Opportunity II

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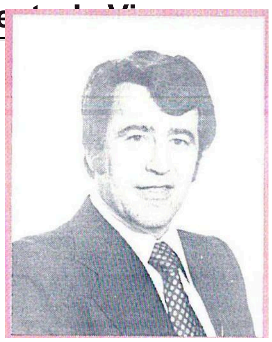

CSA and the Future

On April 24, 1980, President Jimmy Carter asked me to become the Director of the Community Services Administration. I accepted his nomination and told him that I was honored he had chosen me for a job which I believe is one the most important in government.

Since that day, I have had an opportunity to talk to many of you and I am now even more eager to take on the tasks which lie ahead of us. I want to use this column to share with you some of my thoughts about the future.

First, however, I want to especially recognize three members of the Carter Administration who, until very recently, were part of the team that came to CSA to turn around a floundering Agency. They helped reform and streamline the administration of this Agency, put it back at the Federal policymaking table and greatly improved the Agency's reputation at the White House and in Congress. These three people are: Director Graciela Olivarez, General Counsel Frank Jones and Assistant Director John Gabusi. They have gone on to take on important new challenges which will enable them to continue their advocacy on behalf of the poor and disadvantaged. I also want to single out Deputy Director Bill Allison who did an excellent job of administering our Program during the interim period and who will be staying at CSA. For the first time, the Director and the Deputy Director of CSA are both former CAA Directors. I will rely on Bill's experience as a CAA Director and as Deputy Director of CSA to assist me in my new position.

As to the future, I think we can take some direction from the past—particularly from the experience of Community Action Agencies, Community Development Corporations and State Economic Opportunity Offices.

When then Peace Corps Director, R. Sargent Shriver formed the original Federal Task Force to develop the "War on Poverty", two basic approaches were considered. The first was the concept of "community action" which encompassed social and economic development, com munity organizing and advocacy and meant that communities and people would be learning to help themselves and each other out of poverty. The second approach was for local community action programs to be coordinators of a variety of Federal assistance programs for the poor with a Federal "coordinator" (OEO) in the Executive Office of the President. As we now know, both approaches were reflected in the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 and both have been part of the history of OEO/CSA and the programs we have developed.

Today, the role of coordinator of many Federal Assistance programs remains an important one for CSA's grantees. All of us, however, need to place greater emphasis on the concept of community action. Income transfer and in-kind assistance programs—so critical to the survival of many low-income families—can only sustain people in a poverty status. They remain an administrative nightmare—particularly when viewed from the perspective of the potential recipient.

I read a recent draft report which concluded that Federal "intervention into the energy marketplace" to protect the poor (that is, the Low-Income Energy Assistance Program) will hold the share of low-income family income going for energy needs by 1990 to 33 percent as compared to 20 percent in 1975. The per cent of low-income family income going for energy needs in 1990 was anticipated to be just three percentage points higher without the "federal intervention."

This kind of report has helped convince me of two things: that income assistance will continue to be critical to the survival of many low-income families and individuals but that these kinds of assistance programs provide little, if any, opportunity to help eliminate poverty. In my opinion, only social and economic development through the concept of community action—people helping people help themselves—is going to make any long-term, permanent difference for poor people in the critical years ahead.

Where do we go from here? I don't really need to ask you that question. We have always been advocates for the concept of community action. We have always fostered and developed innovative approaches in such fields as child development and education, jobs and training, community self-help, alternative technologies and energy conservation, legal and legislative advocacy, and community-based economic development. You and I are going to continue that tradition. Given what lies ahead for poor people, however, we have a responsibility to insure that the community action approach has an even greater impact in the future than it has had in the past. □

(Rios was confirmed as the 11th director of CSAIOEO by the U.S. Senate on June 18th and sworn in June 24th.)

Richard Rios
Director

Magazine Discontinued

Opportunity II magazine will cease publication with this issue. It will be replaced by an agency newsletter in the near future.

Opportunity II

Volume II Number 3 Summer 1980

Table of Contents

Community Action: Past, Present and Future:

Herschel Cribb
Editor

Community Services Administration

Richard Rios
Director

M. Diane Elliott
Director of External Affairs

Adrien Zubrin
Director Media/Public Liaison

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COMMUNITY ACTION:
PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE

What James Sundquist once called that "ingenious, lusty but divisive institution that is the heart and symbol of the war on poverty—the community action agency—came in for some comprehensive and analytical review at the recent (June 3-5) Conference of CSA's Region V in Chicago.*

The theme of the conference was "Challenge of the 80s," with the start of a new decade an apt time for looking forward and backward at OEO/CSA's history. This was particularly true for four speakers, three of whom reviewed community action as it was in the beginning but (perhaps) is no longer. The fourth speaker dealt with a basic problem which has confronted OEO/CSA throughout its 15-plus years of existence. The question is: Which should the agency emphasize more for community action agencies: Services to the poor or advocacy for social change?

Using briefer, edited transcripts of their remarks, Opportunity II invites you in this retrospective issue to join them in looking backward and forward—to where com munity action has been, where it is and where it may or should go.

* In *On Fighting Poverty:* Basic Books, New York/London (1969).

More Advocacy, Fewer Services

By Mel Mogulof

Community action agencies (CAAs), despite their having survived the Nixon administration, are not terribly robust creatures. Their budgets don't begin to keep pace with inflation, they get their bureaucratic heads knocked off in things like the energy program, and their visibility as a national effort and in most local communities is almost zero.

In sheer dollars spent, less than $400 million authorized for some 900 CAA's seems a national commentary on the perceived unimportance of community action. *The central theme of this paper is that a $400 million national CAA program will continue as invisible and dismissible if the CAAs continue their current primary focus on services delivery.* I will argue that the need to de-emphasize services delivery is equally as applicable to those CAAs which are public agencies with the confidence of their mayors, as it is to those CAAs which are fine entrepreneurs. In a current climate marked by no great love for social services for poor people or for government intervention of almost any kind, there is one model of a CAA that I see as most appropriate to the task and to the times. And that model is not very exotic. In fact, it occupies pride of place in the national Community Services Administration's (CSA) "program policy book," and I quote: "a CAA's effectiveness, therefore, is measured not only by the services which it directly provides but, more importantly, by the improvements and changes it achieves in the community's attitudes and practices toward the poor and in the allocation and focusing of public and private resources for anti-poverty measures..." I believe that CSA policymakers agree that a focus on services giving without a more important focus on advocacy, confines CSA and local CAAs to continuing the erosion of their significance for poor people. I believe that CSA understands this point and is interested in reexamining the role of CAAs as advocates of change and as supporters of local organizations which can effectively press for change which would advantage poor people. If CSA is to act intelligently in these regards, it will need detailed knowledge of the way in which options for advocacy can be used to advantage poor people. And, CSA will also need a solid assessment of the current structures for advocacy in local communities, and the role of the CAA in other community organizations within that structure.

Types of Advocacy

I want to examine in this paper some of the conclusions I have reached on the

Mel Mogulof was a regional OEO administrator in the early days who is now a consultant to one of the Federal Regional Councils.

nature of local advocacy after studying a number of local CAAs as well as other organizations potentially engaged in advocacy. But let me say something further about advocacy. There is advocacy whose basic intent is to seek more ser vices for poor people—that kind of advocacy had its best fit to a time when the money tree appeared full. It is now time to focus on another kind of advocacy which is not at all foreign to CSA. It deals with changing the rules by which our institutions and governments operate, so that they are more effectively directed to the problems of poor people. This kind of advocacy deals with governance—tax policy, administrative regulations, and the making of laws. I will call these efforts "non-service" advocacy—a term coined by the staff of the Stanford Research Institute. I will distinguish between the sup port of any advocacy by CAAs (which is difficult enough) and the support of advocacy which is directed to "changing the rules." It will become clear that I think the latter is the mark of a useful CAA.

Services Not Enough

The national CSA retains a strong concern for service giving and advocacy. I have already made note of CSA's strong policy position in this regard. It may be useful to return for a moment to the concepts of service and "non-service" and their implications for CSA-supported action. A services strategy in antipoverty efforts carries certain intellectual baggage. A service strategy assumes that poor persons will do better after they receive service or assistance. Job training, child care, counselling, Head Start—these and other servi-

President Lyndon Johnson Signs the Economic Opportunity Act on August 20, 1964.

"There is advocacy whose basic intent is to see more services for poor people–that kind of advocacy had its best fit to a time when the money tree appeared full. It is now time to focus on another kind of advocacy which is not at all foreign to CSA. It deals with changing the rules by which our institutions and governments operate so that they are more effectively directed to the problems of poor people ..."

ces are intended to help the poor person take advantage of the opportunities which are assumed to be out there. There is strong evidence that a services strategy is of great use to many poor people. But CSA, and its predecessor OEO, always recognized that services were not enough. Efforts as "institutional change" to make the social structure more hospitable to the poor person continue to be a central part of CSA's direction. The prior quotations from CSA's policy book are ample evidence of that. The "non-service" approach, with its emphasis on governance and policy, rather than service, is in the same intellectual line as the concept of "institutional change."

