or two people preferably from the community who might come to Washington during the week before the Conference and who might be available for traveling to other areas to talk about the meeting.

Invitations - Local areas are to invite whoever they want. The name of every person

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WAR ON POVERTY

BOSTON: M.A.W. SUBMITS PROPOSAL TO POVERTY BOARD

(B) - by Carole Johnson and
Larry Gordon

The aim of the Welfare Department is supposed to be to help every person in need and work with them to try to re-establish their proper place in society with the mutual effort of the Welfare Department and the persons themselves on welfare. This is not the end results commonly seen by either party in a situation requiring welfare.

For this and many other reasons a welfare mothers' organization organized to deal with individual and common grievances of mothers and to involve them in a group in which they will have decision-making powers is important. This could have an important effect in eliminating the feelings of powerlessness, dependence, and isolation common to just about all of us.

Mothers for Adequate Welfare (M.A.W.) will be this solid organization if it continues to grow, as it is rapidly growing now.

For about nine months now, M.A.W. has had many individual grievances and trial programs to see what issues seem to be the ones that all felt had to be changed for better mutual existence. M.A.W.'s biggest program was to push to get federal surplus food sent to Boston. This campaign was successful after a great number of mothers were organized to insist on this program, long-available to the rest of the country.

Just as we mothers didn't know about surplus food, there are many other rules and rights that we are not informed of. Many social workers are poorly trained, underpaid, and overworked, and questions about rules and regulations from mothers are met with great disapproval.

M.A.W., which is made up of mothers with dependent children, is trying to become a body to improve their economic and social status by informing other welfare women of these rights. Several mothers are in the process of drawing up a condensed version of the Welfare manual which gives the allotted budget and describes a mother's rights and obligations on welfare. In addition there are many other ideas that could be worked out, some of which are a cooperative wholesale food buying service and a clothing and furniture exchange. For M.A.W. to get these things accomplished and to help it with the new campaign of raising the rent allowance many obstacles have to be hurdled. Many mothers need babysitters and bus fare to come to meetings and this is poorly come by. Most important because of lack of money for babysitters and continual pressure of home responsibilities, mothers are not able to do much organizing. It is impossible to get around and talk to all the interested mothers after meetings to let them know what is happening and get their ideas, but if this group is really to be run and controlled by welfare mothers they have to be the chief organizers.

A War on Poverty proposal accepted would eliminate many of these obstacles. We are submitting a proposal to our local boards. M.A.W.'s proposal asks the following things as aids to organize a welfare group with some real power to change things.

A budget has been worked out to include the cost of an office,

Chairs
Shelf-help

BOSTON, cont'd

a newsletter, and a staff of mothers to organize a continually solid group working.

The office would have many functions: meeting place, publishing place for the newsletter, library for information about welfare and other community services, and most important a centrally located office open every day where mothers could come for help, talk, and find out what's going on. Programs such as the clothing exchange or food-buying and serving classes could also be centralized from here.

The newsletter as such as possible should be written by welfare mothers on anything of interest to welfare mothers. General news of Mothers for Adequate Welfare would be part of it.

A tentative staff for this group would be two office workers part-time 25 hours a week. These two would try to keep an overall view of what the organization was doing and to coordinate the actions of the other staff. Two other staff members would do the research education, compile all relevant material affecting welfare mothers. Their duty would be new welfare legislation, community services available, and any change in the rules. The rest of the welfare group should be educated in the application of these new findings.

The most necessary of all will be the fifteen community organizers who would work about twelve hours a week. The salary paid them would not exceed the amount that may be earned without deductions from original welfare checks. The main functions of these community organizers would be to involve people in the ongoing activities of the organization, meetings, individual problems and doubts or any new ideas that should be talked about by the organizers.

Last but quite important will be the request for equipment including everything from paper for the newsletter to desks for the office. A small bus is also in the proposal for transportation for mothers and to help cover a larger area for mass meetings.

The proposal is a good one. In the Economic Opportunity Act there is a clause that says this money can be used against already established institutions when community action's involved, so here's hoping!

