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VAN DEERLIN WILL AID IN DRAFTING AMENDMENTS TO WAR ON POVERTY LAW

A demonstration against Rep. Lionel Van Deerlin, Democrat, San Diego, has resulted in an invitation to the congressman to help draft 1967 amendments to the War On Poverty Law.

Van Deerlin was escorted by police from a March 6 meeting to which he had been invited by the Community Action Council at Neighborhood House, in Southeast San Diego. The trouble erupted as Van Deerlin attempted to explain Congressional prospects for the anti-poverty program. Harold K. Brown, a local anti-poverty leader whose $11,845 a year salary is paid by the federal government, was identified as a leader of the disturbance.

Van Deerlin, a strong supporter of the War on Poverty, subsequently was contacted by officials of the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) here and asked to submit his proposals for strengthening local agency control over community action programs in San Diego and elsewhere.

At the time of the Neighborhood House outburst, the Self-Help Through Neighborhood Leadership project headed by Brown was the only one among 14 community action programs in San Diego County without a supervising board of its own.

"I feel that objectives of the locally initiated community action programs can best be achieved through the participation of a maximum number of dedicated and responsible citizens," Van Deerlin said Wednesday.

"The constructive guidance of a board of directors adds assurance that any program will be able to provide maximum service to the people it is designed to help. That, after all, is the most important goal of the War on Poverty."

The Congressman noted that President Johnson, in a March 14 message to Congress, called for

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He's Invited

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"strict rules" to govern the "accountability" of community action personnel in charge of actual operations of the programs.

Van Deerlin said he has suggested to OEO that close supervision by concerned and sympathetic citizen-directors be made a condition for the future federal funding of projects in San Diego and other metropolitan areas.

"Incidents like those of March 6 can only sour public opinion toward a very laudable effort—which truly deserves the endorsement of all Americans—to help the poor join the mainstream of American society," the San Diego Congressman said.

In a letter written to Van Deerlin after the Neighborhood House demonstration, OEO Director Sargent Shriver said:

"I am fully aware of the valuable support you have already given the program and want to do all I can to assure your continued cooperation in the development of sound anti-poverty efforts."