

A STUDY OF PUBLIC HOUSING MANAGEMENT

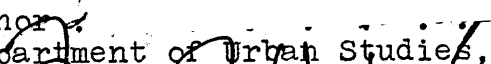
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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the  
Degree of Bachelor of Science  
at the

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

June, 1971

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ABSTRACT

This thesis proposes that there are many problems with public housing today and that many of them stem from poor management procedures that are not in the best interests of the tenants of public housing.

This thesis therefore provides a model plan for improved management procedures, especially allowing more tenant participation in the management and decision making of the public housing authorities.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge Francis Ventre for his advice and guidance in the writing of this paper and also John Pynoos for letting me use his class for gathering information for this project.

Public housing for the poor people in our country that cannot afford their own homes on the private market has long been an important part of the government's fight to end poverty. It was designed to meet the needs of the most unfortunate of our people, the ones that were not reached by the governments' other efforts to help families own or rent homes. It has not succeeded nearly as well as its early sponsors had hoped, however, for a variety of reasons: First it has been cut back considerably from the number of units these sponsors had proposed for it, which has reduced the number of people it can reach, making it less effective. Then the projects that have been built have not been as successful as supporters would have wished either. The families there have been dissatisfied with the physical condition, of the projects, the social atmosphere there, and with the rules and regulations imposed on them.

Instead of becoming a stepping stone on the way to success of temporarily poor people it has become a haven for permanently poor and misfits of our society, and not a very beneficial home for these people either. Some critics today are saying that the projects actually are fostering the conditions of crime, lack of initiative among the people, lack of respect for their homes and for the rights of others, and even ugly, poorly maintained housing that they were supposed to eliminate. These critics are not the usual attackers of public housing

either. Many of them are people who were and still are active supporters of the program and are most sympathetic to its problems. Many of these critics are in fact residents of public housing. This would seem to indicate that the program does have problems that need solving.

The problems that involve the local authorities and in particular management procedures seem to be the problems most immediate to the public housing tenants and also the most easily solved. At least they are the problems that can be solved at the local level or else through action of the department or Housing and Urban Development, which should be more responsive to the needs of the poor than congress could be with its varied interests that it must satisfy. If there are problems in the management of public housing that are making public housing less beneficial to its tenants than it could be and should be then these problems should be remedied as quickly as possible because the program is dedicated to helping the poor and if it is not succeeding in that the program must be considered a failure. If the intention of the public housing program is to supply "a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family" then it must live up to those ideals to be considered a success.<sup>1</sup>

This paper then is a study of one local authority (the Quincy Housing Authority) in depth and a study of the literature on public housing in general to determine whether there are aspects of public housing management

That need improvement to make them truly beneficial to their tenants. If there are such problems, the paper will then propose changes in policy to remedy the situation. After these proposals for change there will be discussions of these problems and solutions and possible alternative solutions will be discussed.

To help understand these problems there will also be a brief history of public housing and its management tracing its evolution and particularly the development of its suspected problems.

Most of the problems came to be considered problems because of complaints of the tenants which is not an unbiased group, certainly, but on the other hand they are the people for whom public housing is intended and their dissatisfaction must be taken as a good sign that the program is not being completely successful. Thus a study of these problems is necessary and programs for improvements in these problem areas are definitely needed.

## History

With the first national housing act of 1937 and even before, public housing in the United States has been surrounded by controversy. The idea that the government should provide "decent, safe and sanitary dwellings for families of low income" was not then and is not now universally accepted.<sup>2</sup> There had been some unsuccessful attempts to start such a program before then, but they had been defeated by the bitter opposition of most private house-builders, landlords and real estate agents (National Assoc. of Real Estate Boards), savings and loan managers (United States Savings and Loan League), and many private citizens not in need of such housing, who resented the idea of having to subsidize the poor with their taxes, and many people who just were against any and all government intervention in a formerly private sector of the economy.<sup>3</sup> The supporters (Public Housing Conference); reformers and politicians who felt the government should look after its poor and unfortunate, the city governments which saw a chance to remove their blighting slums, the homebuilders who saw a chance to receive some government money, and of course the poor themselves; had tried unsuccessfully to get the legislation passed for several years.<sup>4</sup>

It took the depression of the 1930's to finally make the program acceptable to a majority of congress. In 1937 the number of unemployed and poor people had been greatly increased by the addition of many former mid-



dle class and other "temporarily" poor people. These people added impetus to the idea of public housing by more than just sheer numbers. These "temporarily" poor people were often people who had been well respected members of their communities, educated, articulate, influential, and much easier for the average voter to identify with than the poor of the pre-depression years. These submerged middle classes, as they were called, were the friends, neighbors or relatives of the more fortunate majority of voters and this made it easy for the voters, who had possibly come close to financial hardships themselves to feel a need to help these people who were temporarily down on their luck. These temporarily poor people themselves were also more able and willing to press the case for public housing than any class of poor before them. These factors all combined to make a public housing program much easier for the voters to accept. At the same time, previous opponents to the bill were not putting up their usual opposition. The depression-era homebuilding, construction, and building supply industries were suffering from a great lack of business. The federal government was about the only source of money for new construction available at the time and its entry into the housing market was actually welcomed by these groups as long as it was restrained from over-supplying the market.<sup>5</sup> This restraint was built into the wording of the Wagner-Steagall Act that stipulated that the number of units built

could not exceed the number of units destroyed by urban renewal and slum clearance.<sup>6</sup> The anti-socialism and anti-governmental interventionists were not as vocal in their opposition as they had been either, probably because of the changes in the general economic situation and in public opinion, which now favored most government programs that might help provide jobs and give people more money to spend.<sup>7</sup> In fact the 1937 Act had a preamble specifically stating a purpose or "reduction of unemployment and stimulation of business activity".<sup>8</sup>

With all of this favorable support the housing bill was finally enacted with a general feeling of optimism. In the beginning this feeling seemed justified because the rents charged in the public housing, although low were generally high enough to keep out the real problem poor families, who were intentionally avoided in this way in favor of the submerged middle classes, and there were few real problems between the local authority management and the tenants. In fact the atmosphere was an informal and friendly one with rents collected by young female social workers and students, so called "rent girls" who offered help and advice while collecting the rent.<sup>9</sup> These days were ended permanently by the war, however. For it brought with it the need for housing for workers directly involved with national defense which was given priority over public housing for the poor and many of the

units originally intended for the poor were switched to defense housing only three years after the passage of the Wagner-Steagall Act.

