

1588 ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ACT AMENDMENTS OF 1967

Be it further resolved, That B'nai B'rith Women intensify educational efforts among its members and the communities in which it has chapters to establish a climate favorable to these programs and encourage community participation in seeking and implementing solutions to meet individual community needs.

SUNNYVALE COMMUNITY COUNCIL,
Sunnyvale, Calif., May 10, 1967.

HON. JOSEPH S. CLARK,
*U.S. Senate,
Washington, D.C.*

DEAR SENATOR CLARK: The Sunnyvale Community Council has had the unique experience of working in many capacities with our local War on Poverty agency. We were active in establishing the Economic Opportunity Commission of Santa Clara County, Inc. Also one of its Area Service Centers. We have had a component contract with both the County EOC and neighborhood Area Service Center (the latter unilaterally cancelled due to budget "oversight"). We share board members with our local ASC Board. We are supervising semi-professional workers who are on the EOC payroll. We have recently completed an overview of what is being accomplished in the City of Sunnyvale by the EOC Delegate Agency staff. (See attached program outline.)

The Sunnyvale Community Council undertook this evaluation of local programs when the Central EOC, at the urging of Area Service Center Directors, set aside evaluation of the year's work. The Directors stated, "It is too soon to evaluate." Yet this Community Council feels that the trend toward establishing parallel services with already existing agencies is one that needs evaluation. It seems there is not enough money in Poverty funds to recapitulate services exclusively for the "poor." Rather we would encourage local War on Poverty programs to cooperate with on-going volunteer and civic groups.

Evaluation is the tool of assessment vitally needed by such a massive, loosely organized program. The guideline for yearly evaluation should not be discretionary on the part of local poverty groups. (It should be noted here that the Research and Evaluation Department of the County EOC has never been adequately used and recently was eliminated from the budget.)

Accounting procedures of the EOC also have been a concern of the Sunnyvale Community Council. In doing a superficial check of budget items and "in kind" contributions, we have found a few discrepancies between the Area Service Center's statements and apparent facts. We must rely on the federal auditors and accountants to maintain the established guidelines for accuracy in reporting budget items. We call upon the Congress to tighten the OEO guideline for local accountability in fund dispersal.

The Economic Opportunity Act described a grand plan for breaking the chain reactions of poverty. Its one failure lies in the hands of the men who have begun to implement the plan." More careful selection of qualified staff; greater training for professionals as well as the poor; a longer look at needs, problems, possible solutions and goals before acting (in other words—good social planning;) are first steps in the process of retooling society for greater participation by the "lower fifth." In addition, tighter fiscal accountability, independent evaluation of programs and coordination with existing community services are needed before Community support will be forthcoming.

We look to Congress to reorient this massive program so it will achieve its laudable goals.

Sincerely,

ROBERT E. LAWSON, *President.*

FEBRUARY 24, 1967.

On December 10th of last year, the Economic Opportunity Commission of Santa Clara County, Inc. "gave priority to manpower development with special emphasis on coordination of community resources" as the prime goal of the War on Poverty in this county. (pg. 67—Budget Proposals)

To this broad goal of making changes in the social fabric of our county, the EOC has defined and added the following definition of the role the Area Service Center will play in pursuing the goal: