

UNITED COMMUNITY CORPORATION

TO: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

TACTICAL MEMORANDUM #1

FROM: CYRIL D. TYSON

Monday, January 18, 1965

THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEIGHBORHOOD BOARDS IN THE POVERTY COMMUNITY

RATIONALE

The foundation upon which the Economic Opportunity Act rests is the development in the communities of poverty neighborhood organizations that will provide needed services and train individuals so that they administer the services to themselves. Intrinsic to these processes is the development of the poor so they will be able to engage in responsible social action.

Historically, certain services have always existed in deprived communities. Often they were not sufficient in size and scope to meet the need. Financial support necessary to provide broad-base service programs was never available in sufficient quantity in these communities. However, the nature of the challenge today is not one of mere service; the challenge is one of vesting in the poor the decision-making processes as to what kinds of services are needed, who in their community will administer them and the right of evaluation of all services that effect their community; therefore, it is imperative that local Neighborhood Boards be developed in the poverty area of Newark.

STRUCTURE OF NEIGHBORHOOD BOARDS

The Neighborhood Boards should be developed along boundary lines that reflect, to the degree possible, the poverty communities'



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consensus of neighborhoods. The local Boards should have as members individuals who reside or work in the neighborhood. In addition, at least ten per cent of the Board members should be youth under 21 years of age.

The determination of criteria for membership should be made by the local Boards and should be inclusive of representation from social, civic, religious, labor and other community-minded groups. However, the focus should be primarily on uncovering and developing local leadership that is traditionally below the threshold of observation.

PROGRAM AREAS

1. The neighborhood Boards should have the responsibility of on-going assessment of the service needs of their community.
2. They should have the responsibility of recruiting residents for participation in the various anti-poverty programs in their community.
3. They should have the responsibility of developing community action programs related to the more efficient servicing of their neighborhood by private and governmental agencies and organizations designed for that purpose.
4. They should be responsible for conducting systematic community research on who needs services, who are participating in the services and effects of the services.

STAFF

The Neighborhood Boards should initially be staffed with a community organizer, a Neighborhood Worker, a neighborhood researcher,



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and a secretary. All staff should be recruited from the community. Youth should also have the opportunity to participate on a staff level.

ROLE OF THE UCC

The United Community Corporation should assume the responsibility for the development of the local Boards and when they have developed to the point of having a central representative organization the Corporation should then contract with that organization as the responsible organ for serving the Neighborhood Boards. All of the organizing staff of UCC would then become the staff of the Boards and on their payroll. This process will insure that the Neighborhood Boards and their programs are controlled by the poor.

The Corporation should engage in a dialogue with existing groups like CAN, Clinton Hill Neighborhood Association, Students for a Democratic Society, Council of Social Agencies, and other groups interested in organizing the poor so that appropriate geographical boundaries may be determined.

It must be remembered that with limited funds services and organizational knowledge must be funneled into areas where the poor reside in great abundance.

This approach does not prevent specific services being made available to the poor in communities that do not have a high concentration of deprived families--it just insures that priority for services and community organization development will be given to areas that are high on the social pathology scale.