The end of the war in 1945 did not bring any return to housing normalcy, however, for the emphasis of the public housing program was then switched to housing for the large numbers of returning veterans who were unable to find housing. This lack of housing was due to the decreased unemployment and increased wages resulting from the war which enabled many people to buy housing who had been unable to afford it during the depression and also the freeze on private house building during the war which transformed the housing surplus of the 30's into a housing shortage during and after the war.<sup>10</sup>

The government efforts to prevent the prosperity of the war years from fading rapidly into another depression by subsidizing new construction were generally directed towards these returning veterans and the now resurfacing middle classes, with housing for the poor being temporarily neglected. Without the spokesmanship and support of the previously submerged middle classes the pressure for public housing for the poor was greatly reduced and it was only natural that the government switch its emphasis to the more vocal veterans and middle classes, which also were the groups that the public was most sympathetic towards and the groups which could supply some money of their own

towards this new housing. This last factor removed the image of charity normally associated with government subsidized housing and therefore made the program universally acceptable to the public, realtors, bankers, builders, and other groups opposed to public housing for the poor. At the same time the proponents of public housing could hardly object to homes for veterans and the same middle classes they had been working for in the past. It also was a much more economical program from the government's and the taxpayer's viewpoints since less money was needed to subsidize housing for these groups with some money of their own to invest in housing than to subsidize housing for the very poor who had no funds to contribute. In fact the federal mortgage insurance program of the Federal Housing Administration actually ended up making money, so few were the foreclosures and so faithfully did the new homeowners pay their insurance premiums.<sup>11</sup>

With all this government support and money going to the veterans and middle classes, however, there was little left for public housing. Also the numbers of "good" families left to live in the "projects" had decreased considerably. Most of the veterans, defense workers and submerged middle classes previously living there were either taking advantage of the government's subsidies for private housing in the suburbs and moving out, or were being evicted by the local authorities for becoming over-income.<sup>12</sup> Over-income meaning that their incomes had increased until it

was above the upper income limits for continued occupancy. With the economy prospering as it was, most of these educated and mobile poor did become overincome and left but the uneducated, permanent poor were largely left behind. Thus in the late 40's and 50's the character of the public housing projects changed from that of a temporary stopover for the submerged middle classes and veterans, to the present so called "permanent poor" -- the unhirables, the unskilled, blacks, and the "problem families".

This change reduced support for the public housing program greatly for at least three reasons: It increased the undesirability of living near a public housing project, because of its less "desirable" residents; It eroded public sympathy for these needy people because they are not seen as being the same kind of people as the general voting public; Finally it increased the problems of public housing management, which is the main subject of this paper.

Even while this change was occurring, however, the second major housing act (the Taft-Ellender-Wagner act) was passed by congress in 1949.<sup>13</sup> It passed by the narrowest of margins and only after bitter opposition by people who made up the NAREB, USSLL, National Association of Home-builders, U.S. Chambers of Commerce, Mortgage Bankers Association, National Apartment Owners Assoc., Producers Council, several building material manufacturers and subcontractors and by local communities after the passage

of the bill.<sup>14</sup>

The supporters of the bill were the National Assoc. of Housing and Redevelopment Officials, the AFL-CIO, National Assoc. of Parents and Teachers, American Council on Human Rights, Church groups, other civil rights groups, League of Women Voters, Veterans groups such as the American Legion, the National Assoc. of Consumers, and with the National Public Housing Conference (later the National Housing Conference) also in communities acting as a co-ordinator. There were also related groups in local communities such as groups representating better homes or slum clearance.<sup>15</sup>

In fact the major reason for the passage of the bill was that it contained provisions for "housing production and related community development sufficient to remedy the serious housing shortage" and a provision for "eliminating substandard and other inadequate housing " and for the clearance of slums and blighted areas, all to be accomplished by various aids to private housing companies.<sup>16</sup> It can be seen that this was probably the main selling point of the bill by the fact that it was never questioned while the issue of public housing itself, the provision to build 810,000 units by 1955 was almost defeated entirely three times and this provision's greatest margin of victory was only five votes.<sup>17</sup>

After the passage of this bill it appeared that major Public Housing programs were finally going to go into

effect, but again a war broke out and set the program back. This time it was the Korean War in 1950 that forced the government to cut back the program to provide more money and materials for the war effort, and to hold down inflation. The yearly proposed number of units to be built was approximately 135,000 (it was allowed to vary from 50,000 to 200,000 units a year as long as the 810,000 total was reached in six years.<sup>18</sup> But Congress appropriated only enough money for 30,000 units in 1950, 50,000 in 1951 and similarly small totals for all the years up to 1960 with the result that by 1960 less than 25% of the housing that was to have been built by 1955 had been built.<sup>19</sup> The number of units being built since and funded since then has increased considerably since 1960, but the program is still recovering from its many setbacks.

The strong opposition in Washington is only part of the question, however, and for the purposes of this paper not the most important ones. There was also strong opposition to public housing on the local level. In fact even with the decreased appropriation the figures show that at least 20% of the units for which there were funds available were not applied for by local authorities.<sup>20</sup> When a community rejects federal money there must undoubtedly be very strong opposition to the subsidized program in the community. Some of this opposition was probably organized by the real estate and other such interested

parties, but they needed an already present strong base of resistance to build upon. Most of this opposition stems from the change in tenants and the associated reasons for decreased popularity given earlier. Most people in the local communities felt little obligation to take care of their "problem families" and certainly didn't want to live near them. The tenants were seen as "riff-raff", crooks, vandals, and people with little initiative to get a job or better themselves, whose presence would surely lower property values. They also had very dim views of the projects themselves. They were often pictured as ugly high-rises, with broken windows, rats and bugs, obscene obscenities on its walls and the stench of urine in its halls.

