

1 from the record.

2 MR. WALKER: Sir, we will accept the
3 speaker.

4 CHAIRMAN COCUZZA: Dr. Haskin, give your
5 name and address.

6 A VOICE: My name is Mr. Mazuka. I have
7 to attend a meeting.

8 CHAIRMAN COCUZZA: Dr. Haskin, it is now
9 11:55. You may begin your presentation.

10 (The following is transcribed out of se-
11 quence.)

12 CHAIRMAN COCUZZA: The next speaker is
13 Mrs. Louise Epperson.

14 (Applause.)

15 CHAIRMAN COCUZZA: Will you give your full
16 name and address and who you represent.

17 MRS. LOUISE EPPERSON: Mr. Chairman,
18 members of the Planning Board, my name is Louise
19 Epperson. I am a resident, a homeowner in the
20 target area. I live at 40 12th Avenue, in
21 Newark.

22 CHAIRMAN COCUZZA: Thank you very much.
23 You have thirty minutes, ma'am, for your presenta-
24 tion, and an additional ten minutes for summation.
25 You may use that, too. It is now exactly 12 p.m.

1 Proceed, please.

2 MRS. EPPERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
3 I realize -- at least I think I do -- that no
4 matter how many minutes I speak or whatsoever
5 that I may say, that you gentlemen have your
6 minds made up. It was made up before this public
7 hearing. Otherwise, it would not have been all
8 the mahoney in the papers.

9 I am here to tell you that I have worked
10 and struggled very hard and long all of my life.
11 My life savings is in my home. I have went to
12 interview several of the so-called houses for
13 sale in this City at the Irvington lines, and the
14 money that these people are asking for these
15 houses and -- and they are not in half good con-
16 dition that my present home is in. I have told
17 you before, no matter what anyone says, I don't
18 live with roaches and rats, contrary to what the
19 Police Department says, the Fire Department says
20 and many of my people say.

21 Now, if there are roaches and rats in our
22 neighborhoods, I'm sure that we caused them to be
23 there because we live there and I'm sure that it
24 is up to the Board of Health. They inspect every-
25 thing else. They made me fix sidewalks that an

1 Italian doctor owned this house, and had been
2 there forty years with the same sidewalk. The
3 day I moved in I had to put in a new sidewalk.

4 (Applause.)

5 MRS. EPPERSON: I feel as though this has
6 been a long, hard struggle for me as an individual.
7 I come to you asking you to reconsider your plans.
8 Where will our children go to school? Mr. Danzig
9 knows well that there is no one forced together.
10 I have investigated and found out that every low
11 housing in this City, there is a 500 waiting
12 list today, without these 22,000 black people
13 being uprooted out of their homes. No matter
14 what anyone says, I know different.

15 As the gentleman that represented Newark's
16 finest Police Department that spoke just before
17 I did, I don't know where he gets his informa-
18 tion and how he's out checking on houses when
19 he's supposed to be checking on robberies and
20 things.

21 (Applause.)

22 MRS. EPPERSON: I can't conceive -- my son
23 owns a TV store in this target area. This store
24 was broken into one week ago today. I called the
25 Newark Police Department three different times

1 the same night it happened, trying to get police-
2 men out there. Forty-eight minutes before one
3 came, the only reason -- the only reason why one
4 came then, my last call I called them that we had
5 caught the teenager that broke my son's store
6 window, and we were going to beat hell out of him.
7 In five seconds they were there. They said --
8 this is the truth. I'm sure if Newark's finest
9 policemen would conduct their business to pro-
10 tecting the citizens of this town, they would not
11 come here lying to you about our housing, which
12 I'm sure they don't know anything about.

13 I wish you, since you are the Planning
14 Board, not just ride past our neighborhood. Get
15 out of your cars and come into 40 12th Avenue.
16 Inspect my home and inspect any of the others
17 in my neighborhood, their homes. I think it is
18 a shame to tear down many of these homes. If
19 you must tear them down, the only thing we are
20 asking you to do is to build. Build some places
21 for us to go. Tear them down, but build first.
22 Give us homes to move into. This is as simple
23 as the noses on your face. You know if you tear
24 down these homes, there will be no place for these
25 people to go into.