SELMA

(The following is reprinted from SNCC's WATS report of Nov. 5)
SELMA: Martha Preseed/Judy

There was an anti-poverty meeting, apparently called by the mayor, at the National Guard Armory. This was the first integrated meeting in the city outside of civil rights meetings. This was an attempt by the mayor to put the entire poverty program under his jurisdiction. The poverty group that originated in the Negro community has been meeting two or three times a week with the idea of working toward a poverty program with a wide base. The same night that this group had been voted the group to apply for the poverty money from Selma was the night that the mayor announced that he was planning to call a meeting. At the mayor's meeting there were about 600 people, 90% Negro. The Negro group will meet on Tuesday to decide how to proceed. The meetings have been attended by local ministers, some councilmen and Edmonite missionaries (a white group).



POVERTY, and PROVIDENCE

by Sandra Barnett

The "Poverty board" Progress for Providence, divided the city into 9 sections. Like a pie cut into equal portions, morally, this is an outrageous crime. Two of these pie wedges really need as much of the money as is appropriated for the whole Community Action Program.

I work in So. Providence, the "most needy" of the nine areas. So, Providence used to have two community schools. The City of Providence issue was over the role of the Neighborhood Advisory Committees in selecting directors for these schools. Such a furious battle raged between the Advisory Committees and the Providence School Board that the schools which were scheduled to open on October 1 will now open Dec. 1.

The Superintendent of Schools felt that the word "school" in the phrase "community school program" was paramount, thereby giving him absolute authority to name directors for his promotional list. A 100% vote not calculated to insure school board control of the whole program.

The Advisory Committees carried the maximum feasible participation of the poor" clause of Title II in the Poverty Act as a banner into battle. A chance granted by the Federal Government to have a program that was really theirs and certain to meet their needs. There were compromises and doubts. But there were also a few gains. 1) Members from every Advisory Committee gained seats on the Board of Progress for Providence. 2) Two delegates were assigned to each Advisory committee to help them write proposals and give technical advice. 3) Progress for Providence is a little more careful about passing a program without running it out to the Advisory Committees for approval...and they also ask community people to write proposals.

Nevertheless, the school situation is still awful. The superintendent got most of his supercertified guys the high paying directorships. And these directors interests naturally lean toward their big daddy school institution instead of the people they're supposed to serve. In another section of Providence, Lippit Hill, the Advisory Committee has retaliated by removing a tutorial program from the auspices of the community school....

NEWS ITEM: TUTORIAL TIES TO COMMUNITY SCHOOLS SEVERED

The Lippit Hill Neighborhood Advisory Committee voted last night to sever financial relationship between the area's community school and its tutorial program.

The action was taken because of a state law requiring supervision of tutors by certified teachers. The group was informed of the requirement by George F. Marks, director of the Doyle-Jenkins unit of the city's community school program.

Privately financed tutorial programs have been conducted at the Doyle Street and Jenkins Street Schools. In the past, for these programs, certified teachers were not required. This year's program would require supervising teachers, however, because the tutoring is partially financed by state funds. The program will be conducted as a private venture.

(Providence Eve. Bulletin, Saturday, Nov. 13, 1965)

AND A FIRST-HAND REPORT ON THE MEETING FROM DANIEL GANT, COMMUNITY ORGANIZER AND EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER OF R.I. CORE:

Core was well represented at the Lippit Hill Neighborhood Advisory Committee meeting at which the general members voted to sever the Doyle St.-Jenkins St. School from the state-financed community school program. George F. Marks, director of the Doyle-Jenkins unit, was put on the spot by loaded questions from the floor and also by the committee chairman.

The meeting left a lot to be desired

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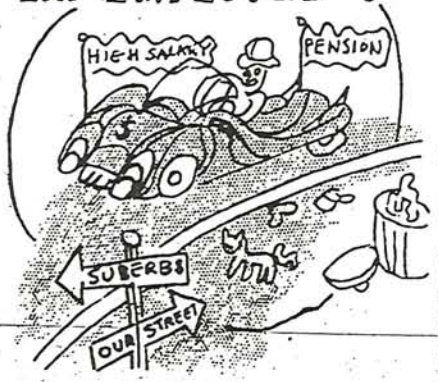
in the way of questions and answers, and although the general purpose of the meeting was the voting, other important items just never came up. Such as, why wasn't the question answered which caused all the dissension? "Does this law apply to professional educators and members of the tutorial group, or just to the Board of Education's favored people, with and without masters degrees?"