In short, national policy with regard to the situation of poor people stands fully behind two primary routes to working with those in poverty: a personal change strategy epitomized by services giving and "more importantly" (in the words of the CSA policy book) a social change strategy. The core question for CSA is how to have the on-the-line efforts of CAA reflect both a personal services and a social change strategy....

Dilemma For CAAs

In the communities that I visited, each CAA perceived that local government approval (or at least the absence of disapproval) was necessary to CAA survival. And each CAA understood that the sup port of services, not advocacy, was the most effective avenue toward governmental support.

Thus, the dilemma for local CAAs seems clear. The support of services is linked to organizational survival, while at the same time CAA leadership and the national program of which they are a part, continues to be attracted to social change and other "non-service" strategies. So CAAs locally, and CSA nationally, have a desire to broaden the advocacy program of the CAA. However, CAA leadership analytically tends to equate advocacy with being antigovernment, thus leading to organizational instability.

If local CAAs come to the conclusion that a services orientation is both safe and useful (that is, good for the CAA and good for poor people) it is a conclusion only occasionally challenged by CSA field staff.

Each of the CAAs I interviewed suggested that they were receiving mixed messages from CSA about the compatibility of ser vice giving and advocacy. The possibility of mixing service and advocacy needs to be better specified, and it is likely that CSA staff (in addition to local CAA leader ship) would benefit from any analysis which was able to show that CAAs do, in fact, pursue the support of advocacy as well as other "non-service" approaches, and this support is not destabilizing to the CAAs. (If there is evidence to the contrary, that would obviously confirm the CAAs in their current services direction.)

There is one last observation about the role of CSA which currently seems to operate against a "non-service" approach at the local level. CSA's reward system for CAA is strongly based on recognition of those CAAs which successfully compete to manage other federal and local funds which are available for service giving. The message from CSA is that the competent CAA will successfully "mobilize" other communal funds and by so doing, will strengthen the CAA's place in the local community. Perhaps, as a reflection of this national position, each of the CAAs I interviewed reported that they received at least as much money to deliver services through support from other agencies as they did from CSA. It may be that the best intentions by the local CAA and by CSA staff are not sufficient to counter a set of circumstances encouraging the concentration of the CAA on service provision. Having chosen the services route, CAAs then perceive an antithesis between service provision and support of advocacy, and this is followed by the customary observation that "operations drives out a concern for policy." The CAAs I have observed are program operators; "non-service" approaches must be directed to policymaking not services delivery, and the support for advocacy must come out of a conviction that policy change is important (even more important than services giving) and possible.

Where Money Is

Interviewees in the field, consistently validated the idea that services were the best instrument (often it seemed the only instrument) to bring to the problems of poor people. A director of a multi-million dollar services organization noted that at one time the issue of policy advocacy was "hot" in his agency. Now, he indicated that he had a board mandate to develop services and avoid advocacy. Each CAA I studied supports this tendency and their current allocations for service delivery reflect this trend.

One agency director made the simple but powerful point: "It is difficult to solicit funds unless you have a direct services program—a product to deliver." Despite the problems enumerated in this paper, and the CAAs preoccupation with services, it appears that CSA is the best federal source of support for advocacy efforts for poor people which can persist over time. CSA has the twin commitments to service giving and advocacy. But unless it finds a way of sustaining the commitment to advocacy via financial support, it seems predictable that advocacy organizations will continue to evolve into "street level" service-giving bureaucracies, because that's where the money is. Whether such "street level" bureaucracies in the neighborhoods of poor people can retain an interest in advocacy directed at policy change, once they become involved in services provision, is unclear.

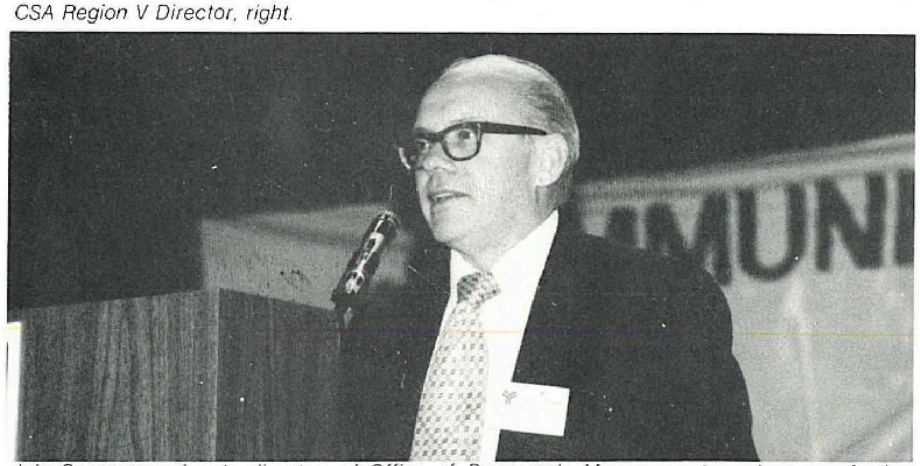
Advocacy Is Riskier

It is likely to be true that some "nonservice" advocacy is riskier for the CAA than the provision of services. And it is true that "non-service" advocacy can be more difficult and less tangible than ser vices advocacy. But in the course of field study, I found that certain organizations, once they were clear about the problems they were attempting to deal with, could not avoid "non-service" actions, unless they chose to be irrelevant to their own purposes.

Those organizations involved solely in services giving to poor people are, in essence, saying that solving the problems of poverty is dependent upon increasing the coping skills of its victims. That is partially true—but CSA (as evidenced in its existing policy) knows that is not the whole story. The question at hand is whether CSA can refocus an interest in those action organizations which are prepared to advocate for policy change and to use other "non-service" tools. The history of CAAs over the past decade suggests that a move from services to "non-services" advocacy may be very difficult and ultimately unacceptable to public funding sources.

The current policies of CSA suggest that it remains interested in advocacy as well as services. The subject is of much more than academic interest to the poor people of this country.

Dr. Theodore M. Berry, first OEO director of Community Action, left; Glenwood Johnson, CSA Region V Director, right.



Jule Sugarman, deputy director, of Office of Personnel Management and one of the "Fathers of Headstart."


Dr. Francis Fox Piven, professor of political science at Boston U.

The Community Action Agency: A Permanent Institution?

By Laird Harris

My thesis is this. When you're talking about what the expectations are of the parent federal agency, about what community action agencies can and should be doing to change institutions and to advocate for the poor in their communities, it's important to understand the view that those people in OEO or CSA had then in the early days of OEO about what the nature of the institutions that needed changing were and what the view of people is now. These latter views really deter mine where we go on policy issues and ultimately get translated into what we tell field representatives to do, what our grant programs look like, what the restrictions on your activities are, etc. And I think that contrasting two statements is a good way of starting this.

Two Views

Yesterday, Ted Berry (Dr. Theodore Berry, OEO's first director of Community Action) said that he and a lot of people who were the early founders of OEO and community action fully expected that the day might come, when OEO and community action would self-destruct, when the mission had been accomplished and the paradox of poverty amidst plenty had been eliminated. A couple of years ago, the then director of CSA, Grace Olivarez, at a conference in San Francisco, said, “let's stop even talking about the war against poverty. It is an inappropriate analogy.” Now I think if you look at the differences between those two views, you go pretty far to explain the differences in how CSA now looks at CAA roles on institutional change and what the expectations were in the very early days.

Total Victory?

A war against poverty is an appropriate analogy if you see a clear enemy, if you understand a clear line of battle, if you are prepared to fight the war with brilliant generals and daring battlefield tacticians, and heroic troops in a trench, and you're going to fight that battle to total victory. In such a war you can afford 90 percent casualties. I think that the time was right in the 1960s for us to look at the mission in those terms. In the early to mid-'60s, a lot of the successes of community action followed on the successes of the black (civil rights) movement of the 1960s. And I really think that civil rights played a very important part in the mind set of those people who wanted to apply many of the same principles to community action.

The nation was clearly outraged by the obscenity of the open institutional racism of the South. It had yet to discover the kind of insidious racism that runs through the remainder of our society. And this outrage was translated by organizing poor people, organizing black people, and bringing in allies from a more powerful class to confront these clearly wrong institutions and the institutions at first gradually and then more en masse began to crumple.

