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PLANNING AND USING RESURRECTION CITY

Planner's Notebook

PLANNING AND USING RESURRECTION CITY

John Wiebenson

Resurrection City was the dwelling place, on the Mall, of about 2,800 demonstrators brought to Washington, D.C., as part of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "Poor People's Campaign of 1968." Rains and organizational difficulties within the City and the Campaign eventually caused severe problems; yet at the peak of its development it was a demonstration of people building for themselves with enthusiasm and pride. Though temporary, Resurrection City is a useful model of the community development process in action.

Resurrection City was built and occupied, then emptied and dismantled, within forty-three days during May and June of 1968. These were rainy days in the nation's capital, days made more grim by the assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy.

Reverend King called Resurrection City into being as part of his "Poor People's Campaign of 1968." He claimed the country was blind to the existence of the poor and to their food, housing, and medical problems. Resurrection City and the Campaign were intended to make the poor "visible" by bringing representatives to Washington where, during the life of the City, they would be seen by Congressmen and, via the press and TV, by the rest of the country.

This study will discuss the planning, construction, and use of Resurrection City from the vantage point of one of the members of the advisory committee on buildings and community plans. Main topics of consideration will include organization for planning, construction systems, community systems, and conclusions about this example of the community development process.

Organization for Planning

About a month before the original starting date for building Resurrection City, a committee was formed to give advice on buildings and community plans.[1] Originally, our committee was to advise on occupancy and layout of donated tents. But, like so many donations, the tents never appeared. We were soon asked for more and more advice, and eventually some of us helped build or helped campaign leaders negotiate with the government for the site. As the "Structures Committee," we worked with other committees for food, medicine, procurement and storage, services, transportation, legal aid, and non-poor involvement. Most committee members came from the Washington area, and most were white professionals, but there were many black professionals and local poor as well.

Committees operated under the direction of Anthony Henry, a black sociologist on leave of absence from a Chicago community program. Henry, as Local Coordinator, headed the weekly meetings of committee chairmen, and was also the liaison with the leaders of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference who controlled finances and major decisions, but who remained out of town until immediately before the City was built. Basically, then, we were part of a large body of part-time planners working fairly closely with the local representative of a distant and rather scattered client.

Residents were recruited from all over the country, but mostly from the rural South and the large cities of the Northeast and Midwest. Most of the whites came from the Appalachian highlands. They were all ages, but mostly they were young. There were Indians, whites, Puerto Ricans, and Mexican-Americans among them, but most were blacks. Nobody knew how many would come, and estimates varied between 3,000 and 5,000, once getting as high as 15,000. Actually, the City was to hold about 2,800, primarily because the Mexican-Americans never lived there.

Our first move as the Structures Committee was to collect as much information as we could about residents, building materials, and site conditions. Since limited data were available, we filled in the gaps with assumptions. Our basic assumption about the residents grew out of the fact that they were coming from diverse backgrounds to dwell, briefly, in a community imbedded in what would be for them an alien environment. Therefore, we felt they would need the City's formal and programmatic framework to be both complete and explicit. This framework would have to respond to a wide variety of needs as the residents would require not only arrangements for security and health, but also conditions that facilitated neighborly relationships. Since we assumed that a resident's "day" would be devoted not only to eating, sleeping, and demonstrating, structures to house informal activities would also be needed. Finally, we assumed that three-quarters of the residents would be single, and the others would be in families that might include children.

The site for the City was to be within the Washington area, but its specific location was not pinned down until about three days before it was to begin. However, since the Structures Committee had been asked to report on the various open, publicly owned spaces in Washington in terms of their size, symbolism, distance to government buildings, and environmental qualities, we were able to assume that it would be one of five locations.

It was intended that Resurrection City would be built from donated materials and labor. It was not until quite late that it became apparent that people were going to donate more money than goods. In fact, except for 300 gallons of paint, virtually no building materials were donated. Donated labor, on the other hand, turned out in quantities exceeding everyone's expectations. Although there was less help from organized labor than was hoped, many church and neighborhood groups and individuals wanted to help build. Because of their numbers and enthusiasm, the problem with workers was how to use them all.

We organized our information in terms of problem areas and problem responses with attention to security, health, and social needs. (See Figure 1.) This analysis was used for work within the Structures Committee as well as for work with other committees. Next we started developing plans for construction and community systems, which were only tentative, but which would help us to advise on site selection, utilities, and schedules for materials and labor.

Construction Systems

The primary goals of the construction systems were: (1) shelter and services for the residents soon after their arrival; (2) severe economy of materials; (3) full use of all labor resources; (4) durability; and (5) protection from the weather. This suggested that shelter structures should be made of components prefabricated by volunteers and assembled by residents. Because of our population assumptions, we developed two types—one for families and one for dormitories, housing five or six people. Some larger, more complex structures, which could not be easily prefabricated, were

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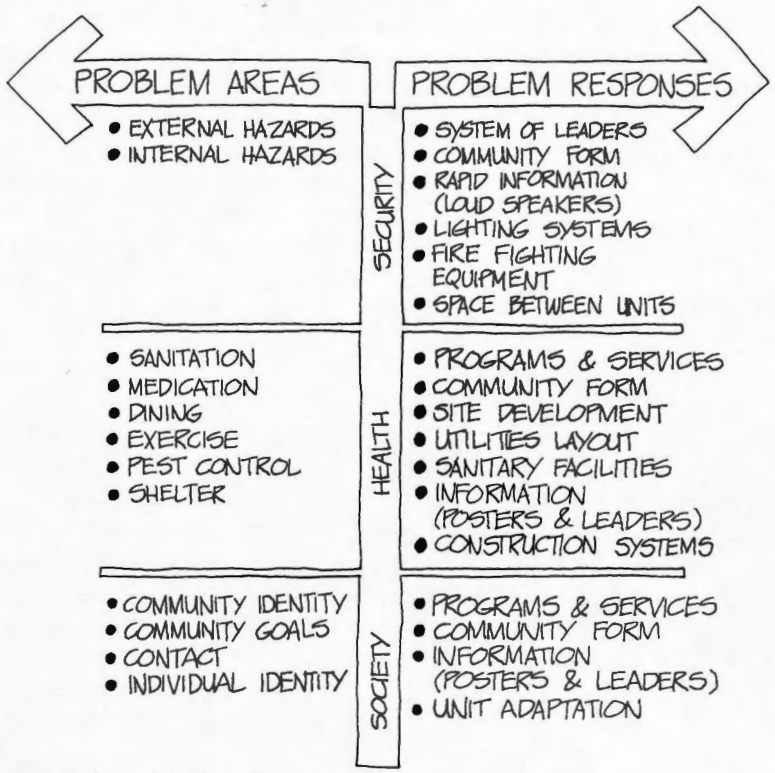


FIGURE 1 *Problem Areas and Responses*

also needed, so these were rented—chemical toilets, tents for dining halls, and refrigerated trucks for food storage. All other construction took place at the site.