Even if they didn't picture the projects quite this badly, they certainly did not have a very favorable picture of the projects judging from the unfavorable reaction expressed by most communities when the possibility of locating a project in their neighborhood was brought up.<sup>21</sup> One of the most effective campaign techniques used for defeating public housing in local elections was to merely suggest to the voters that the project could be located near them.<sup>22</sup> There is some evidence that this attitude is changing considering that even with the greatly increased numbers of units funded in the last few years there are applications from local communities to the Department of Housing and Urban Development for all of these units and more. Applications from local authorities were coming in



at a rate of 140,000 units per year in 1968.<sup>23</sup> Local referenda on public housing had produced negative results in 40 out of 60 cases between 1949 and 1952, but in the 190 cases since then only about 60 have produced negative results.<sup>24</sup>

This does not indicate a complete change of public opinion on public housing for the poor, however, for there have been changes in the program over the years that have made at least some aspects of the program more acceptable to the public. Most notable of which was the addition of housing for the elderly. In 1956 unmarried elderly were first allowed into public housing but not until 1961 did the government actually make additional subsidies explicitly available to public housing for elderly to allow local authorities to house these people and still operate in the black.<sup>25</sup> A small word of description of the local authority. When a community decides to have public housing project in their town they will set up a local authority to handle the project and make reports to the Dept. of Housing and Urban Development. This is a necessary step to get federal money. The local authority then operates under HUD rules but has a great degree of freedom in its operation within these rules. The control that HUD does maintain over the authorities is mainly monetary and since they require the authorities to supply financial statements every year and make explanations of any irregularities or extensive losses the authorities have

had during the year. This makes the authorities keep in mind the desires of their tenants, their general public, the rules of the federal government, and state government in some cases, and also worry about trying to break even financially.) Since this law concerning the elderly was enacted this has been a most popular form of public housing (in 1964 52.6% of all new units put under contract were specifically for the elderly).<sup>26</sup> This housing appeals to the authorities for several reasons besides the extra money. Elderly are very orderly families that will not create trouble, they are easily associated with by the voters which avoids a lot of trouble in site selection and referenda if they are necessary, and they are the closest thing left to the submerged middle class in their values and habits and the fact that their unfortunate circumstances can be seen as true unavoidable misfortunes rather than a case of laziness.

So this special form of housing has undoubtedly contributed greatly to the program's successful showing recently in the referenda. In fact housing for the elderly is the only form of public housing that has been successful and in some cases it is the only form that the authorities themselves will even try to get money for.

Whether or not public housing for the poor in general has become much more popular, is still unclear then, but it seems to be receiving less opposition from its old foes

and less opposition in the local communities. It is still not universally acceptable, however. As a matter of fact it has come under strong attacks from a different group in recent years. This time it is its traditional supporters who are expressing misgivings about the program. The very people who fought hardest for the program in the past; the liberal reformers, the labor unions, the authority managements, and perhaps most importantly, the tenants themselves are now dissatisfied with the program.

There were harsh attacks launched by former avid <sup>such</sup> supporters as Catherine Bauer, Michael Harrington, Lawrence Friedman, Nathan Glazer and others against the drab ugliness of the buildings and the terrible social conditions in the projects, sometimes, such as Pruitt Igoe in St. Louis, they have even described as the worst slum in the city.<sup>27</sup> The tenants staged rent strikes to protest the bad conditions of their projects in again St. Louis and also Syracuse, and less extreme forms of protest such as verbal or written attacks on public housing by residents and managers from a variety of projects throughout the country.<sup>28</sup>

This surprising and disturbing fact that could mean the program has failed to adequately serve those for whom it was originally intended and this is what is prompting this study.

There are many possible reasons for this rising dissatisfaction within this group in the face of public

housing's broader acceptance, but the area of problems probably most curable, and certainly most immediate to the tenants would seem to be the area of public housing management by the local authorities. So this seeming reversal of roles on public housing and especially this particular possible reason for it shall be the topic of this paper.

## Public Housing Management

The evolution of the management of public housing projects has already been touched upon, but deserves closer attention if it is a major reason for the change in attitudes of its original supporters.

The first projects--around 1937-- were generally low rise row houses that fit in quite well with the private houses of the area, often being low in density and suburban in character.<sup>29</sup> A typical project was about 75% gardens, forests, lawns, and recreation areas. The management was casual in form, generally informal and very much like a private landlord-tenant relationship.

The tenants were the submerged middle classes that, although unfortunate, worked hard and paid their rents well, generally had rising incomes that often permitted them to buy their own home within ten years of moving there.<sup>30</sup> These people were often well educated, well behaved, etc., and management reflected this behavior by not imposing harsh regulations or enforcing rules unnecessarily.<sup>31</sup>

With the change in tenants resulting from the war and its aftermath which caused the voluntary and involuntary withdrawal of this temporarily poor class of people from the projects due to overly increased incomes, the project began to serve the permanently poor instead. This brought in the problems of fatherless families, juvenile delinquents, poor rent payers, and all other sorts of problems

that tended to follow these people. Not to mention the problems of being black, truly poor, having large families, and often being ignorant of middle class sanitation and housekeeping norms.<sup>32</sup>

This situation also tended to be self-perpetuating because this influx of "problem families" made the submerged middle class residents all the more anxious to leave generally to be replaced by the permanently poor who had not benefitted from the general rise in standard of living after the war as had the temporarily poor. There were no strict national rules about minimum incomes for projects but as authorities had to be able to justify their losses to the federal government as I have said, they tended to screen out applicants who were deemed incapable of paying the rent regularly.<sup>32</sup> After 1949, however, when the loss of the more stable elements from public housing combined with the seeming intention of the 1949 act, which was to reach lower income families including those on relief, forced the projects to accept these lower income families and those families with irregular incomes. When this happened the projects had to accept the problem families that came with these permanently poor families.<sup>33</sup> Also in 1954 legislation was passed making housing of people displaced through urban renewal and slum clearance a prime concern of public housing.<sup>34</sup> This also reduced the screening ability of the local authorities

who now had to accept all these relocated families that applied.