In some ways when you begin to look back over what was being said and done in the early days of community action, the expectation was that—with local initiative money and community action as a vehicle—the same approaches could be used to eliminate the more general problem of poverty as were used to end the problem of illegal institutional racism in the South. That local initiative money was organization money

Harris

Laird Harris is director of Regional Operations at CSA Headquarters in Washington, D.C.

and the procedures that were set up in the early days—community needs analysis and community planning, involvement of the poor—were community organization techniques that were going to accomplish the same organizational strategies that had been successful for the civil rights movement.

The view was that the institutions in society were either indifferent to the problems of the poor or were actively engaged in practices that restricted the ability of the poor to move into the mainstream of economic life. And that these practices would be evident to people at the local level and that the institutions would be embarrassed about these practices when it was pointed out to them just as the nation was embarrassed by the existence of legalized racism 100 years after the end of the Civil War. I think there was almost literally a hope that if we could organize and give voice to the poor that no real battle would ever have to be fought in the war against poverty. We would provide the trumpets at the walls of Jericho and—with the moral outrage of an organized poor, all with one voice—embarrass the institutions that were perpetuating poverty into reforming their activities. Part of the institutional landscape was an understanding that most of the institutions were at least partly to blame for the problems of poverty. None could be very well trusted, at least in the minds of the people who fashioned OEO and community action, except perhaps the federal government.

An initial model was set up with com munity action agencies as the chief strategists at the local level in the war against poverty. They had a check off on local programs. One federal granting agency—OEO—developed and handled the significant early programs of the Great Society designed to deal with the poor until about 1967 or 1968. So that what you had, in 1966, was virtually 100 percent of the anti-poverty dollars coming down first through OEO and then through community action agencies.

The Institutional Landscape

Now let's shift views and look at what the institutional landscape looks like, at least from my perspective now. Let's start with the way the federal government does business in trying to deal with the problems of poverty.

Every year, since the founding OEO, the percentage of total federal dollars that have gone to antipoverty programs have increased as a share of the total national budget. That increase went on right through the Nixon and Ford years and it has continued through the Carter years. Of course, there's a big political battle going on in Washington right now. Some people are trying to end that progression. But, when you think of how those programs get from the federal treasury to application at the local level, major changes have happened. One of them is that the programs that OEO started have been changed and now are operated by major line agencies for whom these anti-poverty programs are only a part of a more generalized mission to assist people in the country. We have a major growth of income transfer programs, where the federal government, basically, has decided that a large part of its effort should be spent in giving people the greater flexibility of more income with less emphasis on programs intended to do for them. Although there's some controversy over this, this is still an increasing trend in the federal system. At the same time, the parent federal agency of community action is basically at the same level now that it was at in 1969 in terms of total funding. In terms of total size, we have about half the 1969 number of employees.

Poverty Not Ended

But there are other changes in the institutional landscape. We have seen change in those institutions that we saw causing poverty over the last 15 years. But that change has not eliminated poverty. Schools have been desegregated and then resegregated. We have seen businesses—because they want to do business with the federal government—actively get involved in affirmative action programs. We have seen people, about half of whom came out of community action, minority people, getting elected to local offices, the city council, mayor, etc., all around this country. (See related story in this issue.) And we've seen changes in the local government. But poverty has not ended.

I think that when we look at this current institutional landscape, we do

[redacted]

" ... When we look at the current institutional landscape, we do so with a recognition that, in every community, there are different sets of institutions that need to be affected in order to better the condition of the poor. We see the community action agencies, not as temporary shock troops, but as a relatively permanent institution in the community ..."

so with a recognition that, in every community, there are different sets of institutions that need to be affected in order to better the condition of the poor. We see the community action agencies, not as a temporary shock troop, but as a relatively permanent institution in the community, if they're going to be effective at all. And a relatively permanent institution cannot afford to take 90 percent casualties.

I think another point that changes how we look at things now is that there has been a change in the nature of poverty in the last 15 years. In a lot of ways what is left for us to deal with among the poor are people who will virtually always have a dependency on government because they cannot be fully self sufficient due to health problems, age problems or some other status that does not give them the freedom to participate in an economic system in such a way that they can truly escape dependency. I would guess that probably about two-thirds or more of the people who meet our income guidelines, who we call poor, fall in that kind of a category.

So when we talk about institutional change, we're not only talking about a massive and radical kind of change in local or national institutions that are going to somehow open up opportunity for the poor or their children to become economically solvent. We are also talking about changes that make opportunity relatively more available, that make the lives of these people who cannot be without some dependence on the government more decent, give them more options and more opportunity to participate in as many of the other parts of American life as possible.

I think that this view also affects how CSA does this. I think in those early days we thought CSA field representatives to be Renaissance people, for example, who understood community organization and who could teach you a lot about it. And I think that largely that was true. But the point is that the role was very interventionist, very much spending a lot of time in the local community, of providing a tremendous amount of insight into how to deal with your problems, etc.

Several things have happened between then and now in this regard, one of which is that the number of our field reps has been cut about a third. The other thing that's happened is that you have gotten in to your local institutions in a way that no single federal field rep is ever going to fully understand or appreciate. And we now have a very different expectation of what we can do, what CSA can do in the field, because we're really only experts on one thing any more. And that is our own regulations and rules and requirements. But what else do you expect? When a field rep has got seven or eight grantees that he's got to spend all of his time doing the same thing with over and over, there isn't a great deal of time to learn about the unique characteristics of your community that they ought to know to be fully able to assist you.

A Legitimate Voice

I guess the final point that I would like to make is that where I think the view has *not* changed is the basic idea of having com munity action go through certain processes of citizen participation to be the legitimate voice of the poor at the local level. I think that this is an area that you'll see CSA emphasizing more in the future. You don't have any more right going into your city manager's office and pretending to speak truth than I do if you haven't involved the poor in your processes. □

An Alert Lobby: Poor's Best Hope

By Oliver Taylor

I'm going to turn out to be a rather conservative spokesman for community action, because I continue to feel that there is almost nothing in the world that represents people better than an alert lobby. I don't mean to exclude the provision of services. I do mean to say that in the experience I had before I came to community action, when I was a conventional city manager in a couple of places and working for two other municipal governments, I noticed that there was a part of town that you never heard from in the normal American city of the '50s and the '60s. That was where the poor people lived. You never heard from it. It didn't quite not exist. Once in a while the police went out there, once in a while there was a complaint about too many people on welfare coming from that area. Once in a while there was a complaint about floods coming down from there because there were no storm sewers and the water came over into the rich side of town. But you wouldn't ever dream of spending the money that it would take to put storm sewers in that part of town. It really didn't exist in a very major way.

And I saw places that did exist and I was forced to deal with as city manager, day to day, minute to minute. What was the difference? The difference to me was that the people I ended up dealing with were the people who had alert lobbies working for them, both political and functional. They managed to implement the way the cities distributed their benefits and the way they placed new programs and I'll give you a couple of examples of that.

In a very profound way, simply through presence and through a little kicking and gouging, but a lot of presence and attention-getting. "Forty of us will appear at the next meeting of the city council, Mr. Manager. We want that storm sewer; we want sidewalks so our kids don't have to walk in the street on their way to school." Now, these people weren't coming from the poor side of the tracks. I'll tell you a little more about the Chamber of Commerce, the typical downtown merchants' association that I used to have to deal with constantly. They were always there. They made no apology for anyone else in town. They didn't share any burdens, they didn't worry, as far as I could see, about the general welfare of the city. They were what has come to be called a single purpose interest group on the national scene. And they were very effective.

Single Interest Groups

I see as time goes on that there is probably an ineradicable place for singlepurpose interest groups in the way our government works. I believe that's as true municipally as it is on the national scene. We may, and we frequently do, regret the shortcomings of such groups and the de-

". . . I don't want to pretend for a moment that any of the people in your shoes are able to enlist the kind of public support the downtown merchants can. You (the CAAs) are working in much more stony soil than they do. Because the downtown merchants are, after all, a sort of community action agency of the white middle class . . . "

Oliver R. Taylor, a former regional OEO staff member in the 1960s, is now a Management Analyst, Office of Management and Budget in Washington, D.C.

struction that they sometimes cause to other legitimate public interests, the narrowness of their focus and the zealotry of their pressure. But that is the way the system is working now and it is the way it worked at the municipal level when I was there and I really don't feel like asking people who represent the poor to set a new example for us and eschew the techniques that have been so successful for many other people with a clear interest that was definable in terms of public policy. There are some warts upon single interest groups, but I believe they are here to stay and I would like to think the community action agencies are still acting that way as much as they can in the very difficult environment in which I think they find themselves.

The downtown merchants' associations brought about—in the '50s and '60s—everything from bright streetlights to good sidewalks, a cop every couple of blocks because you had to have someone there to move the parkers along so that there would be plenty of open space, and check the meters so that people could come and find open meter space and shop easily. The pavement was excellent in downtown. There were never puddles after a big rain storm. None of the basements in the downtown ever flooded. The trees were well kept. If there was a park or a median strip in a boulevard, it was kept immaculate. These were all characteristics of a place where the people wanted top flight services, organized to get them and harassed the city constantly if they didn't get them.

