

Aug 1964

There were, actually, two main streams to the County Judge's argument and discussion with us. The first was that the people loved him, and that there were no problems in Perry County which could not be solved without us, and the second was that we were "subversives, in Perry County to brainwash the people," and that he was going to get rid of us. As he put it: "I am going to stay up nights if I have to, finding every possible loophole in the law to pull you through, and that includes all of you" (meaning the other field workers as well as Chuck and myself). We then spent a good deal of time discussing the ways in which I could be arrested. Babe Noplis told me that he would book me for vagrancy, and when I asked to see the vagrancy statutes, they were shown to me. According to the law, I would have to have "no visible means of support." When I said that I did have a means of support, they claimed that I was not employed in the area (which is not required by law), and that gave them sufficient grounds for my arrest. Sergeant Mitchell then added that if we attempted to talk to anyone, or hold another meeting, we would be booked for breach of the peace. He said that he would have his men following us wherever we went, and he went so far as to say that if any of the field workers were seen in Hazard, they would be arrested for loitering. I was then informed that if I did not leave the area within twenty-four hours I would be booked for vagrancy, and Chuck would be taken into custody, since he was a minor.

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Towards the end of the "hearing," after Sheriff Charlie Combs, Noplis, and Sergeant Mitchell had all made it quite clear that they were not going to rest until Perry County was purged of us, Chuck and I were asked if we believed in the Constitution of the United States. When we both said that we did, Noplis said that he did as well. He said "I believe in freedom of speech, petition, and all that, and that's why we're going to get people like you, who don't believe in it." It was then explained to me how I had been brainwashed and "duped," and that they (Noplis and his gang) sure weren't going to be brainwashed, because they were too smart for that, but that they had grandchildren to watch out for.

With a departing warning to have us both in jail within twenty-four hours if we did not leave Perry County, we were allowed to leave. When we left the office, it was around 10 P|M. We were never charged with anything, nor did they ever pretend to have brought us there for any purpose other than to harass and intimidate us.

CLEVELAND...

Internal

This week was marked by the realization of the coming end to the summer and all of the changes which will ensue within the next few weeks. Several people felt the need for some kind of phasing out process so that those who will be leaving soon would not feel useless and could leave with some sense of completeness, in at least a personal way. We decided that the three or four, to whom this is an immediate problem since they will be leaving within a week, should concentrate on research and the summer summary work that is essential at this point.

Stanley Aronowitz was to visit us this week to discuss our research progress and proposals which are the following: Each of our groups (welfare, housing, unemployment) will write a detailed research report of knowledge gained, questions answered and new questions. The group will also develop a set of projected research proposals which are strategic and analytical for the continuing project through the coming year.

Other ideas for summer research reports:

Taking the reports of all the community meetings and making a beginning manual of meetings: how to run them, what to expect from them, how to make them meaningful for the constituency. Block meetings, issue meetings and others can be made more productive by learning from past experiences.

2. Many of our constituency are functionally illiterate or have considerable difficulty reading and writing. An attempt should be made to create literacy materials on economic and political issues so that the skills of literacy can be taught while developing political education and acumen within the community.
3. The CCP housing group is in the midst of a bout with the city power structure (see section of this report under Housing) about which an analytical case study should be prepared. The case is interesting both because the CCP became a threat in the eyes of the city and because of the difficulties of creating a legal case against the city and the subversive squad of the police department where there has been blatant misrepresentation, intimidation and falsity.
4. A report should be written contrasting the CCP to other projects. In the first place the strategy of this group has been somewhat unique in that it has not attempted to form block clubs because such clubs could not be a stable base in this community, nor has it been able to organize solely around the issue of unemployment. Rather, organization has been around three issues which immediately affect different groups of people--the unemployed, mothers on ADC, residents of a public housing project--who can join into one group later and whose constituencies are already beginning to overlap. Also the internal group functioning of the CCP has been tremendously successful adding to the general productivity of the group.
5. Each person so desiring and feeling the necessary inspiration will write a sort of super-log of impressions, events and general feelings of the summer and its personal significance.

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Stanley Aronowitz never appeared sending a telegram explaining, but we were clearly in an Aronowarp waiting for him.

WELFARE: On the 10th of the month the welfare checks arrive and that is the one day which is really busy at the food stamp distribution office. Several of the welfare mothers and the CCP leafleted the office with information about their meeting for that night and with a petition favoring expansion of food stamps to a national program and opposing the House-introduced restrictions on soda pop and some frozen foods. Over 1200 signatures had been collected at that time.

food stamps

On Monday night the group had its third meeting and after a day of successful petitioning and leafleting, they should have been quite excited but did not seem to be. The CCP group felt quite discouraged and frustrated after the meeting, mostly because it had become increasingly evident that it is difficult to judge what a good meeting should be and do, and even more difficult to have one. One problem brought out by the meeting was the presence of several Negroes from the East Side of Cleveland. Although the group wants to include Negroes in CUPAW (Citizens United For Adequate Welfare), there are so many more Negroes on welfare that they would easily dominate the meetings. This is only bad in so far as it prevents building a good core of white women on the West Side because it would lessen white expression. This problem has not been resolved.

meeting

race

Several members of the welfare group became enthused about the idea of turning the group to a more political direction. The mothers want to register voters at the food stamp office as part of an anti-Goldwater campaign. One mother wrote the following ideas for a leaflet:

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Goldwater=gold for Goldwater and none for the people.

