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The Structure of a Community Action Agency for a Democratic Process

William Tom Buzbee
Ouachita Baptist University

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THE STRUCTURE OF A COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY

FOR A DEMOCRATIC PROCESS

A Thesis

Presented to

the School of Graduate Studies

Ouachita Baptist University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

William Tom Buzbee

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THE STRUCTURE OF A COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY
FOR A DEMOCRATIC PROCESS

APPROVED:

Clarence A. Allison

Paul Root

James C. Benyman

Sweeney S. Chapel

Director of Graduate Studies

90698

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Background of the Study	4
The Problem	5
Statement of the Problem	5
Importance of the Study	5
Definitions of Terms Used	5
Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc.	5
Lincoln Parish	5
Federal Share	5
In-Kind Contribution	6
Target Area	6
Poverty Level	6
Delimitations	7
Sources and Treatment of Data	7
II. THE STRUCTURE OF THE OFFICE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY	8
Administration of Economic Opportunity Act	11
Community Action Program Organization Chart	13
III. THE STRUCTURE OF THE LINCOLN TOTAL COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY, INC.	16
List of Neighborhood Organizations	31
Community Organizational Map	32
Constitution	33
By-Laws	37

CHAPTER	PAGE
IV. THE PROGRAMS OF LINCOLN TOTAL COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY, INC.	41
Organization Chart	50
V. CONCLUSIONS & OBSERVATIONS.	51
BIBLIOGRAPHY.	54

lives of the poor. The Community Action Program was designed to give a voice to the poor. Due to the fact that Community Action agencies were new, their function and objective may not have been understood.

This study has been prepared with the purpose of revealing the Lincoln Parish situation, and the efforts of the Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc., regarding other provisions of the 1961 Economic Opportunity Act passed by the United States Congress, to eliminate poverty in this parish. The basic premise underlying that portion of the Act authorizing the creation of Community Action Agencies is that poverty, although it may have universal characteristics, is manifesting in different forms throughout the country. Each Community Action Agency sets out the causes of poverty, but also the methods by which it should be eliminated.

Poverty has not been eliminated in Lincoln Parish. Overlapping assistance exists, even to the local consumer. No complete relief exists. However, a beginning has been made and a commitment of responsibility towards has been vividly expressed.

The effort to do something about this ill was not marked by spectacularly successes. Indeed, it was marked by the realization that the causes of poverty are dominated by historical, sociological, economical and

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

For several years because of change or the lack of change, an increasing number of the population of the United States have been the ranks of the poor. The Community Action Program was designed to give a voice to the poor. Due to the fact that Community Action Agencies were new, their function and objective may not have been understood.

This study has been concerned with the problem of poverty in Lincoln Parish, Louisiana, and the efforts of the Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc., organized under provisions of the 1964 Economic Opportunity Act passed by the United States Congress, to eliminate poverty in this parish. The basic premise underlying that section of the Act authorizing the creation of Community Action Agencies is that poverty, although it may have universal similarities, is manifested in different forms throughout the country. Each community knows best not only the causes of poverty, but also the methods by which it should be combated.

Poverty has not been eliminated in Lincoln Parish. Overwhelming evidence exists, even to the casual observer, to support this fact. However, a beginning has been made and a commitment of community concern has been vividly expressed.

The effort to do something about this ill was not marked by spectacular successes. Instead, it was marked by the realization that the causes of poverty are deep-rooted in historical, sociological, economical and

psychological factors. What the Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc. was attempting to do was to change the status quo, to move the community from where it had been standing, to where it should stand in the future.

Lincoln Parish was thought of as an ideal place to rear a family. It was blessed with two institutions of higher education, beautiful homes and subdivisions, new industry, business concerns and financial institutions, and other symbols of affluence and commerce. But there was another side of the parish that was not part of the popular image. This was the Lincoln Parish of "poverty". The parish was marked by such symbols as sub-standard housing, unemployment and more important, by under-employment, and by citizens whose health practices were at best, primitive. In many instances, broken homes were held together with the sole responsibility resting on the female; neighborhoods with a high rate of illegitimacy and crime, apathy and ignorance are found in the "other" Lincoln Parish.

Included in this report was additional information indicating the incidence of poverty in Lincoln Parish. A careful study of this information should help to explain the nature of this problem.

Unfortunately, in many instances, the blame for being in their condition has been placed on the poor themselves. Statements such as "All a person has to do is to merely show some initiative in order to rise from poverty," indicated that the poor themselves have been blamed for this condition. With this attitude, many affluent members of our society have been guilty of oversimplifying the problem. When this is considered as the only problem, the importance of such factors as environmental and

social conditions which are beyond their control, and which, in the end, tend to make a person what he is, is forgotten.

Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc. was operated on the premise that the poor can and will show initiative if they were given the chance to do so. Our society has been guilty of doing for the poor so long that many in poverty have become dependent upon those who do for them; thus they have lost the chance to become independent, contributing members of society.

Community Action Agencies and the programs they carry out are founded on a concept that is unique in the field of American social legislation. This is the concept of involving the poor at all levels of activity. Briefly stated, the Congressional Mandate calling for "maximum feasible participation of the poor" means that persons living in poverty were to have a hand in shaping and carrying out programs designed to eliminate the conditions under which they live. In Lincoln Parish two of the most graphic illustrations of the operation of this principle were the formation of twelve Neighborhood Organizations which elected, from their member, Advisory Councils, and secondly, the election of representatives from the poor to the Board of Directors of Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc.

In target areas located within the parish advisory committees have approved projects to be submitted to the Board and have also initiated and carried out programs designed to better their community. Programs such as clean-up and paint-up campaigns, literacy training, Day Care Centers, and recreation, to name a few.

A beginning has been made and the best interest of the entire community is at stake in the winning of this war. It is not the recipients of supplies or training alone who stand to gain or lose; the whole community gains by mutual understanding and by that measure of genuine freedom for individual initiative. Furthermore, any fellow citizen who was treated unfairly or frozen in a sub-culture of poverty was a threat to the whole community in many ways. He may have proven to have been an expense on the welfare rolls or in the hospital or an inmate of the jail. There was no way to fence these people out of a society---they were a part of the community, whether for good or for bad.

In achieving the goals of Community Action, it should become more apparent than ever that, in the long run, that which harms and degrades part of a community will harm and degrade the whole. But that which frees and builds in one part, will do the same for the whole of the community.

1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Throughout recorded history there has been a group who was considered to be in poverty. Regardless of how prosperous the general population might have been, a segment of the population was poor and miserable and lacked the necessities of life.

In recent years the people of the United States have experienced one of the most prosperous times in modern history. However, in the midst of this prosperity, poverty continues to exist. A number of plans and projects have been initiated to rid America of the misery of want in the midst of plenty. This study has been prompted by a strong interest in that segment of the population in the United States which lives in poverty.

II. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. The dual purpose of this study has been to explain the intent and structure of the Community Action Agency, and to outline how all segments and groups of a community can participate toward a goal of eliminating poverty.

Importance of the study. Many new approaches to eliminating poverty have been tried. There was a need to identify and improve the better programs and to eliminate those which were not helpful. This study was an attempt to determine the effectiveness of Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc. This study has implications for other Community Action Agencies in the United States.

III. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc. This Agency was a private non-profit organization incorporated under the laws of the State of Louisiana. The Agency served the geographical area of Lincoln Parish, Louisiana.

Lincoln Parish. Parish in Louisiana refers to a geographical area ruled by a parish government and is comparable to county systems in other states in the United States.

Federal Share. That portion of funds contributed toward the operation of a Community Action Agency by the Federal Government through the Office of Economic Opportunity is known as the federal share. Throughout the history of the Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc., the

federal share has been 90 per cent. However, this figure may vary from Agency to Agency.

In-Kind Contribution. That portion of the operation that the local Agency contributes was known as the in-kind contribution. Local contributions may be valued in money, volunteer time from its citizens, equipment, or space.

Target Area. Target area refers to a geographical area or neighborhood where there was a large concentration of families who were below the poverty level.

Poverty Level. Poverty level takes into consideration such things as where a family lives and the number of people living in the household, and then is based on income. The current guidelines governing poverty level is found in the following chart:¹

<u>Persons in Family</u>	<u>Non-Farm</u>	<u>Farm</u>
1	\$1600	\$1100
2	2000	1400
3	2500	1700
4	3200	2200
5	3800	2600
6	4200	3000
7	4700	3300
8	5300	3700
9	5800	4000
10	6300	4400
11	6800	4700
12	7300	5100
13	7800	5400

¹Community Action Program, Memorandum No. 67-3. Office of Economic Opportunity, Washington, D.C., April 16, 1968.

IV. DELIMITATIONS

This study included only the Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc., with the exception of the Headstart Program, as administered to the geographical area of Lincoln Parish, Louisiana.

V. SOURCES AND TREATMENT OF DATA

The records, correspondence, and personal participation in the Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc., was the primary source of material. The Office of Economic Opportunity was a principal source of obtaining information regarding the Community Action Program.

Chapter one is an introduction to the study. Chapter two concerns itself with a review of the national structure of the Office of Economic Opportunity and the Act of 1964, as well as the amendments to the Act. Chapter three will describe the structure of Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc. The programs of Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc., will be recorded in chapter four, and chapter five, the final chapter, will include conclusions and observations resulting from the study.