Now they had a big break on the community action agency. I don't want to pretend for a moment that any of the people in your shoes are able to enlist the kind of public support that downtown merchants can. You (the CAAs) are working in much more stony soil than they do. Because the downtown merchants are, after all, a sort of community action agency of the white middle class. They're what people aspire to be. Everybody wants to make money. Everyone wants to be middle class. Everyone wants to own a store or at least they respect that. They want to have good places to shop. They go to the downtown frequently and therefore the public can perceive that it is in their interest for the downtown to be easy to use. All of that is true and very different. I'm not naive enough to believe that it is reasonable to expect the same level of return on effort from a community action agency that you can achieve if you're representing the municipal establishment and representing a geographic part of the city that everyone uses and wants to be able to use well. They are, in that sense, very different.

An Institutional Conduit

But the change that has taken place since community action came into being in American cities is certainly indicative of the fact that there was an enormous room for improvement. And that is a source of what I think should be self-congratulations for you all—pride in the fact that you are a lobbying institution that just plain did not exist. You are now an on-going institutional conduit, you are a place where people can turn and say, "Hey, we've got energy problems, you have a situation in which people who are poor are not going to be able to warm their houses." How do we get to people like that? Fifteen years ago there wasn't any way if anyone had thought of it. Now that is a way that your existence represents a very great advance in the ability to reach your clients that did not exist before.

Can you continue in the setting in which you find yourselves, in which you represent people who a lot of Americans do not admire and do not like? Can you represent their interests in an alert, active way with technical skill, by which I mean things like always being present at public hearings when there are issues for the black part of town to be heard, getting to know and cultivate the local political people from the area of town in which you are serving, always present, always alert to something which is not in the interests of your constituencies? Do you do what the folks on the other side of town used to do in my experience which was to come in and look at the street improvement plan every year? We'd have an annual repaving and pothole repair plan. I had people always from 13 parts of the city come in and check that over and make sure that they were satisfied that it represented a fair—meaning disproportionate—distribution of those kinds of funds to their particular part of town.

On the basis of my experience before community action and in the last ten years in Washington, I feel that an ingredient of change and of proper representation of people is alert lobbying. And I very much hope that you can live with the rigors and disappointments and confrontations and controversy that are inevitable parts of that difficult but important path. □

Did We Win the War on Poverty?

By Ralph Hays

Today the poor are much different than in 1960. They' re different geographically, different in terms of heads of households, different in terms of employment age patterns, and certainly different in terms of transfer payments and the proliferation of social service programs. And if we look at the bottom line, we find that the goals we had in the 1960s to eradicate poverty, as poverty was perceived then, have succeeded beyond a shadow of a doubt. CAAs are not very gracious winners. We do not take success very well. And so if you look at the means that we were to have used to gain those ends, CAAs have failed. Because CAAs were supposed to have been a one-time investment to place the poor into everlasting self sufficiency. That was the initial goal.

OEO's Task Force

They (OEO's Task Force) had a serious plan and I think if the plan had been followed, there would have been an end to poverty. But that plan called for \$28 billion over a five year period. It called for \$150 billion of other money, for other agencies besides OEO, over a five-year period. In the mid-'60s that was a lot of money. It doesn't mean much now. But in those days, that was a lot of money. Well, President Johnson looked at the five year plan of \$28 billion and at \$150 billion and he adapted Patton's Law to a third degree. Patton's Law is, "A good plan today is worth an excellent plan tomorrow." And he probably said, well, this poor plan to day is better than a real (expletive deleted) poor plan tomorrow. And he invested a total of \$1 billion the first year in the war and the OEO budget never got beyond \$2 billion in its history. So the plan that was developed was a billion dollar misunderstanding.

In the 70s came the proliferation of money, despite the change of administration. Transfer payments and food stamps and employment programs and all the insurances thereof, and Medicare and Medicaid and housing supplements and educational grants and loans and a dramatic directional change in the war on poverty.

Many people look on the 60s as halcyon days, as the good old days. But those of us who were in the mess of the 60s know better. We did a lot of hell-raising. Since the Feds didn't want to give us the resources, they shoved us toward the local officials. They said, "Go gettum ... sic 'em." And we were directed to the local government to get those resources. We called that institutional change. Now the 60s were chaotic times. We almost lost it in 1967. In 1969, we almost lost it again; in fact the New York

Ralph Hays is executive director of the Indiana Community Action Agencies Association in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Times ran an editorial in 1969 that said the OEO was like a cat with nine lives. At that time it was only five years old. The fact that there's been 11 OEO and CSA directors in its 15 years of history, I think, is a manifestation of the chaos that the national program computer that will ferret out all our program accounts so that we can get through audits.

NEWS NOTES

“ . . . Today the poor are much different than in 1960. They're different geographically, different in terms of employment age patterns, and certainly different in terms of transfer payments and the proliferation of social service programs. And if we look at the bottom line, we find that the goals we had in the 1960s to eradicate poverty, as poverty was perceived then, have succeeded beyond shadow of a doubt . . . ”

[redacted] agencies is how to buy a

that using the system to change the system in today’s vernacular of community action

and the regional program and the local program have been in.

Now a lot of people in the 60s ran kamikaze raids on city halls and county courthouses. And we had some notable excesses in those kamikaze raids. Usually a CAP director said, “Hell, I'm tired of this, let's kamikaze!” And they'd get 100,000 people together--that's an exaggeration, of course—those were the days when that worked in many instances and it was exciting to do. But many CAAs learned the hard way. That it is very difficult to use the system, to change the system, without arousing the system. And after all we were paid with federal dollars; that was the system. And we finally got some smarts.

Now community action agencies in the 70s are probably enjoying their greatest popularity in their history. A lot of people love us these days. But I'm afraid

The CAAs in the 60s had very little money. So much time and effort was spent in conceptualizing and· organizing and we spent a lot of time with our philosophical underpinnings. We had long and hard discussions about case versus generic poverty and we had many agonizing days about selling our point to a society that wouldn't buy it. Society believed in social Darwinism—the survival of the fittest. We spent a lot of time in planning and organizing and making sure that our philosophy was in order. Today the CAAs are so immersed in paperwork and casework, they don't have time to look at their philosophical underpinnings.

The turning point for community action agencies, as far as loss of their innocence, their idealism, their moral fervor, took place in 1973 when Nixon tried to put the kibosh on community action so, after 1973, community action agencies became very pragmatic.

Given all this history, it's hard to see what the age will bring. But with the eruption in Miami and with the assassination attempt on Vernon Jordan, CAAs could be in for very challenging times. Congress may just pass the budget this year, balanced, maybe. And I think instead of just looking at housing that we are looking at a decent and safe and sanitary place to live; now we've got to have a house that is weatherized and energy efficient. Instead of a food program, any kind of program in the mid 1960s, we'll have an advocacy program for a $10 billion food stamp program. A billion dollars for WIC (Women, Infants and Children feeding program). WIC's now bigger than CSA. Plus money for school breakfasts and lunch, senior citizens' feeding, summer feeding programs, on and on. Instead of basic health clinics that we were struggling for in the mid-'60s, even a prenatal clinic or a wellbaby clinic or a family planning clinic, now we are looking for national health insurance and advocating for that. In the 1960s we learned to err is human. In the 1970s we've learned that to really screw things up you need a computer. And that's where the CAPs are going today. Trying to ferret out all the money and all the programs. □

The White House has announced a $71 million seven-agency program to help rebuild riot-torn areas of Liberty City and Miami.

The program was announced by Frank Jones, CSA Associate Director for Legal Affairs, and Gene Eidenberg, Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental Affairs on June 27.

The announcement followed Jones' submission of a comprehensive report on the causes of the Miami disturbances based on an inquiry by a ten-member Federal Task Force which he headed.

The report concluded that the recent flareups of violence resulted from "anger, frustration, fear and hopelessness" of long standing in the black community.

While noting the trigger event—the alleged murder of a black insurance agent by several police officers and their subsequent acquittal—the report said that "this incident was only the latest in a series of which, in their (the black community's) view, demonstrated the callous indifference with which the justice system in Miami treated black concerns."

The report included specific recommendations on how to economically revive the riot areas including general economic development and specific assistance to black-owned businesses.

The President was also urged to appoint a Federal Coordinator to assure that federal efforts in the area continue in a coordinated manner.

Favorably cited was the cooperative efforts of the three local Chambers of Commerce—representing whites, blacks and Latins—as well as other community and state and local governmental agencies in seeking jobs for those who were put out of work because of the disturbances.