1 Everybody is not project conscious. I'm
2 not project conscious. But if the houses were
3 built and the projects, I'm willing to live in
4 any place, as long as it's decent. But at least
5 give me as good as I'm living in now. Don't give
6 me worse. You say that we can go, and the Mayor
7 says he wants to integrate the different neigh-
8 borhoods, that we will not have a black ghetto.
9 This is fine. But all of the old homes that the
10 white families live in until today, I found that
11 when the Negro buys them, the price goes up three
12 times what they are really worth, and in order
13 to keep their investments that they have paid on
14 to these homes, they have to subdivide them, make
15 three and four families. What one family, one
16 white family earned in his big fabulous salary
17 that they are doing, and at the expense of the
18 black man, thereby creating a greater ghetto,
19 because four families are now here where you had
20 one previously living in. You know this is not
21 right. You say we should get ahead, we should
22 really and truly elevate ourselves, and we should
23 try to help ourselves. I feel personally that
24 this is why it is so easy for the black man to
25 get away from here in Newark, welfare in Newark,

1 because once he is on welfare, he doesn't need
2 a job. He doesn't need to come down and fight.
3 He is finished. He is out of society.

4 Thereby it makes us not have anybody that
5 will really and truly represent us and go forward.
6 This thing should be cut out. We should, and
7 we do -- we want jobs. We want jobs just as you
8 want jobs. We want homes just as you want homes.
9 Don't you think that this is a sacrifice to me
10 today? I'm a working woman. I had to take off
11 my job to come down here to plead to you to give
12 me a place to stay because you want my home.
13 Now, I feel if you want my home and you want all
14 the homes in the neighborhood as you said, I
15 can't conceive why the medical school in the
16 first place would need 150 acres to build on.
17 They can build up as well as they can spread out.
18 I can't see, to save my life, why this ghetto and
19 medical school is so important to all the great
20 white fathers down in the City Hall unless it
21 means an awful amount of money going in somebody's
22 pocket. I can't say whose, but it must be. No-
23 body will fight for this cause. Nobody would
24 disperse this many people without something very,
25 very gratifying coming from it.

1 Now, the same medical school is already
2 in Jersey City. To tell me we have a very high
3 rate of venereal disease and cancer, lung trouble
4 and everything else in Newark, they have the
5 same thing in Jersey City, and this school is
6 already over there. I can't see where the people
7 in Jersey City have any greater health problem
8 than the people in Newark. So what happened to
9 those people over there? I think that this is
10 something that you gentlemen should really re-
11 consider. You shouldn't let the Mayor or anyone
12 else influence your brains, that you can take
13 this many people, throw them out into the streets
14 without thinking or without knowing.

15 I am not politically inspired one way or
16 the other, except I like good government. This
17 is why I vote. I don't even work in the City of
18 Newark, and if I did work in the City of Newark,
19 I would be looking for another job now, because
20 I would not get Addonizio or anyone else to tell
21 me and to take my franchise away from me to fight
22 for myself or place of my people. I will definite-
23 ly be looking for another job.

24 I can do any type of work that any other
25 woman can do, and I believe that there are many

1 of us can do the same thing. I think it's a
2 shame and it will go down in history as a terrible
3 evil that you people are doing to the black man
4 in this City. You should reconsider, and if
5 Addonizio just must have that medical and dental
6 school in Newark, I know he says he will raise
7 hell or heaven in order to get it, and I believe
8 he means this, too. But he just must have it,
9 couldn't he build some homes for the black people
10 to go into first and then take the damn land and
11 build what he wants to build on it?

12 (Applause.)

13 MRS. EPPERSON: I think it's the time. But
14 for him to tell us that there is adequate housing
15 when we know that Mr. Danzig is lying out of his
16 mouth and two ears, because he knows it is not
17 true. Danzig knows it is not true. I will chal-
18 lenge Mr. Danzig.

