

time. Training for Head-Start Teachers Aides is handled by Head-Start, which contracts with local universities to provide one to two week courses. A few Head-Start aides attend an eight to ten week course at the University of Michigan. Although CAC has asked repeatedly for training funds, these requests have always been denied.

The organizing principle of the CAA

The leadership of the Community Action Commission views its activities as equally concerned with services to the poor and organization of the people in the target areas. As pointed out by a senior official, projects and neighborhood organization go hand in hand: people can only be organized in relation to a specific activity.

From the emphasis placed on the Neighborhood Centers and services by CAC, it is clear that organization plays a major role. (This is also reflected in the complaints of a political leader that CAC "shouldn't stir up the neighborhoods so much," because it "just arouses unrealistic expectations.")

An important aspect of the CAC operations is its deliberate effort to work through and buy services from existing social agencies whenever these can handle a project. This has obvious advantages in winning the cooperation of the agencies, which are closely tied to the community power structure. It also helps pave the way for the eventual establishment of some programs as a permanent part of local social welfare activities. On the other hand, there has been some criticism that the program is too much under the control of the professional social workers. Some critics believe that this group lacks the administrative skills required. Others criticize the social workers as unwilling to seek basic changes in social patterns they believe needed to remove the causes of poverty.

Relationship of the CAA to other OEO programs in the Greater Cincinnati area

The Community Action Commission handles recruiting for the men's Job Corps, and there are a number of other antipoverty programs operating in the Cincinnati area with which the Commission has a cooperative relationship. Among these are the In-School Neighborhood Youth Corps, administered by the Cincinnati Board of Education, and Out-of-School NYC, administered by the Citizens' Committee on Youth. The latter non-profit agency also sponsors PEPSY—Preparation and Employment Program for Special Youth. The Youth Opportunity Center, administered through the Ohio State Employment Service, using United States Department of Labor funds, has been fed young clients by CAC.

In addition, the Commission cooperates with a Title V Work Training Program, administered by the Hamilton County Welfare Department, and has provided assistance to an Upward Bound project at Earlham College.

Finally, CAC has contributed funds and effort to the applications being developed for pre-maternity health programs of HEW.

IMPACT AND ACHIEVEMENTS*

Effect of the Community Action Commission in Cincinnati

The view of CAC Officials.—"CAC is a system by which the needs of the poor are met—either through OEO or otherwise." Expanding his one-sentence summary of the agency's role, a CAC senior executive described it as performing a triple task:

To gather information about the hard-core poor in order to develop understanding of their needs and problems;

To help the poor to solve these problems;

To encourage maximum participation by the poor in the planning and operation of the programs designed to help them: "CAC provides the only meaningful, extensive involvement of the target population."

In administering OEO's antipoverty funds, he explained, CAC matches social services to the needs of the poor. Where existing social welfare agencies are competent, CAC works through them, stimulating and coordinating their activities. The Legal Aid Society and the Cincinnati Board of Education, for example,

*All the community leaders interviewed in this study are residents of Cincinnati, and their comments concern the city and the adjacent sections of Hamilton County. In addition, the Clermont County antipoverty programs are described by a CAC staff member who is particularly familiar with them. To avoid confusion, his comments on Clermont County have been set apart in parentheses.