For two years the tutorial program at Doyle-Jenkins School has been running with the utmost success. In fact, the group received a Pacemaker award, which Mr. Jones personally accepted. All the tutorial members were volunteers.

Now that the federal government has given funds, the tutorial program has become a part of the "antipoverty program." The Pacemaker receivers all of a sudden aren't efficient through some technical mumbo-jumbo. That, as are a lot of things, is legal, but has demoralizing qualities. Everything is under the discretion of the School Board.

Another point was: though the Advisory Board's job is self-explanatory by itself, just who are they supposed to advise? Since the revisions were put in without their consent or knowledge, the whole essence of Friday night's drama seems to prove a very old adage: "The rich get richer and the poor get poorer."

"THE COMPETENT EOA EMPLOYEE":



ATLANTA

TROUBLES AT EOA
by Hector Black
(Reprinted from the Vine City Voice)

Wayne Kelley who has just finished writing a series for the JOURNAL on the EOA makes in his sixth article, "The cumulative annual payroll responsible to EOA could reach \$6,323,292 or almost 50% of the total budget, according to Mr. Fulp.

"That is big business. The Atlanta Chamber of Commerce has no record of any larger new industry locating here so far in 1965.

"Approximately 75% (\$4,742,469) would go into the pockets of staff, executives, researchers, social workers, and the like. The remaining 25% (\$1,580,823) would find its way to the poor in the form of paychecks."

Later in the same article, he writes, "The average salary increase on employment for the nine executives working at EOA headquarters amounted to more than \$2,000 per year each. . . . The raises were necessary to "entice" the former deKalb staffers into the agency, Mr. Emmerich asserts. "This is still a temporary program", he said.

On September 26th, Wayne Kelley wrote regarding the meeting of the 15-member board of directors of Economic Opportunity Atlanta Inc. (the EOA or War on Poverty): "On the agenda was a recommendation from Executive Administrator C. O. Emmerich that a pension plan be adopted for the benefit of the agency's employees (including Mr. Emmerich and more than 100 staff members and clerical help, but excluding the poor EOA neighborhood workers).

"The pension plan was necessary, said Mr. Jones later, to secure competent EOA employees.

"A pension consultant retained by the board offered the opinion that a plan offered by the Trust Co. of Georgia 'is the better plan for EOA.' (EOA Board member A. H. Sterne is president of the Trust Co. of Georgia.)

"Board member William L. Calloway, a Negro, recommended that Atlanta Life Insurance Co., Citizens Trust Co., and Southeastern Fidelity Fire Insurance Co. be considered for EOA group insurance and other business, depending of course on their ability to perform. (All three

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companies involve substantial Negro investment, Mr. Calloway said after the meeting. EOA Board member Jesse Hill is actuary for the Atlanta Life Insurance Co.)

On September 28th, the following article appeared in the Constitution. "Pension benefits, under the proposed plan, would be retroactive to Jan. 1st, 1965. Officials said it would be possible for some EOA officials to receive more than \$1,000 should they quit the poverty agency after Dec. 31st, 1965.

"Board member Wiley H. Montague, Sr., said he was concerned about the use of taxpayers money for pension purposes in a program such as the anti-poverty effort.

"He also protested the higher percentage of 1966 company contributions slated to go to EOA employees making more than \$6,000. Under the amended version of the pension plan, EOA will contribute 5 per cent of an employee's salary up to \$6,600 and 10 per cent of the portion over that figure."

On September 30th, Achsah Posey writes in the Constitution as follows regarding the fact that this pension plan will cover everyone but leave out the neighborhood aide.

"Jones and director Charles Emmerich explained to the board that the aides are not "career" employees with a regular employee-employer relationship, but are "trainees" from poverty areas, as are the persons in the Job Corps, the Manpower Development Training Program, and the Neighborhood Youth Corps.

"Atlanta School Supt. John Letson said, ' . . . The object was to prepare aides for regular work in the general economy.' W. L. Calloway, a Negro businessman, argued that putting aides in the pension program would discourage them from doing what they were being trained to do.

"He (Jones) and Emmerich admitted after the meeting that perhaps some neighborhood aides did not exactly understand their status as trainees, although both said the program had never anticipated considering them as "permanent" employees, but recipients of poverty benefits designed to make it possible to get out of poverty."

JACK MINNIS

(The following is reprinted from Jack Minnis's "Life with Lyndon in the Great Society", Vol. I, #41, copyright by Jack Minnis, 1965.)

There have been indications for some time that Lyndon is going to make some changes in the poverty program. The main change, apparently, is that he's gradually going to drop the whole idea that poor-folks ought to have something to say about how it's run. This week Lyndon's Bureau of the Budget came out with the idea that poor people ought to work in the poverty program, but that they shouldn't have anything to say about what they're doing. The New York Times reports that "encouraging the poor to organize and raise their voices" about where poverty money ought to be spent "is unsettling politics."

The Washington Post reports that an "authoritative source" inside Lyndon's administration says, "We've learned that a \$100,000 grant to a community action project can cause a million-dollar headache." So, say the reports, Lyndon is going to take most of the community action projects' money out of that fund and use the money for Job Corps and Neighborhood Youth Corps projects. These projects have been run, thus far, by either universities (and non-profit foundations) or business corporations. We detailed just who some of the corporations are, and why they're interested, in previous pages. The poor have nothing to do with these phases of the poverty war. They're run entirely by big business and big education.

A few weeks ago, Sargent Shriver was running around the country complaining that the universities which were running these programs were doing a lousy job. However, Shriver had nothing but praise for the big business corporations that were running the Job Corps camps. So now it looks like more and more of the poverty money is going to be channeled into the programs in which big business predominates, and that more and more of the contracts for conducting these programs will be going

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directly to corporations, rather than to universities.

Thus does control by corporations continue to extend, through Lyndon's government, to more and more of the people.



HOBOKEN CO-OP

by Carl Wittman

In the movements for change that have developed since 1960, the participation of Southern Negroes both poor and middle class, of college students, and increasingly of the poor Negroes in the northern ghettos is fairly well documented. Beyond that, projects in Chicago, Cleveland, and Appalachia have suggested that community organizing is possible in dislocated and impoverished white areas.

Over the last six months a few of us have been grappling with the problem of how to extend the ideals and beauty of the 'movement' to another group of people. The majority in Hoboken, New Jersey, are working class of European stock, the largest group being Italian. They are not the impoverished, although with their limited incomes they cannot escape to the suburbs, and continue to live with run-down conditions and corruption of the exploitative work situation, often without the minimal protection of the trade unions. The racism which the situation breeds, focused on the small number of Negroes but more against the substantial Puerto Rican population, has warped the outlooks of the majority; the hopelessness has made almost everyone cynical.

In this environment, we have been able to find ways to talk with many people; we work with them, talk at every opportunity about what we believe in and how we think some changes are necessary. Despite our unpopular ideas about foreign policy and race, we find many who are sympathetic, and a very few who are excited about change. For the most part, we are finding ways of making friends, broaching con-

CAIRO CLOSE

Dear Newsletter People,

Please make note of the fact in the Newsletter that the Cairo ERAP project is closing. But while the staff is pulling out, the last sparks are not dead; there is an effort under way to transform the Cairo project into an indigenous movement, which is what it is all about anyhow. To do this the people here will need the encouragement of the other projects and also their help. It would be important for the various projects to initiate the correspondence with people because they are not familiar with the idea of being left alone against the establishment. We are fearing reprisals against those who have cooperated with us after we have left. Please contact the people here through:

Rice Whitfield
622 Pyramid Courts
Cairo, Ill.

Yours in fanning
the flames,

Jim Huntington

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troversial subjects, and maintaining a dialogue.