Testing of designs was carried out on two fronts. First, we checked them against other designs, but since there were few precedents (army camps, migratory worker camps, and the like), we used a sketch problem at Howard University's Department of Architecture to provide alternative models for building and planning. In addition, interested Washington architects were asked to submit their proposals. Next, shelter prototypes were built to test materials, use, methods of construction, and durability. A number of changes were suggested by these tests and checks.

The final shelter units were triangular in section, with floor and roof panels of plywood on 2 × 4's. A plastic membrane was used at the ridges to admit light without loss of privacy and to make a simple waterproof joint. The larger structures to be built at the City for service functions were also designed of lumber and plywood and had floors to prevent weather problems. Originally, we had hoped to find a construction system that would permit a kind of covered arcade for the main service spine. Such possibilities as telephone poles, with canvas for roof and partitions, were considered. However, our assumptions of available construction skills and money led us to more conventional solutions. Basically, construction systems used the highest possible technology for planning and the lowest possible for building.

Shelter unit components were trucked to the site near the Lincoln Memorial on May 13th. The day before, volunteers, using plans we had made, had started painting marks on the grass to locate construction. (The marks had to be repainted two days later when park lawnmowers came through.) Then, immediately after Rev. Abernathy drove a ceremonial spike, "foremen" trained by the yard supervisor helped the poor people and local volunteers erect shelters from the laid-out components. Many units were put up during these first few days. Most builders increased their efficiency by forming into teams to accomplish a specific task: there were floor-and-frame teams, skylight teams, and door teams. Later shelters were made by those who would inhabit them. Foremen were no longer needed, for new arrivals simply used existing shelters as guides, paying attention to even minor points of construction.

During this period of major construction lasting for the first week or two of the City's life, the committee tried to have at least one member at the site during the entire day. Most construction problems were simple and easily handled, such as changing details in plans for large building construction to help the carpenters. Other problems, arising from organizational difficulties within the City and the Campaign, were more complicated, and some were never solved. It was never possible, for example, to properly put in drainage systems for showers and sinks, and people had to be bussed to baths.

Helping with construction made it possible for members of the committee to see how people could build their own shelters with enthusiasm and pride. Some, usually those from the rural South, built slowly and individually; those from large cities seemed to have more experience in working together, and they built rapidly in teams. The New York crowd, for example, was able to put up shelters at a rate of about one unit per fifteen minutes per three-man team. The shelters belonged to their users, and after assembling them, many personal adaptations were made, ranging from painting names or designs (squares, stars, dot patterns, and faces were most popular) to making special doors or windows. Some even adapted the components, using the implicit system of geometry, to make second stories, or, before the rains came, sun-decks. The materials were available, and people used them.

Community Systems

In developing the community plan for Resurrection City, the Structures Committee tried to provide for spaces, services, and identity at several scales. The smallest scale was the single shelter unit that housed one family or, as a dormitory, five or six people. The next scale was nine shelter units (about fifty people) formed into a compound that backed onto a shower and toilet "core." Then, groups of four compounds (about 200 people) were formed with a leader's shack (also used for group storage and supplies) at its entranceway. Finally, a group of about 900 people would

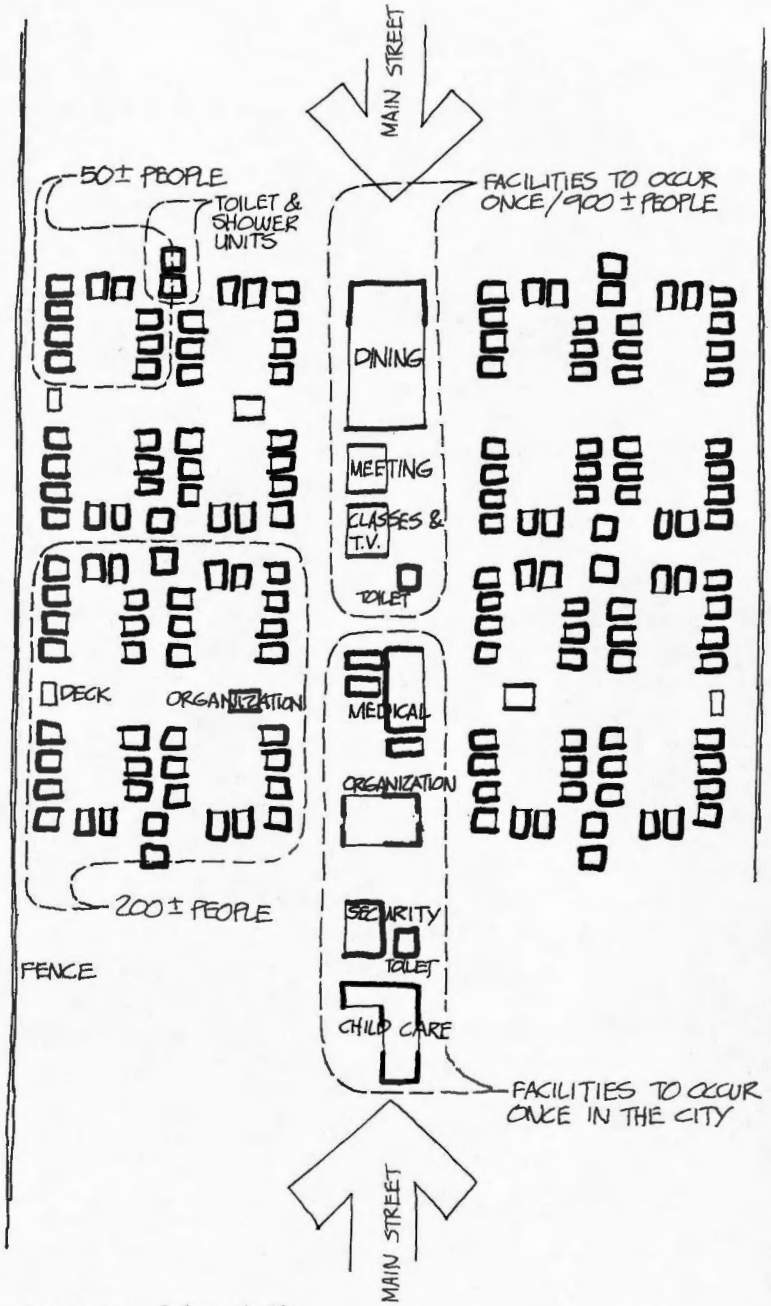


FIGURE 2 *Schematic Plan*

share a dining tent at their location on the Main Street. "Main Street," the central community spine, was to hold all other services and to tie the diverse elements together, both functionally and symbolically. (See Figure 2.)

