

OPERATION EQUALITY

Newsletter

Volume 1, No. 2

September 1967

From The Front Desk

The past two months have been marked by visible short term success coupled with possible long range set-backs for the overall Operation Equality program.

In the King County and Southern Snohomish County areas, good progress has been made in strengthening and establishing fair housing listing groups. The effectiveness of our fair housing volunteers is reflected in more than 100 listings received during the month of August and the placing of six families in housing units during the first eleven days of September.

COUNTY PROGRAM ROADBLOCKED:

On the debit side of the ledger are two blows to our blueprint for an increase in the overall supply of low-and moderate-income housing. In early September, it was discovered that the King County Commissioners had not filed the necessary papers required to re-qualify the Federal Workable Plan. This means that after September 30th, and until such time as the Commissioners choose to resubmit, no federally assisted housing for the poor, for low or moderate families can be built in the unincorporated areas of King County. Not only is the King County Housing Authority crippled, but non-profit sponsors such as churches and unions, and limited dividend sponsors comprised of builders and realtors will be unable to qualify for these federal housing programs.

BUILDING SPONSORS ELIMINATED:

A second major blow came from Washington, D.C. where the Rent Supplement Bill has emerged from Senator Magnuson's Senate Appropriations subcommittee in such a state of emasculation as to render it almost useless as a tool for the construction of housing for low-income Americans.

The Senate committee, while restoring funds cut by the House of Representatives, concurred in an amendment which would require non-profit sponsors to contribute 5 percent of the total costs of construction and land. Under the present bill, such sponsors receive 100 percent federal financing.

Since nonprofit sponsors cannot earn any funds from rent supplement construction, this amendment effectively eliminated from participation the very groups who have built most of the low income housing constructed under the existing act.

In short, low-income housing cannot now be built in King County unincorporated areas, and the Rent Supplement Act appears lost as a viable tool for such housing on a national scale.

Unless the King County Commissioners can be persuaded to take immediate steps to recertify the Federal Workable Plan, and unless Congress can be persuaded to remove the 5 percent provision for non-profit sponsors from the Rent Supplement Bill, we will lose nationally a valuable housing tool and a sizeable local area will be closed to all types of federally assisted low and middle income housing.

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Fair Housing Committees : Activity Progress Report

BELLEVUE-KIRKLAND: The few volunteers who are working in this area are doing a good job but in this, as in other areas, more volunteers are needed. Listers and inspectors are especially needed. Please call Merrily Schwinn, Area Chairman, at VA2-2366 and offer your services if you are an Eastside resident.

Applicants now living in this area through O.E. efforts: 3.

CENTRAL: The Neighborhood Advisory Council has been formed. Dr. Alvin Thompson and Mrs. Alvarita Little will serve as Chairman and Secretary respectively. Members include Mona Bailey, Edward Banks, Edward Beard, Rev. Edgar Bratton, James Burton, John Cannon, William Derry, Edell Durden, Donald Haley, Annie Hall, Arlena Jackson, Sandra Mack, Ethel Pugh, Michael Rosen, George Schultz, Melvin Streeter, Shirley Ticeson and Margaret Read.

The Council will assist Operation Equality by publicizing program resources and goals and by motivating and counseling Central Area residents who wish to move. An orientation workshop for members is planned September 27th at the YMCA. Ira Oakes is staff liaison.

Applicants now living in this area through O.E. efforts: 5 (Mostly reverse migration)

EVERETT: Rev. Charles Asplin is chairing a meeting of interested Everett citizens at Bethany United Church, 6125-167th Place S.W., Edmonds on Monday, September 25th, at 8 p.m. Call 743-3971 for further information.

Applicants now living in this area through O.E. efforts: 0.

FAR NORTH END: Candy Worchester is the new Chairman of Listers in this group, succeeding Peggy O'Coyné who has assumed the office of Secretary - Treasurer. Bob Smith remains as General Chairman.

A revised Inspectors Evaluation Form will be forwarded to the appropriate volunteers soon. Dean Fournier, who collaborated on the revision, is Chairman of Inspectors.

Far North Enders are still working effectively as shown by the number of "for-sale" listings in our Master File. However, addition of some apartments inside the city limits in the \$100-\$135 price range would meet an expressed applicant need. Houses "to-rent" in the same price range also are needed.

Applicants living in this area through O.E. efforts: 4.

FAR SOUTH END: Exciting things have been happening in this section of our city! On August 17th, an interfaith meeting was held at St. Bernadette's Catholic Church through the generous cooperation of Father Thomas McEnnis. Operation Equality goals, minority housing problems and effective citizen participation were discussed by O.E. staffers Dave Guren, Ira Oakes, Ruby Wiley and by Elliott Couden, Cooperating Realtor, with the more than 40 participants who came in spite of the heat.

Pursuing the same theme on September 8th at the Hungry Mind Coffee House in Burien, Mrs. Steiner's committee worked with the Christian Family Movement (Mr. & Mrs. Neil McKinnon, Co-Chairmen) in presenting a provocative, broad-scoped panel discussion entitled "Housing - Fair or Forced." Panelists Arlena Jackson, Norman Ackley, Elliott Couden and Stuart Oles presented, with admirable skill and realism, both sides of the housing issue. From the number of volunteer recruitment forms requested, we anticipate significant affirmative action from this area.