But talk is cheap. Real changes in most people come about when they have to confront decisions, take risks, commit themselves to ideas and to each other. More recently our attention has turned to finding contexts in which people (and us ourselves) can do more than just talk. For a few, the reality of change is sustained by participation in protest against the war, communication with radicals in Newark and elsewhere, and other ways not so immediate and personal as other projects.

But for action here in Hoboken, there has been none. The prevailing cynicism has its roots in reality. Traditional forms of protest, such as unionization of shops, block groups, rent strikes, democratization of war on poverty groups, all have limited applicability. Although we are trying to organize some trade unions, there are often reasons why such attempts have failed in the past. Shops will move away or go out of business. The history of failed unionization attempts and sweetheart contracts has developed a backlog of suspicion and fear. It is also very difficult without the power of example to convey a vision of trade unions as very important or meaningful, beyond some small money benefits.

Schools are not what they could be, but there is no dissatisfaction with them, other than complaints of general corruption of the administrators. Most housing is tenement, but the owners often live there, the rents are not high, and except in the minority group areas, the buildings are pretty well kept up, mostly by the constant efforts of the tenants. Life is established in patterns, and talk of pickets and rent strikes is met more with an odd look, than by understanding or fear.

Municipal services, if a little shoddy, are plagued more by the corruption and overextension of the political machine. Government and politics is the largest single industry, and every family has a relative with a job or a friend that performs any service, with monetary return. The welfare rate is high, and in this area some protest and reform may seem desirable and possible. We are just recently beginning to meet large numbers of welfare recipients.

In most ways, this is a traditional and often very European society. People work hard, find their pleasures and escapes, and continue on generation after generation. The better off leave, the many who don't get ahead remain. People gripe, but there is no belief that change will or should come. The community is not dislocated, in the sense that the burgeoning ghetto or the rural south is, nor is it under the immediate pressure of great technological change. There is a slow exodus of industry, and a continuing displacement of Europeans by the minorities.

Under these conditions, attempting to develop a protest movement has its limitations, and reform movements are less likely to radicalize people than to fill in the cracks of the existing system of patronage. Perhaps our most important role here is to convey the concept of an alternative; the values and beauty of the 'movement' argue that there can be a better way of humans getting along and that there can be some deeper meaning in life. Equality, more money, better services, less oppression are not the central needs of the community (although any alternative we try to build must certainly be better in these aspects also). Nobody can say what the central needs of the community are, but they are probably related to the following:

- 1) the arbitrary, overstructured, and alienating character of work;
- 2) insecurity of low income, fear of loss of job, or of being or thinking different;

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3). the lack of meaning in life, resulting in minimal communication and a feeling of brotherhood. (This last one is less substantiated by actual statements and opinions, although it has been expressed in many ways enough times to be included.)

These things we have not just dreamed up, so much as our perception of the working conditions we have been in, and the discussions with workers, friends and patients in the local hospital psychiatric ward have supported them. They do, to a large extent, overlap with concerns of people in the movement elsewhere. That is, maybe the needs of working-class European Hobokeners are in some way related to the needs of intellectual radicals and more impoverished groups, both white and Negro. To cope with a set of needs like this, it is important to make real what kind of society we want and we think is possible. Those faults of the present society are all too apparent; and the real power relationships in the society will become more apparent as we try to create a new "counter-society".

In a city like Hoboken, which is losing a population and business, and industry is dependent on outmoded technology, developing a counter-structure which actually functions for a time may be possible, and may be a way to break into the lives of the residents. A housing cooperative or a restaurant may be immediately possible, with perhaps a day-care center, a coop market, or other things stemming from that. The imminent closing of a garment factory might, with the previous existence and support of other cooperative enterprises, precipitate the takeover of a plant by the workers, to be run as a dress-making cooperative. An elementary school, run by the community people involved in other coops, might follow from the day-care center.

The benefits of these may immediately be seen in terms of improved services, working conditions and perhaps financial benefit. But more important for us, I think, is its value in terms of education that goes on: how should we run our own coop, how much bureaucracy is necessary, who is to teach whom and what shall he teach; are profits necessary? Most of the basic needs outlined above are related to control, and the formation and running of our own institutions, with all their difficulties, broaches these issues in a more meaningful way than other things we have thought of.