¹Michael Harrington, *The Other America* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1962), p. 10.

²Roger Lincoln Shuy, *Intergalactic World* (New York: Harper & Row, 1961), p. 39.

CHAPTER II

THE STRUCTURE OF THE OFFICE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

In the past several months the United States has been awakened to a dilemma of which she apparently was not aware. This dilemma has proven to be that a substantial number of people in this country are and have been living in poverty. Michael Harrington has written: "I had proved to my satisfaction that there were around 50,000,000 poor in this country."¹ Roger Shinn wrote in his book Tangled World:

Line up 100 'average' Americans. About 80 of them belong, more or less, to the affluent society. Most of the 80, for reasons we have noticed, strain to balance their budgets. Most of them hanker after products they cannot buy. But they contribute to the prodigious consumption of this economy. The 20 poorest are painfully poor. They are migrants, marginal farmers, city slum-dwellers. Four of them are Negroes. Society dangles before them its advertisements, its goods, its invitations to spend. These people look at the alluring goods as strangers. They do not belong or expect to belong.²

Harrington indicated some of the reasons that the impoverished have been hidden from the affluent society. He felt that poverty has not been seen from super highways. Myths and beauty have often caught our attention while the poor have been overlooked or explained away. Harrington also felt that ignorance contributed to the condition of the poor. He contended that clothes tend to make the poor invisible in that most of them

¹Michael Harrington, The Other America (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1963), p. 10.

²Roger Lincoln Shinn, Tangled World (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1965), p. 39.

hide their condition with good clothes. Harrington believed that the poor are either very old or very young and politically they are never heard.³

The poor live in a different world from the mainstream of American society. The President's Council of Economic Advisers in 1964 used these words to describe the world of the poor:

It is a world apart, whose inhabitants are isolated from the mainstream of American life and alienated from its values. It is a world where Americans are literally concerned with day-to-day survival---a roof over their heads, where the next meal is coming from. It is a world where a minor illness is a major tragedy, where pride and privacy must be sacrificed to get help, where honesty can become a luxury and ambition a myth. Worst of all, the poverty of the fathers is visited upon the children.⁴

In response to this awakening the United States Congress authorized the creation of the Office of Economic Opportunity.

The Office of Economic Opportunity Act passed by the United States Congress in August 20, 1964 has as its declared purpose:

Although the economic well-being and prosperity of the United States have progressed to a level surpassing any achieved in world history and although these benefits are widely shared throughout the Nation, poverty continues to be the lot of a substantial number of our people. The United States can achieve its full economic and social potential as a nation only if every individual has the opportunity to contribute to the full extent of his capabilities and to participate in the workings of our society. It is therefore, the policy of the United States to eliminate the paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty in this nation by opening to everyone the opportunity for education and training, the opportunity to work, and the opportunity to live in decency and dignity. It is the purpose of this Act to strengthen, supplement and co-ordinate efforts in furtherance of that policy.

³Op. Cit.

⁴New York Times. January 21, 1964.

It is the sense of the Congress that it is highly desirable to employ the resources of the private sector of the economy of the United States in all such efforts to further the policy of this Act.⁵

The Community Action Program was authorized under Title II of the Act:

This title provides for community action agencies and programs, prescribes the structure and describes the functions of community action agencies and authorizes financial assistance to community action programs and related projects and activities. Its basic purpose is to stimulate a better focusing of all available local, State, private, and Federal resources upon the goal of enabling low-income families, and low-income individuals of all ages, in rural and urban areas, to attain the skills, knowledge, and motivations and secure the opportunities needed for them to become fully self-sufficient.⁶

The Office of Economic Opportunity Act was administered through several cabinet level departments.⁷

The Office of Economic Opportunity in Washington, D.C. administers the Community Action Program through several regional offices located at strategic areas across the nation.

The Southwest region includes the five states of Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas and New Mexico and has its regional office in Austin, Texas.

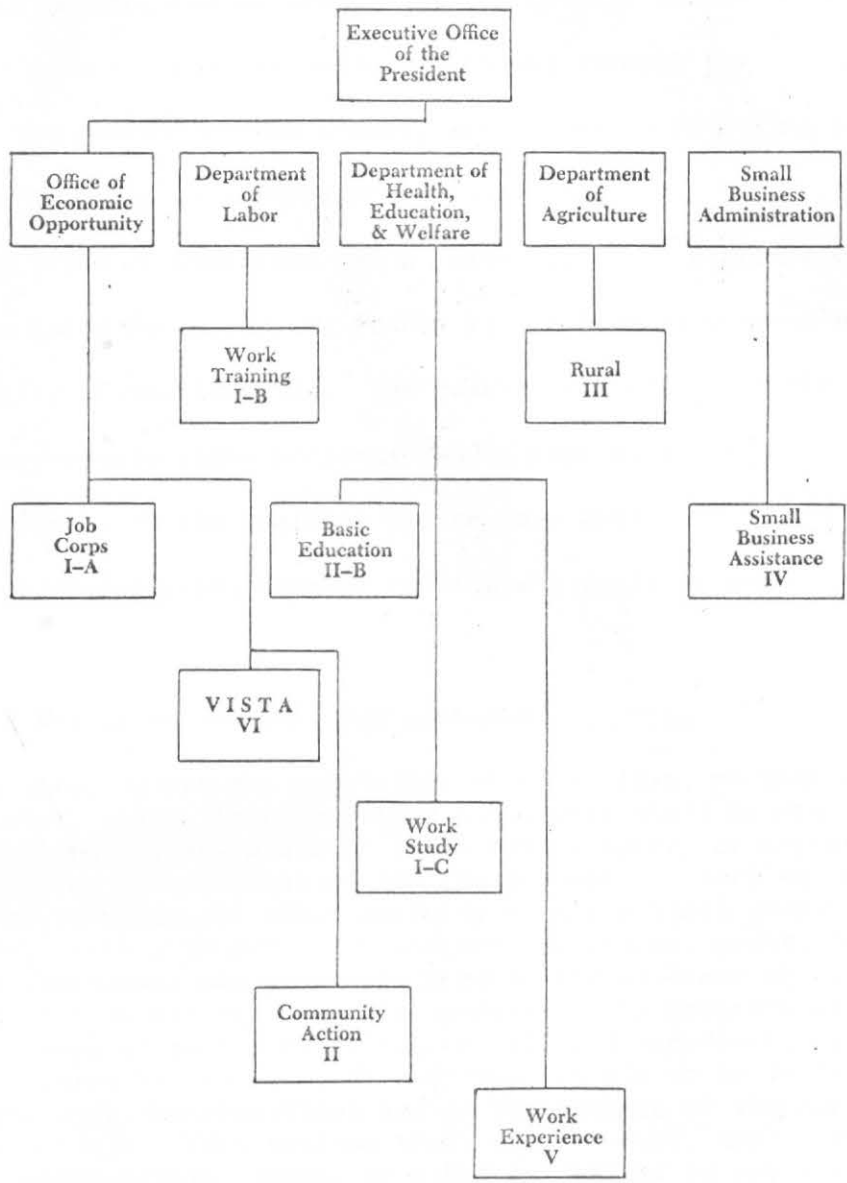
Each state had a co-ordinator in the regional office. The co-ordinator had several regional analysts who were responsible to him for assigned Community Action Agencies. The analyst also had his office at

⁵Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, as Amended, p. 1.

⁶Ibid, p. 27.

⁷See Administration of the Economic Opportunity Act.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ACT



—Reprint from report of South Carolina League of Women Voters.

regional headquarters and communicated directly with his assigned agencies by mail, telephone, and an occasional visit. All communications that the agency made to regional headquarters was through the program analyst assigned. The analyst worked closely with agencies in making applications, correcting budgets, or general problem solving.⁸

The State of Louisiana has a state Office of Economic Opportunity located in Baton Rouge and was funded by the Federal Government, but under the authority of the Governor. The general objectives of the state office were to co-ordinate state programs and to provide training. All major communications with the regional office have been sent to the state for approval or disapproval, however the state's decision were not final in all cases.