19 A VOICE: Come over here and sit by me.

20 MRS. EPPERSON: Everybody says it is not
21 true. So why he gets here and says that so many,
22 so many thousands fit in -- or how many turn over.
23 Why don't you go and see that there are over 5,000
24 waiting list at every housing project, 22,000
25 people. I know Mr. Danzig is having words put into

1 his mouth and he have to go along with it, but I
2 can't see how you gentlemens have to go along
3 with it. Are you being promised part of this
4 filled pile, also? I don't understand how you
5 can let this terrible thing happen to us without
6 even trying to fight or even saying anything
7 about it or even sitting up there laughing or
8 looking concerned about it. This is our very
9 life that we are fighting for. It is not a
10 laughing matter. It is a very serious matter.
11 I want to ask you gentlemens to please, whatever
12 you do, reconsider your plans. Shuffle your
13 cards around again and look at what you are doing
14 to us. Build houses for us to go into. Build
15 schools for our children to go to school in.
16 Take the land and do whatever you want to do with
17 it, but first do what I'm asking you to do. I'm
18 imploring it to you. I know what I'm saying.
19 What made us this way? But it truly and really
20 should. This should be the first order. We are
21 not against schools coming to Newark. We are not
22 against anything that will be for the benefit of
23 a city that we live in, a city that all the ills
24 that everybody have had in all of Washington,
25 New York City, Elizabeth, New Jersey, gentlemens.

1 We have tried to be a peaceful, abiding
2 citizens, but you won't let us. You don't want
3 us to be. You want us to come down here and to
4 fight and to act ugly and to do everything. I
5 was fighting against this thing since January
6 3rd. I met with the great white fathers when
7 they had their Council Chambers around here be-
8 fore you ever came into the picture. You should
9 have called us at the beginning. I don't know
10 why you should think that whatever goes down in
11 our neighborhood, we should not have something
12 to say about what comes up in it, but we really
13 should. Any neighborhood has this privilege to
14 say whatever comes down goes up.

15 Now you are acting like you are a bunch
16 of disciples. We are down here fighting for our
17 very lives. You are not concerned. You should
18 really be concerned. This is not for just
19 Louise Epperson as an individual. It is for all
20 of the 22,000 black people. These people are
21 so confused, you have no idea. You should live
22 in the neighborhood and hear and see what is be-
23 ing done. No matter any promises -- I know the
24 Fire Department gets up and they talk. I read
25 in the paper where there are fires all over New

1 Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Alabama, Missis-
2 sippi, everyplace. I don't know why these fires
3 in this particular neighborhood mean so much to
4 be pointed out here.

5 I know this was not declared a blighted
6 area until Addonizio decided he wanted it. All
7 of a sudden it is so blighted. All of a sudden
8 it is nothing but roaches and rats and the place
9 is falling down and diseased. I'm sure if he
10 had wanted any other place in these sections of
11 Newark, North, South, East or West Ward, he would
12 have found those sections blighted, also, be-
13 cause this is what he really and truly wants at
14 anybody's cost. So if he wants it, he can have
15 it. Just build homes for us to go into, will
16 you please. Would you consider doing that, Mr.
17 Chairman, and your Board members?

18 CHAIRMAN COCUZZA: When you are through
19 with your comments, I will state my position.

20 A VOICE: She is not through.

21 CHAIRMAN COCUZZA: Are you finished with
22 your comment?

23 MRS. EPPERSON: No, I'm not finished yet.

24 CHAIRMAN COCUZZA: Please continue.

25 MRS. EPPERSON: What is that?

1 CHAIRMAN COCUZZA: Please continue speak-
2 ing.

3 MRS. EPPERSON: Okay. I am sure that
4 Addonizio -- you know, we are the ones that is
5 to blame for this anyway of speaking, because if
6 it wasn't for the black people Addonizio wouldn't
7 be down here in the first place.

