

October 28, 1967

COMMITTEE TO SAVE THE WAR ON POVERTY

TO ALL CAA DIRECTORS:

While our NACD newsletter, that you are also getting today, is a factual summary of what is happening a group of us as private citizens would like to fully acquaint you with the seriousness of the present situation and our present plight.

The War on Poverty is in very deep trouble and the whole program can be killed by a negative vote of the House of Representatives. Given the facts about partisan politics and the conservatism of some Democrats no one can really guarantee that we have the votes to "Save the War on Poverty!"

So there is work to be done, now!

Nationally, we are organizing a Washington meeting for CAA Board Chairmen and Vice Chairmen for 9:00 a.m., November 8. Please call (202) 296-6739 not later than Wednesday, November 1 to tell who is coming and to discuss arrangements.

We must ask you to provide for the transportation of your delegates. We are attempting to secure private funds to take care of rooms and meals for the delegates while in Washington for this one-day meeting. In addition to a general morning session, there will be time in the afternoon to visit Congressmen and we are making those appointments now. Have your delegate armed with data about your CAA operations for delivery to your Congressman. Remember, we want 2 delegates per 1,000 CAAs or 2,000 in Washington to make this a success. We need 100% cooperation!

Locally, you must get to work on bringing the message home to all of your citizens that we can lose the War on Poverty. You must immediately call a meeting of your Citizens Advisory Committees and acquaint them with the facts. They can write letters to the President and your Congressman at once and you may want to develop a petition for your Washington delegates to deliver to your Congressman.

At the same time you must advise all of your citizens that America may try to run out on the War on Poverty. You will want to work with your local press, radio and TV to get coverage and special features.

You may want to take part in a nation-wide series of night-long vigils to dramatize this issue. The evenings are Saturday, November 4 and Sunday, November 5. We suggest you have small groups in shifts, very well marshalled from early evening through morning. We suggest you provide for singing and work with local Clergymen to provide for prayer. We also suggest the use of candles and a small sign for each participant saying something like "Help Us to Help Ourselves." We suggest the steps of City Halls, Court Houses, Neighborhood Centers, etc., are logical places for these vigils. In conjunction with the vigils, please work with your Clergymen of all faiths to arrange for sermons, etc., addressed to this crisis for services over the same weekend.

If your Congressman can or does come home weekends call him immediately and arrange for an appointment with him for this coming weekend. Arrange a small meeting consisting of community leaders and poor people. If he is not going to be at home have your Board Chairman call your Congressman and discuss the situation.

In this regard, based on the present temper of Congress, you must mobilize Mayors, County Commissioners, businessmen and other well-accepted powerstructure Community leaders to make statements, contact Congressmen, etc.

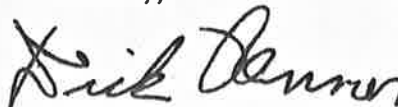
Remember, this is a national effort. We must have your contribution to make Washington and national level activities a success. And if a nation-wide effort is to be a success you must make your efforts in your community a success.

We caution that not one penny of public funds or any employee working time may be spent on these activities. That is just what our enemies would like us to do.

In summary, we cannot impress on you too much the seriousness of the situation or the lateness of the hour.

This could be your last chance! And you must act now! Call for details.

Sincerely,



D. Richard Wenner