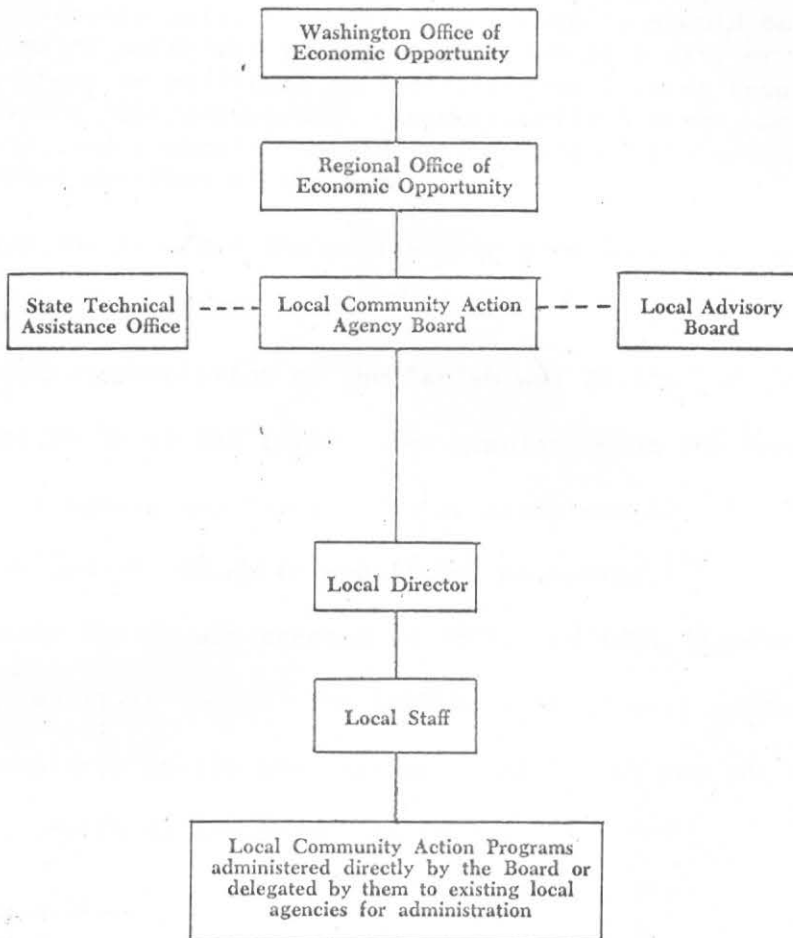
The Office of Economic Act provided:

In carrying out the provisions of this title, no contract, agreement, grant, loan, or other assistance shall be made with, or provided to, any State or local public agency or any private institution or organization for the purpose of carrying out any program, project, or other activity within a State unless a plan setting forth such proposed contract, agreement, grant, loan, or other assistance has been submitted to the Governor of the State, and such plan has not been disapproved by the Governor within thirty days of such submission, or, if so disapproved, has been reconsidered by the Director and found by him to be fully consistent with the provisions and in furtherance of the purposes of this title. This section shall not, however, apply to contracts, agreements, grants, loans, or other assistance to any institution of higher education in existence on the date of the approval of this act.⁹

⁸See Organizational Chart---for structure of Community Action Program.

⁹Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, as Amended, p. 47.

COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM ORGANIZATION CHART



For the purpose of a Community Action Agency, a community was defined by the Office of Economic Opportunity:

The 'community' to be served by a community action program may be any urban or rural, geographical area, including but not limited to a State, metropolitan area, county, city, town, multi-city unit, or multi-county unit. Generally, a community should be coterminous with a major political jurisdiction, such as a city or county, or with a group of political jurisdictions exercising responsibility for related public programs. In metropolitan areas, whenever feasible, the community should include all of the urbanized or urbanizing portions of the area.¹⁰

Education provided the parish with more jobs, 24.3 percent, than any other profession did.

The total population of the Parish was 28,535; of this total 11,400 are rural or 34.9% of the total. The population on the farms was 1,452. The number of people who lived in urban areas was 17,135. The racial distribution was 16,594 white and 11,941 non-white.¹¹

Lincoln Parish was created in 1873. In 1884, Ruston was made the Parish seat as it is today. The leading agricultural products were dairy products, poultry, cattle and peaches. The Parish was the home of Louisiana Polytechnic Institute and Grambling College.¹²

¹⁰Community Action Program Guide. Volume I. Instructions for applicants (Washington, D.C.: Office of Economic Opportunity, February, 1965), p. 13.

¹¹A Statistical Profile of Lincoln Parish. Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana, Inc. Baton Rouge, Louisiana, July, 1965, p. 1.

¹²A Statistical Profile of Lincoln Parish. Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana, Inc. Baton Rouge, Louisiana, July, 1965, p. 7.

A community Action program was requested for the Parish in early 1966 with a small group of citizens who felt that a large number of the people were impoverished. Most of the original group made up the first Board of Directors.

The Lincoln Parish Community Action Agency, Inc. is the product of a small group of people who shared the conviction that the poor of Lincoln Parish have not received their share of the affluent society. This small group also had the conviction that a large percentage of the population, 41 per cent who were Negroes, had no voice in the community. The Negro had no voice in how the school system was operated, how the school board did not have a representative from the Negro population.

There were other statistics which indicated the need for a Community Action Agency: (1) 46.1 per cent of the children in Lincoln Parish under 25 years of age did not have above an eighth grade education; (2) 41 per cent of all families received an annual income of less than \$1,000, which is the percentage for the United States as a whole; (3) 201 families out of 450 families received no city assistance; (4) 16 per cent of the Negro population in Lincoln Parish were those families whose annual income was less than \$1,000.

¹ Statistical Profile of Lincoln Parish, Parish Office of the Social Council of Louisiana, Inc., Baton Rouge, Louisiana, July, 1966, p. 1.

² Ibid., p. 4.

³ Ibid., p. 5.

⁴ Ibid., p. 10.

⁵ Lincoln Parish School Board minutes, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986.

CHAPTER III

THE STRUCTURE OF

THE LINCOLN TOTAL COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY, INC.

The Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc. is the product of a small group of people who shared the feeling that the poor of Lincoln Parish have not received their share of the affluent society. This same group also had the conviction that a large percentage of the population, 41 per cent who were Negroes, had no voice in the government.¹ The Negroes had no voice in how the school system was operated since the School Board did not have a representative from the Negro population.

There were other statistics which indicated the need for a Community Action Agency: (1) 40.1 per cent of the citizens in Lincoln Parish over 25 years of age did not have above an eighth grade education;² 43.8 per cent of all families received an annual income of less than \$3,000, while the percentage for the United States was 21.4;³ 503 persons over 65 out of every 1,000 received old age assistance;⁴ 20.78 per cent of school age children in Lincoln Parish came from families whose annual income was less than \$2,000.⁵

¹ A Statistical Profile of Lincoln Parish. Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana, Inc., Baton Rouge, Louisiana. July, 1965, p. 1.

² Ibid, p. 4.

³ Ibid, p. 9.

⁴ Ibid, p. 10.

⁵ Lincoln Parish School Board application, Title I of Public Law 89-10, 1966.

One of the purposes for the existence of the Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc. in Lincoln Parish was to attempt to give a voice to the poor in programs which were designed to affect them directly. There was some hope that, in the end, the poor would have an opportunity to participate in the city and parish governments.

The Community Action Board was required by law to represent all of the people in a given Community. This statement was supported by the following excerpt:

Each board to which this subsection applies shall consist of not more than fifty-one members and shall be so constituted that (1) one-third of the members of the board are public officials, including the chief elected official or officials, or their representatives, unless the number of such officials reasonably available or willing to serve is less than one-third of the membership of the board, (2) at least one-third of the members are persons chosen in accordance with democratic selection procedures adequate to assure that they are representative of the poor in the area served, and (3) the remainder of the members are officials or members of business, industry, labor, religious, welfare, education, or other major groups and interests in the community. Each member of the board selected to represent a specific geographic area within a community must reside in the area he represents. No person selected under clause (2) or (3) of this subsection as a member of a board shall serve on such board for more than three consecutive years, or more than a total of six years.⁶

The Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc. had its first meeting in January, 1966 with thirteen members present. In the beginning of its existence the Board was limited in geographical area and in representation from the total community. In the January Board meeting the following recommendations were made by the Board: (1) Secure more representatives from the white population, (2) Amend the charter to include

⁶Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, As Amended. Office of Economic Opportunity, Washington, D. C., August, 1964.

Lincoln Parish members of 3-P organization,⁷ and (3) Distribute representation on the basis of communities, wards, etc.⁸

A committee was appointed in the January meeting to contact the Police Jury and the Parish School Board. The President of the Board, Dr. Felton Green, attended the next Board meeting of the Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc. and expressed his opinion concerning the Charter. During the meeting he stated that (The Charter) should be amended to include the entire parish.⁹

The Office of Economic Opportunity's regional office in Austin, Texas, also was concerned about involving governing officials on the Board. If this could be done there would be a larger span of representation as well as more white participation. In an attempt to include the Police Jury and the School Board members on the Lincoln Total Community Action Agency Board, these two different groups of people were contacted. On March 25, 1966, the Board met and the following suggestion was made: "send correspondence to the parish School Board, the parish Police Jury, and to the state regional Office of Economic Opportunity offices."¹⁰

In the meantime while the board was attempting to get a broader representation on the board, the program was progressing. In April the

⁷3-P Organization was an application for a Community Action Agency submitted by another group which included Lincoln Parish.

⁸Minutes of Board meeting. Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc., Ruston, Louisiana, January 4, 1966.

⁹Ibid, March 11, 1966.

¹⁰Ibid, March 25, 1966.

Board hired a temporary staff to take a survey of the parish to determine the specific needs of the poor people.¹¹ The survey was terminated in July, 1966, and the Board was authorized to hire a permanent Director, Assistant Director and secretary.

The location of the first Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc. offices were in a rural area, six miles west of Ruston, Louisiana. Due to this remote location, and because of the recent authorization to hire permanent employees, the Area Supervisor from the regional office in Austin, Texas, made the following recommendations to the Board: that the Board turn its attention to (1) increasing membership, (2) changing the location of the offices, and (3) establishment of by-laws.¹²

The Board followed through with the recommendation and By-laws were established and several committees were appointed and were responsible for specific functions of the Board of Directors. The body also expanded its board membership to thirty-five and continued to invite local officials to take part on the Board.