To counteract the problems of rowdy, often illegitimate and or fatherless families, often with criminal record, or drug and alcohol records, often prostitutes, or just plain troublemaking and damage causing families; the projects switched from their loose informal rules structure to a very strict, formalized, impersonal authoritarian one.<sup>35</sup>

Most of these changes took place between 1949 and 1953 and helped to give public housing a generally bad image, that later events have not dissipated. This has resulted in the projects' generally bad image with its tenants, prospective tenants the general public, and the authority management. For any of these groups to have these attitudes is bad but for the managers to have an attitude like this could only succeed in making matters worse.

Surely most project managers view their tenants with respect but there have been many reports from tenants that claim the management looks down on them as inferior and one poll of the board of commissioners of one authority revealed that: There was no need for more public housing in the area, that the authorities needed more strict rules to control the tenants and better means to enforce these rules, that the authorities should not recognize tenants groups, and finally that most public housing tenants have no initiative.<sup>36</sup>

This is obviously an isolated study, but that these attitudes should exist in any managerial group is not a promising

sign.

The attempts of the public housing boards to stop this change in character of the projects' tenants by enforcing more strict rules, have not been successful and may in fact have made matters worse.. Many of the more stable elements in the projects these rules and the management's method's of enforcing them, and the many inspections and moved out to avoid them. People of the West End district of Boston, for instance, who are fairly typical "respectable" poor, when an urban renewal project moved them and gave them a chance to move into public housing, only 1/6 of those eligible for public housing bothered to apply, even though they were living in crowded slums at the time. The ones who did not apply all thought that the housing projects would offer them a worse housing situation than they enjoyed then. They feared not only loss of freedom but also that the projects would be more crowded and run down than their present slum. This shows how bad the image of public housing is or else the quality of projects these people had seen in Boston.<sup>37</sup> Despite this almost all major cities, including Boston, have waiting lists to get into public housing because they have more applicants than they can handle, so this negative idea of public housing must not be as bad as the reality of many people's housing at present. This means the authorities must be doing something right. There is still a possibility that the image of the rules and poor physical conditions



may be keeping certain classes of people (probably the more stable ones) out of public housing.

These problems and changes have tended to shift the whole attitude and therefore policies of the boards from one of being a helping hand to the temporarily poor on their road back to one of being a caretaker for the chronic poor mainly keeping them isolated from the general public life of the city.

The lease imposed on the public housing tenants by the management often contains two to three times the restrictions found in a private lease drawn between landlords and tenants.<sup>38</sup> These leases also tend to be enforced rigidly and uncompromisingly. For instance, a case often mentioned in public housing literature is that of a blind New Orleans man who had to go to court to be allowed to keep his seeing eye dog in the project, because of the projects ban on pets.<sup>39</sup> Although cases such as this are very rare, there are less extreme cases of overly-strict regulations on holding parties, for having overnight guests, and often frequent invasions of privacy for inspections.<sup>40</sup> The fact that the lease itself is almost invariably a one month lease is another inconvenience that there is no real reason for, especially in the case of elderly persons whose incomes are obviously not going to change.

With these rules and regulations, or possibly with

them just being enforced for the first time after 1949, there grew increased annoyance and rebellion by the tenants that resulted in a rise in tenant organizations and activism.<sup>41</sup> These tenant organizations were not new to public housing. They had existed in the earliest days of public housing when there were educated individuals in the projects who had some knowledge of the law or organizations, but these organizations had faded out with the loss of their leadership class.<sup>42</sup>

Another cause of a lack of leadership besides the loss of the submerged middle class was the fact that many authorities evicted "activists" tenants as troublemakers at the first sign of activity and also because of the Gwinn amendment allowing authorities to evict subversive tenants for their refusal to sign loyalty oaths, on the grounds of "annoyance".<sup>43</sup> This latter probably had little real effect because it was passed during the Mc Carthy days and it is doubtful that there were many communist organizers in public housing at the time. It could have been used to scare people out of trying to organize any tenant's group, however.

General purpose tenant organizations are again appearing as have ad hoc groups organized around specific issues in management of the projects. There have been several rent strikes such as I have already mentioned and other lesser indications of organization in, if not real tenant organi-

zations in almost every authority throughout the country. There are now tenants magazines of a state wide nature and possibly a nation wide nature that list dozens of project and authority wide groups in Massachusetts alone. The tenants are increasingly expressing a desire for at least a say in the governing of their projects and usually a more active part in it including some decision making power or some power of review of the board's decisions that affect them. The authorities have responded differently in different parts of the country depending on the strength of the protest, the attitudes of the managers, and the measure of sympathy for the cause of the tenants that is found among the citizens of the immediate area.<sup>44</sup> In recent years the federal and state governments have begun suggesting guidelines for the handling of these problems and in the next few years there may even be a more or less uniform policy governing the main areas of complaints that tenants have. It is to this end that the following study was proposed and this paper written.

## Survey Project

The purpose of this paper was to produce a model management policy for public housing authorities across the state to make their operation more equitable and beneficial to their tenants assuming they were not already so. It drew much information from a study by the Joint Center for Urban Studies of Harvard and MIT. This study was designed to study the actual operating procedures of public housing authorities as opposed to the handbook or suggested guidelines. Its purpose was to combine all this information and make it available to the public in general and community organizations, tenant organizations, legal services groups, and public housing authorities in particular so that these groups can be made aware of what is happening elsewhere in the state and compare it to the local management procedures. It is assumed that there would be differences in procedures among projects with advantages and disadvantages accruing to these methods.

It is also the intention of this study to eventually use this data to try to put together some form of uniform policy covering every aspect of behavior of public housing management. The idea is that the differences among authorities may be due to lack of communication and this collection of data and model policy might be of great benefit to all concerned.

The group conducting the study was made up of one legal services representative, one Harvard Ph.D., one community

organization representative and several Harvard students doing the research for a paper. The main concern of this group was the handling of tenants and their rights by management. The survey and questionnaire pertained to the expected areas of most concern to the tenants such as admissions policies, evictions, rents, leases, and tenant participation. These were the areas of complaint most mentioned in tenant journals and other articles concerning tenants so it was assumed that they would be the major issues here also.