8 A VOICE: He'll never come back again,
9 that's for sure. He'll never come back again.
10 That is for sure.

11 MRS. EPPERSON: The black people put him
12 down here. We kept him down in Washington. We
13 worked for him in Washington and we worked for
14 him in Newark because we thought that he was a
15 friend to us. But he had us brainwashed, also.
16 If he didn't have us brainwashed, we would not
17 have worked for him so hard. Believe you me,
18 we wouldn't have. But if Addonizio wants to do
19 the things that's right and his Mr. Lou Danzig,
20 I'm sure he will tell the truth and stop reading
21 all these fabulous lies with the housing situa-
22 tion. He knows that there is no housing in
23 Newark. I know that there isn't. I don't know
24 if you gentlemen know it or not, because you
25 don't live around here, but if you did I'm sure

1 you would know, and if you would check the record
2 of all these people he claims that he is moving
3 in every year. The only reason why he is having
4 all of this moving with all of this influx of
5 people, he claims, it means people are moving
6 into projects, into three rooms and when a five
7 room apartment gets empty, they move and they
8 count this as one person moving. It is the
9 people moving around in the same project, the
10 same people. He knows this, also, to be clear.

11 You are talking about what the Negro has
12 did to the projects and all this kind of jazz.
13 We haven't done anything to it. In the first
14 place, you build these old big monstrosities
15 like the Hayes homes that they have up on Bel-
16 mont Avenue. You go up there and you know that
17 every poor family has four or five or more
18 children to build these big and tall things.
19 The children go out in their yards to play and
20 maybe they live up on the seventh floor. There
21 is no bathroom facilities in the play areas or
22 anything. This is a shame. When the children
23 want to go to the bathroom, they jump on the
24 elevators and it's a cliché. You know what hap-
25 pens when they can't get it or can't get up to

1 the seventh floor. Then all you can say is that
2 the Negroes are keeping these places dirty. This
3 isn't true, gentlemen. I wish that Mr. Danzig
4 and the Planning Board would plan when they
5 build the next low rental project, that they put
6 bathroom facilities in the play areas so that
7 the children will have someplace to go.

8 (Applause.)

9 MRS. EPPERSON: They can't live up on the
10 top floors and get caught short of no place to
11 go. You know this, whether you are black or
12 whether you are white. It doesn't make a differ-
13 ence. In this entire neighborhood it is not all
14 black people. We have white neighbors that have
15 been there all their lives. They, too, feel very,
16 very bad. They are afraid. They are frightened.
17 I talk to my neighbors every day. This is just
18 a terrible thing that we all feel that you are
19 doing to us. I wish you would just think what
20 has happened. You can still have all of this
21 money from the government, all that you can get
22 your hands on. We will even help you to get it,
23 but you must build some houses for us, build some
24 places for us to go into. Build some homes for
25 the children to go to school in. This is not

1 asking too much, is it? This is our own fight.
2 If we don't fight for ourselves, who is going to
3 fight for us? If we don't come down here and
4 ask you, are you going to volunteer and do it
5 for us? You might not do it even if we ask you,
6 and beg and plead to you. If you don't do it,
7 I don't have to tell you what the alternatives
8 are. I'm not a threatening woman. I'm not a
9 fighting woman. I'm not anything but just a
10 United States citizen that's fighting for my
11 home.

12 I have my home and it's paid for. Now
13 where on earth do you think I'm going to pay
14 twice that kind of money and get a mortgage?
15 I'm a widowed woman. My home is paid for. I'm
16 not in any debt. I can live on my salary very
17 nicely, keep my home up very good, also. But
18 what am I going to do starting all over again
19 at this age? This is a terrible thing when you
20 sit down and think about it. I don't think you
21 gentlemens have ever thought of these particular
22 things that I'm pointing out to you. I don't
23 care anything about Addonizio or anyone else that
24 might get down here in City Hall that would do
25 such mean things to a group of people, whether

1 they be a black group or a white group. This
2 is not humane. To be human means something,
3 gentlemen. This is the first thing that you
4 should think of, not the medical school, not
5 anything but people. In order to think of
6 people, think of housing first. Don't move us
7 out of our homes, have the bulldozers ride off
8 all through the land, all through the night and
9 day, knocking it down, not one house going up
10 in Newark. All I know and all I see is a bull-
11 dozer riding and I think this is a disgrace to
12 a big City like Newark. I think you should
13 build some places that we could have homes to
14 go into, and I'm going to ask you again and
15 again to reconsider. Think of the human aspect.

16 I want to ask the Chairman at this point
17 if he will please tell me -- and don't tell me
18 what Lou Danzig told me -- because I know this
19 is a prefabricated lie, that there is not hous-
20 ing. I know there is no housing. I have checked
21 this thing out. I have worked night and day
22 checking it out. I know this is not true. I
23 want to know what are you gentlemens planning to
24 do with homes for us. If the Chairman would
25 please answer me that.

