

are contracting agencies. Where no social agency exists—or existing agencies are not competent to meet the need—CAC creates a new agency, for example, the new Neighborhood Services it has set up in some target areas.

Has CAC succeeded? "In a sense, our mere existence is our success," the CAC executive declared. Enumerating the agency's activities, he pointed out that the Commission operates \$4 million worth of OEO programs, and has a hand in programs costing \$4 to \$5 million more, under various titles of the OEO Act.

He listed some programs established by the agency: a dental clinic in the Cincinnati schools, preeducation programs in Cincinnati and adjacent Lincoln Heights in which 100 nonprofessional Teachers Aides are paid for by OEO and 150 more by Cincinnati; a Montessori program demonstrating very advanced teaching techniques for preschool children; and an OEO grant, matched by the Legal Aid Society, to provide legal services for the poor. The executive emphasized that the CAC urged the residents of the target areas to serve on the Boards of the participating agencies, while encouraging the agencies to hire indigenous people as nonprofessional workers in the programs.

CAC also provides a center for exchange of information and the interfitting of antipoverty programs, the respondent pointed out, and coordinated Manpower Services—job training, job development, and employment.

"The Commission is a gadfly for the community," he declared, "pointing out to the social agencies where there are needs, duplicated efforts, examples of institutional rigidity."

(The CAC official concerned with Clermont County described the agency's role there as "primarily to move the people of poverty out of poverty." To do this, the CAC office concentrates on coordinating public, private, and other groups in an all-out effort to improve economic conditions in the County. CAC does not operate programs itself in Clermont although it intends to in the future.

(The respondent declared that "the program has been mighty successful—one of the best. It took six months to get things started—then the operation snowballed." Among other things, the County, a depressed area, has raised money for an industrial park, established an Adult Education Council, and started a recreation program.

(The CAC official explained that he had gone to Clermont County as Cincinnati CAC representative in the face of considerable local opposition. Many Clermont people had wanted the County to have its own, independent community action agency and to hire their own director. "Now," he declared, "there's a new feeling of unity with Cincinnati and Hamilton County, which were formerly distrusted." The Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce is assisting Clermont to obtain new industry; the Cincinnati Hospital Council is helping set up the Clermont Hospital Program.

("There's a new attitude in Clermont, which a lot of people attribute to the Community Action Program.")

The View of Other Community Leaders.—Interviews with community leaders acquainted with CAC and its programs found an overwhelming majority praising the OEO agency as a positive benefit to the city. "Worked out well," "beneficial," "positive effect," "of significant value, both economically and socially," were typical of the majority's comments. Although these respondents had many suggestions for improvement, they agree on the validity and success of CAC's basic approach.

Two respondents, however, sharply challenge this favorable view, pointing to what they believe are fundamental flaws. Since their viewpoints are poles apart, however, they arrived at quite opposite conclusions about what is wrong—programs versus execution.

Singled out for repeated praise by the majority was the impact of the CAC programs on the poverty population. "The programs have made people in the poverty areas more keenly aware of the possibilities for improving their lives," a school official said. And a businessman: "CAC has made these people aware of their own identity and power—of their own importance as people." A social worker declared: "There's been a stirring in this community such as I've never seen before. In the city as a whole, there is a more active concern at the neighborhood level about a variety of problems—a sense that 'Things will happen if we speak out.' This is not just in the target areas but all through the city."

A labor leader declares that the CAC programs "have changed the attitude of the target population from apathy to action and self-help," and he went on to give an example from his own neighborhood, "In the past, potential leaders have had only marginal opportunities—running ball clubs and that sort of thing.