In September, a Board member presented this recommendation:

In order to have cooperative planning and workable mutual policies between the school board and Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc., I recommend that we (1) renew our invitation to the Lincoln Parish School Board to elect a representative to serve on the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors, and (2) that a committee composed of representatives from both groups --- school board and Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc. --- be appointed to develop guidelines for effective working relations.¹³

¹¹ ibid, April 25, 1966.

¹² ibid, September 6, 1966.

¹³ ibid, September 12, 1966

Although the body had not been successful in gaining the participation of governing officials and school board members, it had been successful in involving the poor and the professional people. Following is a list of board members and their occupations:

Mrs. Almada T. Anderson, Education; Mr. Frank Bailey, Superintendent of Ruston State School; Dr. Neal D. Blanchard, Director of Lincoln Parish Health Unit; Mr. Frank Bonner, Education; Mr. Earl Brown,^{***} Bus Driver; Dr. James R. Brown,^{*} Medical Doctor; Mrs. Ruth Reed Calhoun, Education; Dr. J. E. Carothers,^{*} Education; Mrs. Clyde Chaffers,^{**} Laborer; Mrs. Allie Coleman,^{**} Housewife; Mr. Eddie Davenport,^{*} Education; Mrs. Jenie Denny, Secretary; Mr. Odus Douglas,^{**} Laborer; Mrs. Mattie Ford,^{**} Housewife; Mrs. Freddie S. Jones,^{**} Laborer; Mr. Paul Kidd,^{*} Attorney at Law; Mr. L. D. Land,^{*} Education; Mr. Charles T. Lewis,^{**} Grocery Clerk; Mr. George Mack,^{***} Factory Worker; Rev. Gerald Marvel, Minister; Mrs. James Mattox,^{**} Janitor; Mr. Curtis Mayfield,^{**} Laborer; Rev. Clyde Oliver,^{*} Minister; Rev. C. P. Payne,^{***} Minister; Mr. Truman Potts, Pharmacist; Mr. John Robinette, Special Education, Father Kevin Roe,^{*} Priest; Rev. Robert Shepperson, Minister; Rev. Sidney Smith,^{**} Minister; Mr. Thelbert Snowden,^{***} Mechanic; Mr. Willard Wallace, Director of Lincoln Parish Public Welfare; Mrs. Dolly Warren,^{**} Housewife; Mr. Calvin Wilkerson, Businessman; Mr. Oscar Williams, Education; Mr. Joe Womack,^{*} Education.¹⁴

¹⁴One asterisk indicates member of executive committee; two asterisks indicate Target Area Representative; three asterisks indicate member of executive committee and Target Area.

The Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc., Board of Directors had four elected officers. Their title and duties were:

CHAIRMAN - The chairman shall preside at all meetings of the Board. He shall have such additional powers and perform such other duties as the Board may, from time to time, prescribe. The chairman shall serve no more than two successive terms.

VICE-CHAIRMAN - The vice-chairman shall succeed to the chairman in case of a vacancy in that office. He shall preside at all meetings in the absence of the chairman. He shall undertake such other responsibilities as the chairman may assign.

SECRETARY - The secretary shall keep a record of the proceedings and of all other matters of which a record shall be ordered by the said Board. She shall attend to all correspondence and notify all officers and members of their election or appointment to committees; she shall keep a roll of the members; shall issue notices of all meetings; and shall perform all such other duties as are usually incident to her office.

TREASURER - The treasurer shall have general supervision over the books and financial records of the corporation. He shall make reports at the annual and regular meetings of the Board and at such other times as the Executive Committee may require. He shall also serve as chairman of the Finance Committee and shall perform such other duties as are usually incident to the office or required by the Executive Committee or the Board of Directors.¹⁵

The Board of Directors carries out its responsibilities through the Executive Board and four standing committees and any such special committees designated by the Chairman.

Executive Board. The business and property of the Corporation shall be vested in the Executive Board of Directors, who shall be selected by the members of the Corporation.¹⁶

¹⁵By-Laws, Article VI, Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc., Ruston, Louisiana, p. 3-4.

¹⁶Ibid, Article IV, p. 2.

The Membership Committee. shall make nominations for members of the Board of Directors giving due consideration of representation of the various agencies, departments, organizations and institutions, both public and private presently or hereafter concerned with matters pertaining to the social and economic progress of Lincoln Parish.

The Finance Committee shall consist of the Treasurer as chairman and as many other persons as the Board of Directors may from time to time designate. The Finance Committee shall be in charge of and responsible for all of the fiscal, financial and budgetary affairs of this corporation, and such other duties and responsibilities as the Board of Directors may from time to time request.

The Planning Committee shall consist of the Executive Director as chairman and not less than four (4) nor more than seven (7) members appointed by the Director with the advice and approval of the Board of Directors. The Planning Committee shall be responsible for establishing long and short range goals for the organization and shall work closely with the Program Development Committee in establishing priorities of operations. Furthermore, the Planning Committee shall act as a Program Review Board and shall along with the Program Development Committee, present findings and recommendations to the Board of Directors.

The Program Development Committee shall consist of the Assistant Executive Director as chairman and not less than eight (8) nor more than fifteen (15) members appointed by the Director with the advice and approval of the Board of Directors. The Program Development Committee shall be responsible for putting into effect the recommendations of the Planning Committee by, wherever possible, making contracts with existing public and private agencies for the conduct of all programs. If study indicates that no existing organization is capable of conducting such programs, they shall be allowed to engage in program activity.

Further, after programs have been started, it shall be their responsibility to see that these programs are carried out in accordance with the stipulations set forth in the contracts.¹⁷

The election of new directors was held each year in February. The By-laws required that one-third of the Board of Directors be replaced each year.¹⁸

¹⁷Ibid, Article VII, pp. 4-5.

¹⁸Ibid, Article V, p. 3.

Any interested citizen who is a resident of Lincoln Parish could become a candidate for membership by submitting his name to the Membership Committee. A member can remove himself by resignation or by his continued absence from Board Meetings.

Absence by a director from three (3) consecutive meetings of the Board may, at the discretion of the Board, be construed as a resignation by the member so absent. Vacancies occurring on the Board between annual meetings shall be filled by the Board for the unexpired term.¹⁹

It has already been noted previously in this study there have been several attempts to involve local governing officials without success. Under the 1967 Amendments to the Economic Opportunity Act local governing officials had the opportunity to make several decisions concerning local community action agencies:

A political jurisdiction may designate an existing community action agency, may designate a different agency or may choose not to designate any agency. In the absence of action by local or state officials OEO may, on its own authority, designate a CAA.²⁰

The political jurisdiction in Lincoln Parish had declined to take any action concerning the Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc.

The Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc. was financed from two sources. The Federal Share to date has been 90%, according to guidelines this, "assistance will not exceed 90 percent of the cost of a community action program, except that in circumstances determined by the

¹⁹ Ibid, Article II, p. 1.

²⁰ Organizing Communities for Action. Office of Economic Opportunity, Washington, D. C., February, 1968, p. 7.

Director of OEO."²¹ The other source was from local resources and termed non-Federal share. The non-Federal share may be in-kind or cash:

The non-Federal share of community action program cost may be contributed in cash or in-kind. A contribution is treated as a 'cash' contribution in any case in which money from a non-Federal source is disbursed by the grantee or a delegate agency to pay expenses of the community action program. A contribution is treated as 'in-kind' if it consists of the use of services or property owned by, or loaned to, the grantee or a delegate agency.²²

The Federal share for program years 1966 and 1967 was \$98,978.00 while the non-Federal share was \$8,505.78 for a total budget of \$107, 483.78.²³

The Agency was closely supervised by a Certified Public Accountant.

The Lincoln Community Action accounts were set up and are supervised by Mr. Bob Holladay, Certified Public Accountant. All grants are audited by Mr. Holladay upon termination of the program year. In addition, they are also subject to Federal audit.²⁴

One of the most important responsibilities of the Board of Directors was hiring and maintaining staff personnel. The first staff of the Agency was temporary for the purpose of taking a survey of the Parish. The first permanent employees were hired in August, 1966. They filled the position of Director, Assistant Director and Secretary. In June of 1967 the Agency was authorized to open a multi-purpose center and hired 10 additional employees. One of the major problems was the hiring and maintaining white staff members. From August, 1967 to June, 1968 the Agency

²¹Community Action Program Guide, Volume I. (Washington, D. C.: Community Action Program, February, 1965), p. 8.

²²Ibid.

²³Audit reports for the Lincoln Total Community Action, Inc. by Robert E. Holladay III, Certified Public Accountant, Ruston, Louisiana.

