

A wide range of benefits provided by the neighborhood program were cited by the community leaders. Nearly half of these respondents emphasized the effect of the program in providing motivation. Several welfare workers agreed. "It has given the poor a sense of participation," said one. Another said that now the poor "walk a little taller." "It's snapped the people out of lethargy," an elected official said. "It helps build initiative and self-respect" another respondent said, "and provides the leadership needed to galvanize the poor into action." A business leader declared that the program "made people in the poverty areas aware of their own identity as people." A labor leader described one Neighborhood Center council as having transformed the morale of the community from apathy to a feeling that it is possible to do something about the situation.

The impact on the whole target community is frequently mentioned. A businessman states he has "high hopes and great faith that the program will succeed" because while flexibly adapting its services to each target area it "treats each neighborhood as a whole and gives the residents unity and purpose as a group."

Several persons emphasize the value of the Centers for communication. A businessman points out that the Centers let the target area people know that the whole community is interested in their problems. A former Congressman, noting that the program was reaching people never reached before, declares that "4 out of 5" (of the poverty population) do not even know what services are available to them, and have a built-in suspicion of authority."

A businessman has his own reason for praising the program. The Centers, he says, provide a way for "haves" to help the poor in a more personal way than by just making a contribution to the Community Chest. Volunteers work with child care, tutoring—sometimes just talking to the people in the Centers. The dialogue helps both of them. A civil rights leader values the Neighborhood Services for reaching out through family workers into the homes: "Many people in poverty areas don't realize that their way of living is not normal until somebody points it out to them."

Participation of the poor is emphasized. "This is the first time an attempt has been made to get the poor to do things as a group," a businessman declares. And another respondent points out that the Centers provide "places where neighborhood people can discuss their problems together and act as a community rather than as individuals. Now they have a voice—and are more likely to be listened to by City Hall."

A social worker makes this point. "This program gets at the basic problem of the poor—their lack of communal and personal resources or power. The city's services come only in response to the organization of the community. If the poor are given encouragement, resources, hope, they'll do this. The Centers provide the poor with these things. The only lasting benefit to the community is to get people to do things for themselves and this means they must be in a power position from which they can do things for themselves and make requests."

Giving the target people a "voice" draws critical comments as well as praise. A newspaper reporter believes that "social workers encourage unrealistic projects," citing as an example "agitation to increase the level of welfare payments." Formation of an ad hoc committee and organization of a "March on Columbus" to push the issue were, the reporter believed, encouraged by CAC workers—"CAC denies this, but its people were always on hand." The respondent states strongly that "while this kind of activity may be okay, it disturbs the public in a conservative city like Cincinnati. The Neighborhood Centers weren't really set up to do this sort of thing." He also criticizes a voter registration drive held by the Centers: "These people don't vote and the drive was a big flop."

A labor leader disagrees: "Now these people can muster opposition to the power structure as never before." As examples, he describes organized protests in the West End that had blocked downzoning for a filling station and defeated an attempt to raise rents in public housing.

These incidents are also cited by a senior CAC official as showing the impact of the neighborhood program on local government. This staff member lists other, less dramatic examples: the bringing together of city departments and local residents to plan for the West End community; an increase in the number of Health Department clinics; more concentration on Housing Code enforcement; more attention to neighborhood improvements such as traffic signals, street lights, signs; a planned decentralization of recreation facilities.

"As the programs give the poor an increased feeling of identity," a businessman reports, "they begin to ask the Welfare Department to answer a lot of ques-