The seven-agency federal program will include:

• $4,280 million for U.S. Department of Labor training and job programs;

" $5 million for both short and long-term economic development from the Economic Development Administration.

• $17.3 million of expedited Urban Mass Transportation Administration funds to provide jobs for black contractors;

• $40 million for small businesses impacted by the civil disturbances from the Small Business Administration;

• $1.3 million for anti-crime efforts in public housing projects in Liberty City;

• $2 million of Law Enforcement Assistance Administration funds reprogrammed to the area for criminal justice programs;

• $1,250,000 for health and human ser vice efforts in the impacted areas from the

[redacted]

Department of Health and Human Ser vices.

□

All CSA grantees are urged to participate in National Consumer Education Week which has been proclaimed by President Carter for October 5-11.

In a letter jointly signed by CSA Director Richard Rios and Esthier Peterson, special assistant to the President for Consumer Affairs, CAAs and other grantees have been sent a list of suggested activities.

CSA Headquarters will sponsor a Consumer Workshop on October 8 to inform CSA employees and other residents of the Greater Washington area about consumer resources throughout Washington. Director Rios will recognize significant consumer efforts by CSA grantees during this special week. Rios has asked each CSA regional director to select one grantee which has made notable contributions on behalf of low-income consumers and sponsor a joint activity with them. On October 10, CSA will join in the Consumer Affairs Exposition sponsored by the U.S. Office of Consumer Affairs which will be held on the Smithsonian Mall from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

For further information, call Caroline Ramsay: (202) 254-3046.

Giant Utility Group & CSA Join in Energy Partnership

The Community Services Administration, the American Gas Association and the National Community Action Agency Executive Directors Association have agreed to join together to create a National Energy Conservation Partnership. The formal agreement was signed August 21 in a ceremony at CSA Headquarters in Washington, D.C.

The American Gas Association. which has utility members (gas companies) across the nation, will join with CSA and NCAAEDA in organizing local energy saving projects in which CSA's nearly 900 community action agencies would play a pivotal part.

A series of regional seminars will be held this Fall to bring together representatives of the energy industry, CAAs and other community groups across the nation, including those already conducting similar programs.

A national clearinghouse for exchanging information about the overall program will be established.

Specific operational details for local projects are still to be worked out. CAAs and other local groups will be used to adapt local programs to the specific needs of their communities with AGA contacting local utilities to promote their participation.

AGA has many members which currently conduct consumer assistance pro grams to help the poor budget their utility payments, etc.

The new CSA-AGA-NCAAEDA project would expand the types of participation by the poor and increase the number and scope of such programs.

While specifics of projects may vary from community to community, the basic kind of program contemplated under the partnership would include such things as job training for unemployed youths and other CETA-eligibles in weatherizing homes and conducting energy audits.

AGA affiliated utilities—or others who wish to participate—would provide the training building, staff to build training mockups and simulators, classroom and shop training manuals and would train the shop instructors at no cost to the government.

The national CAA executive directors group members will be the primary liaison with individual CAAs in communities where such projects would be organized.

AGA will assist in placing the trainees in jobs with the local utilities and related companies after they have completed their basic service with the CAA and

ENERGY PACT SIGNED-*A new agreement creating a National Energy Conservation Partnership was signed on August 21. Signing for their agencies were Richard Rios, center, director of the Community Services Administration: George Lawrence. Right, president of the American Gas Association. and Delores DaLomba, left, director of the National Community Action Agency Executive Directors Association.*

New Black Leaders: A Study

Were the community action programs of the '60s and '70s an open sesame by which new black leaders achieved public identities, trained themselves in the fundamental of politics and ultimately moved into public offices?

This is the basic question which Professor Peter K. Eisinger of the University of Wisconsin attempted to answer in 1978.

He cites the fact (based on earlier studies by the Joint Center for Political Studies and others) that the number of black elected officials in the nation at all levels grew from about 70 in 1964 to 4,311 in 1977.

Eisinger's own study sample, divided equally between mayors, aldermen, city councilmen and state legislators, was drawn in equal parts from two comprehensive rosters of black elected officials put out by the Joint Center in 1970 and 1976.

His conclusions, contained in a research paper, "The Community Action Program and the Development of Black Political Leadership," in brief, ran as follows:

"Data from a nationwide sample of (210) black elected officials in state and local government show that nearly a quarter of those elected since the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 had substantial pre-election CAP experience.

"In contrast to other black politicians, the former CAP officials appeared more politically ambitious, were more likely to hold state rather than local office, and tended to come from urban rather than small city or rural jurisdictions. In addition, there is evidence that the CAPs provided significant training in leadership skills and played some political support functions." Eisinger noted the difficulty of assessing the specific effect of CAP experience as compared to civil rights movement and similar pre-elective experience (some had experience in all three) on some of the new politicians.

However, he concludes:

"It cannot be claimed that the Community Action Program was the most important institutional setting for the identification, training and support of black officialdom: *although no alternative institutions, including political parties and the civil rights movement, seem significantly more important.* For many aspiring black politicians community action offered the right sort of organization at the right time." (Editor's emphasis)

He also noted that his data did not reveal "whether CAP worked primarily to attract politically ambitious blacks who came to the program in order to use it as a political base or whether it inculcated those who were involved with political ambition and provided them with political opportunities ...

"To judge by volunteered responses to the open-ended question on benefits gain ed from pre-election involvements, people became involved in politics via both paths. In all probability any given community action agency drew into public service both activists and potential activists and either created in them or reinforced a taste for politics."

"To the degree that the program train ed a significant portion of a generation of black political figures and provided them an entree to political life, the impact of the program is likely to endure long after its modest service delivery innovations and community organizing efforts have been forgotten."

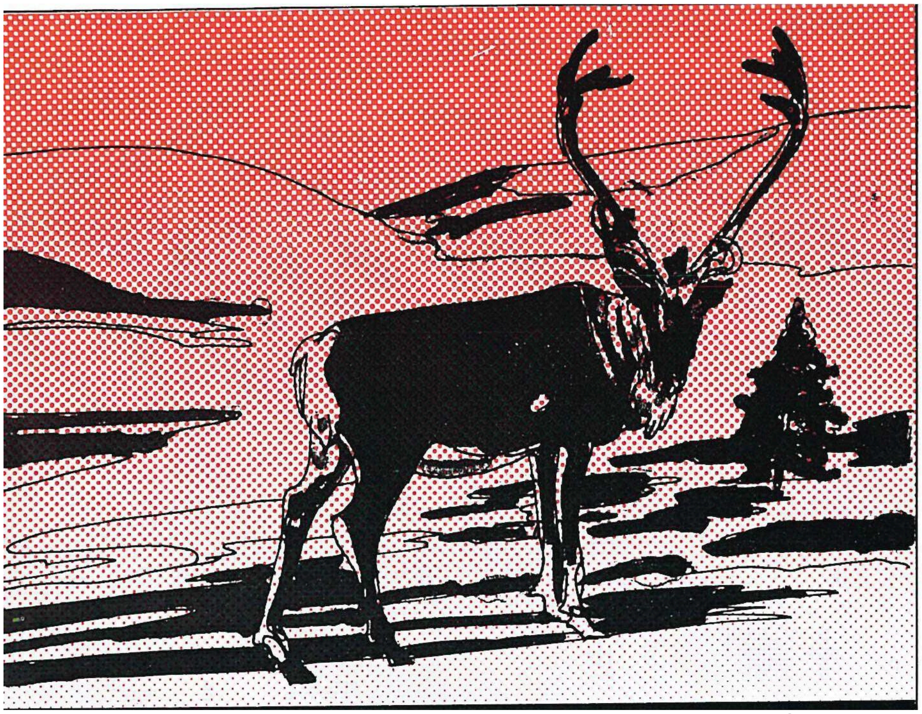
□

from page 15

tion, but not "started" in a political career by community action include:

President Jimmy Carter, member of board, Southwest Georgia CAA Council, Inc.; *Vernon Jordon* (OEO Staff-General Counsel, Region IV), Executive Director, Urban League; *Rep. David Bowen* (D-Miss.), former OEO employee (1966-67); *Rep. John Duncan* (R-Tenn.), (one of founders of Knoxville-Knox County CAA); *Rep. Jim Leach* (R-Iowa), former OEO employee (Special Assistant to OEO Director Donald Rumsfeld); *Rep. Richard Cheney* (R-Wyoming-At-Large), former OEO employee (Special Assistant to OEO Director Donald Rumsfeld; *Rep. Mary Rose Oakar* (D-Ohio), served on CAA Board; *Rep. William Ratchford* (D-Conn.), served on CAA Board. □

Advocacy in Alaska



Rural Alaska Community Action Pro gram played a significant role in achieving the Alaska Native Land Claim Settlement Act of 1971 in which the Congress awarded Alaskan Natives 400 million acres of land and $962.5 million.