This plan was only a guide, to be adapted when the site was finally made known. Actually, the site selected required only a few changes in the plan. Most of the compounds south of Main Street had to be adjusted to fit between trees, for this area was heavily wooded. Other factors caused more changes. Because of equipment shortages, only the dining tent already up at the western end of the City could be operated. Then, the public agency that supplied the medical and dental trailers required that they be placed outside the City (contrary to our plans and to those of the volunteer doctors, too). Several other service buildings scheduled for the Main Street also failed to appear, further reducing its possible level of activities, but Main Street was still the public place. Because community services were located here, and because it went the length of the City, this was the place of greatest traffic—basically pedestrian. New services would naturally locate here. When a couple of Diggers (a San Francisco group organized to provide free goods) arrived, they put up their bakery here. In good weather, this became a meeting place; when looking for someone, or when looking for company, people would go to the public way. On the morning of Robert Kennedy's assassination, this is where many stood, quietly, waiting for news.

Main Street was not only the public place but also the communication spine. Telephones for offices, pay phones for residents, mail, and notices were here. Loudspeakers for rapid communitywide spread of information were also here, but, through continuous use, were soon no longer "heard." Newspapers, both from inside and outside, were available at City Hall, near the center of Main Street. Visiting congressmen and celebrities walked its length, sometimes joining in a town meeting held there. At one end, it opened, through a guarded gate, into a parking area where reporters and curious onlookers might wait.

Another kind of communication, a sort of "bridge" between the City and the outside world, occurred away from Main Street, beside the northern perimeter fence. Passers-by would stop here to read the walls of several shelters that had been covered with enough slogans to turn them into billboards. Then, quite naturally, they would fall into conversation with residents standing within the fence. On sunny days, there were always groups on each side of the fence talking to one another.

The problems that limited public construction also prevented organizing the building of leaders' and group storage shacks. However, cohesive groups, usually those from the big cities, simply built their own. Our City plans called for these places for local organization because we had sought to provide facilities for a strong organizational fabric at local *and* City scales. However, only those groups that came organized were able to operate that way. These groups were sometimes criticized for being too independent. Indeed, some had their own marshals and did their own cooking. But, during the first week or two, these groups were solving their own problems and were helping other people as well. For example, on the first Sunday after Resurrection City's occupation (a chaotic day when nearly 1,000 people arrived in the first of the rain), some of the New York crowd carried plywood on their cars, delivering it where people needed it to build. These groups did retreat from the City as time passed; some even retreated behind guarded fences. But, this is how

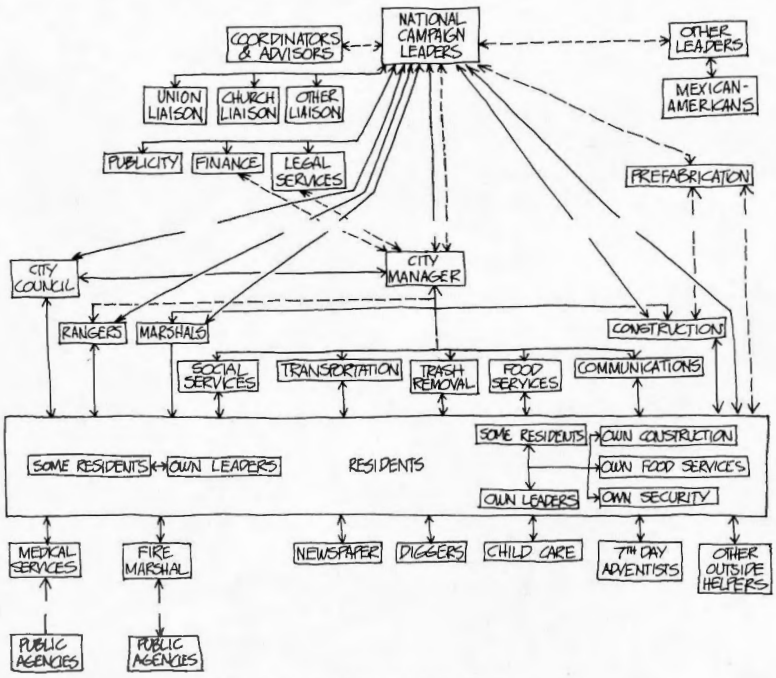


FIGURE 3 *Operational Communications Paths*

they had survived at home, and as problems in the City grew, it was one way to survive here.

There was a similar range between success and failure in the organizations for City services. Food and child care, for example, met their immediate goals, but many others did not. Among these was the security service, initially handled by the Marshals, a group of City residents. Soon, failures and excesses of duty occurred (mainly affecting the less cohesive groups), and attempts were made to improve the organization from within. However, lack of support from above doomed these attempts, prompting a young resident from Detroit to form the "Tent City Rangers." The Rangers solved some security problems, and they provided other services, such as rush transportation, as well. But, there was more a sense of competition than of cooperation between the Marshals and the Rangers, and, amid occasional announcements from City Hall that the Rangers would soon be disbanded, security continued to be a problem.

Organizational difficulties at the City scale were, with the amorphous political structure, probably unavoidable. Town meetings were held from time to time, and efforts were made to form a City Council. Neither held power; they operated as forums. Major decisions could be made only by Campaign leaders, and they were seldom in the City. The City Manager, for example, was not only the official charged with coordinating services and activities within the City, but he also served as Demonstration Leader. This effectively prevented his being able to follow through on problems. (One of the series of City Managers, after ordering gravel for the muddy Main Street, then had to go lead a demonstration. Almost immediately, one of his staff cancelled the order. This was the sequence of many attempts to solve problems.)

Thus, the City became a loose assembly of groups and services, some organized and some not. Communication paths would shift from time to time, but "average" paths are charted in Figure 3, with broken lines to show frequently broken communication paths, dotted lines for little used paths, and crossed lines for conflicts and short-circuits in paths. Such a chart shows a shifting, complex lattice. Organizational communication became a tool few residents could use.

If the structure of Resurrection City did not make it possible to organize improvements, it did not hinder individuals and small groups from making improvements on their own. Many Marshals (some only teenagers) took this, their first real responsibility, seriously. They worked twenty hours a day, keeping at their jobs day after day. A handful of local electricians took leaves of absence from their jobs and worked for weeks at wiring the City, stopped only by rain or, for a while, by limited power service. An outside church group donated their own labor and materials for building the Child Care Center, which was then staffed by resident and outside volunteers. A skilled carpenter came in regularly to help at building until material and organizational problems stopped construction. Then, in order to continue helping, he became a Tent City Ranger. And, during the time when prefabrication and building were taking place, many people helped others to build.

