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CURE

CITIZENS UNITED FOR RACIAL EQUALITY

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TOWARD A BALANCED COMMUNITY

by C. Shuford Swift

On Thursday December 21, 1972, the San Diego City Council will hold open hearings on a balanced community policy. At that time two proposals will be under consideration. One is a proposal approved by the Planning Commission. The other is a proposal submitted by the Balanced Community Coalition, of which CURE is a member. How were these two proposals arrived at?

In November 1968 the state issued guidelines for Housing Elements calling for "A detailed work program for preparation of a complete housing plan for all economic segments of the community, in accordance with the desires and needs of the community." As a result, such an item was included in the Housing Element adopted by the City Council in June, 1969 Based on that work program, the Planning Department and the Planning Commission spect two years developing a housing plan. This study, called A Decent Home for Every San Diegan and published in August 1971, examined in depth the national housing situation, the housing situation in San Diego, the relationship between housing and poverty, land costs, construction costs, labor policies and practices, financing, housing conditions in San Diego, and projected housing needs. The study included a random survey of citizens' present housing situation and their needs as they perceived them. The study included a housing plan developed from the extensive factual information gathered, and recommended the adoption of "a 'Balanced Communities' housing policy that would require every major new development or redevelopment project to include appropriate proportions of low and moderate income housing units." Such a policy was included as Appendix E in the report. Despite the availability of the carefully thought out policy that resulted from this lengthy and detailed study, the City Council in a conference session directed the Planning Commission to hold additional workshop sessions on the policy. At these workshop sessions community groups and individual citizens participated actively in discussions with the Planning Commission. In spite of calls for a strong policy from the community, the Planning Commission considered a "new balanced community policy" that failed to mention racial and ethnic balance, and that was concerned only with economically balanced communities in newly developing peripheral areas and in city approved or sponsored redevelopment projects. At the public hearing before the Planning Commission on September 20, 1972, a dozen groups and individuals spoke in opposition to the new proposal. Only the Building Contractors Association speaker did

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CHICANO WORKERS SEEK SUPPORT

by Gilbert Robledo

The Chicano employees at the Cantor Brothers tire company, at 1035 Market St., San Diego, are striking for better working hours, a wage increase, a health plan and recognition and acceptance of the union by the employer. The strike began as part of a city-wide strike against all the tire stores by mechanics from teamsters local 481. The union settled all of the other tire stores within a week for 20¢ per hour raise and gringe benefits such as paid prescription medicine. However, the employer at Cantor Brothers refused to accept the new union contract. Consequently, the strikers have been striking for over four months They are asking for what the other tire store employees have received. The strikers have been supported by M. E. C. H. A., (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan) and W. A. M. (Workers Action Movement) at San Diego City College and the Chicano Federation. What is needed is a strong, coordinated and prolonged battle against the owner of Cantor Brothers to force him to recognize and negotiate with the union. Gilbert Robledo and Cesar Barajas of the Chicano Federation will be coordinating the boycott effort. The strikers are in search of support and a quick solution to what they see as discrimination and racist action against them. The Chicano Federation of San Diego County asks people to support the strike by:

1. Not patronizing Cantor Brothers.
2. Picketing with workers whenever possible.
3. Asking your Union local to support this strike.
4. Raising food and money for the strikers.

Bumper stickers urging people to boycott Cantor Brothers Tire Co., at 1035 Market St., San Diego will soon be available. If you have any questions, contributions or wish to obtain bumper stickers, please contact Gilbert Robledo at 236-1228x63.

MAGNET SCHOOL AT ENCANTO

by Roberta Heyer

The establishment of a magnet school in Southeast San Diego was approved by the San Diego City Board of Education in July 1972, but the site, Encanto Elementary School, was not chosen until October 10. It has long been the desire of board member George Walker Smith and of other residents in the area to have a model integrated elementary school in Southeast, similar to those at Fremont and Silvergate. Now that it is a certainty some tough planning still remains.

