

The Washington County Community Action Program has been called Oregon's best by Marko Haggard, the Governor's Co-ordinator of OEO Programs. The Southeast Washington County CAP has been one of the most active programs in the county, contacting more people than any other Center in the county.

The program began to form late in the summer of 1967, pushed most strongly by the Reverend Otis Harden, a Methodist minister in the Sherwood-Tualatin area. Pastor Harden has been the driving force behind the program and can take most of the responsibility for its existence. He is from Georgia and worked with migrants, alcoholics, and other unfortunate people early in his career. He is intensely concerned with the poor and the unhappy, and in many ways he represents the best in the social-action ministerial tradition of his church.

The organization was mentioned to Dr. Martin Johnson, President of the Tigard Chamber of Commerce, who brought it to Mr. Logan's attention. He passed it on to me, since he wanted to know what was going on in the community. I called Pastor Harden first, and then Mayor Eichelburger of Sherwood and Judge Teagarden of Yamhill County.

Both officials had a very poor opinion of the CAP. Both complained that the CAP had been extremely hostile to the local jurisdictions from the beginning and that they had tried to establish themselves secretly, without the knowledge or co-operation of the local governments. Judge Teagarden said that the communities had tried to cripple the program by taking it over and putting a conservative real estate broker at its head. Mayor Eichelburger said that the CAP had tried to organize secretly and that when a meeting was later arranged, the CAP representatives did not appear. The CAP people, on the other hand, felt that the government was hostile and disruptive to their meetings. Whatever the truth of it all, the two groups polarized and have never been able to establish contact to any extent.

I attended a meeting of the CAP Steering Committee on September 13, 1967. There were a few people there, mostly older Sherwood residents. Mr. Peter Cullen, Program Director for WCCAO, was present to give advice and direction. He seemed highly antagonistic to me and to the city of Tigard. Subsequently he has met Mr. Logan and the problem has subsided. He had been conditioned, either by training or experience, to expect hostility from any local government, and when it was clear that Tigard was not trying to subvert the program, the hostility died down.

By the end of September, a nominating committee had been set up, and Otis Harden, Agnes Mandell, and Pat Smiley had been elected officers of the Ad Hoc Steering Committee. A general meeting was held on October 30, at which time an 11-member Board was elected and public opinion solicited about the appropriate activities to be undertaken. Attendance was rather poor, and conspicuously absent were middle class people, elected and appointed government officials, and urban dwellers.

In November, the Board met and elected Pastor Harden President, Pat Smiley Vice President, and Agnes Mandell Secretary. It was decided to hire a Co-ordinator and Community Worker to act as professional staff. We were looking for people with rural experience, compassion for the poor, and an ability to meet the public. Mr. Cullen said that experience or training were not essential since they would be trained by the WCCAO.

The salary of the Director was \$525. per month; that of the Community worker, \$404. per month. Mr. Cullen said that in the field of social work, salary is not too important, since dedicated people will work for very little. I am inclined to think that any organization gets what it pays for, and that professional administrators will generally not work for \$525. per month. The Sherwood CAP was extremely fortunate to get Mrs. Tiner and Mrs. Haynes. Mrs. Tiner was hired because of her pleasant disposition, and her apparent confidence and ability, and her background in supervision. Mrs. Haines was hired in part because of her long residence in the community and her knowledge of community affairs.

The Board as a group did the interviewing, with interviews being scheduled at 15 minute intervals. If I had it to do over, I would certainly suggest interviewing over a period of several days, or the establishment of an interviewing subcommittee of the Board to screen out the best candidates. As it was, the process was running almost two hours behind schedule, and some candidates left in frustration.

The new staff went to a two-week training program in Hillsboro conducted by Peter Cullen. The training included an introduction to OEO and its work, a briefing on CAP, descriptions of their jobs, and a summary of the organizations and agencies with which they would be working. Some record-keeping practices were covered. Since that time, they have also attended other schools in the area. Generally, one or two staff people in the county are sent to a given school and they report back to the others. The most recent school attended by Mrs. Tiner was sponsored by the Oregon Correctional Institute and held at the University of Portland.

The Sherwood CAP was functioning by the end of December.

#### PROGRAMS:

Most of the programs conducted by the CAP are financed by other agencies and made available to the poor by CAP. The Sherwood CAP, for instance, sponsors a Well Baby Clinic and an Immunization Clinic every other month, but the nurses and equipment are provided by the County Health Department. CAP notifies low income families in the area and provides the facilities and transportation. Likewise, CAP informs families of the Family Planning Clinics held in Hillsboro once a month.

The CAP acts as a clearing house to inform the poor of the services available to them. Thus, a family could come to the center and be referred to Welfare, a job, and any one or all of the clinics, as well as be provided with emergency food if necessary. A development of this has been a co-ordinating session held periodically in Hillsboro, at which concerned social action agencies meet and try to co-ordinate their efforts with cases being handled by all the agencies.

