

knowledge, and background to contribute with full effectiveness. Their personal knowledge of life as poor people is not enough. They need to know more about parliamentary procedure, about their community and about programs and possibilities. It may also be appropriate to follow the practice of business and compensate board members for the time they devote to center affairs. This may help to make board positions more attractive than at present.

Last, it appears appropriate to devote some attention to training the professional and agency personnel who become involved with center activities. To most of these people the center represents a new work environment and the poor a new type of client and associate. Thus, they need to be retrained so that their attitudes and approaches are suitable for their new positions.

To repeat, the need for intensive training of all persons associated with neighborhood centers cannot be overstressed. The potential benefits cannot be overestimated.

ORGANIZATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

If the neighborhood centers are to afford local residents a meaningful opportunity for participation and self development, there must be a redefinition of the relationship between the CAA's and the centers. At present, in most cases, the CAA dominates the center in every important respect—namely, program development, funding and personnel selection. Thus, only the most minor prerogatives exist at the center and efforts to expand their scope are generally vetoed at the CAA level. This situation does not strengthen the capabilities of the poor to help themselves.

One way to make participation in center affairs more meaningful is to increase the autonomy of centers by establishing them in a status equivalent to delegate agencies rather than integral parts of CAA's. In this status, the centers can have real responsibilities for program development and management of their affairs. The role of the CAA can be modified so that it is no longer the nexus of all community anti-poverty authority but instead is a source of expert advice and counsel as well as a body to coordinate center and other delegate agency activities.

At present most center-service agency relationships are negotiated between the CAA and the concerned agency and then imposed upon the center. If the center becomes the equivalent of a delegate agency, it is then in a position to negotiate with other agencies on a relatively equal status. This organizational expression of the legitimacy of the power of the neighborhood poor should result in relations which more fully reflect the desires of the local residents. It will clearly be more complex and difficult for traditional agencies to negotiate with many centers and to enter into a wide variety of operating arrangements. It must be remembered, however, that the goal of the centers is not to ease things for the agencies but to benefit the poor neighborhood residents. Further, if particular center boards choose to have no relationships with certain agencies or to have only adversary relationships, this should be possible.

In addition to being more autonomous, it is appropriate to organize centers rather informally and to limit their size. The formal structures necessary in large centers inhibit the effective participation of the poor who are not experienced with such arrangements. Large boards, in particular, are a most inappropriate vehicle for the development of the capabilities of the poor and the expression of their views. Small boards, and smaller committees and subcommittees organized and operated on informal lines are needed. Parliamentary procedures are neither required nor useful in these situations.

Small centers, with staffs of from five to twenty persons, are also more hospitable to clientele who tend to associate large institutions with the traditional agencies. Small centers are easier to manage; they permit more personal development; and they are a useful entry level to the world of public affairs. Small centers also permit programmatic flexibility not otherwise possible. Centers with only a very few employees are not recommended. It has been noted that centers of this size have little outreach, little to offer participants and not enough solidarity to support the local people through difficult periods.

The cost of having many small centers is not much more than having fewer large centers. The largest cost by far of all operations is the cost of paying the staff salaries. Fixed overhead costs are relatively low. Thus, if large centers are divided into smaller ones and the same numbers of people are involved, costs should not be greatly increased.

If CAA's are really concerned with making neighborhood centers operational, centers should have the opportunity of having the neighborhood representatives