1

A VOICE: Don't take so long.

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CHAIRMAN COCUZZA: Mrs. Epperson, are you finished with your speech?

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A VOICE: She asked you a question. She is not finished.

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CHAIRMAN COCUZZA: Are you finished with your remarks? If you are, then I will answer the question. Please continue.

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MRS. EPPERSON: Mr. Chairman, where are you going to build houses for us? Where are you going to build schools for our children to go to? What is going to happen to these people that are struggling so hard for one thing, to live? This is our life that you are trying to take away from us. I know you feel that you have a power of life and death in your hand, but I don't feel that way. I feel that you should do something for these people. You are the Planning Board.

I want to say to Mr. Bradley, he has a most serious look, and I think he is just one, whether he's doodling or just jotting or writing down, because he does seem to be interested at least, but everybody else is taking this as a joke. I don't think it's no joking matter. Really and truly, I don't think it's a joking

1 matter at all. I think that this is a terrible,
2 terrible, terrible ordeal that you are doing to
3 the people of Newark, and particularly to the
4 black people.

5 We have struggled so hard. We have tried
6 to keep the peace. We have tried to keep the
7 faith. But it seems that all you are looking
8 for is trouble. Well, if trouble is what you
9 want, trouble is what you're going to get.

10 (Applause.)

11 MRS. EPPERSON: We are not going to have
12 anything less, no type of appeasement, but homes
13 and schools. If you don't want that, then leave
14 us in our rat and roach-infested homes as you
15 call it. Leave us where we are. Don't bother
16 with us. But if you want our homes, build some
17 places for us to go into. This is all I am ask-
18 ing you, Mr. Chairman. I don't think this is
19 too much for anyone to want to know. I think
20 that this is what all of the ruckus is about.

21 You say you have a public hearing. Any-
22 one that wants to be heard to come down here,
23 can come down here and be heard. If you are not
24 going to do something about it when the people
25 come and ask you for it, what the hell is the

1 good of coming down to be heard? You are just
2 wasting time. I could have gone to work today.
3 I need a couple of dollars that I miss working
4 for today, but I had to come because my life
5 savings is at 40 12th Avenue that you want to
6 take away from me. I cannot permit this to hap-
7 pen without at least raising my hand. I don't
8 care what you do and how you do it.

9 I want to ask you again and again to
10 please, Mr. Chairman, and Board members, remember
11 that Mr. Danzig is lying. I charge him with
12 lying. There is no housing in Newark. There is
13 no places that these people can move into. I
14 have looked into it again and again since Janu-
15 ary when they announced that they wanted our
16 homes.

17 Now, will you please, Mr. Chairman,
18 think of what I'm asking you and let me have an
19 answer. I will sit down now if you are ready
20 to answer me now.

21 CHAIRMAN COCUZZA: Thank you very much,
22 Mrs. Epperson.

23 MRS. EPPERSON: Are you going to answer
24 me?

25 CHAIRMAN COCUZZA: Just a moment, please.

1 Just be calm. Take it easy.

2 MRS. EPPERSON: I am. I'm calm.

3 CHAIRMAN COCUZZA: The Chair has listened
4 very attentively to your remarks. I observed
5 that from your comments you do not oppose the
6 medical college per se, provided there is ample
7 housing to move into; is that correct?

8 MRS. EPPERSON: That is absolutely cor-
9 rect.

10 CHAIRMAN COCUZZA: Thank you very much.

11 MRS. EPPERSON: Now, what are you propos-
12 ing also that we are going to have? Are we go-
13 ing to have these houses?

14 CHAIRMAN COCUZZA: That phase, Mrs.
15 Epperson, devolves into the study of the minutes,
16 the record of this meeting and the consultation
17 with the Housing Authority.