Some programs put on by the center itself have included a Hootenany for teenagers and a demonstration of Economy Meal Planning at a luncheon sponsored by the center. The Center operates a clothes closet, fitting needy families with clothes donated by others. A special fund has been set up, with contributions from various churches and women's organizations, which is used to buy shoes for hard-to-fit children. The center runs a small transport-pool of volunteers to take people shopping, and the staff takes people to the Oregon Medical School, the Beaverton Dental Clinic, to Immunization and Well Baby Clinics held at the center, and to pick up Abundant Food.

The Center sends people to Manpower Development Training programs, to Job Pairs, and similar activities. The center has also established small GED classes, taught by two volunteers. In addition, an application has been filed for a Head Start kindergarten at the Unitarian Church in Metzger.

#### PROBLEMS:

A number of the large problems faced by the CAP are reflections of the problems faced by OEO. The Poverty Program has never been particularly glamorous or popular, and repeated scandals in the handling of funds and/or the results in other parts of the country (or in the Valley Migrant League in Oregon) have increased the suspicion. Congress has treated OEO as a stepchild and has dismembered it, giving many functions to other departments. The program is usually inadequately funded, poorly supported at the federal level, and subject to fluctuations in funds and programs. For instance, if the City looks for people to hire, we go to different people for MDT, NYC, Needy Men and Women, and Migrants, to say nothing of the organizations set up to help the Negroes.

In addition, poor people are often difficult to work with. Many are poorly motivated, apathetic and discouraged. Most of the families dealt with by CAP have a number of problems, including unemployment, credit, lack of education, too many children, inadequate housing, and a poor diet. It is difficult to know where to begin. The inadequate funding of social programs often results in poor help and increases discouragement of the family.

However, barring a drastic change in attitude in the country, these conditions will probably continue and simply have to be lived with.

The problems associated with the Sherwood CAP are as old as it is. First, the organization tried to work around the Sherwood City Government, which was deeply resented by the Mayor and Council. Staff antagonism led to further difficulties. The staff, I think, expected trouble from the City, and they were appropriately rewarded with trouble. While I have talked to the parties involved, I can't figure out who started it all. If it were starting now, I would suggest that the local jurisdictions be approached by the staff to see what opposition there is, rather than assuming that there is opposition. I would be curious to know how much of the problem is in part a result of the training given to the professional staff.

Community support has not been firmly established as yet. Those who volunteer to work on various programs are usually from Sherwood, although there are two Hillsboro women in the car pool. Tigard and Metzger are simply not involved, and I've met residents of Tualatin who have never heard of it. Publicity on most activities is non-existent, at least in Tigard, and the majority of residents in the Tigard-Metzger-Progress area do not know that CAP functions in the area.

There is a very real division between the rurally-orientated program centered in Sherwood, and the metropolitan area around Tigard that the CAP is expected to serve. The Board is almost entirely rural in composition, and is made up almost entirely of Sherwood and Tualatin residents, even though the population is centered around Tigard. Programs, likewise, are not held in Tigard, but always in Sherwood.

A problem connected with mobilizing the community is that no one seems to have any idea about the number of poor people in the area, or their needs. A census was taken a few years ago, but its accuracy is doubtful. People were included who did not need help, but were only interested in helping someone else.

Funding is a serious problem. The CAP budget provides for the utilities to operate the office, the salaries of the Co-ordinator and Community Worker, 7¢ per mile for transportation expenses, and a \$10. per month petty cash fund. For anything else, the program is dependent on grants and donations, and a few people are willing to donate to a government-sponsored program. The Washington Neighborhood Services Program budget is only \$ . As is often the case with federal programs, funding can be cut back without notice, and this is a chronic problem with Poverty Programs.

One of the most serious practical difficulties in the program has been transportation. Bus service is almost non-existent, and many poor people do not own cars. Much of the staff's time is taken up with driving people around, and volunteers for car pools

are difficult to find. Mrs. Tyner said, as an example, that she will drive a person to the U of O Medical School Clinic, which is a long drive, and then wait there for the several hours necessary before the person is attended to, and then drive back. It seems appalling to me to take upher valuable time just sitting.

The small scale of the programs is unfortunate. There has been no community-or area-wide mobilization to help the poor in the area. Therefore, most programs are limited to one-to-one work, picking up food, or other, equally peicemeal projects. The development of a co-ordinating body of social agencies is a step toward cooperative and more effective help, but there is little serious area-wide commitment.