Systems of territories and barriers developed in terms of use and events. The City, as built (Figure 4), could be compared with socially developed territorial and border systems (Figures 5 and 6) since people operated in fairly non-overlapping spaces. Group areas could be classified in terms of territorial possession ranging from "very private" (cohesive groups) to "private" (non-cohesive groups in the woods) to "private/public" (non-cohesive groups in the open) to "public" (Main Street). Originally, the only "impenetrable" border was to have been the fence around the City, but as conditions deteriorated, many edges between territories were also made into borders meant to challenge crossing.

Some of the levels of penetration operated because of function. For example, the dining tent with its many doors and services was an inviting place to enter. Similarly, much of the southern edge of Main Street was inviting because thick groves of trees and soft patches of grass suggested passing through would be pleasant. Still, the dense growth permitted even non-cohesive groups to live privately there. The perimeter fence was both a real and symbolic barrier. To the north, west, and east, it was in clear view, and beyond it, curious outsiders and reporters could be seen. These sides were heavily guarded. However, to the south, the fence was obscured by dense woods. There were even some extensive gaps in the fence there, but with

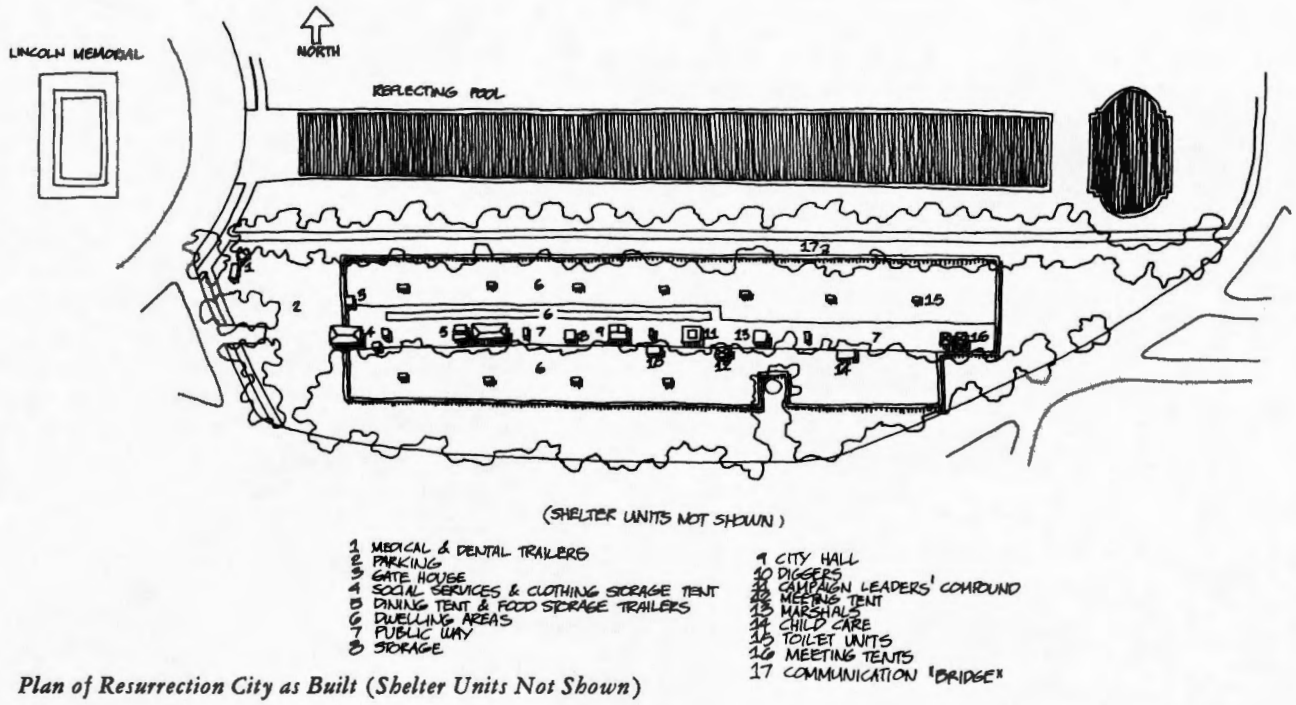


FIGURE 4 *Plan of Resurrection City as Built (Shelter Units Not Shown)*

the woods as a strong visual barrier, guards seldom patrolled this side.

As time passed, these territories and barriers, whether real or symbolic, became more fixed, channeling and limiting activities and contacts. At the smaller scale of an individual shelter unit, there was always a strong sense of possession. Their inhabitants owned them, and uninvited entry by outsiders was strongly resented. People put in doors that could be made more secure than the canvas ones provided. Owners usually wrote their names on their shelters. Similarly, cohesive groups identified themselves. People from Detroit painted large signs reading "Motown" on their shelters. Yet, there were no signs in areas where the less well-organized lived. Nor did Resurrection City, as a community, have a large sign announcing its presence.

The fence had been put up to keep potential threats at a distance. But, it also happened that, when looking over the fence at the throngs of curious (or sometimes threatening) outsiders, a resident could identify himself as part of Resurrection City. He could see, across the fence, the people, the city, and the society to which he did not belong. This was identity gained through exclusion, a kind of group self-awareness that was easy to develop, for he knew it at home. The other kind of community identity, gained through participation, was hard to find after the period of major construction passed. Some found it anyway: the Rangers, some Marshals, those in food or child care services, and a few others. A community needs a format for participation, such as helping one's neighbor to build. Resurrection City offered only a few others, mostly based on special roles.

Implications for the Community Development Process

The members of the Structures Committee were deeply impressed by the enthusiasm with which people built for themselves and for each other. The construction systems lent themselves to prefabrication and assembly by the skilled and the unskilled, the poor and the nonpoor, alike. This resulted in great pride of accomplishment and pleasure of ownership. If people can so easily be helped to build their own shelters, then it would seem easy to develop construction systems that go beyond current "self-help" programs to permit people to build their own housing. "Kits" of materials and simple directions could solve many building problems, even in our center cities.[2]

We were also impressed with the use of compounds in the City. All the residential areas were to be formed from systems of compounds strung along the linear Main Street, and it turned out that cohesive groups who built without knowing the plan would still form compounds. In addition, these highly organized groups would have facilities, such as cooking or child care, for all their members in the common space formed by the compound. The less well-organized groups, however, sometimes lost their compounds. For example, one day some Marshals rearranged enough shelter units to create a lengthy alley parallel to, and just north of, the Main Street. This effectively destroyed any private group spaces these residents had. Since the units were light enough to be shifted, like large pieces of furniture, their owners could have reformed their spaces. But, being no better organized than those removed by our freeway systems, the alley remained, and traffic passed their front doors.