Rural CAP, for example, helped organize and increase the number of Alaskan Native associations in the 1960s. (It was the statewide coalition of these [current] 21 individual associations, the Alaska Federation of Natives, which represented the natives in the land claims settlement.)

In 1964, four such native associations existed. The main increase in their number came in 1965 and 1966 as a result of CAP staff work and the land claims issue was developed with substantial input from CAP staff. (This was the initial community action program—Alaska State Community Action Program—later replaced by Rural CAP.)

Also, much of the leadership for the land claims settlement was drawn from the boards and staffs of the OEO programs.

The Federation of Natives was itself an OEO grantee for Indian and Health Service grants. Rural CAP came into being (in 1967) and was funded as an OEO community action program with legal services, economic development and Head Start programs. (Economic Development and Legal Services were spun-off later.)

Rural CAP, the Community Enterprise Development Corporation (a CDC) and Alaska Legal Services have all supported the Alaska Federation of Natives in various projects, including outreach and education for village people.

The Land Claims Settlement Act award ed the land and money to 12 native regional corporations created by the Act plus 200 village corporations.

A large number of these corporations' executives and board members got their early experience in OEO programs. Some examples: *Byron Mallott,* chairman of the SEALASKA Corporation in Juneau was formerly executive director of Rural Alaska CAP. *Tim Wallis,* chairman of Doyon Ltd. in Fairbanks once ran CEDC, an OEO economic development grantee. *Harvey Samuelson,* president of the Bristol Bay Native Corporation, was chairman of a Rural Alaska CAP regional corporation.

Additionally, several current and past members of the state legislature or state government got much or most of their previous experience with Rural CAP or its associated programs.

Some current state legislators in that category include:

- State Senator *Frank Ferguson* of Kotzebue was executive director of a Rural CAP regional development corporation. (Rural CAP has had nine such regional corporations as delegate agencies.)
- Representative *Phillip Guy* is also a former executive director of a Rural CAP regional corporation.
- Representative *Nels Anderson* of the Bristol Bay area is a past deputy director of Rural CAP headquarters in Anchorage.
- Representative *Bill Parker* of Anchorage was previously on the staff of the Alaska State Economic Opportunity Office.
- Senator *John Sackett* of Galena, chair man of the Alaska Senate's Finance Committee; *Al Osterbeck* of the Aleutians and *Leo Schaefer* of Kotzebue were native leaders associated with OEO programs in their areas.

Some former members of the Alaska Legislature with past Rural CAP affiliations include:

- Former State Senator *William T. (Willie) Hensley,* former board chairman of the Community Enterprise Development Corporation.
- *Brenda Itta,* formerly of the Rural CAP staff, one of the first native women elected to the state's legislature.

Former executives in the state government who had prior CAP experience include:

- *Byron Mallott,* former executive director of Rural CAP, who became the first Commissioner of Community and Regional Affairs in 1971 and is now chief executive officer and chairman of the board of SEALASKA Corporation, a native holding company which had sales of more than $200 million last year.
- *Michael* C. *Harper,* another onetime executive director of Rural CAP, was until last year administrative assistant to the governor. Harper is presently completing a year of training with the Ranier

Bank of Seattle before returning to Alaska as one of the chief officers of the United Bank Alaska, a minorityowned bank whose chairman of the board is former State Senator Hensley.
□

Mississippi CAAs Improve Their Image

By Anita McGraw

When community action programs began some 15 years ago, it was amid widespread opposition. The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 was viewed by many as a means of giving un necessary aid to persons who didn't deserve it. After 15-plus years, some of that negative attitude still exists among the general public and apathy about the accomplishments of community action programs remains.

"One of our biggest problems," said William (Sonny) Walker, director of Com munity Services Administration's Region IV, "has been the lack of understanding among various publics served by CSA. Community leaders—those who can make things happen—especially need to be reached."

In 1977, the directors of 18 community action agencies in Mississippi decided to improve their image. Three months of research indicated that the major problem was communication—or lack of it.

The communication problem was three-fold. Of major concern was the number of eligible people who were not aware of available CAA services. Also, realizing that their agencies could not continue to exist or expand without public support, the directors wanted to focus attention on community leaders—those who direct and mold public opinion. Finally, the directors wanted to present proof to the general public that community action programs were not a drain on the local tax dollars or economy, but helped those in need so they, in turn, could help the community.

The task wasn't easy.

A Statewide Campaign

Funds ($108,000) for an intensive two year campaign to educate the public and change the image of community action services came from CSA's Region IV office in Atlanta. Regional Director Walker endorsed the proposal recommended by the Mississippi CAP directors which called for the statewide program to be channel ed through one community action agency.

Anita McGraw is a staff writer for the Department of Public Relations at the University of Mississippi.

Richard Gernert, executive director of the Bolivar County Community Action Pro gram, was chosen as project administrator and monies for the project were handled through his office. Dr. Ed Meek, director of Public Relations at the. University of Mississippi, served as project director.

Following a survey of agency programs and community information needs, a slide show was developed, describing each of the community action agencies in Mississippi. The presentation uses the Flexivision System which includes a 35mm slide projector with a synchronous sound unit held in a small suitcase. This system offers great flexibility both in showing the slides and updating future information.

The slide show explains the benefits of CAA programs to civic and school groups, as well as persons who might be eligible for agency services.

With a broad fund of information about the function of each agency and its ser vices in hand, project directors turned to developing a 30-minute television special. Using a news documentary style, the University of Mississippi's radio, television, and film staff produced the special which was targeted at the general public. This documentary was also designed to reach low-income viewers who needed to know about CAA services and give viewers a positive view of the total community action program. Information on each local agency was included in the special.

Documentary Distributed

It was distributed to all commercial television stations in Mississippi. (Mississippi has 10 commercial TV stations and 160 commercial radio stations.) Produced so that stations could receive public service credit for production of a local documentary on a public interest subject, the TV film was widely shown during fringe-area viewing time.

A shorter version was made available for showing to school and civic groups.

To follow-up on information in the documentary, public service television spots were produced. Each spot was related to the role and scope of Community Action program activities and services. Over a two-year period, four television spots and four radio spots were sent to stations throughout Mississippi. During each three-month period, television use alone provided approximately 30,000,000 exposures, it was estimated.

Broadcast media, required by law to provide programming that is of “public interest, convenience, and necessity,” are usually receptive to such materials if they are skillfully produced and of local interest. By working with the University of Mississippi Department of Public Relations, the CAP directors established a reputable distribution system for their films and spots. At the time, the University was the only agency or organization in Mississippi which provided locally produced, relevant public service materials on a continuing basis.

Targeting The Influential

Research on media usage has shown that persons who watch or hear news pro grams daily are generally better educated and more active in civic affairs than per sons who choose entertainment pro grams exclusively. Recognizing this, the project directors developed news feature stories aimed at this influential audience for distribution to television and radio stations in the state. Four film features for television and three sound spots for radio were produced from the materials gathered for the slide presentations and documentary.

Again using the news distribution system of the University of Mississippi, these news features were able to reach millions of viewers and listeners, many of whom were community opinion leaders.

As the success of the statewide public education campaign became evident, CAP directors began to recognize the need for more information tailored for their local programs. To meet that need, a general information brochure adapted to each local program was developed.

There are also plans to publish a general audience newsletter for use by local CAP directors. Three issues a year will provide CAP agencies with up-to-date information on services and participation. And because broadcast media make such a significant impact in reaching a general audience, public service announcements for radio and television will be produced on a continuing basis.

Also at the request of the local CAP directors, a series of training seminars is planned to help them mount public education campaigns in their own communities.

Significant Success

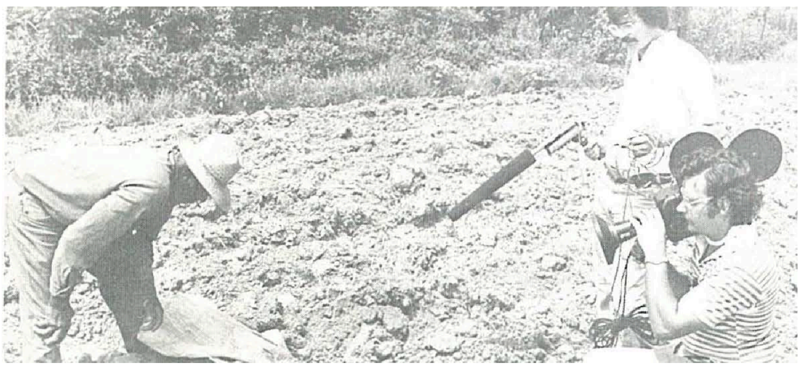
The success of this public education campaign has been substantial, according to Clovis Williams, deputy director of The Governor's Office of Human Resources (SEOO). "Community Action programs in Mississippi have gained greater acceptance and recognition from local elected officials, the general public, and the people who need our services," he said.