We have few illusions that we can develop a counter-society and counter-economy to compete with the U.S. society and economy. But there are a number of places in Hoboken where it is feasible to begin in this direction. Barring active opposition in the initial stages, some of these enterprises are likely to bring some success. And if and when failure and opposition arises, as seems inevitable if one thinks that our society is controlled in the interests of the few, we cannot help but learn from our experience. And perhaps in that process we are likely to see more clearly that the movement is a potential ally, more than other institutions in the society.

Is it feasible to develop cooperative enterprises? Listed below are a few of the ideas, with the problems and advantages that we have thought connected with each:

1) a restaurant could be a starting point, since it requires small capital investment. The coop aspects of it would be partly financial and partly social of structural. Ownership could be helped by a paper corporation, which would limit profits and specify that excess capital would be channeled toward expansion. Prices would be held to a minimum to attract business and meet the financial limitations of the customers. It could be a pilot project for developing human and tolerable working conditions for the employees involved. Relating to some other cooperative venture, of even by itself, it could afford its employees the opportunity to decide the work conditions that they would work under, a primitive "workers control". Greater flexibility of working hours, the removal of oppressive bureaucracy and boss control, wages according to need as well as according to

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contribution, and many other innovations would be possible. Even if they were not all instituted, the education from discussions of these points would be worthwhile. A restaurant has the additional benefit of becoming a meeting place where people hear about coop ideas, and meet new people and ideas from the movement.

2). housing: with a flight of population, rents remain low and no new housing has been built except for the projects. Most buildings are 6-10 families, often inhabited by the owner. Many are for sale, even ones of solid construction. The major advantages of a coop would be: use of profits could be invested in the building, or could be returned in cheaper rents. The coop could provide a new forum for communication and meaningful relationships. One could maintain common facilities; capital could be accumulated for investment in future cooperative ventures. Problems: relatively large investment; vulnerability to attack from tax assessors' boards of health, if tenants developed bad relations for political or other reasons; savings are minimal for those who have not yet moved out of town, and capital would have to come from without. Also initial enthusiasm may not be as great as it would be for a restaurant.

3). food retailing: one of the most common coops in the U.S., the food store, is usually run in pretty traditional ways, with profits being returned to investor according to patronage. Other forms that might be more meaningful for poor people and for radicals might be lower prices and some form of workers control of conditions. There are wholesale distributors for coops in this area, and it is possible to remain solvent while reducing prices; giving employees relief from exploitative conditions, and possibly developing investment capital for other services. It could begin on an elementary scale, with an outlet for staples, milk, etc. When distribution and wholesale connections were worked out smoothly, the conversion to a store would not be hard.

4). education: A day-care center could be set up relatively easily. There is immediate need for such a center, as many welfare mothers would like to work. Assistance might be obtained from the CEO of the local war on poverty, and the experiences of others in individual and government headstart and tutorial projects makes this seem valuable if certain difficulties are overcome. Certainly personnel resources for this exist. Problems are both financial and structural. On the latter, the tendency is to attract only children of intellectuals, and to lose touch with the neighborhood and the movement. All of these might be resolved at least partially by the presence of movement people, the presence of other coops, and the very constitution of the town's population. A kindergarten and first grade, perhaps developing into a separate school system, could evolve naturally from a day-care center. There are probably people in the field of education who would see great possibilities in instituting real thinking and democracy into such experiments.

5). production: With a body of people who have learned to value the satisfaction of cooperating, there may be interest in running a factory on a workers' control basis. The workers could decide production level, wages, prices, work conditions, and the use of profits. They themselves of the community of coop users at large could hold ownership of the plant. It could begin from scratch, or take up where a failing enterprise was planning to close down. Small craft industries may be more feasible in terms of capital, but in Hoboken the exodus of industry makes the latter seem possible too. When a plant cannot continue and pay its workers a decent wage and work conditions, perhaps this is an answer. Some advantages to a production coop would be confronting major questions of control and organization. The employment security for people with unpopular ideas is of value (a friend in Hoboken was fired soon after he publicly protested about Vietnam). The more progressive and humane work conditions are of immediate and central importance. The difficulties are endless: insufficient capital, possibility of no markets, hostility from other enterprises and perhaps from unions or government; and getting

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enough people who are enthusiastic enough to try it.
COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS, HELP NEEDED!

