

April 15, 1967

United Community Corporation Trustees
c/o Dean C. Willard Heckel
124 Branford Place
Newark, New Jersey 07102

Dear Trustees:

This is written to serve as official notice of my resignation from the United Community Corporation's Board of Trustees as a representative from OPERATION WE CARE.

Having been a UCC member since early 1965, it has become clear that the UCC in Newark and the Office of Economic Opportunity nationally form programs based on the idea that poverty exists because people are unskilled, undereducated and that the poor cannot function in the complex urban American society of the 1960's.

This is not my view. I believe poverty exists because some people have power and others do not. That those who have power use it to enforce the dependency of the powerless and that this system is institutionalized into the very make-up of this country.

It is my hope that neither my resignation nor this letter will be taken as a "put-down" of the UCC. On the contrary, people now in the program must work harder to make UCC a force in Newark for change -- both economic and political.

However, it is for those activists who hear a different drummer and who realize that entrenched power gives nothing without a struggle to turn their attention and energies to that fight.

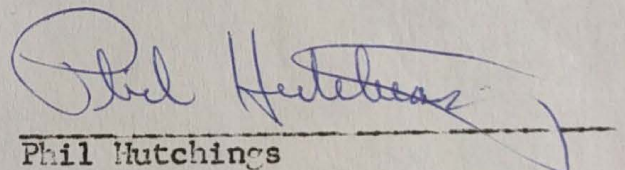
The history of Negroes in America is a history of powerlessness and its debilitating effects. The vast majority of Negroes in this country live in poverty and must endure these conditions of oppression because they are black and powerless.

Solutions to these conditions can originate only inside the black community. Here protest which calls upon the power structure for help and enforces the sense of powerlessness must be avoided. Involvement for the sake of participation and not control can only frustrate and does little to increase the capacity for change.

We must try to create a situation in which poor black people can depend on each other and not on do-good agencies. An independent community is one that can exert influence and control over its own politics, resources and education.

I think that it is now time for the black freedom movement to stop pandering to the fears of the white middle-class in the attempt to earn its "good will". It is time to return to the ghetto to organize those communities to control themselves.

This organization must be successful, because there are no viable alternatives. Without the power to control their lives and their community through which to relate to the total society, the ghetto will stay in a constant state of insurrection. What will happen is up to us.


Phil Hutchings

PH/rnl

cc: Rabbi Jonathan J. Prinz
Mr. Willie Wright
Mr. Donald M. Wendell
Mr. William K. Wolfe