Project Administrator Gernert agreed with Williams. "This project has enhanced the image of community action programs in Mississippi by showing the impact the programs can make on people and the community. A positive attitude has developed among everyone—including our board of directors, volunteers, and our staffs."

That positive attitude is a significant advance for Mississippi's community action programs.

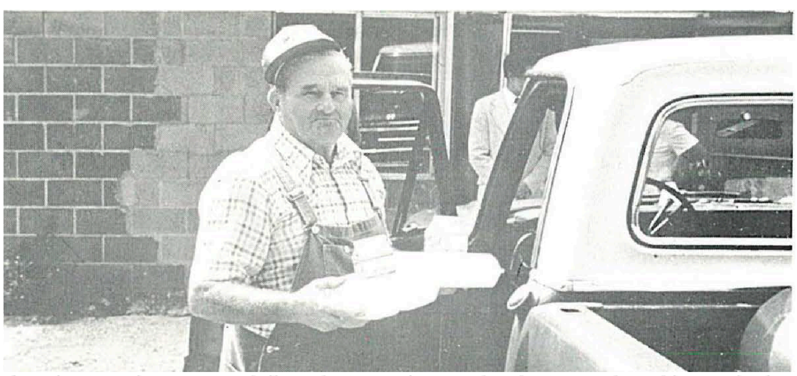
"As more people throughout our state learn of the benefits of these programs, they want to have them available in their communities," Williams said. "We open ed two new agencies in Mississippi last year and have requests for others."

Regional Director "Sonny" Walker agrees: "The Mississippi project has had a far-reaching impact as a pilot project and example for other states. The pro gram has demonstrated that organized, effective communication can result in greater understanding, participation and support." □



A University of Mississippi film crew shoots a segment for a 30-minute ... unity action agencies.

This elderly man gets help with his utility bills at one of the state's CAAs.



A volunteer leaves to deliver hot meals-on-wheels to senior citizens in Lee County Mississippi.

This van provides transport for poor people in Starkville, Mississippi who otherwise would have none.

This weatherization worker puts the finishing touches on a window he has sealed against cold winds.

This young Mississippi Head Start student takes time out for lunch.

Legal Services and Rights of the Poor

prospered in other agencies where they were transfer red (See Accompanying Table.) Some ***ex****amples: Head Start, Upward Bound, Foster Grandparents, and Job Corps. The brief history and current status of these four programs were reported on in the 1980 Winter Issue of* Opportunity II *under the title, "Some OEO Experiments Which Worked—and Still Do."*

The following story briefly traces the founding of the Legal Services Program in OEO and its subsequent transfer to an in dependent Legal Services Corporation where it thrives today.

By Jim Doherty

The heart of the new national effort to combat poverty has to be the providing of legal services. The whole bundle of rights that the poor ought to share with the rest of us is utterly meaningless to them unless legal representation is provided to give those rights reality. The anti-poverty drive to bring new opportunities for employment,

thinking that led to the establishment of a Legal Services Pro gram under the Office of Economic Opportunity, the predecessor agency to the Community Services Administration. That lawyers could and should help the poor secure equal justice was already a deeply rooted tradition. The added notion that the kind of assistance lawyers are uniquely qualified to give can help people find their way out of poverty was a recent idea but rapidly spreading throughout the legal profession.

"Pro Deo" representation of indigents was an accepted part of the practice of law in many European countries long before the U.S. came into being. In England, the ideal of equal justice for all can be traced to the Magna Carta, and court appointed attorneys to a 1495 statute. The first American version of such legal aid came immediately after the Civil War, when the Freedmen's Bureau paid private attorneys to represent destitute black per-sons in some states. This effort ended when the Bureau itself closed its doors in

e German Society of New York began providing ivals from the homeland. This program was the nced Legal Aid Societies which, for the next 89 ganized source of such assistance for persons

iod, the program's proponents maintained that istice to the poor was sufficient to provide "equal guaranteed by the Constitution. Critics of that es not afford full representation of the client's they cited the fact that in the 89 years of Legal ed to the Supreme Court and few ever appealed compared with the record of Legal Services appeals to the Supreme Court between 19667 d further that a particular law might be the poor argued further that a particular law might be the such an instance, they felt a lawyer is obligated to seek a change in that law. Both points of view were to be represented in the planning and operation of OEO's Legal Services Program.

In the early 1960s, supporters of expanded legal assistance to low-income persons launched several experimental full-service projects, using some federal anti-juvenile delinquency funds and grants from the Ford Foundation's "Gray Areas Program." Deeply involved in the neighborhood law office experiments were Edgar and Jean Kahn who also worked closely with Sargent Shriver, OEO's first Director. In the summer of 1964, the Yale Law Journal published an article by the Kahns, "The War on Poverty: A Civilian Perspective," in which their proposed role for lawyers in the emerging anti-poverty campaign was clearly set forth. Shriver apparently shared their view, for in November of that year he stated, in a Chicago speech, that legal assistance would be one of the many services OEO grantees would make available in poor neighborhoods. Though not specifically mentioned in the Economic Opportunity Act until the amendments of 1967, Legal Services Programs could be and were funded under the general provisions governing Community Action.

Lewis Powell, then president of the Amer-

Jim Doherty is a writer-editor with CSA's Office of External Affairs, Media/Public Liaison in Washington, D.C.

ican Bar Association and now an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, was an enthusiastic supporter of the idea. His resolution endorsing OEO's plan won unanimous approval at the February '65 meeting of the AMA House of Delegates.

With this prestigious backing, the Legal Services Program got underway. By June 30, 1966, OEO had put approximately $25 million into 130 active community programs, with 25 other grants for research and training by law schools and similar institutions. The early programs were funded by Community Action grants. Their plans were drafted at the local level by representatives of the Bar Association, the minority bar, the community action agency for each locale, the poverty population and other interested groups such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), local welfare workers and the public prosecutor's office. Program objectives typically included:

- To provide quality legal representation for low-income persons who cannot afford private attorneys;
- To improve, through education, the ability of target area residents to under stand and make use of the law as it applies to their rights and responsibilities;
- To determine when changes in the law are necessary and to bring about such changes; that is, to seek reform of the law or administrative process;
- To provide concerned advocacy for groups of the poor by representing them in the local social decision-making process;
- To assist groups of the poor in the formulation of self-help efforts such as credit unions, cooperatives and other business ventures; and
- To involve the poor in the decision making process of the Legal Services Pro gram itself, as members of the Board and, to the extent feasible, by hiring them as staff.

From the beginning, most of the cases handled by Legal Services lawyers (an average of more than a million a year) have concerned problems familiar to Legal Aid attorneys: consumer credit complaints, wage attachments, landlordtenant disputes, unconscionable sales contracts, domestic relations, the mishandling of welfare or other benefits.

Former OEO Programs • Today

Program	Transferred to:		Budget (In Millions) 1966	1980
Head Start	HEW	· 1970	83	735
Job Corps	Labor	· 1970	310	415.7
Legal Services	Legal Services Corporation	· 1974	23	300
VISTA	Action	· 1972	16	28
Upward Bound	HEW	-1970	28	62
Foster Grandparents	Action	-1972	5	46.9
Green Thumb	Labor	· 1965	1	76.7
Indians	HEW	-1974	24	33.8
Migrants	Labor	-1974	25	83.3
				16 plus for young people
TOTAL:			$515	1,797.4

However, certain cases and the precedents they established have brought benefits far beyond the individual or group directly involved. For example:

□ A 1968 lawsuit to win enforcement of the minimum wage law raised the pay of California farmworkers 25 cents an hour, adding almost $100 million to the total income of that group;

□ Supreme Court decisions in 1968 and 1969 eliminated residence requirements for welfare eligibility and voided the so-called "man in the house" rule;

□ A District Court in Texas declared in 1968 that the Food Stamp Program is in tended to feed the poor, not just help farmers, and that county officials are therefore legally bound to administer this program;

□ A 1970 suit forced the state of California to produce I.Q. tests in Spanish as well as English;

□ Other Supreme Court decisions stated that public housing tenants must have a hearing before they can be evicted and that welfare recipients must be given a hearing before their cases can be terminated;

□ Approximately 100,000 MexicanAmeri-cans now vote in California because of a ruling that to require them to be literate in English is a violation of the "equal protection" guarantees of the Constitution.

Invaluable assistance has been furnished over the years by the so-called "backup centers." These research facilities concentrate on specific problem areas, such as social welfare policy, health care, housing and economic development and have produced training and reference materials and assisted in drafting a number of statutes beneficial to lowincome persons.