Applicants now living in this area through O.E. efforts: 0.

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MERCER ISLAND: Through the generosity of Rev. William Tatum and Margaret Nugent, temporary Chairman, "Segregation Northern Style", a half-hour CBS documentary, will be shown at the Mercer Island Presbyterian Church on Tuesday, October 10th at 8 p.m. The public is invited to view and discuss this enlightening statement-of-the-problem. Your services as a volunteer are also needed. Mrs. Nugent's telephone: AD2-0565.

Applicants now living in this area through O.E. efforts: 1.

NORTH END: Chairman Jean Jones and her committee held a workshop September 12th to evaluate the effectiveness of method currently in use aimed at reaching people and involving them in O.E. goals and functions. To adequately canvass this area, Chairman Jones needs more volunteer Listers and Inspectors. You may reach her at LA5-9176.

Applicants now living in this area through O.E. efforts: 3.



Roberta Patience

NORTHWEST: Roberta Patience chairs this committee which encompasses Ballard, Queen Anne-Magnolia and Wallingford Communities. The committee met for a workshop on August 2nd at the home of Idabelle Hannah, Chairman of Escorts.

An informal getting-to-know-you affair, planned with staff cooperation, is in the immediate offing.

As in other areas, there is a need for more volunteers and a particular need for Inspectors. Call AT2-7852 to reach your Chairman.

Applicants now living in this area through O.E. efforts: 1.

RENTON: A film, "To Find A Home", was shown on August 30th at the First Methodist Church (Rev. Earl Dean, Minister). Regrettably only eight people came, three

of whom were ministers.

Ruby Wiley spoke to the Renton Ministerial Association at their September meeting at the invitation of Rev. Louis F. Brunner who has pledged his support, as have a few other Renton clergymen. YOUR help is needed in creating a favorable racial climate in this largely unresponsive community. Please call Acting Chairman Marjorie Erickson at BA6-2364 of O.E. at EA9-3333.

Applicants now living in this area through O.E. efforts: 0.

SOUTHEND: Still inactive. Still needs active volunteers, You can help. Call Operation Equality to volunteer.

Applicants now living in this area through O.E. efforts: 2.

WEST SEATTLE: The nucleus of a listing group is already functioning in this community although no formal organization has occurred. A workshop is planned Tuesday, September 19th, at the home of Area Chairman Ludie Watson, 3931 S.W. Monroe, at 8 p.m. Call WE5-9556 for more information. Ministers and friends of fair housing are working to make this first big meeting a success.

Applicants now living in this area through O.E. efforts: 2.

TACOMA: A fair housing committee will soon be organizing. Tacomans please call Jolly Sue Baker, SK2-2069, or Tom Dixon at BR2-6228.

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Thursday Forum: Where Is The Ghetto?

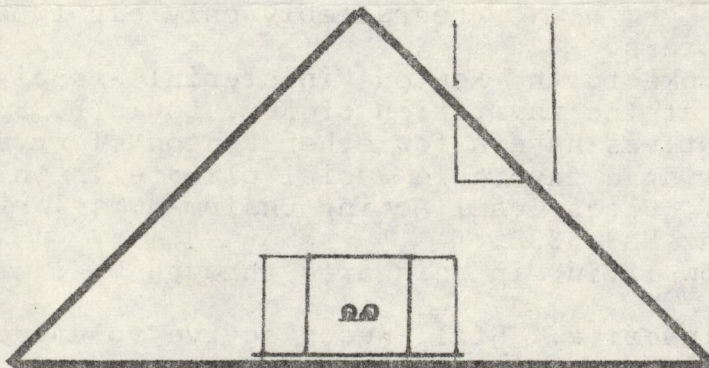
During the audience participation period of our first Thursday Forum, the volume of audience inquiry made it impossible for panel members to respond to them all.

In this and future Newsletters, some of the more frequently asked and/or most probing questions will be answered on the assumption that these are also the kinds of questions you meet when you tell people about our program. We hope you find this useful.

Question: Where do you draw the line as to where the Central Area is; the ghetto?

Answer: The modern rule of identification for any ghetto or ethnic enclave is the predominance of persons of a common bond (usually racial) in a geographically definable area who live there because property is more easily available to them in that area, as determined by the Real Estate Industry, by the Mortgage Banking Industry, by the codes and regulations of federal housing agencies, by local zoning practices and by majority population consent. The office of Population Research (1960 data) shows that Negroes are concentrated in a converged area, the heart of which is between East Mercer and Yesler Way, 15th East and 31st Avenue. The total area is bound by Lake Washington Blvd. on the East (census tracts J1 and Q1); 15th East on the West (census tract K1); East Mercer on the North (census tract K2) and South Irving on the South (census tract Q1).

It may be pointed out that while Seattle does have a black ghetto, it does not yet have a comparative slum. What it does have is a restricted, frustrated, disenfranchised black population who in many instances remain isolated not from choice but because they have to.