The magnet school concept simply means making a school attractive enough to lure children to it from other parts of the city. The lures can be special programs, small classes, ungraded classes, excellent teachers, and multi-cultural student body or other educational experiences not available at the child's local school. The magnet school is often tried as a partial integration measure in cities where authorities are reluctant to go the whole way. But in Providence, R.I., it was part of the city's plan to end de-facto segregation. Boycotting black parents, unwilling to have their neighborhood school closed, were successful in achieving voluntary attendance of enough white children to make the ratio 70% white, 30% black, in a school with very attractive programs.

The goals for the Encanto magnet school are (1) to provide the students unique and extensive educational opportunities, (2) to provide the basis for meaningful racial integration, and (3) to reduce the level of racial imbalance that existed prior to the beginning of the program. Goals 1 and 2 should appeal to parents considering the program. Goal 3 speaks to alert citizens in the Encanto area and to board members and staff concerned with the lack of progress made by San Diego towards school desegregation.

CURE readers should know that plans for the magnet school are not yet complete. The awkward beginning last summer was due to poor communication between the Board of Education and staff handling the program, along with vacillation as to the selection of a site. Input from interested parents in the northern part of the city helped get the program going on a representative basis.

An advisory committee was recently selected with members representing the Encanto school staff, Encanto parents, parents from sending schools, the Urban League and central staff. The committee is charged with exploring all methods by which the magnet school can be implemented in a successful and productive manner for all involved.

Encanto Elementary School was finally chosen as the magnet school because the leadership of the site administrator, Jack Klein, has stimulated the staff to pursue a variety of innovative programs. Encanto has a truly effective seminar program for gifted students as well as gifted cluster groups for upper grades. It is a school evidencing the "tipping process" (Becoming racially unbalanced: Spanish Surname - 25%, Black 25%, White - 45%, Other - 4%). The magnet school program will be an effort to maintain a racial balance more comparable to the district as a whole. Encanto has available space and is close enough to major transportation routes. Finally, as Superintendent Goodman remarked in October, there are citizens in Encanto who have worked for meaningful integration in the community for many years, and who would continue to do so for the magnet school.

Students attending schools in the northeast region of the district (predominantly white) would be selected on a voluntary basis to participate in the magnet school program. Although some sixty parents expressed an interest in the program last summer, even before the site was chosen, there will be further opportunity for others in the northeast region to indicate their desire to participate. Students living in Encanto will be assigned in the traditional manner.

A tentative budget of $39,940 has been proposed. This would allow for two teachers, one aide, instructional supplies, inservice activities, and other expenses.

Problems of publicity, program, teacher support, parent cooperation, and others will be tackled vigorously by the advisory committee. Sound planning from this representative group should lead to success. For the first time white children will be leaving their home attendance areas to attend a school in Southeast San Diego. Hopefully they will find a school providing academic excellence as well as supplying the uniqueness of intergroup relationships and experiences.

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CURE

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The purpose of this newsletter is to provide a forum for the dissemination of information and the expression of opinions among those concerned with combating racism. CURE believes the opinions herein need to be expressed, although they may not represent official policy of CURE

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BALANCED COMMUNITY

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not oppose the policy under consideration. Nevertheless, the Planning Commission approved the new policy by a 4-3 vote.

CURE supported the policy for the fostering of balanced community development that appears as Appendix E in A Decent Home for Every San Diegan and opposed the policy approved by the Planning Commission for the following reasons:

First, the approved policy will apply to only specifically designated areas of the city. The policy specifies "newly developing peripheral areas" and "city sponsored or approved redevelopment projects." In the purpose of this policy University Community, North City and Rancho Penasquitos are named. According to A Decent Home for Every San Diegan housing needed in those named areas from 1970 to 1975 is only 16,800 units out of a total of 56,700 needed for the whole city. Thus the presently proposed policy would apply to less than one third of the housing needed between 1970 and 1975.

