

bers of councils are inarticulate and ineffective in terms of influencing the courses of action chosen. They may well be learning how to participate in this type of group situation, but the overt evidence indicates that for the most part the learning has not yet been transferred into effective participation. Second, those of the poor who are most active are those most active and aspiring at the outset so their roles are changed generally only to the extent that they have a new organization in which to participate. Third, there seems to be a great deal of frustration associated with board membership, especially as compared with being a paid staff member. As a matter of fact, one of the chief frustrations is that it is impossible to be both. In addition, council members feel that their views are not respected, that they have no control over the center and/or that they are inadequate to cope with the complexity of affairs confronting them. There are exceptions to this generalization, but they are rare. The more common situation is one in which board membership has tended to be an unrewarding experience. In addition to other factors, this may be because few CAA officials seem to realize that board membership requires skills which can and should be taught and that board members should be compensated for their time involved.

Paid employment of local residents seems to be a much more satisfactory type of participation. Another project¹ concerned itself more fully with this subject. However, the findings of both research efforts indicate that the participation of the nonprofessional in center activities is a very favorable development and that the problems involved are minor when compared with the obvious benefits and achievements. Those involved with this project believe that the lack of adequate training for these people is one of the most serious problems that needs attention.

Volunteer services are offered in a comparatively limited way by residents of poverty neighborhoods. Few efforts have been made to involve people on a voluntary basis and these have tended to concentrate on attracting people with particular skills, such as teachers. Thus, few data are available to evaluate the volunteer problem accurately.

There has been an impetus from Washington to involve the poor in positions having responsibility and authority. The approach has focused on involving people who are chosen through some sort of democratic process. This approach has been successful on a quantitative basis for the poor are indeed filling board positions. While this is, of course, a necessary first step, the quality of the involvement should now be a matter of concern. The same may be said for the poor involved as staff members, although in this case the problems do not appear as severe.

One organizational feature that has tended to inhibit satisfying participation at the neighborhood level is the degree of control which the CAA often exerts over the center. The more aspiring poor members of neighborhood boards feel that their activities are circumscribed and futile as long as budget control, staff selection and program development are largely confined to the CAA level. Since the CAA is the focal point in terms of control of the CAP, and since this control tends not to be delegated to the neighborhood level, the neighborhood center has not yet become the ideal locus for maximum feasible participation.

Evaluation

Participation of the poor as employees in the conduct of center programs seems to be well advanced and largely successful in terms of immediate aspirations. Participation of the poor as policymakers and administrators seems to have been achieved on a quantitative basis but there appears to be little effective involvement due to a lack of training in some cases and a lack of authority in others. The "problematic" and "disreputable" poor appear to be almost completely uninvolved as active participants in center programs. It is suspected that an examination of middle-class society might well reveal the same patterns, and it is important not to establish criteria for neighborhood centers that exceed those appropriate for other types of organizations.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGE

Discussion

Significant changes involving the poor can take place in social, economic and political institutions, in the physical environment, and among the poor

¹ Daniel Yankelovich, Inc., *A Study of the Nonprofessional in the CAP*, Prepared for the Office of Economic Opportunity, September 1966.