

to share is wealth. The Community Action Agency was designed in 1964 as the instrument to overcome the problems of these people; it grew out of a citizens' committee formed by the Mayor to deal with questions of hard-core unemployment. When the Economic Opportunity Act was introduced, the Mayor asked the citizens' committee to serve in an advisory capacity to develop an anti-poverty program. A group of city planning employees were called upon to make long-range studies of the city's problems and to suggest possible solutions to these problems. An additional study performed by a private firm indicated that only about 4 percent of persons living in target areas who needed services of existing agencies were familiar with the agencies and could make use of them. From these studies, the initial grant request was submitted to OEO during the summer of 1964, immediately after passage of the Act. The CAA was funded in the fall of 1964 and the first Neighborhood Service Centers were formed in the early months of 1965.

## 2. *Relationships With Other Organizations*

In the earliest days of the Center formation, disagreement arose between city officials, CAA officials, and area board members over the site for the Center and the selection of the Center staff. The area board, searching for ways in which to exert its influence, wanted to have a voice in site and staff selection but their suggestions were ignored. The site for the location of the Center was chosen by CAA and city officials and recommendations of the area board went unheeded. There was a great deal of dispute in regard to a ruling that all CAA and Center personnel would be selected on the basis of civil service exams. Area board members felt that this ruling would preclude the underprivileged from obtaining jobs, and would thus defeat one purpose of the program—that of employment of the poor.

Another staff selection procedure is a source of controversy between city officials and the area board; namely, the practice of moving personnel from various city departments directly over into the CAA structure. It is the contention of area board members that these positions should be offered to members of poverty communities instead of city and government officials already employed. These hiring procedures were interpreted by the poor to be a means of control over and reward for city officials. The conflict grew to the extent that area residents threatened to boycott certain CAA programs. The boycott was not in fact carried out but the hostility between the city government and the board were reflected in the threat. At the present time, there are indications that the city has acquiesced somewhat and made certain changes giving the area advisory committee a minor role in personnel selection.

During the formation of the advisory board itself, power struggles appeared between members of various organizations over control of this board. Basic to these conflicts was the theme that participation and control should rest with the poor. The poor viewed the presence of agency personnel at meetings as a threat to their control at the grass-roots level. Professionals in attendance at these meetings were there at the request of CAA personnel but they were completely ignored by area residents. Now, however, the relationship between the two groups appears to be more friendly and many social workers have gained the confidence of the poor.

During its formative period the area board also had to contend with various political elements which viewed the board and Center as a means for political manipulation of the area. The struggle ended after a period of four months when the board voted to exclude politicians from its membership.

The Center maintains satisfactory contacts with the traditional service agencies, many of which supply personnel who work in the Center location partially because the poverty program functions as a city department, and it is accepted as such by other city departments. The only dissenter among this group of agencies is the Welfare Department.

As in many other cities, the disagreements between these groups center around basic policies and attitudes toward the clients. Unfortunately, this area has a long history of conflict and a mutual distrust between its residents and the Welfare Department. Welfare personnel are said to exhibit this distrustful attitude by showing discrimination and discourteous treatment to their clients and the clients reciprocate by harboring negative and hostile feelings toward this agency.

The Center staff has experienced difficulty in getting Welfare personnel at the Center to coordinate their working hours with those of the Center. Welfare people claim that their presence is unnecessary at night and on weekends and that their case loads at the Center do not warrant their presence for more than four hours per week. Weekend and evening emergency cases, therefore, must be re-