²⁴Lincoln Community Action, Inc. 1967 Annual Report, Ruston, Louisiana unpublished, p. 43.

had, an Executive Director, Director of the Area Resource Center,²⁵ an Assistant Co-ordinator, and two aides resign, all of them were white. During the same time period the agency had lost one Negro, a secretary-receptionist who was dismissed for incompetency.²⁶

The Agency now had 15 full time staff members. At the close of the year 1967 the staff characteristics were as follows:

Charles R. Smith, Executive Director, B.S., M.S., Louisiana Polytechnic Institute
 Clifford McLain, Assistant Director, B.S., Southern University
 D. Ray Hendon, Director, ARC, B.S., MBA, Louisiana Polytechnic Institute
 Albert McHenry, Assistant Director ARC and Co-ordinator of Manpower, B.S., M.S., University of Michigan
 Dena Lewis, Co-ordinator of Family Services, B.S., Oklahoma College for Women
 Clara Carr, Co-ordinator of Education, B.S., M.S., Tuskegee Institute
 William Buzbee, Co-ordinator of Community Development, B.A., Ouachita Baptist College
 Ira Wiltz, Assistant Co-ordinator, B.S., Grambling College
 Terrel Deville, Assistant Co-ordinator, B.A., Louisiana Polytechnic Institute
 Paul Slaton, Manpower Department
 LaJunta Farmer, Education Department
 Cathryn Hammock, Education Department
 Nelda Cooper, Secretary, B.A., Grambling College²⁷

A community action agency was required by the Office of Economic Opportunity to consider staff applicants who had low educational achievements, as a result, educational requirements to fill staff positions were discouraged.

²⁵Name of multi-purpose center.

²⁶Minutes of Board Meeting. Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc., Ruston, Louisiana, November 14, 1967.

²⁷Lincoln Community Action, Inc. 1967 Annual Report. Unpublished, Ruston, Louisiana.

Each Community Action Agency Board is required to make certain that its recruiting procedures afford adequate opportunity for the hiring and advancement of people to be served by the Community Action Program. Educational qualifications, unless required by the state or local law or regulations, shall not be made a condition for employment or advancement if a candidate is otherwise qualified to perform the duties of the position.

This prohibition against the use of educational qualifications places an extra burden on the Board member but on the other hand it provides you with a real opportunity to give a particularly intelligent and deserving poor person a second chance to do something really worthwhile with his life. Education, while certainly a desirable attribute, is not the only index as to a man's value. All too often employers are prone to use education as an arbitrary gauge and in the process society loses the talent of an individual who might otherwise make a real contribution. It is hopeful that no Community Action Agency will ever be guilty of this evil.²⁸

Also discrimination in employment was not tolerated:

Lincoln Total Community Action, Inc., is an equal opportunity employer. In all hiring or employment done by this agency, the agency (1) will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, creed, sex, color, age, or national origin, and (2) will take affirmative action to insure that applicants are employed, and that employees are treated during employment without regard to their race, creed, sex, age, color, or national origin. This recruitment shall apply to but not be limited to the following: Employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer, recruitment or recruitment advertising, layoff or termination; rates of pay or other forms of compensation; and selection for training, including apprenticeship.²⁹

The Board of Directors communicated to its staff through the Executive Director of the Agency. Therefore Board/Executive Director relationship was extremely important. An Executive Director who met with Board members individually had invited several possible problems:

²⁸Handbook for Board Members. State of South Carolina Office of Economic Opportunity, p. 28.

²⁹Personnel Policies. Lincoln Total Community Action, Inc., Ruston, Louisiana, Para. 1.

It has generally been found that contacts between Board members and the Director should be limited to group meeting as much as possible. Frequent recurrence of meetings with individual members of the Board can be extremely time consuming and cuts heavily into the time the Director has for carrying out his regular assignments. It also can place the Director in the position of appearing to have favorites among his Board members. This is a situation which should be avoided at all cost to prevent an undesirable relationship from developing with other members of the Board.³⁰

The staff depended greatly upon the various committees on the Board for guidance and planning of its programs and projects. The staff also received information from its Advisory Board.

The Advisory Board for the Area Resource Center was selected by the Director of that Center. The function of the Board was to advise the Director on present programs and help plan new programs. An effort to involve more of the community into the functions of the Agency was made. The Advisory Board provided an opportunity for another group of citizens to communicate with one another about the problems of the community. The Advisory Board had no authority over policies of the Agency.

The most promising efforts of the Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc. was the concept of target area community organizations. They were different from other organizations in that they gave the poor an equal voice with others in the policy making. They were important to the agency and to the entire community because they provided a means of communication for the poor. They gave the poor a chance to work together and present a collective voice on their problems. As Charles Smith, former Director of the Agency, put it:

³⁰Handbook for Board Members. State of South Carolina Office of Economic Opportunity, p. 33.

Too many mistakes have been made in attempting to do for these people without their having any say in the matter, this is evident in many public and private agencies designed to help the poor, and very easily could this have been the case with our agency. We felt that if we did not involve these people in the program, our work would have very limited success. We wanted to get at the cause of the problem and not simply treat the effect. Our greatest problem was the fact that target people do not have an avenue whereby to meet together to express themselves and work on solving their problems.³¹

One of the observations which had been made by the staff of the Agency was the mobility of professional and educated people. When a resident acquires more than the average educational level, he was moved from the neighborhood and community. This mobility of leadership from the community had left the neighborhood with little or no developed leadership. There are several other factors which contributed to this dilemma. As Smith stated it, "Churches in target areas are not operated by a full-time pastor."³² He also stated, "Schools had held some communities together but many of these have been consolidated."³³ Therefore target neighborhoods had little organization and they saw little need for organization since they had no representation in official governing bodies. Smith reported:

The effectiveness of working on community problems was virtually nil. There were however natural leaders in the communities, but there was no organization which they could work through.³⁴

³¹Community Action in Lincoln Parish, August 1, 1966-January 31, 1967. A report made by Charles Smith and Clifford McLain, Director and Assistant Director of the LTCAA, Inc. during that period.

³²Ibid.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid.

It should not be assumed that all target area people wanted to be organized, nor should it be assumed that all poor people co-operated in bringing about change. Among the reasons opposing organization reported were:

(1) There was natural suspicion of our motives. Few wanted to commit themselves to a new program. (2) There were those who were interested only in financial gain from the program. (3) There were those who feared that the program would be cutoff and they did not want to build up the people's enthusiasm only to be disappointed like they have been so many times in the past. (4) There were conflicts within the various neighborhoods, among the target people themselves.³⁵

The initial step in organizing was to call a meeting of the residents. Once the group was together and had begun to voice their problems there were a multitude of problems. Residents were amazed that other people were concerned about the same problems. Some of these problems according to Smith were:

(1) Poor telephone service (2) School age children were not being required to attend school (3) The young people needed recreational programs (4) The community needed to be cleaned up (5) Inadequate law enforcement (6) Landlords would not repair rent houses (7) Poor water supply (8) Unpaved roads (9) Consumer education (10) Adult education (11) Aged need assistance (12) Poor garbage collections, etc.³⁶

The community was always asked by a staff member if they had a community need. This was done according to Smith because, "If a community does not feel the need for such organization there is no use attempting to organize it."³⁷

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

Most neighborhoods came up with similar problems, some of course had a unique problem depending on where they lived in a rural or urban area. Once a neighborhood voiced a need to organize they were furnished a constitution and by-laws and asked to adopt them.*

There were twelve functioning neighborhood organizations in Lincoln Parish by August, 1967. Each was in a different stage of development. The following is a list of the twelve organizations and some of their projects.

Each neighborhood organization elected a representative to the Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc. Board of Directors to voice the organization's concerns and to help formulate the policies of the Board. The representative was responsible for reporting back to the organization the actions of the Board concerning its membership.³⁸

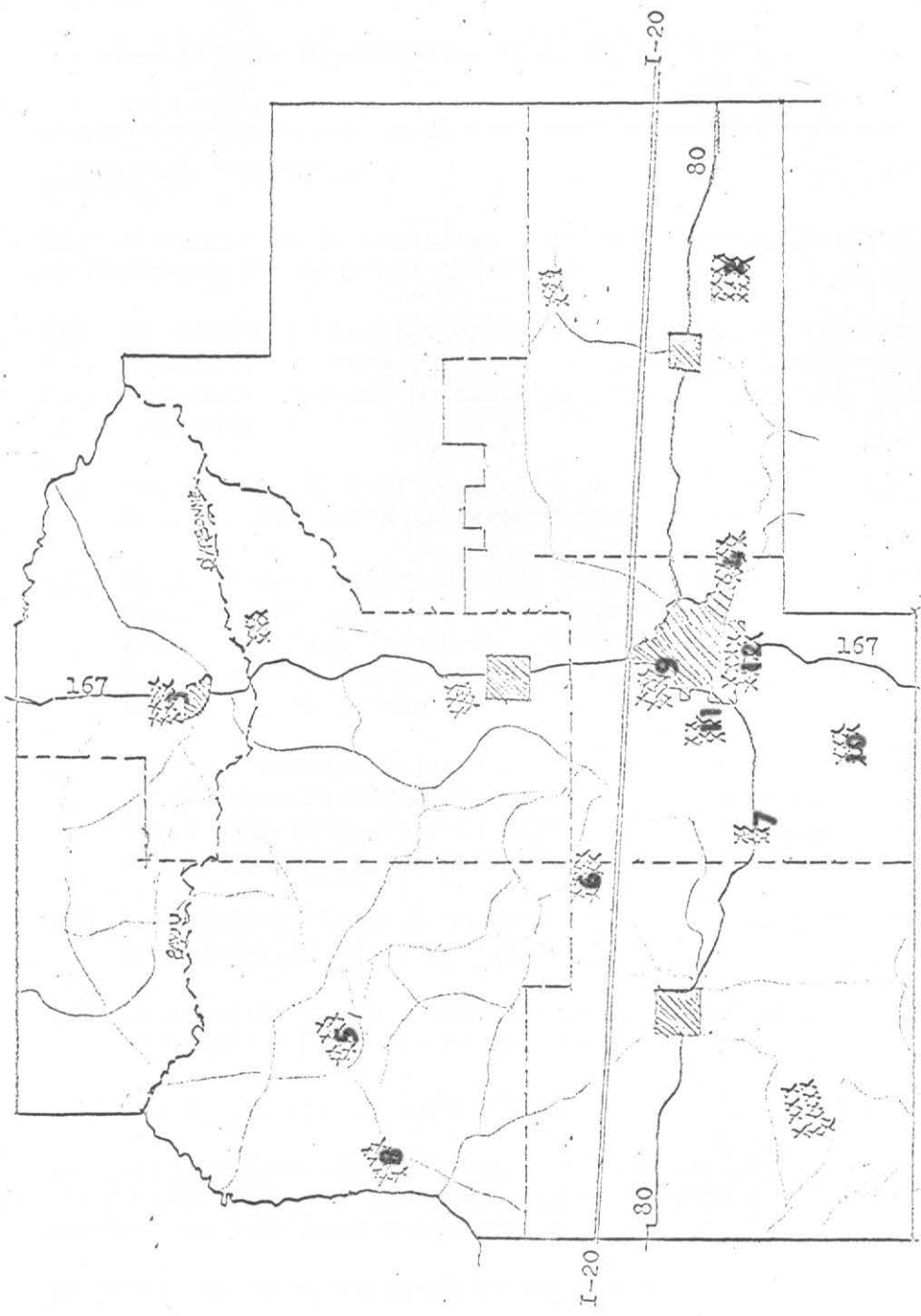
³⁸A copy of the constitution and by-laws common to all neighborhood organizations will be found at the end of this chapter. See map for location of organizations.