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and the possibility of their coming with numbers of people should be sent to Phil. Cleveland East has agreed to draft an invitation and call to the Conference if everyone agrees in the next week about the above plans. Newark has agreed to act as coordinating center for the conference.

Fund-raising

Steve Elock of Newark agreed to work on fund-raising from the East and Chicago project will do it for the Midwest. We hope that someone from Oakland could work on getting some money for the meeting. The main expense will probably be travelling money. Projects should begin to try to estimate how much money they will need to bring people to the conference and what kind of transportation they will need.

Coordinators

Each project must pick a coordinator for correspondence and communication purposes. That person will also be in charge of getting a paper about the War on Poverty in their area together. So far the list is: Larry Gordon, Boston, Louise Gaston, Cleveland East, Rusty Gilbert, Baltimore, Bill Higgins, New Brunswick, Mary Hockenberry, Chicago, Jay Davis and Eddie Smith, New Haven, and Helen Carvy, Hoboken. We must have some estimate of how many people you might bring, whether you can devote any time to the conference, and what funds you can get locally.

Travelling

It was suggested that someone should do travelling in the South to talk to local projects about the Conference and to encourage discussion on the War on Poverty. Tom Hayden and Phil are getting in touch with SNCC people about the meeting. Anyone available for such work should send his name to Phil immediately.

We are planning to have another small meeting in Washington during the SANE march. Anyone planning to be there should write Phil beforehand to tell him. At this time, I think it should be possible to change the arrangements for the conference if it's clear that there is opposition to its focus, to a demonstration, or too few people able to attend. We could then 1) call it off completely, 2) change the date and focus, 3) call off the demonstration and plan to visit Congressmen and the CEO instead.

Cleveland West voiced some opposition to the meeting because of limited resources to devote to making it happen, too few people involved in the project, or the feeling that it made little sense to work on a national program at this time. Most people at the meeting agreed that they saw the conference as a beginning and did not expect massive changes or responses nationally or locally as a result of the meeting. It was in no way seen as a substitute for local organizing but as a necessary addition. In spite of some conviction that Johnson has pretty well convinced people about the goodness of his Great Society, we felt that it was necessary to focus on the fact that it just isn't working. Also people felt the need for national unity between the different groups currently isolated from each other except through newsletters and twice-yearly meetings.

PLEASE WRITE TO PHIL THIS WEEK, AND INDICATE WHAT YOU OR YOUR PROJECT THINKS ABOUT THE FOLLOWING:

1. Number of people you could bring, willingness to devote time, people, and funds to making it happen, people to go to Washington or speak.
2. What kind of local action you would plan for Tuesday and what you think people in Washington should be doing.

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3. Who will be your co-ordinators and are you willing to write a short paper for the conference?
4. Should there be a demonstration, and how large should it be to make it happen, what should be its focus and where should it be?
5. Have you alternatives in date or program to what's been outlined above?
6. What do people want to talk about at the conference? Should we invite outside speakers? Should we invite bigwigs just to attend?
7. Who should we send invites to?
8. What should be talked about at the NCU discussion?

PLEASE WRITE TO PHIL HUTCHINGS, NCU, 471 CLINTON AVE., NEWARK, NEW JERSEY THIS WEEK.

Freedom,
Harriet Stulman

DOCUMENTS FROM THE WAR ON POVERTY BATTLEFIELD:

"intelligence" =



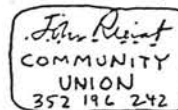
ERAP
BULLETIN

"mutiny" =



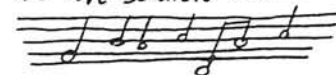
LEGISLATION
BY AND FROM
THE PEOPLE

"draft card" =



"marching song" =

WE ARE SOLDIERS in the army...



"arms" =

the people working as a group