All of this data is not collected at this writing so it is not possible to examine and report on specific policies of the authorities throughout Massachusetts. This paper has instead based the following model policy plan and discussion of it on a study of present state, federal, and local housing authority policies and a study of major complaints of involved parties and some of the solutions proposed by various groups. This information was found through reading the available literature. Also used was an in depth study of one particular housing authority through personal interviews and readings of their printed material such as annual reports and leases.

This sample is not large enough to draw conclusions about what is being done in local authorities outside of the one I visited with any degree of validity. It will also limit the applicability of my model plan considerably, but it should remain valid for the sample of

authorities that I studied. Judging from the authorities that I studied it seems like there are only a limited number of problems that an authority is likely to have and these are the ones this study is aimed at. These may not be problems at all authorities, but this should not hurt the applicability of the model plan to those areas where these same problems exist. It is the problems that the proposals center around and not the projects, even though much of the form of the problem and solution comes from the particular projects studied.

Following is a brief description of Quincy and its public housing authority and the data about procedures and problems that was obtained there.

#### The Quincy Housing Authority (QHA)

Quincy is a predominantly white, mainly middle class town with a substantial working class population of recent immigrants from Dorchester, South Boston and other sections of Boston, and a few much richer residents living in its suburbs. The city is extremely homogeneous racially with less than six black families out of a total population of about 90,000, despite the fact that it is close to a large metropolitan area with many black families, and also despite the fact that many blacks work in a factory in Quincy. How it has managed to stay this way is difficult to understand considering the large numbers of fairly inexpensive houses there. It is possible, and

was suggested to us more than once that there is a very subtle segregation procedure that discourages blacks from buying homes, but no one could offer any more concrete ideas than that by way of explanation.

It has a fairly large housing authority with slightly more than 4,000 people living in 1470 units, but it does serve a larger area than Quincy itself; the towns of German-town and Scituate are also served by the QHA. There are no blacks in the housing authority, which is quite understandable. About 50% of the people are elderly, with half of the units being federally funded units specifically designated for elderly persons. The other units are state aided and designed for the poor with preference given to veterans. One of the smaller units is occupied entirely by veterans but most of the other buildings have only a small number of veterans although no numbers are readily available. The units range in age from 1 year to ten years, with most of them being close to ten years old. They are generally low, about three stories and the individual buildings probably contain less than fifty people, except for the newest building which is the only high rise. It is about twelve stories tall and probably contains around one hundred people. The projects are located in two separated locations each of which is in a very nice section, blends in very well with its surroundings and is very pleasing physically all around.

The local authority management changed five years Ago when its former manager was replaced with its present manager, an ex FBI man appointed by the mayor. The consensus of the three people we talked to who were tenants or primarily concerned with the tenants welfare, was that the new manager was much more cooperative than the old one. The new manager also seemed to be growing more willing to delegate more authority to the tenants as time goes on, but he needs to be pushed into any concessions.

The local board of commissioners is composed of persons appointed by the mayor also; all are white collar businessmen and lawyers. They are much less receptive to the demands of the residents than the manager is, which is unfortunate because they have all the actual power in the authority. They decide all evictions and discipline cases, in closed executive session, and have the final say in all major policy decisions.

The biggest controversy concerning the local housing authority at the time we were studying Quincy, was that the mayor had just created new jobs in the authority and given them to his brother in law and private secretary and intended to take one himself when he retired. Other members of the board are all close friends of the mayor with one other being his other brother in law and one his law partner. The furor over these appointments caused the new jobs to be tabled for a while while more consideration is given them. The other main complaint of the head



of the tenants' organization, was that this board has absolute power over the authority with the tenants having only the right to express their ideas but no official power to affect decisions, and almost no informal power given them either. The usual procedure is for the tenants' group to make a recommendation on evictions or whatever the issue is at hand, and then the board goes into executive session and makes a decision that is then announced to the tenants. On evictions the board will usually go along with the tenants but on other decisions, such as the new board positions, or the question of appointing a tenant to the board the commissioners have done what they liked regardless of the feelings of the tenants.

The major reason for choosing Quincy for study was one of convenience: the study was intended to look at as many authorities as possible and therefore it touched those closest to Cambridge. There were no special reasons for selecting it for this paper since I had no previous knowledge of the city or its authority, but it seemed fairly typical. In fact, Quincy is far from typical in terms of its completely homogeneous racial character and the newness and excellent physical condition of the project, but the problems of the tenants seemed very similar to those described in articles concerning other projects in other cities. Their complaint of lack of power is easily the most commonly mentioned in any reports of other authorities. The problem with the political appointments

to the board of commissioners was far worse than anything I had heard of but the problem is quite common for small towns. In all other respects it was typical of authorities in medium sized non-urban area.

The tenants' organization is a city wide group that as mentioned before is mainly a go-between for the tenants and the management and the board of commissioners with some control over small problems and decisions that are primarily inter-tenant matters. Other than that its functions are strictly advisory. The head of this group said the biggest problems not already mentioned were getting the authorities to hire tenants for summer jobs and other temporary or secretarial work instead of hiring outsiders for the jobs

There was also a Community Action Program (CAP) that is concerned with problems of all the poor in the city instead of just the public housing residents. It does much of its work with the tenants, however, and is very concerned with their problems. The head of this group was actually more concerned about the lack of power of the tenants than the tenants' organization was. He also expressed a desire for a legal counsel that could be available to the tenants and these two organizations and thought that the board's executive sessions might be illegal. He saw more power and actual control for the tenants' organization as the key to the tenants getting any other concessions from the authority.