League of Women Voter's New Home

As of Friday, September 8, 1967, the League of Women Voters is at home at 1402-18th Avenue in its newly-acquired Central Area quarters.

Joan Thomas, State President and Edith Lobe, Seattle President, began to feel isolated from the happenin's which were occurring (or threatening to occur) mostly in the Central Area. Kay Bullit asked Operation Equality to help the League find quarters in the area.

By putting Margaret Clise and other L.W.V. principals in touch with Gil Baker, who just happened to have recently acquired and rehabilitated a vacant old eyesore, we did help.

Congratulations all around: to Gil Baker for foresight and community pride; to L.W.V. for courage and concern. Welcome!

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Discrimination Western - Style: An O. E. "Failure?"

Early in the life of Operation Equality, a young, government-employed Negro woman of middle-class circumstances filed an application for a one-bedroom unfurnished apartment on Capitol Hill.

Our Field Representative, Ira Oakes, made an intensive search and finally came up with what he calls "a winner." The applicant was referred to the building manager who showed her the accomodation and accepted the necessary funds. We thought that we had scored a "success." We told our National Office we had.

When the young woman arrived to take occupancy, the manager 'regretfully' returned her money. Why? A present tenant had suddenly decided to take the apartment and there were no other vacancies which fitted the applicant's needs.

The search for a one-bedroom unfurnished apartment on Capitol Hill began anew. An apartment house manager, who had been cooperative in the past, was approached. Her response was almost tearful and, we believe, genuinely regretful. Four Negroes were living in that 48 unit apartment and she "just couldn't take anymore." Her quota had been filled.

The search goes on ... and on ...

Weeks passed. Managers said that units advertised for rent had "just been rented," when approached by the applicant. They simply hadn't had time to remove the vacancy sign out front. They did so just as soon as the young woman left. A subsequent check back by telephone or by white checker found several such units "still available."

The Human Rights Commission was called. John Eichelberger interceded with persuasion and logic but to no avail.

The search went on. KING-TV and radio publicized the plight of this "qualified Negro" applicant. A studio apartment and a two-bedroom unit were called in by owners, one of which was available only to the publicized applicant. Unfortunately neither accomodation fitted the applicant's needs.

The Mayor's office was asked to assist. The Apartment Operators Association was also directly approached. To no avail.

Today, nearly eight weeks later, there is no one-bedroom, unfurnished apartment available on Capitol Hill--to a Negro, that is. Who's got the answer?

Report from NUL

The Portland Urban League hosted the National Urban League Conference in the beautiful Portland Hilton, August 20-24th. Urban League Board Presidents, members, staff and volunteers came from all over the country to participate in plans to close the economic, social and cultural gap between Negro and other minority groups and white Americans. The entire staff of the Seattle League attended as well as Board members Johnny Allen, Leon Bridges, Bernice Holland, Robert Jones, Margaret Nugent, John O'Hara, Dave Perkins, Edwin Stone, and Robert Williams. Next Conference: New Orleans July 28-August 1, 1968. Why not plan to go?

Newsletter

Huzzahs !

To all our volunteers for their commitment, their time, and the generous contribution of considerable talent to our labors.

Brownie points to: The A.A. Abioduns, Norman Ackley, Pete Bailey, Eddie Beard, Bonnie Brown, John Cannon, Channel 9, Elliott Couden, Mrs. Francis Cunningham, Mrs. Ivol Curtis, Bob Daniel, Vince Davis, Herman Ehrlich, Dean Fournier, John Graham, Idabelle Hannah, Jay Higbee, Arlena Jackson, Wilbert Johnson, Milli Jones, Jim Kimbrough, KING Radio and TV, Mrs. Art Kobler, Shirley Kurtz, KYAC, Gladys Lockwood, Betty Martinsen, Father Thomas McEnnis, John Owen, Stuart Oles, Genevieve Peterson, The Lloyd Porters, Al Riley, Idell Ronne, Diane Rothaus, Merrily Schwinn, Elizabeth Stafford, Jean Teal and Gunnar Tempte.

Basket Category

ITEM 1 - Volunteer listers, please put your name and telephone number somewhere on the listing forms you send us. It helps us to know the source of the listing (i.e. volunteer or owner) and we'll know whom to call for further information, if needed.

ITEM 2 - Watch TV schedules for a Face-To-Face segment on Operation Equality---sometime in October.

ITEM 3 - Listen to KING Radio for a weekly "Operation Equality" Progress Report...beginning soon.

ITEM 4 - "It Begins With You", Channel 9, October 6, 7 p.m.

Seattle Urban League

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Operation Equality Staff

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Mrs. Richard Jackson

Harold T. Martin

Robert Murray

David Perkins

Mrs. David Shaw

Mrs. Neil Thorlakson

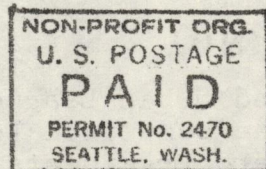
Mrs. Harry Truman

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RETURN REQUESTED

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