We were impressed with how naturally (1) new

Key in Figure 4 also applies to Figures 5 and 6.

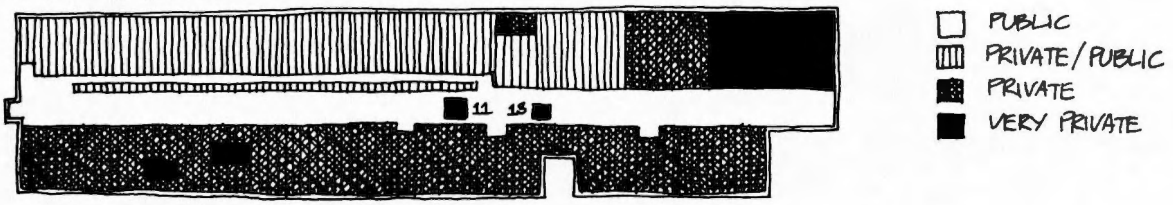


FIGURE 5 *Territorial Possession*

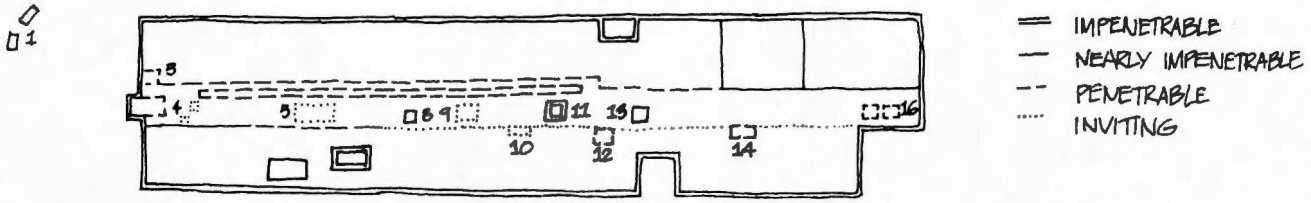


FIGURE 6 *Border Crossing*

services, like the Diggers' bakery, could come into the City and plug into a gap in the Main Street, and (2) individuals and strong groups would use paint to identify their walls. There was, in some areas, a sense of place and participation seldom seen in slums or public housing. Perhaps people in other cities could benefit from similar opportunities to develop place, group, and individual identification.

As problems increased building came to a halt, and people withdrew from the community. Soon, qualities making this a special city disappeared. The City was gradually becoming similar to communities all over the country.

At the start, some members of the organization had wanted the City to be an actual demonstration of the problems of the poor. Others had wanted the City to be a demonstration of what could happen in poverty areas through development of real food, housing, medical, and training programs. As it happened, despite medical and dental trailers, doctors, dieticians, planners, administrators, and workers, Resurrection City became more a demonstration of conditions that exist rather than those that could be.

However, this was not a demonstration of conditions found only in poverty areas. The fence that closed the City in (and off) was based on fear. The withdrawal of the organized groups into self-sufficient enclaves was based on fear and on their despair of successfully participating in community events. Fences and fear, withdrawal and despair describe ghetto, suburb, and downtown apartment building alike. Resurrection City had, in a matter of weeks, become a demonstration model of the current American community.

The only way the City could develop these conditions so rapidly was to start early in developing many of their causes: security services of mixed effectiveness and responsibility; inability to develop participatory government; inability to encourage growth of group structures among the disorganized; inability to develop rapid response and followthrough to changing needs.

People had come to Resurrection City, as people have come to other American communities, seeking many things. These included excitement and reward, but primarily they came seeking a new and improved destiny. The momentum of their expectations made it possible for them to build places to live and to withstand early storms, despite predictions that the place would have to be abandoned. There was pride in proving the predictions wrong. More storms came, but growing organizational difficulties, adversities that were more difficult to withstand, also came. Resurrection City, like other American communities, lost its high expectations. The population dropped from around 2,800 to about 500, and those who stayed found other ways to withdraw.

Still, as in most American communities, many people kept trying to make things work. The persistent menders were like the people who had helped build the City, hoping that with this effort some problems could be fixed in America, even after the riots following King's assassination. Those who stayed in the City were, just at the end, starting to build again.

The end came in late June, little more than six weeks after the beginning. The City was emptied, and its inhabitants dispersed. Its buildings were taken down to be sold to a contractor from Tennessee. Sod was rolled out where mud had been. The area was returned to its park-like character, a place of grass and trees and flags, a place for monuments and memorials.

NOTES

[1] Members of the Structures Committee were: James Goodell (then at Urban America), Kenneth Jadin (Department of Architecture, Howard University), Tunney Lee (architect and planner from Washington, D.C.), and John Wiebenson, (School of Architecture, University of Maryland).

[2] A concern for tapping the little used resources of the individual builder's energy and initiative was expressed by John C. Turner, "Barriers and Channels for Housing Development in Modernizing Countries," *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, XXXIII (May 1967), 167–81. This excellent study of a Peruvian squatters' city describes the potential (and official blocks to the potential) found in underdeveloped countries. A similar potential exists in underdeveloped neighborhoods in more advanced countries.

During a rainy May and June of 1968, there was a separate community in the center of the Nation's capital. It was built and occupied, and then emptied and dismantled, all in 6 weeks and 1 day. In between, carrying out a plan begun by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and completed by members of the Poor People's Campaign of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, its residents formed both a symbol and a city. It was named Resurrection City.

As a symbol, it was to make visible the American poor. It was to stand for their needs, hopes and frustrations. For some, it stood for more than severe poverty, poor diets, poor housing, poor medical attention. Some, better off, were now seeking relief from social and political injustices, usually those stemming from race. Some wanted the means to join the rest of the country in acquiring the advertised paraphernalia of abundance. Some looked for more meaning to their national and individual lives. But, for many, it stood for poverty.

As a city, it was to be composed of representatives of these poor. Those who came included some who were there for the excitement or for the trip. But, most were there to represent the poor.

This symbol was put up seventeen blocks from the Congress it was meant to confront, and even closer to most of the agencies and departments appointed to serve the country. It was built between the monuments to Lincoln and Washington, men who have become symbols of the conflicts

most felt in the American past. This is an area of grass and trees. Tourists come here to photograph the monuments and to read the inscriptions. Few others are around, however, for the area is surrounded by major roads bearing heavy traffic. This is an isolated focal point.