Goldwater president=people thieves (implying that people would be forced to steal for their keep).

Goldwater president=black and white together suffer.

politics

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At its next meeting along these lines, the group is also planning to discuss a diagram of the administration policies of the welfare system and who is responsible for what (state, federal, etc.).

The welfare group is ahead of our other two groups in that they have a definite, hard core group of women who attend all of the meetings and work from day to day. The CCPers feel however, that they have been spending too much time with this group and not enough time contacting new people for the group, though that too is done to some extent.

It is hoped that the political direction plus some other educational plans will give the group more of a direction, making meetings more productive and keeping them from just being personal gripe sessions.

UNEMPLOYMENT: The unemployment group has reached an interesting yet frustrating position in its U-JOIN operation. At its meeting on Thursday, there was close to 100 percent turnover and what's more, the group present at that meeting was all female. The biggest problem resulting is how to form any kind of action program with such a fluid group. One of the reasons for the fluidity is that many of the original group have found jobs even though they are most marginal jobs of the Manpower sort. These are often jobs which cannot be found in the Negro community. Also in the Negro community the unemployed guys, including young ones, seem to always be sitting on porches or standing around street corners. This is not nearly so true among the white unemployed, probably because they are not yet resigned to their plight. They somehow manage to keep busy (the short-term unemployed are looking for jobs) or feel busy doing meaningless tasks because they are sure that it is only a temporary condition. There

The program of the group has been going to the retraining office with the members of U-JOIN to apply for the retraining programs and leafletting the factory stamp place about their meetings. At an earlier meeting they had discussed gaining the support of organized labor to fight Manpower and other spot labor outfits. It would be in the interest of the labor unions to encourage their members not to take these non-union, spot labor jobs, and at the same time it would force the unions to develop their own unemployment programs to meet the need served by spot labor. In Detroit and Huntington, W.Va., the Manpower operations have declined because of similar pressure. However, this discussion was not particularly relevant to the women at the last meeting and was temporarily dropped--another problem of changing constituency.

The unemployed do not feel any common bonds to each other; there is nothing with which they really identify, making it hard to move into substantial, racial programs. Thoughts are unclear at this point about the future of the group. Perhaps it should subside until winter when unemployment increases.

Research is continuing in this group, finding out more about Cleveland's projected poverty program, looking into the Manpower and other spot labor operations, and feeling out the unions to see if they would give support.

PUBLIC HOUSING: At the end of last week's report there was the very beginning of "In Which the Organizers Meet the City and Are Labeled Subversive" which really began when a group of CCPers and some tenants from the project met with recreation commissioner Negy. Present at that meeting was Sgt. Ungvary, the head of the Cleveland subversive squad; who was introduced to the group by John Devlin from the recreation department. The activities of Sgt. Ungvary have been stepped up this week. First, a fake visit by a man who identified himself as a Lt. Circuit from the Sanitary Division of the Police Dept. came to investigate rats, roaches, and the use of our building as a hotel. We later foera-

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from the police dept. that they don't send police but health officers and housing officers for housing misuse. Just a little more dope for Ungvary's files! Next we found out that Ungvary had been to the project and had shown pictures of us from "several demonstrations" to Ed, the recreation director, Bob Hoffman, a resident, and Rev. Eichenbuerger who is a friend of ours. We were on one demonstration sponsored by the WILPF, but they will no doubt try to link us up with CORE which would be fairly easy. This city is terribly afraid of CORE and spends much time investigating CORE-agitators. Finally, today the custodian where one of our members used to live in the Negro ghetto, was visited, complete with pictures which she refused to identify. We are trying to gather allies wherever possible, especially those who are sympathetic and in a position to hold Ungvary back.

The main concern of the housing group at the first of the week was how to deal with the management-controlled meeting of the tenants planned for Thursday night. We expected not to be allowed to attend, but a call to the assistant manager said that we could go. At this point we wondered what their strategy would be. Work in the project centered around finding who our allies would be at the meeting in case we needed a vote of confidence, and generally encouraging people to attend the meeting and see where it should go from that point. The meeting finally arrived and the first incident was when the project manager told us that we "had no business being there and certainly could not speak." The meeting was clearly controlled by the management and many people were dissatisfied with it. A constitutional committee was appointed to whose meeting we were barred; however the committee of 12 includes several of the best people from our neighborhood groups.

Thoughts about us by the tenants are often varying and confusing, but we are not yet ready to pull out of the project and feel that there is much potential for good organization. We will continue to work with our neighborhood groups, two of which are quite interested in building a good, independent council and have been having their meetings outside of the project. These groups should probably start action programs such as a newspaper or a project specific to that neighborhood area such as getting rid of the rats in the area near the river.

Many tenants want an organization, have spent considerable amounts of time in the last couple of weeks working on it, and don't want to see it run by the management and turned into a company union.

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DID YOU KNOW? This week the CCP food budget was an asset--allies who cook are great!

One must be careful of the peas and the corn. Sgt. Ungvary sometimes works for the recreation dept., and sometimes he looks for vermin and sometimes he finds the CCP.

Reporter: Nanci Hollander