The concern of the board seems to be to avoid any scandals or serious trouble from the tenants, while trying to make as few changes as possible, and keeping as much power for themselves as possible. The jobs seem to be used solely for political favors and the men appointed seem to be trying to insure that the jobs keep the same level of power (and salary) that they now enjoy. The head of the CAP thought that the tenant selection was much abused for patronage reasons, and if this is so this would be another stronger explanation why the board members are so loathe to relinquish any of their control. The head of the CAP seemed quite radical and some of his accusations seemed totally unsupported so it is impossible to say how much weight to attach to his theory. The CAP seemed to be connected to the Office of Economic Opportunity, but this is not certain.

The tenants' organization head also seemed not to fully agree with the CAP people in CAP's views of the authority management and commissioners. The tenants had a more sympathetic view and thought the management people were quite cooperative, while the CAP thought they were just acting. This could be due to a difference in personalities but could also be due to the fact that the tenant had gotten into the projects and was being allowed to stay even though she had been over-income for quite a few months. This could easily tend to make her look more sympathetically

on the authority's management practices. The CAP chairman, on the other hand, had to look out for the interests of all the people including the ones that have not gotten into public housing so it is logical that he would be more critical of the tenant selection process than someone who only represented people who had already gotten in.

The management also had troubles in Quincy. Their problems were financial in nature. They had not gotten the federal grants they needed and they were losing money on rents under the so-called Brooke Amendment which will not allow a family to pay more than 25% of their income for rent. The difference is supposed to be made up by the federal government but the director of the QHA said that it buried them in paper work and the delays in getting money could be quite long. He also expressed concern over The Department of Housing and Urban Development's model lease and their guidelines encouraging tenant participation. He said these things could make his load of paperwork to get anything done completely overwhelming.

We did not get to talk to any members of the Quincy housing board.

### Model Policy

This model policy is intended to benefit the tenant of public housing much more than any other party involved in public housing, but the benefits to the tenants have been weighed against the costs to the other groups. Most of the ideas for the policies have come from the tenants or advocacy groups working in their behalf. These policies are an attempt to pick the workable parts out of the proposals of these tenants groups and find workable programs to handle what seem to be the major problems of the tenants of Quincy and the major problems for all public housing authorities.

Many of these ideas are not new and many in fact are in effect in some places or are supposed to be in effect at least in state (Massachusetts), federal or on some local level.

It is obviously almost impossible to formulate one universal policy acceptable to all groups such as tenants, local management, housing board members, and prospective or rejected tenants (not to mention the taxpayers who must pay for these projects) involved in any project or to fit one policy to all projects unless it is tremendously flexible. For these reasons there is a discussion of each main feature of the plan immediately afterwards along with possible alternatives that could be equally justified. The proposals are separated into areas of operation, such as admissions, evictions, tenant partici-

pation and tenant organization to make them easier to follow.

#### Admissions

The main complaint from Quincy concerning admissions was that the procedure was very arbitrary and entirely up to the management. This came about because the authority has a zero vacancy rate with a long waiting list and very little turnover in tenants. It turns out (according to the head of QHA) that vacancies occur so rarely that almost every time they do there is some emergency case that has to be considered ahead of all those on its waiting list. It is obviously necessary to have provisions for handling emergency cases, but this special consideration could easily be abused if there are no controls over this power. This is what the head of the CAP thought was happening in Quincy, with political patronage a key force in tenant selection with the friends of the mayor or the other members of the Authority's hierarchy, getting the vacant apartments. It is not possible for us to determine if this is the case or not, but it is easily conceivable that it could happen in such a case as Quincy is. To prevent the possibility of this happening, or to eliminate the possibility of anyone charging that this happening there should be some controls on this power.

1. To guard against these abuses or possible abuses there should be a formalized system for dealing with these emergency cases on the basis of family size, condition of present housing, and other extenuating circumstances such

as natural disasters. It almost goes without saying that "first come first serve" be the basis for honoring applications for housing. Unless the situation was a true emergency the selection should be made of the person at the top of this time ordered list.

This would probably not be enough to stop unfair selecting processes in most cases, however so some form of review by some unbiased board would be necessary to prevent any unfair or arbitrary behavior in selecting tenants or ordering them on the list. Summarizing these points:

1. There should be a formalized method of ranking applications with extenuating circumstances on the same waiting list with the regular applicants, but would be given a certain amount of priority.

2. There should be a review board to impartially review these cases to insure honesty.

A. A possible form for this board would be to have an equal number of tenants elected by tenants, and an equal number of Housing board members elected by the board members, with one unbiased member elected by these previously elected board of review members.

Like any proposed action this one has advantages and disadvantages. These are summarized below:

PROS	CONS
This procedure for selection by setting up priorities and sticking to a	This would add more delay and paperwork to an already inefficient system.

waiting list that already Quincy may be an isolated included extenuating circum- city as far as this problem stances in its ordering, or the possibility of this would make for a fairer sys- problem goes. The liter- tem with less chance for ature on public housing man- patronage or bias. agement/pays little attention

It would also give prospective the problems of patronage tive tenants a better idea of and apparently it is not con- where they actually stand on. sidered much of a problem in being admitted and allow them most authorities.

to plan more effectively. A review board of the

It would probably result form proposed would have in better integration of fam- interests as concerned ilies throughout thr author- with preserving the status ities if they gave the first. quo as the present man- vacancy to the first family agement would be, and on the waiting list. might not be an effectual

review.

The setting of priorities within the waiting list could be as arbitrary as the present sit- uation and could tend to promote exclusion of whole classes of people if abused.

.....  
 This idea is obviously not without its drawbacks. It would be more fair to prospective tenants and reduce



patronage if handled correctly, but this is often not a serious problem (patronage). If it is not a method such as this would only create more work and the odds of getting a good management that would handle the selection fairly, are almost as good as finding a review that would handle them fairly. With any reasonable type of control on it, however, the abuses of this proposed system should be very small and if there were a review board of the type suggested it should not prove very burdensome or much of a waste of time. If bias and patronage were not considered a major problem in an authority it would probably be better not to bother with this review board, because it would only complicate the procedure needlessly. Only if there were complaints or a strong possibility of mistreatment of the "emergency" classification as there appears to be in Quincy. In these circumstances such as the one in Quincy such a procedure is necessary, however. If a waiting list is considered useful for public housing then it should be followed and used and not merely sidestepped continuously. This procedure of a systemized list and a review board would make the waiting list a meaningful thing that prospective tenants could plan by.