The residents of Resurrection City came from all over the country, but mostly from rural Marks, Mississippi, and from the large cities of the Northeast and Midwest. A few, most of the whites, came from the Appalachian highlands. They were of all ages, but mostly they were young. There were Indians, whites and Puerto Ricans among them, but mostly they were blacks. They put together small shelters from components prefabricated by others friendly to the Campaign. Their numbers grew during the first two weeks to around 3,000 people, with hundreds more housed temporarily in churches and schools in suburban Washington. Then, steadily, the population declined until there were only about 500 left. The decline was sometimes blamed on rain and sometimes on poor organization. Part of it, however, was inevitable, for many participants had to go back to jobs or families. But, just as no one ever knew how many were in the City, no one could say how many had come for only 2 weeks.

OPERATING ORGANIZATION The City was there as a symbol, and the primary role of its inhabitants was thought of as being there; their secondary role was attending demonstrations. Living in the City was thought to be third. The organization for operating the City reflected these priorities,

for the city manager was also the demonstration leader, and major decisions affecting the City were often made outside, by Campaign leaders.

The charts which describe the operational communications for the City and those for demonstrations are, like other charts here, averages of conditions across time. The City was always in flux, and the charts cannot show specific conditions of a single day, but rather they show approximations of conditions across many days. In addition, except for the charts in the section about "change", little weight is given to conditions during the first week or two when considerable building was occurring, and when much of the development of the City was being directed by coordinators and advisors, some from outside the Campaign.

Some of the connections in the operational communications were only tenuous, and these are shown with dotted lines. Those between the national Campaign leaders and the leaders of the Mexican-Americans, for example, were never strong. In fact, the Mexican-Americans never lived in the City, nor went to the same demonstrations, nor issued the same demands. Both a broken line and a solid line are shown connecting the Campaign leaders and the city manager. In a sense, more lines of each kind should be shown between the two, for the Campaign leaders operated as a loose committee which allowed its members to develop individual connections of varying strengths to the city manager and, often, to the services of the City, as well.

Some very cohesive groups had their own very strong organization. This

were advised that this was, at that time, the most important need. This group then raised the money for the materials, bought them, and then constructed the building. They also, because of the need to prevent their materials from being taken for less important projects, provided the protection for them. On completion, it was equipped by other contributors. It was staffed by local and resident volunteers who looked after children brought by parents going to demonstrations. This informal series of events permitted a necessary service to occur, and gave the participants a chance for direct involvment.

Not all services functioned as successfully. The security services, for example, caused resentment among some of the residents they were to protect. Originally, security was to have been handled by the Marshals, a group formed from among the residents of the City. Soon, failures and excesses of duty occurred, and there were attempts to improve the organization from above, and attempts from within. However, lack of successful contact between the two efforts prompted a young bricklayer from Detroit, Johnny Patterson, to form, on his own volition, the Tent City Rangers. They wore sharp uniforms and badges provided by Patterson from donations and purchases. They were abe to fill in some gaps in security and in services such as rush transportation. But, there was more a sense of competition than of cooperation between the Marshals and the Rangers, and, amid occasional announcements from City Hall that the Rangers would soon be disbanded, security continued to be a problem in the City.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION The residential areas reflected the discontinuities within the operating organization: Boundaries between groups were stronger than the links between them, and strong sense of community never developed. Allowing for the population decline, boundary conditions did not change much. Cohesive groups stayed cohesive and kept boundaries; loose groups continued to lack cohesion and boundaries.

This continuity across time extended from the point of arrival, for people lived about as they had constructed. For example, the group known as "the New York crowd" built as a team. Their leaders found out how shelters were to be assembled, how they might best be located and then, with their people, saw that the whole group got housed. They worked efficiently, and they discovered new techniques to speed construction. The following days, they passed these techniques on to other builders they happened to see. As residents, the New York crowd had its own administration and security, and frequently provided its own food services as well. Their friendships were found within the group, and they attempted to solve their problems there, too.

On the other hand, the white Appalachians came seeking to build neither near nor far from one another, but wherever there might happen to be an open spot, or perhaps where a tree had caught their fancy. They seldom looked for help from others. They usually started to build independently, but if advised to work with others because impending rain or darkness suggested a need for greater efficiency and speed, they were agreeable to doing so. As residents, they formed few social groups, but were

shelters to be more irregularly placed, giving a more easily differentiated form to the layouts. In addition, the trees simply broke down the visual scale to a more domestic level. Combined, these factors pinned these areas down in space and helped provide even relatively weak groups with territory.

On the other hand, the shelters immediately to the north of the public way were rearranged by Marshals to create a new public path (called "Abernathy Avenue"). This weakened neighborhood spaces and encouraged through traffic. Groups in this area were virtually unable to establish possession.

Few families or individuals tried to take personal possession of outdoor territory after the rains began. Before, there had been some inclosing of yards and building of platforms on top of shelters. But, there was, continuously, work being done to increase the inside/outside barrier through making entranceways and through changing canvas doors to wood; the private territory of the dwellings was strongly felt. A couple of reporters caused, for example, great anger by entering a shelter to photograph it.

SYMBOLS Territorial boundaries were not always strongly visible. An example of this was the relation of Resurrection City to the outside world. Basically the City was enclosed by fences on all sides, with a gate on the West for service and access. North of the City was a sidewalk,

Buildings indicated degree of possibilities of entry in similar ways. Probably the most inviting building was the dining tent, which was central in location, possessed many generous openings, and had the sounds and sights of activity. It suggested participating. The bright color of the tent and its form suggested that the participation would be cheerful, and pay-off for entry was conversation and food. The city hall was nearly as inviting, and its pay-off for entry was conversation and the possibilities of information. Both of these buildings were usually points for informal gathering, both indoors and out.

The location of the medical and dental trailers outside the City, as required by the public health agency which owned them, meant that potential users would have to leave the City and cross an open area given over to cars, reporters and curious onlookers. And, the information conveyed by this location was that the medical facilities were part of the alien environment and only incidentally for the residents. As many residents refused to make this crossing, the intentions of the doctors volunteering to help were somewhat countered.

The dwelling compound built for Campaign leaders in the public way was of units so tightly clustered as to suggest not only difficulty of entry, but withdrawal from the rest of the community, as well. The central location did not lessen the symbol of withdrawal, but rather made it and the long vacancy of the compound apparently important.

In addition, some of the gaps in organization corresponded to gaps,

symbolic and functional, in construction. The small buildings planned for neighborhood leaders and supplies were never put up; and there were many groups without unity. Although there was the public way with its services common to most of the City, many services and their buildings did not occur, nor did any tower or sign for the City get built; and there was lack of community identity.