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS³⁹

NAME OF ORGANIZATION	CHAIRMAN	ACTIVITIES
1. Branscome	Curtis Mayfield	Recreation Day Care Community Service Clean-up
2. Choudrant	Ellison Benton	Educational Sewing Class Community Service
3. Dubach	John Scales	Recreation, Education Sewing Club, Clean-up Community Service Buying Club
4. Greenwood	Alberta Lewis	Recreation, Day Care Community Service
5. Harmony	Tigg Walker	Recreation, Clean-up Community Service
6. Liberty Hill	Earl Brown	Community Service Clean-up
7. Mt. Olive	Ardonia Gaulden	Recreation, Day Care Community Service
8. Mt. Zion	Allie Coleman	Community Service Clean-up
9. Northside	Cynda Buggs	Day Care, Community Service Clean-up
10. Washington Heights	Earnest Thurmond	Recreation First Aid Class Community Service Day Care
11. Westside	Lucey Frazier	Recreation First Aid Class Community Service Day Care Sewing Class Clean-up
12. Westwood	Theibert Snowden	Recreation Day Care Community Service Clean-up

³⁹Lincoln Community Action Agency, Inc., 1967 Annual Report, Ruston, Louisiana, unpublished, p. 7.

LINCOLN PARISH



xxx - Target areas

LOCATION OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS-NUMBERS MATCH LIST ON PREVIOUS PAGE

CONSTITUTION OF: _____

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this Organization shall be _____

ARTICLE II: PURPOSES

This organization is organized for the following purposes, and to carry on the following purposes and objectives.

- To wit:
- (1) To provide participation of all residents of this community regardless of race, sex, or religious affiliations. To formulate programs to meet the needs of the poor in this community.
 - (2) The articulation of community programs and needs by residents. Express need for Neighborhood based services.
 - (3) To elect an advisory council composed of representatives of the community at large. Further represented by the offices of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, representative of the community as Community Advisors to the staff of Lincoln Total Community Action, Inc.
 - (4) Further representation shall be had by the President becoming a full participating member of the board of directors. He shall also have power to appoint an individual to serve in his absence with the approval of the advisory council.
 - (5) The Advisory Council in each area will give program direction to the Neighborhood service center.
 - (6) To provide proper motivation toward the participation of residents of the war on poverty.

ARTICLE III: BASIS OF ORGANIZATION

This organization shall be organized without capital stock and on a membership basis and membership herein shall be evidenced by certification with the Secretary of the local Neighborhood Organization.

No person shall be required to pay membership fees in this organization.

- (a) All persons of good moral character, and who are otherwise qualified for membership in Lincoln Total Community Action, Inc. in accordance with the by-laws of it's organization shall be eligible for membership.

ARTICLE IV: ORGANIZATIONAL POWERS

The organizational powers of this organization shall be vested in an Advisory Council consisting of a minimum of _____ active persons of this organization; provided however that in no case shall the Advisory Council ever consist of more than _____ members.

- (a) The Advisory Council shall consist of the following officers: to wit: president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer.
- (b) The duties of all officers of this organization shall be provided by in the by-laws.

ARTICLE V: TERM AND TENURE OF OFFICE

The officers of this organization shall serve for a term of one year following the annual election unless removed therefrom by death, mental or physical incapacity or by 2/3 vote of the members of the Advisory Council. And provided further however, that upon the expiration of the term of the office, all others elected to the office shall serve in a like manner and capacity. Any officer may serve for as many times as he is elected.

ARTICLE VI: TERRITORIAL DIVISION OF MEMBERSHIP

This organization shall have the right to provide in it's by-laws membership according to region or district and be extended as far as territory, to the boundaries enveloping designated area of staff of Lincoln Total Community Action, Inc.

ARTICLE VII: BY-LAWS

The Advisory Council of this organization being a 2/3 vote of the members of said council shall have the power to make such by-laws as may be necessary to govern the affairs of this organization, provided however, that the same shall not be inconsistent with division of the charter, constitution and by-laws of Lincoln Total Community Action, Inc. and provided further that each local Neighborhood Organization shall be authorized to make such by-laws as may be necessary to govern said organization, provided however, that the same shall not be inconsistent with the charter, constitution and by-laws provided by the advisory council.

ARTICLE VIII: DUES

Each member of this corporation shall not pay dues in accordance with the guide-lines provided by the Office of Economic Opportunity of Washington, D. C.

ARTICLE IX: MEETING OF ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Advisory Council of this organization shall meet at least once a month, providing that at least one special call meeting shall be held once every month and it may have such other meetings as it may deem advisable.

ARTICLE X: MEETINGS OF THE MEMBERS

The membership of this organization shall have at least one meeting each month, during which meeting said members shall be permitted to vote on the matters concerning membership of this organization in accordance with this constitution and in accordance with the by-laws by which this organization is governed. The first meeting shall be held by the second Saturday following the monthly board meeting of the LTCA. No business transacted by this membership shall be binding upon the corporation of Lincoln Total Community Inc. unless provided for in the by-laws of the constitution and by-laws of Lincoln Total Community Action, Inc.

ARTICLE XI: AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended by the affirmative vote of $2/3$ of the members of this organization, voting as provided members of the Advisory Council.

THUS DONE AND SIGNED AT _____, _____

IN THE PRESENCE OF _____, _____

THE UNDERSIGNED COMPETENT WITNESS ON THIS _____

DAY OF _____, A.D. 1967.

PRESIDENT

SECRETARY

WITNESSES:

Charles R. Smith, Director

Clifford McLain, Assist. Director

TO THE CONSTITUTION OF _____

Neighborhood Organization.

ARTICLE I: MEMBERSHIP

Qualifications of eligibility for membership shall be as follows: (1) Any person desiring to become a member of this organization must and in accordance with provisions of the constitution, register with the Secretary of this organization. There shall be no restrictions as to sex, race, creed or color. (2) Only residents of the area covered by this constitution, relating to territory shall be members, and shall be confined to residents of the above with the exception of the following: (a) School Administrators (b) Ministers (c) Persons cleared by the Lincoln Total Community Action Staff. (3) Membership on the Advisory Council and as officers shall be confined to the above.

ARTICLE II:

(Section 1) Officers and Elections

The executive power shall be vested in a President of the Neighborhood Organization. He (or she, as the case might be) shall hold office for a term of one year immediately following the Annual Election, and shall be elected by the majority vote of the registered members of the Neighborhood Organization. Any conditions prior to the adoption of this constitution and these by-laws shall not be effected. This regulation becomes effective as of date of adoption by the members of this organization.

(Section 2) His duties are as follows:

- (1) To open the session at the time at which the assembly is to meet, by taking the chair and calling the members to order.
- (2) To announce the business before the assembly in the order in which it is to be acted upon.
- (3) To recognize members entitled to the floor.
- (4) To state, and to put to vote all questions which are regularly moved or arise in the course of the proceedings and to announce the results of the vote.
- (5) To assist the expending of business in every way compatible with the rights and privileges of the members, to restrain the members when engaged in debate within the rules of order.
- (6) To protect the assembly from annoyance from delatory motions by refusing to recognize them.
- (7) To enforce on all occasions the observance of order and decorum among the members, deciding all questions of order.
- (8) To inform the assembly on a point of order or practice pertinent to pending business.
- (9) To authenticate by a signature all the acts, orders, and proceedings of the assembly.
- (0) To preside at council meetings

(Section 3)

All officers are elected by a majority vote of the Registered members. The same rules as applied to the President shall be extended to these officers. In case of a vacancy of an office or on the Advisory Council, the vacancy is filled by the President with the approval of the Advisory Council.