To be effective the policy must apply to all areas. The previously proposed policy specifically states that it is applicable to all areas of the city.

Second, the policy approved addresses itself almost exclusively to the cost of new housing and to the need for subsidies or other help in financing. Referring again to A Decent Home for Every San Diegan, it points out, though not adequately in our opinion, that the problem is also a problem of racial discrimination. It says, "Unfortunately, there are some minority group households with incomes sufficient to purchase or rent housing in predominantly middle class areas who are unable to do so because of criminatory actions." It adds "There is sometimes a reluctance on the part of minority families themselves to pioneer in new, mostly white communities." This is a backwards way of acknowledging prejudice in the majority community as a factor in creating unbalanced communities.

A Decent Home for Every San Diegan makes clear that "Although some amelioration of conditions can be achieved through compensatory social, educational and economic programs within the ghetto areas, the most genuine solution would seem to lie in effectuating open housing policies to create ethnically and economically balanced communities in EVERY part of the city." (emphasis added). CURE agrees with this statement.

CURE believes the balanced community policy should recognize the discriminatory actions that result from the prejudices that still exist despite the laws of the land. This social problem should be dealt with as well as the economic problem. In fact, it seems obvious to us that the economic problem is only another consequence of the basic social problem of discrimination.

We believe this problem is better handled by the previously developed policy in that it says, "an affirmative plan shall be submitted describing efforts that will be made to maintain an ethnic and racial balance." The policy approved only requests an applicant to give evidence of his efforts to provide a balanced community.

In short CURE supported the previously proposed policy because it would apply to all areas of the city and require an affirmative plan to maintain balance. We opposed the policy approved because it limits the area to which it would be applicable and addresses the problem of a balanced community as if it were almost wholely economic problem.

There was considerable frustration among those who spoke against the policy that was later approved by the Planning Commission. The Chicano Federation, NAACP, the American Institute of Planners and the League of Women Voters called a meeting of interested groups to explore the possibility of uniting their efforts to oppose the approved policy when it was presented to the Council for action. Out of this first meeting came the Balanced Community Coalition. Their objective is not simply to oppose the approved weak policy, but to offer a strong, citywide policy as an effective alternative. Others who have joined in the coalition are the Pilipino-American Community Center, CURE, San Diego Teachers Association, San Diego Human Relations Agency, Urban League, YWCA, Community Planning and Design Center, South Bay Terraces Committee, Kuumba, Community Congress Advocates, Long Range Housing Goals Committee of La Jolla, Padre Hidalgo Center, and Citizens Coordinate Century III.

The Coalition has met more than four times to examine the problem and develop an alternative. The alternative policy agreed on was the original policy that appears as Appendix E in A Decent Home for Every San Diegan, less the Implementing Procedure. This is the strong policy that was developed by the Planning Department and the Planning Commission through their two years in depth study of the problem. This

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BALANCED COMMUNITY
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policy acknowledges the racial and ethnic dimensions of the problem as well as the economic factors. It also makes the policy applicable to all areas of the city. The Coalition appeared before the Council on November 21, 1972, to request that the alternative policy be considered at the December 21, 1972, public hearing of the Council as well as the one approved by the Planning Commission. This request was approved. Between now and December 21,21972, the Coalition will be developing the suggested implementing procedures to accompany the policy they have endorsed. The Coalition is also seeking community support. What can you do?

First inform yourself on the issue. This has necessarily been a brief, largely historical explanation. Call one of the groups in the Coalition for more information. CURE and others are willing to provide speakers to explain both policies. When you are informed, inform others. Contact your Councilman or Councilwoman and give your views. Urge others to do the same.

Segregation is a reality in San Diego. Racial and ethnic surveys of the school population show that racial imbalance is increasing. However, and examination of the problem also shows that San Diego still has the potential at this time to develop into a balanced community if a strong policy aimed at fostering a balanced community is enacted and followed. The Coalition enlists your support and active involvement in this effort.

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