Another innovation brought to the legal profession by this program was the introduction of paraprofessionals. The paralegals, as they have come to be known, have assumed many of the out-ofcourt responsibilities of the neighborhood law offices. In addition, the program has continually worked to increase the nation's supply *of* concerned attorneys. The Reginald Heber Smith Fellowships (named for the father of Legal Aid) bring top law school graduates directly to Legal Services offices. Begun under OEO, the fellowships (called Reggies) are now administered by the Howard University Law School under a grant from the Legal Services Corporation.

The Corporation took over administration of the Legal Services Program in October 1975, after four years of careful consideration by Congress and the OEOCSA Legal Services staff. Functioning as a federally funded, independent corporation, it is designed to insulate the program from political pressures. Service has continued to expand under the Legal Services Corporation. In fiscal year 1980, a budget of $300 million supports 320 programs, employing 5,000 lawyers and 2,500 paralegals. While the LSC bill was being debated, then Senator Walter Mondale summed up the importance to America of the Legal Services Program. He said: "This is the genius and the historic significance of the Legal Services Program: that a government can offer to the powerless the opportunity and the resources which are needed to challenge improper acts by both private and public bodies. This National Legal Services Corporation will not be free *of* controversy. No method of resolving conflict is, except total repression. If the poor and the powerless do not have free access to our legal system, government by law is a failure." □

LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

By Chris Rossomando

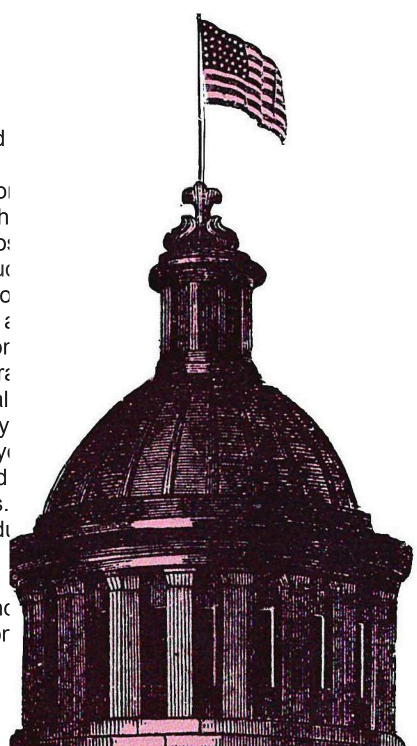
While the 15th anniversary of the Economic Opportunity Act has been an occasion to reflect upon the achievements of the anti-poverty effort thus far, it has also been a time to design strategies to prepare the Community Ser vices Administration to meet the challenges of the future. During the past several months, the Agency has drafted and transmitted new legislation to authorize activities for three years; participated in hearings before the congressional committee that oversees CSA pro grams; and followed closely legislative developments on many important issues, most notably Low-Income Weatherization.

Reauthorization of EOA Submitted to Congress

On May 15, Administration submitted Congress its proposal reauthorize the Econo Opportunity Act for th years. The propos legislation inclu amendments which wo strengthen administration a facilitate efficient operatior the agency's overall progra One provision would al the Agency to employ two-year audit cy consistent with that used other Federal agencies. second would redu unnecessary delays in regulatory process modifying the Agenc procedures for publicatior regulations. A third would clarify ambiguous requirements for funding community development corporations. Other provisions would repeal sections of the Act which have become administratively unnecessary for various reasons.

In his transmittal letter to the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate, Acting Director William Allison said, “By reauthorizing the Community Services Administration for three years, Congress will not only sustain the antipoverty effort, but will demonstrate in a tangible way that America's commitment to the poor is an enduring commitment not subject to derailment by short-term trends or moods.”

He continued, “Congress's original declaration of purpose—”...to eliminate the para-



dox of poverty in the midst of plenty in this Nation... "—is closer to achievement because of the continuing efforts of CSA. Much remains to done, however. It is in this spirit that I urge Congress to promptly and favorably consider this proposal."

The current authority for the EOA continues through fiscal year 1981. Congress is expected to begin work on the reauthorization sometime next year.

CSA Oversight Completed

Richard Rios joked that it was "baptism by fire" when he was called to testify before CSA's oversight subcommittee June 25 - the day after he was sworn-in as the agency's eleventh director. The hearing before the House Government Operations Subcommittee on Manpower and Housing focused on CSA's mission, goals and strategies.

Director Rios outlined his views on the agency's mandate, which he said has changed since the creation of the Office of Economic Opportunity. "The original intent of CSA and OEO was embodied in the concept of community action. Rather than administering traditional kinds of welfare programs, OEO was to organize people and communities to become self-reliant. This was to be done through constant experimentation with new and effective ways to eliminate the causes of poverty," Rios said.

Over the years, CSA lost this initial thrust and became a service-oriented agency, Rios explained. Immediate Past Director Graciela Olivarez began to move the agency back toward the initial notion of community action, nonservice approaches, and economic development.

"I agree with this shift in emphasis

and pledge to pursue it during my term in office," Rios said. He stressed his belief in the utility of limited direct services to meet legitimate needs of those who many times fall between the bureaucratic cracks. Rios added that services can also be used as leverage with other agencies and private organizations to mobilize resources.

He concluded, "Services along with nonservice approaches and community economic development constitute a frame-work in which CSA will continue to serve the poor and work with them to achieve both individual and community self-reliance."

The Director was accompanied by Deputy Director William Allison; Michael Blouin, newly confirmed Assistant Director for Community Action; Laird Harris, Director of Regional Operations; Robert Landmann, Assistant Director for Policy, Planning and Evaluation; and Gerrald Mukal, Associate Director for Economic Development. Regional Directors Ivan Ashley (Region I) and Wayne Thomas (Region VII) also accompanied the Director.

The panel answered questions from Subcommittee Chairperson Cardiss Collins (D.-Ill.), Ranking Minority Member Wayne Grisham (R.-Calif.) and Rep. Caldwell Butler (R.-Va.) concerning the CSA policies and practices. In her opening statement, Chairperson Collins called upon CSA to assess what has been learned about poverty since enactment of the Economic Opportunity Act. She said that the real challenge for the agency will be in equipping itself for the hard economic times to come.

The hearing capped a year-long series of hearings by the Manpower and Housing Subcommittee, which has conducted comprehensive oversight of CSA since 1975. Previous sessions during this cur rent round have focused on CSA management and internal control problems.

The Subcommittee is expected to make its report on CSA prior to the end of this session of Congress.

WEATHERIZATION

Congress has approved several changes in the Department of Energy's Low In come Weatherization Program, but legislation clarifying CSA authority to con duct weatherization activities appears to be stalled in the House of Representatives.

H.R. 6619, the "Economic Opportunity Amendments of 1980," was reported May 13 by the House Education and Labor Committee. Three other House commit tees—Science and Technology, Interstate and Foreign Commerce, and Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs—have jurisdiction over H.R. 6619, but none have held hearings or taken any action on the measure. While Education and Labor Chairman Carl Perkins (D.-Ky.) is eager to take the bill to the floor, jurisdictional disputes could stymie his efforts.

Similar legislation (S. 1725) introduced by Senator Gaylord Nelson (D.-Wisc.) passed the Senate November 29.

The President has signed the Energy Security Act (P.L. 96-294), an omnibus energy bill which includes a one-year authorization of DOE's weatherization program. The bill repeals the present priority given to Community Action Agencies for the management of local weatherization programs. It has been replaced with a weaker provision which gives "preference" to a CAA to continue managing a weatherization program where it has demonstrated that its program is an effective one.

The bill authorizes the Secretary of Energy to increase the $800-per-dwelling unit-limit to not more than $1,600 to secure installation of weatherization materials where the Secretary determines that an insufficient number of volunteers, training participants and public service employment workers are available. The limit on the cost of making incidental repairs necessary to make weatherization *effective* is raised from $100 to $150.

It is still uncertain whether Congress will decide to keep the Low-Income Weatherization Program in DOE or move it back to CSA. While final passage of S. 1725/H.R. 6619 would seem to indicate Congressional support for a CSA administered program, the final decision on weatherization lies with the Appropriations Committees, which ultimately will decide which program to fund.

CSA has had authority to run a weatherization program since the addition of Section 222(a)(5) to the Economic Opportunity Act in 1974. Authority was also given to the Department of Energy in the 1976 Energy Conservation and Production Act (ECPA). In 1977 and 1978, the CSA and DOE weatherization programs operated concurrently, each under its own set of regulations. In 1979, the Administration proposed that funds for lowincome weatherization to be appropriated to DOE and that CSA's authorization be deleted. The reason for the proposed transfer was to maintain all energy-related programs within the Energy Department. Congress refused to eliminate CSA's authorization, but since then has provided appropriations only for the

DOE program.