

gests that a new clientele of poor has been recognized and that efforts are being made to serve these people in new ways. Agencies post their own people in centers to provide services; they take referrals from centers; and, although the relations are often acrimonious, in many cases agency-center accommodations have been worked out. Whether there are basic changes in the attitudes of these agencies toward their clientele is a moot point. It appears that although there may be some changes in traditional ways of doing things, there are not yet changes in the traditional ways of thinking.

Observations of center operations indicate they are not generally efficient or well-organized, using the same criteria that would be applied to a welfare department or employment service, for instance. To the extent that they are well organized in conventional terms, they seem to be ineffective in their outreach and community action roles. Nevertheless, highly structured traditional agencies are now interacting with loosely structured centers and, while each is influenced by the other, the result has not yet been an effective integration of effort to solve the problem of neighborhood poverty. For instance, there appears to be relatively little program coordination within the center, among agencies, and between the center and agencies. Clients continue to perceive the center and the agencies as places where they may get help with a particular kind of problem. Indeed, most clients tend to identify the centers so closely with particular services that they often do not even know that it is a neighborhood service center as such.

It is interesting to note that when centers have considerable autonomy and have a definite interest in community action there is the greatest difficulty of coordination between service agencies and centers. Agencies tend to operate on a community-wide basis and it is apparently disruptive to them to have to operate on a multitude of different neighborhood bases.

It has been observed that in the cases where the centers are most closely associated with the structure of the municipal government there has been the most effective integration of services—most of which are also associated with this same level of government. Where centers are relatively independent and autonomous and where there has been the fullest participation of poor residents, the integration of services has been least in evidence.

Evaluation

It appears that the present organizational arrangements, staffing patterns and goals most common to centers and agencies do not encourage an integration of services of benefit to the poor. There is evidence of modification of individual services, but coordinated neighborhood approaches and programs continue to be rare.

MAXIMUM FEASIBLE PARTICIPATION

Discussion

Previous sections of this report have discussed the variety of interpretations of the phrase "maximum feasible participation" and the ways in which the interpretations are implemented at neighborhood centers. In spite of the variety evident, it should be clear that centers are an appropriate locus for this participation. Further, it is clear that the view is generally held, at least by many center officials, that an appropriate goal of center programs is to decrease the dependence of the poor on services and to cultivate their individual growth, independence and aspirations for achievement. In this discussion, participation of the poor is defined as including but not being synonymous with aggressive community action.

The research has revealed one common thread that appears evident through all forms of participation in all areas—it is the upper stratum of the poor which is involved and the "problematic" and "disreputable" poor are almost totally uninvolved with the center except on an emergency basis. Thus, the comments to follow deal only with this upper group and it must not be forgotten that most of the poor have no involvement whatsoever.

In discussing this subject, it is appropriate to consider what is happening to the people involved and what is happening to their environment as a result of their involvement. The focus in this section is on the former question and the latter subject is considered in the following section.

Participation of the poor and other neighborhood residents occurs in the roles of neighborhood council members, paid centers employees and volunteer workers. Aggregate data for our sample indicate that, numerically, participation is approximately equal in the council roles and the employee roles. A thorough investigation of council members was not possible in this study but a number of tentative generalizations appear to be possible. First, many of the poor mem-