

3906 ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ACT AMENDMENTS OF 1967

with other people, design new programs and fill out CAP applications. These duties were complicated during the initial months by lack of an office. Mr. Jordan continued meeting with people in the districts, in his words "trying to sell the OEO," but this became increasingly difficult. "After a while we realized all that OEO talk was just campaign promises," one rural Sioux put it. This is a stronger statement than most would have made, but the sentiment behind it was widespread.

"Report of Community Workers, September 1965" is a five-page mimeographed document prepared by personnel of the Community Worker component, explaining existing programs which were being conducted at that time by the Community Health aides, Community Development, the Nursery School, and the Neighborhood Youth Corps. After describing what these programs were doing and what they expected to do, the last page of text requests cooperation:

"At the present time, our young people are realizing the benefits of the program, and our acceptance of the present programs, will eventually bring into reality, a workable adult program, and the other worthwhile benefits that will be forthcoming under the Anti-Poverty Program. The program has some very good basic points, and we should give the program a chance, and it may prove itself to be the makings of a long-range rehabilitation program.

"We, the adults, should also take into full consideration that this program may be our last one, and for the benefit of our younger generation, we should cooperate with the sponsor and the entire working personnel of the Office of Economic Opportunity organization."

Probably the greatest direct benefits of the initial field work phase of the CAP program were that many people were encouraged to apply for OED jobs, volunteer supervisors for the Neighborhood Youth Corps were contacted, and suggestions were elicited from communities for local NYC work projects. Indirectly, the dissatisfaction the program aroused as a result of not being able to live up to the people's expectations may prove to have positive value. Political activity in the last tribal election was reportedly greater than during previous elections, with almost twice as many candidates as usual running for office, and a voter turnout, despite a blizzard, of approximately 50% of the eligible voters. The tribal representatives elected are generally hostile to the OED, and are trying to find ways to exert control over the OED. The OED lends a real issue to tribal politics, and the hope of real power. Although they could quite possibly use the power unwisely or selfishly, the situation carries a built-in corrective: people will watch the Council more closely as its activities become more important, and political sophistication and involvement is likely to continue to improve. An important factor in this trend is the presence of Community Workers and Worker aides in the districts. They are in a position to feed information about reservation affairs into their work areas, and this new information source is bound to increase the pressure communities are able and motivated to put on matters that affect them.

Eight new Community Worker aides finished training and were in the field only a month before the end of the project research period. It was therefore impossible to assess their impact with accuracy. The need for these additional aides is quite clear, however, and was recognized by the Community Workers not long after the program was initiated.

It is a fact of Sioux life that strangers, including fellow Sioux from other parts of the reservation, are regarded with distrust. Therefore, even if it were possible for three Community Workers and three Community Worker aides to overcome logistic problems of covering a work area of nearly five thousand square miles, with poor or nonexistent roads, the human problems would be exceedingly difficult. A number of Sioux interviewed in Wounded Knee, where Community Worker Everett Jordan makes his home, said Mr. Jordan used to work closely with them, but that now he was always off someplace and no one saw him much. They spoke with reproach, and seemed to take his frequent absence from the community as a sign that he had lost concern for their problems. Undoubtedly, this was also due in large part to his inability, through lack of resources, to do very much about their problems. The new complement of Community Worker aides, one in each reservation, seems already to be increasing the effectiveness of the Community Worker program.

The Community Worker aides have been engaged, since their numbers were augmented, in contacting and establishing cordial relations with all the families in their districts, and in conducting an economic survey of the reservation. Since each district has an average population of close to one thousand, this is an