

11. *Participation of the Poor*

The poor participate in the poverty program on various boards, as members of neighborhood organizations and interest groups, as employees, and as clients. The participation of the poor on the boards is a new role. Only a small minority of the needy was allowed on the CAA Board during its first year of operation. Neighborhood Outreach boards were, at the time of this research, in the process of forming their membership. Consequently, it is difficult to make any definitive statements about the effectiveness of the poor on the various boards.

The majority of Outreach employees are indigenous workers. Despite the fact that most of these workers are undereducated and very little staff training is provided, it appears that their efforts have been very effective. Hundreds of clients have been contacted as a result of the work of these people; many organizations have been formed; and many direct services have been performed by the workers themselves.

The Outreach program has opened new doors to clients by making them aware of the fact that there may indeed be answers to their problems. They are encouraged to be active participants, not merely recipients of welfare services. Client groups have been organized to communicate directly with authorities, and they have, for example, toured various residential buildings with landlords, pointing out unsafe and unsanitary conditions. Plans are being formulated to put pressure on City Hall to enforce building codes, provide proper street lighting and police protection. Thus, the greatest area of participation of the poor appears to be apparent at present in the roles of clients and members of the newly-formed interest groups.

CENTER "Q"

1. *History and Origins*

An overcrowded, urban, predominately Negro ghetto is the setting of the Center research in this city. The area contains an overwhelming number of social ills—unemployment, sub-standard housing, crime, broken families, and juvenile delinquency. Traditional agencies, though accepted, have long been viewed by the residents with contempt, fear, and mistrust. Realizing that their charities were merely proliferating bad conditions instead of alleviating them, personnel of some of these agencies initiated the idea of a multi-purpose Community Center, where the poor could help themselves.

Initial meetings of a group of agency professionals together with church and private welfare people occurred in October of 1964, at which time a temporary development committee was elected. The temporary committee was heavily weighted with area residents with a few social welfare professionals acting as advisors. The duties of this committee included the nomination of permanent area committee members who were elected on March 19, 1965. The primary function of the permanent committee was to work with the city CAA for development of a Neighborhood Service Center, which in August of 1965, became a reality. It is interesting to note the active part taken by the area citizens in the initial phases of the organization. The Center program was generated, promoted, and designed at grass roots level with only supplementary advice from the CAA.

2. *Relationships With Other Organizations*

Youth Opportunity Center, Public Welfare, Family Counseling, Legal Aid and Community Council are established agencies which have decentralized and situated personnel at the Center either full or part time. The inter-relationships between these groups and the Center appear to be workable but characterized by occasional personality conflicts and rifts over procedures. The Legal Aid attorneys, for example, feel that Center and agency personnel exhibit a failure to respect the confidential nature of the Legal group's client relationships. They recounted instances of informal questioning by Center staff members and the offer by another agency to share its clerical staff with Legal Aid. These advances are interpreted by the attorneys as attempts to pry into Legal Aid's activities.

The policies of Urban League and the Center do not make for a compatible relationship between the two groups. Though located within the Center building, the operations of Urban League have become autonomous of those of the Center. Center employees feel that Urban League concentrates too much of its effort on finding white collar jobs for middle class Negroes and does not seek to aid the destitute, lower class Negro on whom the Center concentrates. Urban