

THE UCC EVALUATION AND RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

The conduct of the investigation

As heretofore indicated, when it was announced that the City Council appointed a sub-committee to study the Federal Anti-Poverty Program in Newark, UCC welcomed the opportunity to report on its activities and to communicate its organization, operations, and needs to the City Council.

UCC conspicuously avoided any public controversy with the Committee during the course of the investigation to prevent any suggestion of interference or lack of cooperation with the Committee in its investigative processes. It is regrettable that the Committee did not approach its task with the sense of objectivity such an important undertaking required. This unfortunate circumstance is reflected in the manner in which the investigation proceeded and in the content of the report itself.

Following designation of the Committee on August 4, 1965, repeated requests were made by UCC throughout the month of August to talk with the Committee about our activities, plans and needs to facilitate the inquiry and to proceed to the issue at hand, waging an effective War against Poverty in Newark. A meeting was sought to ascertain the nature of the information sought in order that UCC be fully responsive to the Committee and to set out procedural guidelines for the investigation. Despite assurances that such meetings would be arranged, in fact, these requests were ignored.

Finally, on September 3, 1965, the Friday of the Labor Day Weekend, without any advance notice, a letter was received from the Committee requesting extensive data and materials to be provided by 10:00 A.M. of Wednesday, September 8th, for a hearing to be held on Thursday, September 9th, 1965. (Exhibit II, Appendix) Such request was without consideration of the personal needs of the UCC staff or of the regular normal operations of the agency. No explanation or reason was given for failure to meet with us at a reasonable time regarding the information required, the delay in requesting the information, or the short time provided over the holiday week-end for its preparation.

Nevertheless, a UCC devoted staff worked around the clock on the holiday week-end to assemble and duplicate all the detailed records requested, which were hand delivered to the Committee on September 8th with a written request for a conference on procedures. (Exhibit III, Appendix). No such conference was provided.

The first hearing held on September 9, at 8:00 P.M. City Hall, was well attended by the concerned Newark community, Dean Heckel, President, and Msgr. Dooling, a Vice President of UCC were invited and appeared as witnesses. Dean Heckel read a prepared statement into the record, copy of which was supposed to have been made a part of the transcript of the testimony. (Exhibit #12, page 3). This statement was neither printed in the record nor was it appended to the transcript; Exhibit #12 annexed to the report. Included in the appendix and marked Exhibit #1 is a copy of the prepared statement read into the record by Dean Heckel.

Despite the depth and detail in which Dean Heckel's testimony and prepared statement described the operations of UCC, both were completely ignored by the Committee in its report.

During the course of the September 9th hearing Dean Heckel and Msgr. Dooling were questioned on certain aspects of personnel and other matters which were not within their personal knowledge. The Committee investigators announced at the hearing that they would call the Chairman of the Personnel Committee, the Executive Director and other UCC staff people, and some of the Pre-School Council People, as witnesses at the next hearing, since they had the information desired. (Exhibit #12, pp. 34-38). None of the foregoing were called to testify, nor were they requested to provide the information sought.

Additional documentary data requested by the Committee was made available by UCC, but only after protest regarding the conduct of Councilman Bernstein in improperly using material submitted to the Committee for personal political purposes, and assurances that there would be no further improper utilization of material provided the Committee. (Exhibit IV, V, VI, Appendix)

The cooperative spirit of UCC was noted and complimented by the Chairman of the Committee at the outset and conclusion of the September 9th hearing. (Exhibit #12, pages 2 and 51.)

A second hearing was convened on November 9th at 5:30 P.M. without prior notice to UCC (Exhibit #13). The selection of the normal dinner hour to con-