(Section 4)

Duties of the Vice President: He shall preside over the meetings in the absence of the President but shall have no vote in it's activities. He shall have the power to call special meetings with the approval of the President and shall act on behalf of the President when called upon to fulfill said duties. He shall assist the President in the expending of business and perform all other duties of the President when called upon to do so, at the request of the President. Shall also serve on Advisory Council and on Finance Committee.

(Section 5)

Duties of the Secretary: The whole of this office shall keep the minutes of the meetings, keep a register and roll of the members, shall notify officers, committees and Advisory Councilmen of their appointment and is to furnish committees and councilmen with all papers referred to them. Shall also keep one book in which the Constitution, by-laws, rules or order are all in writing. A report must be sent in each month which will give data on the total membership of the organization, new members and the general welfare of the organization. This report will be headed as a "Progress Report." Shall also serve on Advisory Council and Finance Committee.

(Section 6)

Duties of the Treasurer: The duties of the Treasurer shall be merely holding any funds deposited with him as may be authorized through the Board of Directors of Lincoln Total Community Action, Inc. Also serve on Advisory Council, serve on Finance Committee as chairman and make monthly reports to CAP, INC.

ARTICLE III: ORDER OF BUSINESS

- A. Meeting called to order.
- B. Reading of the minutes of previous meeting.
- C. Number present
- D. Reports of Council, report of Board Representatives and standing committees.
- E. Reports of special committees.
- F. Unfinished business.
- G. New business.
- H. Adjournment.

ARTICLE IV: CONSTITUTION

No organizational constitution shall be in violation of the constitution and by-laws of Lincoln Total Community Action, Inc. All organizational constitutions must be submitted in duplicate form for approval by the Lincoln Total Community Action staff.

ARTICLE V: AMENDMENTS TO BY-LAWS

Amendments to these by-laws shall be made by a 2/3 vote of members present at any meeting when the proposal or amendment has been sent out in the notice of such meeting.

ARTICLE VI: RANK OF ORGANIZATION

This organization shall be subordinate to the Board of Directors of Lincoln Total Community Action, Inc. and must comply with the rules and regulations set forth in the constitutional by-laws of Lincoln Total Community Action, Inc.

ARTICLE VII: RULES OF GOVERNMENT

This organization shall be governed by the Roberts Rule of Order (Revised).

ARTICLE VIII: COMMITTEES

(Section 1)

Directions: All committees shall be chaired by an appointed member of the Advisory Council, said appointment by the President.

(Section 2)

Social Service Committees: This committee shall function under the direction of the Advisory Council and shall serve in a capacity related to the field of Social Service. Shall be called upon to participate in surveys, excursions and any matter relating to Social Services.

Continuation of Section 2 - Article 8

COMMITTEES:

Membership Committee - This committee shall seek applicants for general membership.

Public Relations Committee - This committee shall be responsible for the announcement of meetings in the mass news media, communications media and general advisory for the local neighborhood organizations. This committee shall assist the President in the preparation and release of all statements relative to the neighborhood organization.

Inspection Committee - This committee shall serve under the directorship of the President utilizing the Robert Rules of Order revised to interpret rules of order. This committee shall act under the direction of the inspection committee of the Board of Directors of Lincoln Total Community Action, Inc. toward the end of determining if this organization is operated as described in this constitution.

Health Committee - This committee shall serve under the directorship of the Health Committee of the Board of Directors of Lincoln Total Community Action, Inc. assisting in its functions of surveys for health needs in the community.

Education Committee - This committee shall function in the capacity of surveying and establishing educational levels of community residence together with suggesting needed educational programs that can be implemented.

Nominating Committee - This committee shall serve to nominate members of the advisory council from the general membership during election time.

Volunteer Committee - This committee shall screen all volunteer services and facilities offered to this organization and report upon the same. Volunteers shall be used to provide in-kind service contribution for the local neighborhood organization as well as assist in any capacity upon need.

Employment Committee - This committee shall be responsible for doing research and survey on manpower needs and working with the local neighborhood service centers in ascertaining the employment status of residence in the community and of assisting of employment for these persons.

Community Needs Committee - This committee shall ascertain community needs, urge and assist applicants to fill their needs. (Made up of chairman of all other committees.

Recreation Committee - This committee shall ascertain recreational needs within the boundaries of this constitution and may suggest programs to meet these needs.

Welfare Committee - This committee shall be responsible for research and statistics, surveying and data on the conditions and status of welfare recipient toward the end of assisting these persons in any way possible within the limitations and scope of this organization.

Finance Committee - This committee shall be responsible for all financial matters.

Building Committee - This committee shall be responsible for supervising all building projects.

CHAPTER IV

THE PROGRAMS OF LINCOLN TOTAL COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY, INC.

The Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc. function in two areas. One is conduct and administration, which employs three staff members.¹ The other is the Area Resource Center which is responsible for the bulk of projects and programs.

The Area Resource Center started its operation in August of 1967. In the beginning there were two main objectives for this center. One, to provide an opportunity for the low income residents to better help themselves. This was to be accomplished by providing a structure where the poor could be made aware of their responsibilities as members of a democratic society by participating in the identification of their needs, and by having an effective voice in determining how these needs were to be met. The second, to lessen the gap between the people and the network of social services through a frontal attack on the factors which cause under-utilization of these services. These objectives are being met by the Area Resource Center.

Following is a summary of activities from each of the three divisions of the Area Resource Center.

It should be mentioned that the activities being carried out by these departments are continually changing. For instance, a new program

¹See Organizational Chart at the end of Chapter IV.

is tried and found not suitable to meet the needs of the people; so it is dropped and another approach is made. This flexibility allows the center to experiment with new approaches to meet the needs of the poor. This must be done in a program as new as this because there are no easy solutions to the complex problems of poverty.

A. Manpower Department

The Manpower Department was functioning in three areas. First, it was acting as an employment agency for Lincoln Parish. There was neither a branch of the Louisiana Division of Employment Security or a private agency functioning in this vicinity, so that the Manpower Department did fill a pressing need.

Secondly, this department recruits applicants for Job Corps and Neighborhood Youth Corps. These two organization will be more fully delineated in a later paragraph.

The last major function of the Manpower Department was to make an overall assessment of the employment atmosphere in the parish and to make long-range plans in connection therewith.

Of all the various department of the ARC, none can show their effectiveness more than by simply counting their accomplishments.

The Manpower Department had 216 applicants and 81 placements, with 61 of these being below the poverty line, between September 1 to November 30, 1967.²

²Lincoln Community Action, Inc., 1967 Annual Report. Unpublished, Ruston, Louisiana, p. 16.

The Manpower Department was responsible for co-ordinating the Job Corps Program with the Louisiana State Employment Service. The Job Corps was an institutional training program:

Job Corps is a program of basic education, skill training, and useful work experience for young men and women. It is aimed at those who need a change of environment and individual help to develop talents, self-confidence, and motivation to improve themselves. Enrollees reside at three types of Job Corps centers: (1) conservation centers for men, located in national parks and forests and (2) training centers for men, located on unused Federal military installations in or near urban areas and operated under contract by private and public agencies, and (3) training centers for women, located on leased facilities and operated under contract by private and public agencies.

Enrollees receive room and board, medical and dental care, work clothing, a nominal allowance for purchase of dress clothing, a monthly living allowance of \$30, and a terminal allowance of \$50 for each month of satisfactory service in the Job Corps.³

Eligibility requirements for Job Corps applicants were:

Anyone age 16 through 21 who is a citizen and permanent resident of the United States is eligible to join the Job Corps. Enrollees sought are those who are most likely to continue living in poverty if they are forced to continue living in their present environment.⁴

Presently sixteen young men and women from Lincoln Parish are in the Job Corps learning skills ranging from auto mechanics to typewriter repair.⁵ These young people will be prepared to make a definite contribution to their society when they complete training.

³Catalog of Federal Assistance Programs (Washington, D. C.: Office of Economic Opportunity, June 1, 1967), p. 555.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Lincoln Community Action, Inc., 1967 Annual Report. Unpublished, Ruston, Louisiana, p. 18.

The Manpower Department also co-ordinated Neighborhood Youth Corps Activities. The NYC program was authorized under Title I B of the Office of Economic Act and was divided into three major programs:

The Neighborhood Youth Corps has three major programs: an in-school program, and out-of-school program, and a summer program. The in-school program provides part-time work and on-the-job training for students of high school age from low-income families. The summer program provides these students with job opportunities during the summer months. The out-of-school program provides economically deprived dropouts with practical work experience and on-the-job training to encourage them to return to school and resume their education, or if this is not feasible, to help them acquire work habits and attitudes that will improve their employability.