#### SUGGESTIONS:

At the first meeting of the Steering Committee that I attended, I asked for proof of the existence of substantial poverty pockets in the area. I think that still remains one of the greatest needs of the program. There are a number of community minded, compassionate people in the area, such as Dr. Martin Johnson of Tigard, and the many individuals initially interested in a C CAP program, who want to do something to help other people. However, few people are willing to do something if they feel it is not needed or duplicates an existing service. If people in the county don't believe that poverty exists here, they will do nothing, and attribute poverty programs to empire building on the part of the OEO staff. The County CAP should get statistics proving the existence of poverty, and back it up with pictures, facts, and speakers. There should also be some effort made to convince the community that the fight against poverty leads to benefits for others, in the form of reduced welfare payments, or better people, or less crime, or whatever. People will usually act if they are convinced it is to their own interest.

I would suggest that the Sherwood Center continue to keep records of the number of people helped. I would suggest that statistical breakdowns be available for the number of calls, the type of calls and the disposition of them. These records are useful as proof of activity, and they also can be used to follow or spot trends, such as an increased need for housing, food or employment at a given time. Furthermore, solid proof of activity can be released to the general public. This has been included in the monthly reports to the Board, and I suggest that it continue and be expanded to include monthly grand totals of the number of individuals and families helped, as well as quarterly compilations of the number of individuals helped by the program.

I would suggest that these figures and other pertinent information be released to the area's newspapers, such as the Tri-City Times, the Tigard Times, and the Journal's Metro West section. All three papers look for human interest material and factual information. Spectacular hard luck stories are good if they are either particularly frustrating or turn out exceptionally well. It wouldn't

hurt to show some of the reporters what is happening, for instance, if the Head Start center is established. That is far more convincing than abstract comments about a "Vast number of rural poor in the area."

I would suggest that Mrs. Tiner get acquainted with C CAP directors in Multnomah County, such as Fred Weiss of East-CAP, and that she meet Paul Schultze of Model Cities. The Snow-CAP program is in an area similar to ours. Any of these men might have useful suggestions and advise for the program. Some acquaintance with Pastor Jewell of Metzger Methodist, who is trying to organize a Tigard C CAP, would be useful. There was interest in a C CAP and the people who turned out for that could very possibly be interested in CAP if they knew there was something worthwhile they could do. The Tigard Ministerial Association is reluctant to commit itself to a program that would fall largely on their shoulders, but might be interested in directing interested parishioners to the CAP, if properly approached.

I would also suggest that Mrs. Tiner try for speaking engagements, not only in Sherwood, but in Tigard, Garden Home and Metzger. Churches, women's groups and some service organizations would be places to start. Persuasive speaking can publicize the program widely. Any speaking of this sort would have to be backed by hard facts and examples, not generalities.

It would help if the program were not so centralized in and limited to Sherwood. While people in the Tigard-Metzger area are helped individually, there has been little obvious benefit to the community as a whole. Tigard has a strong community spirit and a number of service organizations that do worthwhile projects; and an acquaintance with them would be helpful. The population is around Tigard, not Sherwood. Increased Board membership from Tigard, Metzger and Garden Home would help. Furthermore, there is more money in Tigard than Sherwood, and the City government is willing to cooperate with CAP. The Board now seems to be composed of earnest, sincere people, all of whom are rurally orientated and committed to Sherwood. I think an increase in parochialism will only damage the program for the area as a whole, and I hope an effort will be made to expand the program as quickly as possible.

I would suggest again that copies of the agenda be made available to Board members before the meeting, along with copies of the monthly report. This would give members of the Board the opportunity to study the agenda and connected material, to prepare questions and suggestions. That way, their monthly report could simply be approved rather than read, which would save time. A sincere effort should be continued to limit the meetings to a reasonable hour. I have talked to a number of the people who are reluctant to serve on the Board because they know that volunteer organizations often keep late hours unnecessarily, and they don't feel their time would be well used.

I think in time, the Board should concentrate more on policy decisions and less on running the program at Board meetings. The Board should direct the staff, but generally leave the administration to Mrs. Tiner.

I would suggest that Mrs. Tiner approach some of the colleges in the area about 3-hr. intern programs, so that girls like the pair from George Fox can be utilized more often.

I am not sure if contact has been made with FISH in Beaverton, but if not, it would be to Sherwood's advantage to learn about this emergency help program.

I would suggest that efforts to continue to widen the community base of support. The Green amendment requires a change in the County Board, and even the Sherwood Board would not be hurt by inclusion of friendly local officials, or even non-government members of the middle-class establishment. Since funding is limited to operations, program funding must come from a mobilized community or federal grants. An acquaintance with persons who can get even limited contributions will be increasingly necessary as the program expands.

It would be handy if a list of interested persons and volunteers was kept in the office. These persons could be contacted for help when needed, and perhaps when many is available, sent monthly reports similar to the County Newsletter. As people become interested, a record could be kept of the type of volunteer service they are willing to do and of their availability.

Mrs. Tiner has a difficult job which I would not care to try. I think she has shown tremendous patience in the face of one of the most difficult problems facing the country, and that she has done much more than I would have thought possible. However, if community support can be increased, the activities can be expanded to reach more of those in need. There is no need to have a tight, little program in Sherwood when it can be effective throughout the area.