Still, the public way was the public place. Because public services were located here, and because it went the whole length of the City, this was the place of highest pedestrian traffic. New services would locate here, naturally. When a couple of Diggers (a San Francisco group organized to provide free goods) arrived, they put up their bakery here. In good weather, this became a meeting place; when looking for someone, or when looking for company, people would go to the public way. On the morning of Robert Kennedy's assassination, this is where many stood, quietly, waiting for news.

COMMUNICATION AND TRAFFIC The diagrams of operation above suggest that operational communications were difficult, but they were further hindered by mechanical problems. Most communication between individuals was face-to-face, and this often required considerable searching for the right individual. The same need for search in contacts with Campaign leaders limited the usefulness of telephones to their headquarters or motel. To this extent, traffic and communications would coincide.

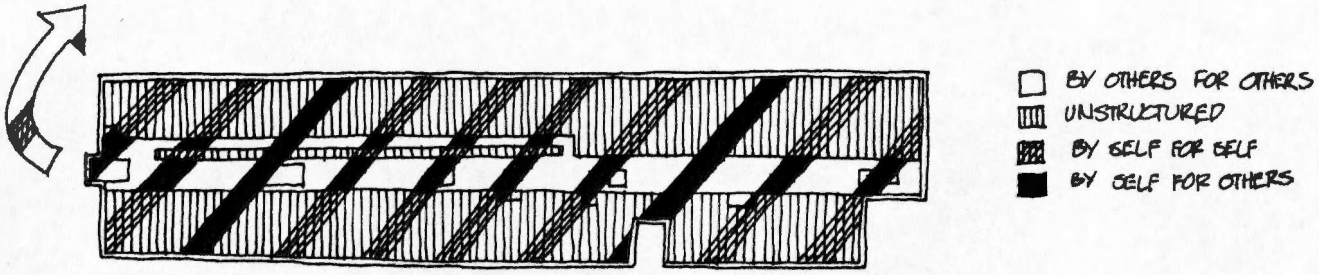
Communication within groups was simply handled through meetings, but scale

prevented City meetings from being more than one-way. Newspapers and notices were also used to speak to the whole City, but these had a time lag, and as few events were planned before they occured, printed matter was generally about the past or general future. Loudspeakers were much more heavily relied on, and they were used for individual search, as well. Their only limitation was that continuous use caused them to be resented or not heard. The importance of loudspeakers for City-wide communication increased the feeling of independence of the groups at the west end of the City, for the loudspeakers seldom reached there.

The City was connected to the outside world by half a dozen telephones, 8 pay phones, mail, television and the press. These last two are shown on the diagram as being two-way because of their extensive coverage of the City. In addition, another bridge, in the form of a talking point, occurred at the northern fence. This happened where outsiders, using the sidewalk north of the fence to look at the City, stopped to read the wealth of slogans which turned a few of the shelters into billboards. They would then frequently fall into conversation, over the fence, with insiders. On the occaissional sunny days, as many as a dozen people, on each side, would talk here.

Communication in the communication and traffic diagram emphasizes only that which was operational or formal, and shows the locations for that which was mechanically aided. It will be noted that these tended to concentrate along the public way, particularly at the city hall. Other types, ritual, technical and informal are not shown. The ritual, except

or religious meetings, although on some evenings visiting television or movie celebrities would put on a show. Informal activities were equally rare as there were no shops in the City nor any nearby outside.



STRUCTURE OF ACTIVITIES

The activities diagram is meant to suggest that there were considerable possibilities for change, in a single day, in the type of activity in a given area. Thus, in a residential area, some would be working on their shelters, making shelves or sweeping the floors, while others sat. And, earlier, everyone may have been sitting; while later perhaps some Marshal would come by and help people pick up waste paper. However, most of the other-directed activities were in the service buildings, or near them, in the public way. Here, there was also an overlapping of various activities. In the dining tent, for example, both resident workers and those from outside, from Washington, worked hard. And, as this was a partially autonomous operation, some were structuring the work for themselves, while others were performing within a structure provided for them. But, this was also a place to eat and to sit and talk, so the area included non-service activities, as well. The diagram suggests that the same mixture of activities would occur in going out the gate, too, for some went to demonstrations,

while others went on tours or looked for shops, or simply went out for a walk.

Those who were involved with services and were not stymied in trying to improve them were busy. One of the Marshals from Chicago, who was about 20, spoke about his work with great enthusiasm, including the long hours. He had just been calming down some people and felt pleased at his success. It was probably the most responsibility he had ever had. Some of the other Marshals, however, who had had more experience with organizations, would sometimes quit in frustration in trying to improve their outfit.

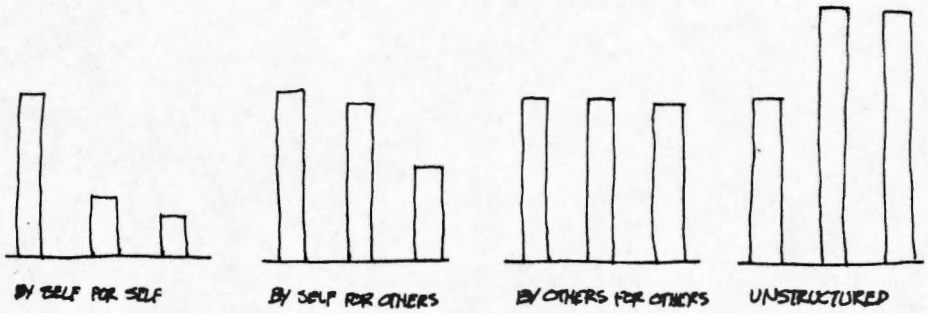
Among those in the residential areas who worked hard on their shelters were two boys of about 15 who brought people over to see their work. They showed off the small windows they had made near the bunks they had built-in. They spoke with pride and enthusiasm. Shortly after finishing, however, they left. Others worked on shelters, finished them, and left. There were two old men who pounded nails with rocks because of the shortage of hammers. They worked slowly but purposefully, enjoying their many conferences on what should be the next step. A second pair of boys built a unit, but gave it to relatives after making another for themselves atop the first. These also left.

Gradually, for most people, the activities narrowed down to eating and waiting and avoiding getting rained on. Waiting could be sitting or, for the more active, fooling around. One old man, seated and contented, replied that there was not much to do at home, either. As time passed, those

who did not leave continued waiting until, on June 24th, the City was closed down, and the people dispersed.

