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CITIZENS INTERRACIAL COMMITTEE OF SAN DIEGO COUNTY
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CIC AND YOUTH PROGRAMS
(IDEAS FOR COMMUNITIES)

Within the San Diego area, there is at present not a single agency which has as it primary objective that of serving as an overall coordinating body for youth activities and programs, which serves as the channel through which any and all concerns of all youth of all minorities are directed, and which performs as a catalyst to community involvement with and by these youth.

There are, to be sure, many community agencies, clubs and organizations which do serve many segments of the youth population in specific and much needed areas: some of these are the Neighborhood House, the Boys Clubs, Girls Clubs, YMCA, YWCA, and the many youth committees and councils of the many local churches. The needs met by these agencies and groups are varied and cannot be judged in monetary terms; neither should their services and dedication be taken for granted.

Yet, with the limited staff of these groups, many of the youth equally in need of their services cannot hoped to be reached. And there are thousands "outside" the reaches of these agencies, and it is this latter population of youth that somehow must also be included and made a functional part of their own communities. Naturally there is no panacea for this kind of a general or specific problem of youth-community involvement. But there are perhaps some positive action programs which at the moment are worthy of serious consideration. And to the end that CIC might initiate and stimulate greater total community concern in this general areas, the following ideas are offered for your analysis.

I. CIC might be the logical community agency to initiate, sponsor or help bring into existence, a city-wide (or area-wide) citizens "youth commission".

II. Without herein detailing the specific functions of such a commission, here is <u>one</u> way of approaching this project, if there is agreement as to a need to further pursue this idea.

A. CIC might convene a meeting of the many administrators and board members representing youth serving organizations to discuss the possible need of a San Diego City or (and) County Youth Commission.

B. From this initial conference, these representatives by agreement might divide into so many small discussion groups to meet independently at various places to further discuss the desirability of the formation of a youth commission, its organizational structure, the type of programs and responsibilities this commission might undertake and have.

C. After this series of small group community-based discussions, the entire body might then be reconvened to now analyze the results of the discussions.

D. There is the possibility that the group will not achieve unanimity with regard to the structure, the program, or even the need for this commission. There might be alternative programs; these possibly could emerge as one outgrowth of these small discussions. Nevertheless, until there is further exploration, there now appears to be an urgent need for: (1) serious study of youth problems; (2) that a cooperative approach is needed; (3) that the entire community should be involved from the beginning; (4) that local, state, county and city services could conceivably be more closely coordinated in some areas; (5) that there is a need for a strong officially appointed citizens' group to focus attention on youth and their problems, which would enlist comprehensive community support, and have the power to develop a comprehensive plan and program of action; (6) that specific neighborhood projects now proposed, sponsored, or already in operation could be encouraged as demonstration projects for more detail planning of effective ways of working with youth and their problems. Such a commission may be city or county appointed, as a part of that unit of government, or by ordinaance, etc., as one example. Alternatives again might easily result from the exploration discussions. Presented herein is just one idea of a comprehensive community approach to the many growing and complex problems of our youth in a growing and complex urgan metropolis.