

poverty program primer

PART I: COMMUNITY ACTION GROUPS

(IF YOU MAKE UNDER \$3000.00 A YEAR
YOU ARE ONE OF MANY POOR PEOPLES
IN MISSISSIPPI AND THE POVERTY
PROGRAM WAS DESIGNED TO HELP YOU

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GUILD

WHAT IS THE POVERTY PROGRAM?

The poverty program is a series of projects that are supposed to help poor peoples, like the Job Corps, Headstart, etc. One of the Poverty Programs that can help poor peoples the most is the Community Action Program (C.A.P)

What is the Community Action Program?

It is a way for the poor peoples to plan programs to help them stop being poor. If a group of poor peoples have an idea of a way to help themselves, they can ask the United States Government for money. They might want to have day-care centers where a mother that works can leave her children without having to pay a dollar a day, and where she knows they will be well fed and taken care of. They might want to have free lawyers that fight for the poor peoples to make sure they don't get gypped. They might plan to have training centers so that people could get paid while they go to school and learn how to be welders or secretaries, and things like that. ANYTHING THAT POOR PEOPLES CAN THINK OF TO HELP THEM STOP BEING POOR, THEY CAN GET MONEY FOR UNDER THE COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM.

How does it work?

The community action program is very complicated and takes a lot of studying on it to understand. BUT IF POOR PEOPLES WANT TO MAKE SURE THE MONEY IS USED TO HELP THEM, THEY WILL HAVE TO KNOW ABOUT IT. Many rich people and people like Governor Paul Johnson will try to control the money so that the poor peoples will do what they say and scratch their heads and say "thank you, Mr. Charlie" and not fight for freedom. Remember that this is your money, that Washington voted for you to use.

NOW THIS IS HOW A C.A.P program should work

1. People in a large city or town or county have to form a committee. This committee is called a Community Action Board (C.A.B) This C.A.B is supposed to represent all the people--city government, welfare agencies, and especially poor peoples. The C.A.B is supposed to arrange it so that poor peoples can plan programs and then get the money from Washington to help run them. For example, the people from city X, form a board and ask Washington for a PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT GRANT. This means money to hire a director and people to help find

How why people in an area are poor, and what they need to stop being poor. They could hire poor peoples \$1.25 an hour to make a survey in their neighborhoods. If the survey showed that a lot of mothers worked, that people didn't have good jobs because they needed training, and that there weren't enough businesses to hire people, then the C.A.B could ask Washington for money to start day-care centers, for children of working mothers, for training programs that would be free and people could get paid \$35 a week while they were being trained, and they could set up a loan fund, with low interest to help start businesses and cooperatives and get advice and education on running a business. Whenever possible poor peoples would be hired to work in the program. For example, in the day care centers they could hire the mothers for the cooking and the teaching, and set up training programs so they could be good teachers. THIS IS HOW IT SHOULD WORK--HOWEVER, IN MISSISSIPPI THERE ARE PROBLEMS.

The rich white people don't want to see the poor, peoples, especially Negroes, running their own programs and running their own lives, because the rich white people know that then the poor peoples will start speaking out for freedom.

Washington says that the poor people should run their own programs. In a speech Nov. 5, Sargent Shriver, who is the boss of the poverty program said that the poor peoples should plan these programs right from the beginning. He also said that these programs wouldn't be any good unless the poor peoples ran them, because poor peoples know more about being poor than rich people.

The problem is that poor people will have to speak up. Sargent Shriver is like everybody else--he is afraid he will lose his job if he fights the rich white peoples too much and the poor peoples don't help him. He also knows that poor peoples have more votes than rich peoples. If poor peoples organize their own committees, and say they want to run their own programs, Shriver will stop being scared and help them. But if the poor people sit back the rich people will control the money.

IN PLACES WHERE THE POOR PEOPLE HAVE RAISED ENOUGH SAND, THEY ARE RUNNING THE PROGRAMS. WHERE THEY SAT BACK, THE RICH PEOPLE ARE IN CONTROL. WHO DO YOU THINK OUGHT TO RUN THEM?

HERE ARE SOME OF THE THINGS POOR PEOPLES CAN DO AND ARE DOING AROUND THE STATE.

1. They should study on the Community Action Program and know all about it.
2. They should have meetings and elect a committee to represent them.
3. These committees should find out if there is a community action program in their area, and who is on it. If there is a C.A.P. they should demand to be on it, and complain to Washington if they aren't. If they don't have a C.A.P. in their area, they should find out how to get one.
4. They should come to a statewide meeting to be announced soon, so that all the poor people in the state can tell Washington together that they want to run their own programs and can learn more about them.

HERE IS WHAT WE ARE DOING IN JACKSON. There is a committee of 23 rich white people and 13 hand picked Negroes and NO POOR PEOPLES that are trying to control the program BUT the poor peoples are electing their own committee, by having neighborhood meetings. This committee has written letters to Washington and will be able to stop the rich peoples committee, if enough poor peoples come to the meetings.

If you are interested in having a poor peoples committee and want to know more about the C.A.P program and how to form a committee you can get more information and have some one talk to you about it in your area, contact

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