This procedure should allow less maneuvering of tenants of one type into one project, or in other words should promote more social integration which would seem to be a necessary part of the "suitable living environment" mentioned before that the government intended to supply these

tenants. If the ghettos need to be broken up they also need to not just be resettled together in public housing, and a faithful sticking to a waiting list should prevent that.

If the project is to operate for the best benefit of the tenants, then at some point their judgement must be accepted along with the project director's, and they must work together in running the authorities, and this includes the admission procedure. As long as there is still a formalized waiting list system there is little chance for a clique to take over the selection process and convert the projects into totally homogeneous units.

One other possible area of improvement is the area of admissions would be to broaden the spectrum of incomes allowable in the projects. This would again promote more social integration and variety in the projects and introduce elements into public housing that are now excluded, but are still unable to afford decent housing on the private market. This was not considered a problem in Quincy, but could be in other places or to other groups that we did not get a chance to talk to precisely because they were excluded from public housing.

2. There should be broader more flexible income limits extended up, and down if still necessary. ( There should be no exclusion of any people because they cannot afford public housing rents, but if there are still places that are doing this they should be stopped)

.....PRO.....CON.....  
The greater variety of income. Allowing higher income

ranges and hopefully people families into public hous-  
would allow more social int-ing would cause exclusion of  
egration, which seems advis-some families who might be  
able for breaking up the needier and less able to  
ghetto and ghetto mentality. afford decent housing.

It would make public Public housing is gener-  
housing serve all of those ally already way over sub-  
for whom it is needed and scribed. There is not  
intended. enough room now and more

It would help supply bet-applicants would only make  
ter role models for poorer matters worse and lengthen  
public housing residents and waiting lists.

help give them initiative  
for self-improvement.

.....

If there are some people who are being overlooked  
for public housing because they are too poor to afford rents  
and not eligible for welfare, this policy would benefit  
them most. Hopefully there are no such cases now with  
the Brooke amendment and other changes in public  
housing policy.

The provision for allowing higher income people into  
public housing would probably be beneficial to the projects  
as a whole, but is probably unfair to the then excluded  
poorer families. The provision for allowing families  
whose incomes rise above the normal limit for maximum

income , to stay anyway, which will come later in this study, seems more effective in providing role models for the poorer families to copy. That policy would show the poorer families a family that had come into the project as poor as they had and then had prospered, bettered themselves, and who were not being punished for this improvement with eviction. The family that comes in better off may be a more stable force for the projects, but won't have the effect of showing the poorer families how they can better themselves, because they will have been that well off from the beginning. The stabilizing influence would be a benefit to the authorities by itself that should not be overlooked. If the provision for allowing over-income families to stay were to be accepted this one would be unnecessary as far as providing role models and stabilizing influences are considered.

The only other consideration for the measure would be whether these presently excluded upper-lower income people could find decent housing on their own. Undoubtedly there are people who cannot afford a house or apartment on the open market, who are still not eligible for public housing because even the maximum rents allowable in public housing projects (not including rents for over-income families) are by definition lower than private rents for decent housing of comparable size. And yet maximum limits for eligibility now are always set some percentage below the income needed to purchase adequate private housing in

the area. This automatically leaves out some people whose incomes fall somewhere in between these numbers needed for public housing or private housing. Many of these people are reached by other government programs but this is another way to reach these families that could possibly be of benefit to the other families living in public housing. There is also the extra feature that these families could pay higher rents taking some of the loss up that the poorest families cause the projects to incur. This would make the jobs of the managers that much easier by removing some of their worries about losing too much money. Also if the present projects could be made to be less of a financial loss this could very well make the projects more popular with the public and with private developers interested in the turnkey projects whereby a private developer builds and runs the project for a time and then turn them over to the local authority for either a limited profit or no profit. In other words more financially successful projects that could be made possible by these higher rent paying families could result in more projects getting built because they would be more appealing. This would be doubly true if these families provided the stability that would be expected of them, and could erase the rowdy riff raff image of public housing projects.

### Continued Occupancy and Evictions

That keeping of over-income families that I have just mentioned is probably one of the more debatable aspects of public housing management at the present time. The issue has not been hotly debated but it has produced divided opinions by housing experts, public housing managers, and tenants. The main question is whether these good "role models" that families who have worked to become over-income (having their incomes rise above the maximum upper limit for continued occupancy in public housing) present are worth the loss of space that could otherwise go to needier families. This is by no means an easy question to answer and it is especially hard to quantify exactly how over-income a family should be allowed to become and still stay and then for how long?

This issue was not of very great importance in Quincy because the tenants, management, and community action people all seemed to agree that these over-income families should be allowed to stay because they were beneficial to the projects. Apparently no one had been evicted for being over-income in at least the last year or two even though many families had become eligible to be evicted for that reason. The usual practice seems to be that these over-income families write a statement showing that they could not get any adequate housing that they could afford and then take it to the notary public in the authority to get it notarized and then they can stay as long as they like

and everyone in the project is happy. The prospective tenants that are forced to wait for openings may have a very different opinion, however. These tenants that do become over-income are of worth to the other tenants, though as is witnessed by the fact that the president of the tenants' organization was a woman who had been over-income for months and had not even bothered to turn in the letter stating that she could not find any decent adequate housing that she could afford. It appears that these over-income, more fortunate, skilled or educated families may be assuming the place of the departed middle classes of the old public housing days. They may become the able spokesmen and organizers of the public housing projects and may eventually be able to build support for the issue of public housing the way the former spokesmen of the submerged middle classes did. At least they may be able to get more respect and rights for the tenants from the local management and boards of commissioners.

3. Local Authorities should be given more liberty to keep over-income families, especially if they cannot find suitable, safe, standard housing they can afford. They should also be allowed to stay for either a certain length of time or until their incomes reach a certain limit regardless of the availability of adequate housing that they can afford, if the local authorities deem it necessary to keep these stable, high initiative, and of course, good role model families around for the good of

the authority.