18 MRS. EPPERSON: If you are going to go
19 by the consultation of the Housing Authority,
20 we won't have any more than we have now because
21 the Housing Authority has already stood up here
22 and told you a bareface lie, and you believe it.
23 You are going along with it. You know that I
24 have stood here and told you the truth and spoke
25 to you from my heart, that the Housing Authority

1 is a liar, that there are no places for the
2 people to go into. I know this to be the truth.
3 It's no need for you gentlemens to say you are
4 going to check with the Housing Authority be-
5 cause it brings us back where we are at this
6 moment, and this is no place. Mr. Danzig knows.
7 I don't know how he can -- I know he must be
8 gone by now. Where is he? Mr. Danzig, you know
9 you are lying, wherever you have moved to. You
10 know you are lying. The Mayor will take your
11 job if you come and tell these people the truth.
12 Why don't you tell the truth, Mr. Danzig, be-
13 cause this is a bareface liar. There is no
14 places for these people to go.

15 CHAIRMAN COCUZZA: May I interrupt you?

16 MRS. EPPERSON: Yes, you may, Mr. Chair-
17 man.

18 CHAIRMAN COCUZZA: I wish to reveal from
19 my knowledge what occurred the other day, that
20 housing will be built.

21 A VOICE: When? On the moon? Don't sit
22 up there giving us second-hand information.
23 When?

24 MRS. EPPERSON: Mr. Chairman, don't you
25 think, in all fairness --

CHAIRMAN COCUZZA: May I finish?

MRS. EPPERSON: Yes, you may.

CHAIRMAN COCUZZA: Please. I do know for a fact that housing --

A VOICE: No, you don't know for a fact. Tell us where.

CHAIRMAN COCUZZA: I don't think you are courteous.

A VOICE: Where is the housing?

A VOICE: Don't sit there and mislead people.

CHAIRMAN COCUZZA: I know for a fact that housing per se will be built in the -- just a moment, please.

A VOICE: In the Central Ward? No medical school, right?

CHAIRMAN COCUZZA: In particular, in the neighborhood of Avon Avenue, that housing will be built there.

A VOICE: Everybody knows that.

CHAIRMAN COCUZZA: Housing will be built, and this Board will make every effort to see that the Housing Authority comes up with the plans for quick consummation of the plans they have in that area. Thank you very much.

1 MRS. EPPERSON: I would think that you
2 would stop a lot of filibustering and a lot of
3 arguments and all of this disruption and all of
4 this trouble that we are having in Newark to-
5 day. It will be dissolved if you gentlemen
6 will only see that low rental housing are put
7 up for the people and put up first before we
8 move, so we will have some places to go to.

9 You have read in the paper about middle
10 income houses. You know that \$3,200 is property
11 level, and there are many of these people in
12 this particular neighborhood that don't even
13 make \$3,200, that they are just barely existing
14 on relief. I think low houses is the thing you
15 gentlemens need to think of, and you need to
16 think of it now and quit fooling around. Quit
17 fooling the public. Don't go around and say
18 that the black man has caused trouble in Newark.
19 We don't want to have another Watts here in
20 Newark. We need not have it. It is up to you.
21 It is as plain as that. Unless you build houses
22 for us to go into and build schools for our
23 black children, there's going to be another
24 second Watts, only we will be better prepared
25 for it.

1 There is no need of having all of this
2 racial tension in this great city of ours.
3 There is no need of having all this trouble here.
4 The fate is in your hands. The blood will be on
5 your hands, also. I'm giving you your choice
6 to believe Mr. Danzig or believe the people,
7 and Lou Danzig is Addonizio's puppet that is
8 lying for him, and he knows it.

9 (Applause.)

10 CHAIRMAN COCUZZA: Thank you very much.
11 The next speaker will be Colonel Hassan.

12 What is your name, sir?

13 DEAN HARRISON: My name is Dean Harrison.
14 I'm the Acting Community Action Director for
15 the United Community Corporation.

16 CHAIRMAN COCUZZA: I address my remarks
17 to Mr. Moore. Mr. Moore, this gentleman's name
18 is not on the list.

19 DEAN HARRISON: I signed up last night.

20 MR. MOORE: Due to your arbitrary re-
21 scheduling this meeting at a time when some of
22 our working people, the majority of them couldn't
23 be here, we have had to make adjustments and get
24 other experts to take the places of our missing
25 people, and with our full knowledge, Mr. Harrison