The in-school program is open to students from low-income families, grades 9 through 12, or those who are of high school age but are in lower grades. The out-of-school program is open to unemployed youth from low-income families who are 16 through 21 years of age.⁶

To date 110 young people in Lincoln Parish have been assisted through the Neighborhood Youth Corps Program.⁷

B. Education Department

One of the most disturbing characteristics of poverty was its tendency to be self-perpetuating. Attitudes of indifference toward school and work plus a poor self-concept are all too often passed from parents to children. The transmission of these attitudes was perhaps more important and more tragic, than the physical inheritance of an impoverished environment.

School can do much to counteract the debilitating influence of the home and to resist these negative attitudes. However, many youngsters

⁶Catalog of Federal Assistance Programs (Washington, D. C.: Office of Economic Opportunity, June 1, 1967) p. 483.

⁷Lincoln Community Action, Inc., 1967 Annual Report. Unpublished, Ruston, Louisiana, p. 20.

who entered school in the first grade were inadequately prepared to take advantage of the learning experience which elementary school offered them, and consequently they rapidly fell behind. This inadequate preparation may have long-range effects resulting in poor academic performance throughout elementary school and culminating in drop out during high school.

The educational programs this agency has undertaken in Lincoln Parish were primarily intended to fill in the "gap" between a poor learning environment in the home and the academic demands of school. These programs also -- and perhaps more importantly -- intended to close this gap by reaching the parents of the deprived and encouraging their involvement in the educational process.

The Education Department assists Grambling College in identifying and recruiting Upward Bound applicants.

Upward Bound is a national pre-college program designed to motivate secondary school students who have been handicapped in their studies by economic, cultural, and educational deficiencies. Through special educational and counseling programs, these students are given a new chance to reach their academic potential. Each project consists of two phases: (1) a 6- to 8-week intensive summer are consolidated through after-school tutoring and weekend sessions. The full-time summer residential program offers small classrooms, individual tutoring by undergraduate college students, personal counseling, medical and dental care, and small weekly stipends. Academic study is supplemented by cultural and creative activities in art, music drama, photography, journalism, and off-campus field trips.

There were four types of classes being conducted by the Area Resource Center. Adult education, education above the elementary levels, basic

⁸Catalog of Federal Assistance Programs (Washington, D. C.: Office of Economic Opportunity, June 1, 1967), p. 558.

literacy training for illiterates, and various other classes mostly centered around the home. First aid and home nursing were examples of the latter type. At the end of 1967 there were 112 people enrolled in these various classes.⁹

An outstanding example of cooperative efforts and community organization was the Mt. Olive Day Care Center. A church donated the land and building for its use. Underprivileged children between the ages of two and five were transported five days a week to the center where they were exposed to a normal classroom situation.

In the Day Care Center the children received supervised learning and play.

No direct Federal or State funds had been spent on this project. All of the teaching time, space, food and equipment had been contributed by interested citizens of the community. December 1967 closed with 43 children enrolled.¹⁰

Another educational program, Tutoring-Big Brother was being investigated and was nearing implementation. Many elementary and secondary level students fell behind in certain subjects and need individual attention. The school teachers gave each student as much attention as they could, but in many instances there was not enough of their time to go around. To help with this problem, it was felt that personal relationships would

⁹Lincoln Community Action, Inc., 1967 Annual Report, Unpublished, Ruston, Louisiana, p. 33.

¹⁰ibid.

help the student catch-up. Volunteers were being recruited, and a training program was being established that would equip the volunteers to do this task.

These individuals, mostly college students or Louisiana Tech and Grambling would spend time with the students, giving them the individual attention. Hopefully, a personal relationship would also develop between the tutor and the students, and in this way help raise the sights and goals of those whose aspiration level was low.

C. Individual and Family Services

The concept underlying this department is to treat the individual's problems as they arise and try to in whatever way necessary to help him solve his problems. As one might expect, it was difficult to categorize individual problems, but they do seem to fall into a limited number of areas.

Housing, for example, was one of the more pressing problems facing the underprivileged. Because of their low incomes, their budget amount allocated for housing was low, and it was practically impossible to obtain good housing within their budget. As a result, they were forced to live in substandard housing; housing without indoor bathrooms, with inadequate and hazardous heating, poor ventilation, poor construction, and poor maintenance.

In order to alleviate this problem, three means of attack were devised.

If possible, programs should be established that would enable those with steady incomes to own their homes. This can be accomplished

in several ways. If they live in rural areas, the Department of Agriculture has several programs that would enable an interested family to contribute their labor to the building of a low-cost home. In urban areas the Federal Housing Authority has several programs that were being investigated which offer some promise.

A second means of attacking the problem was to provide a dwelling of good construction that was available for rent. The Ruston Housing Authority had several such projects that accomplished this end, but the need was particularly acute, and the demand far exceeds the supply.

The third method was simply to keep abreast of private rental property available. Families moving into the area or those who had been displaced locally may have immediate needs in this area that must be satisfied quickly. An attempt was made to keep up-to-date so as to be in a position to provide this service as needed.

There were times when an individual or a family had an emergency housing need. A home destroyed by fire; a member of a family may be in chronic need of emergency medical treatment. These types of situations occurred with some frequency, and although the satisfaction of those needs were not directly related to the elimination of poverty, it was felt that by providing aid, the staff may have been able to establish communication with the poor and be in a position to introduce them to some of the other programs more directly related to their poverty problem.

Any emergency aid provided was that contributed by public spirited citizens of the community. The Area Resource Center itself had no money

Board of Directors

Director of LTCAA, Inc.

Assistant-Director
of LTCAA, Inc.

Secretary
to
Director of LTCAA

Director of ARC

Secretary-Receptionist
to ARC Director

Coordinator of
Individual & Family
Development

Asst.-Director of ARC
and
Manpower Coordinator

Coordinator
of
Education

Assistant-Coordinator
of Individual & Family
Development

Assistant-Coordinator
of
Manpower

Assistant-Coordinator
of
Education

Individual & Family
Development
Aide

Manpower Aide

Education Aide

ARC Dubach Aide

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND OBSERVATIONS

The intent of the Office of Economic Opportunity was to involve the total community into discussing, planning, and executing the programs which would solve community problems. In an effort to accomplish this objective, total control was given to a local Board of Directors, made up of local people from all segments of the community.

In a highly specialized society, it was a normal procedure to leave these plans and projects to experts. As a result of leaving the planning and problem-solving in the hands of a few, apathy on the part of many was a way of life. People who were left out felt they had no voice in the programs which were created for them. They felt no responsibility for the failures of those programs and really never felt a part of their society. It was the author's observation that the poor in Lincoln Parish had seldom been given a chance to exercise responsibility for themselves, their family, or their community. In their changing society this responsibility has been given to them without previous experience in exercising that responsibility with the expectation that they could, by some Divine Revelation, "know" what to do and how to do it. It was with the recognition of that condition that Community Action Agencies were operated. This Agency had several channels of inner-action among people.

The Board of Directors gave opportunities to all facets of community institutions to discuss problems, the poor with the rich, Negro with White, the governing official with the minister. All were given a

chance to be heard, and better understanding each other's problems was a result of these discussions. Suspicion was deferred to positive action. In Lincoln Parish, the involvement of all segments of the community had not been accomplished but a beginning had been made. The Board of Directors directed the areas of community concern, and the staff reported its findings to the Board for review and they in turn used them as a source for better program planning.

The Advisory Council was another phase of democracy in that it opened another opportunity for interested citizens to have their influence felt in the Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc. and another opportunity for an exchange of views. Area Resource Center staff served as a catalytic force between the Board and the Advisory Council.

The staff's position of importance was in the personal contacts made in meeting with target area people and hearing their views, getting them involved, and informing them of other sources available to them in their needs. All of these actions and observations were communicated back to the Board of Directors, as has previously been stated.

Target Area Organizations elected representatives to serve them on the General Board, thus assuring involvement of the poor in the policy-making body of Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc. and also giving them a chance to voice an opinion as to what programs, available under the OEO Act, tended to best serve them and to add suggestions of better program planning.

Interaction between these groups brought excellent opportunity for long range planning in areas of health, employment and community development

and also provided the means to educate the public to the needs and opportunities in their communities.

The agency worked toward taking advantage of yet another opportunity, the prevention of wasteful duplication of services to the community. Communication with other agencies serving the needs of the poor, Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc. can supplement, when necessary, rather than duplicate the energies and findings of others in public service. Cooperation saved time and effort which was channeled to more immediate and positive action and most important, a community would always be in a ready position to know when, where, and how future problems can best be handled. A democratic way of life leads one to believe that through communication, cooperation, and understanding, hunger and hopelessness could be alleviated to a degree and hope could be brought once again to the hopeless.

Democracy is not a system but a process. The Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc. provides the means by which this process can take place and gives an opportunity not only to voice opinions and problems, but also to act to find fruitful solutions to those problems.

in its budget for give-aways, and to successfully solve an emergency problem the resources of the community must be utilized.

Each of the preceding departments utilized volunteer workers in program activities. Ten per cent of the budget of Lincoln Total Community Action Agency, Inc. was contributed from the local community. To meet this requirement, the agency had a volunteer program designed to utilize the services of those in the community who saw the need for this type of program and who could devote part of their time to its aims.

Each staff member was responsible for working with an assigned target area. This included meeting with the community organization and encouraging the residents to work together. The staff member also explained agency projects and programs to the people. These meetings provided the residents an opportunity to criticize and evaluate the effectiveness of the total program.

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