CHANGE As the section on "activities" suggests, there was considerable change to some of the aspects of Resurrection City. What started as a community with rapid growth and much building became one of population decline and little building. This change can best be seen in examining the life of the City through 3 periods: High Growth (1st and 2nd weeks), High Occupation (2nd and 3rd weeks) and Low Occupation (4th, 5th and 6th weeks). In addition to the overlapping shown here, these, like all period designations, are only approximate in title and extent. A resident of only the first 2 weeks might, for example, feel that there were 2 periods, one dry and one wet. Or, a long-term resident strongly involved in one of the services might think of periods of Chaotic Start, Constant Change and Near Routine; however, these 3 personal designations would roughly correspond in time to those given to the City as a whole.

The change in activities was basically a shift from those structured by the individual or others to activities not structured at all. Using the 3 periods of High Growth, High Occupation and Low Occupation, rough charts can be made to approximate this change. With allowance for population decline, and in reference to an arbitrarily equal level in the first period, the activities change chart shows change for both structured and unstructured activities.

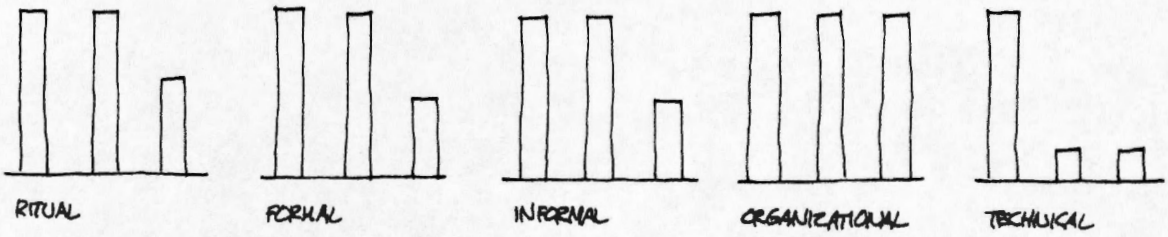


ACTIVITIES STRUCTURE CHANGE

The activities structured by an individual for himself fell off when the amount of building fell off, for new opportunities did not appear. Activities structured by an individual for others did not decline as much because of continuing need. For similar reasons, those structured by others for others did not appear to decline at all. A number of people might quit their jobs, but their places would often be readily filled by others. And, sometimes, those who quit would shift to a new job within the City. One of the carpenters, for example, got discouraged with how he was being used and switched over to become a Ranger.

Communication changed in similar ways. After the period of High Growth, the need for technical communication fell sharply. However, the fall in formal and informal communication seemed to occur because of the fall in density. With the population down to about 1/6 of its original number, opportunities for conversation also went down. In addition, the rain kept people isolated under shelter, and discouraged outdoor activity. Gradually, ritual communication went down, too, but this was primarily in the falling off of statements by individuals about why the City and its gathering of people had taken place. This decline happened in words

being painted on shelters and in conversations. Public ritual messages through newspapers, loudspeakers and meetings appeared to remain about constant. Organizational communication, like the technical, was tied to need. And, as the need was continuous, organizational communication remained about the same.

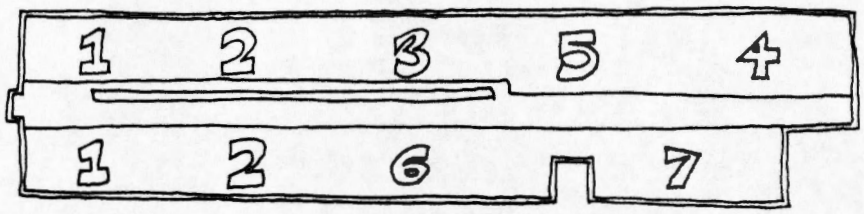


COMMUNICATION CHANGE

There was less change in the sense of personal, group and community territories and in the location and strength of their boundaries. However, empty houses in the weaker groups did further weaken their possession of area as these empty houses became more public than those in strong groups. In addition, some groups might feel more excluded or less excluded by group boundaries as the City evolved, but this was primarily through their own reactions to that evolution. And, the penetrability of service buildings was subject to personal readings of change as these were also symbolic, and therefore subjective, events.

After the period of High Growth, there was little change in the physical nature of the City. Buildings weathered and became stained, but the mud did not increase, nor were empty houses removed. But, during the High Growth, there was the considerable change of building. The City expanded

from West to East for the most part. The center of operations followed this shift in the center of gravity. Originally, these were handled at some telephones near the gate, but then were shifted, on its completion, to the City Hall.



SEQUENCE OF GROWTH

Once the rains began, they were nearly continuous; and once the operational organization took shape, it was not changed much. What changed most was the level of population, and the communication and activities it had. To the extent that communication level is an index of life in a community, it appeared to be declining, and to the extent that activities level is the life of a community, it was declining.

But, this was always meant to be a temporary city, one changed briefly from a grassy park and meant to be changed back to a park. The residents knew this, as did the Campaign leaders. A one-week extension was granted to permit the park to be used until a little past the big march on Solidarity Day, June 19. As the final day approached, no new extension was applied for, and activities and communication continued to decline. On the last day, some residents went to a final demonstration. The others

waited for police to take them away. Later, the buildings were demolished, and the grass was resown.

CONCLUSION When it was all over, it appeared that the political goals of the Campaign had been lost. Congress had been reluctant to pass new social legislation before the representatives of the poor came, and it did not change after their arrival. Newspapers printed many articles about the City's problems with organization and security, and many pictures of its rain and mud. They generally concluded it to be a failure. But, perhaps these articles and pictures accomplished one thing that the demonstrations by themselves could not do. The extensive coverage made the poor visible to the nation, and the visibility was continuous. The City helped make it possible for it to be understood that poverty can exist in a lush economy.

Resurrection City gave its residents food, shelter and medical attention. For some, it was better food and shelter than they had at home; for some, it was the first medical attention they had ever had. But, what was not given the residents was the opportunity to participate, through their own social and organizational structures, in the operation of the City. These remained buried in the residential body, used neither as plug-in units to fill gaps in the city structure, nor as models to help less organized groups develop cohesion. As it was, an opportunity was lost to use some strong leaders and some strong organizations for the benefit of the City. Nor was a strong effort made to create a rich assortment of

meaningful activities at both local and public levels. As it was, an opportunity was lost to use the residents for the benefit of themselves and of the City, too.

If, finally, Resurrection City did not show how people should live, it did show the problems too many have in how they do live. For too many people there is a lack of response in service and security needs. For too many, there is a lack of rewarding chance for involvement, locally (as the two boys making a shelter with windows and bunks) or publicly (as the young Marshal from Chicago who was calming people). What Resurrection City was able to give its people is what, too often, other cities and towns do not. And, for some, for a while, it did give not only food and shelter and medical attention, but challenge and involvement, as well.