..... PROS ..... CONS. ....

It would provide needed role models for poorer and younger tenants to aspire to.

The places held by over-income families could better be used by poorer, needier families.

It would remove the present penalty for working hard and raising the families income.

Local project managers might tend to take advantage of this rule and keep all their

It would provide added revenue and stability to the projects, and probably more able and active leadership for the tenants.

overincome families until the projects became essentially a middle class, moderate income project.

.....  
The main question seems to be not the worth or advisability of keeping over-income families, but rather what limits should be placed upon this policy. Almost all involved parties in most authorities and especially Quincy seem to feel that some successful families are needed and that it is unfair to immediately eject these families just for displaying the very attributes the program is supposed to help build in its tenants. The debate comes in when the actual numbers such as level of over-income to be allowed; number of over-income families to be allowed; and length of time they should be allowed to stay have to be considered.



If rents are increased directly with the rate of income increase over-income families will generally move out voluntarily as soon as they can afford private housing as cheaply as their present public housing, unless they have developed real roots there. Private housing is more private, more unregulated and allows freedom to move or locate where you wish with whatever people you wish, so it has proven in the past to be preferable to public housing if rents are the same.

The only reason most over-income families stay at present, besides sentiment for their homes, is that it is very hard to find suitable housing elsewhere at any where near the same cost. One survey of persons displaced from a project showed that 80% of all displaced families who were removed for being over-income paid more for their new housing, but that between 1/3 and 2/3 of them were living in substandard homes.<sup>45</sup> This would seem to indicate a discrepancy between present estimates of adequate income to afford private housing on the open market and the actual income needed for such housing. If such a discrepancy exists then the income levels for continued occupancy should be raised accordingly, as well as the eligibility limits that have already been discussed. Of these two increased limits, the one for continued occupancy seems most important and should be raised first or else highest. This would allow for a family to raise its income without having to suffer the punishment of being uprooted.

and forced to pay higher rents for quite possibly worse housing. It would seem better to deny something to someone in the first place than to give it to them for a short while and at the first sign of self-improvement, take it away from them. Also maintaining the lower limits for eligibility, however, would insure that the program still reached the very poor that are below the reach of other government assistance programs for housing. Without some form of incentives, or at least a lack of punishments, the program runs a great risk of losing all its ability to help poor people improve their lives, and could cause the program to end up the permanent home for these permanently poor families that it may very well be helping to create. This is one view of public housing's purpose but it is the one that has created the most hostility and disappointment in the program.

The social benefits of keeping some number of over-income families seem quite clear and valid, but what are the costs? If the total number of such over-income families in any authority is kept quite small, as it should be, to be most effective, and as it probably would be naturally if rents were raised equitably with income, given the natural aversion to any institutionalized style of life with less freedom than private housing could offer, and also considering most families natural desire for their own home. Assuming then that this number of families that

stayed on would be small the costs would also be small. The number of families waiting for admission to public housing throughout the country must be an enormous number compared to the small number of openings that forcing these over-income families out would create, if Quincy is any measure of the typical authority. The reading would indicate that in this respect anyway it is quite close to normal.

In Quincy there is a waiting list of a total of 1800 families for the 1480 units, and assuming that only half of the units are occupied by elderly, whose incomes are presumed not to rise above the income limits, (this is the minimum number of units that can be occupied by elderly since half the units are specifically designated for the elderly), this would leave only 700 units that could be vacated by families becoming over-income. Assuming that about ten percent of these units actually could be vacated in this manner, which was one tenant's estimate of the very maximum number of non-elderly families that could become over-income in a time span of about five years; this would vacate 70 units for 1800 families in five years. This number would be very significant to one of the families that could be occupying one of these units, but this increase in available units would do little for the total housing situation for the poor in Quincy.

More good could be probably done by leaving these families in the authority. Besides their role as good

models for the poorer residents, there are the benefits already mentioned of increased stability for the projects, increased leadership, organization, and an increased ability for the tenants to make themselves heard and gain respectability, which could lead to larger improvements in the tenants' condition later. Then again there is the possibility of financial benefits to the projects that could do more good than anything else.

Finally there is the possibility that the good influence of these tenants will have its desired effect and help other poor families to better themselves and therefore leave the authorities, creating open spaces that could be filled by the waiting tenants.

The major responsibility in determining the number of these over-income families kept and the limits on their ability to stay should lie with the local authorities and their tenants, but should be largely dependent on the availability of good housing in the area. The authorities should be able to decide if they needed these models and how many they did need, but these decisions should again not be arbitrary, but rather based on actual needs of the authority and its tenants.

The ideal form then would be the most flexible possible to make the program suitable to the different projects, however, this is assuming that the system would not be abused. This could easily be an unjustified assumption because the management and tenants are going to be most

anxious to keep these stable and desirable elements and might tend to keep too many of them for too long a time, depriving many needy people of housing without providing their tenants any more real benefit. This is why it might be necessary for limits on the amount of time a family could stay or on the amount of money over the maximum limit they could earn to prevent abuses of this program. A limit on length of occupancy would be advisable when there is readily available housing in the area that people who are only slightly overincome could afford, and the limit on the extent their incomes were over the limits should be used where housing is very scarce and considerably higher incomes than the maximum allowable are required to purchase decent housing.

The other major area of concern in Quincy and to an even greater extent in other areas judging from the literature is the area of tenant participation in eviction decisions and other areas of tenant participation in making decisions affecting their lives and the projects.

The Quincy tenants' representative complained that they had no say at all in the governing of the projects, or at least what they said had no effect at all on the policies decided upon, but could only discuss and advise. This seemed to be the most common complaint of public housing tenants and seemed to irritate them the most. It is a part of almost all complaints of tenants that they have been left out of the policy forming process even when they

agree with the decision reached. The tenants of Quincy expressed the belief that this lack of participation was a major factor <sup>and</sup> problem behind all their other problems. The head of the tenants' group said that just to be able to talk with the management and know that they would listen and genuinely consider their proposals would make many of the other frictions between the tenants and the authority management seem far less important. The feeling of having the ability to influence the important decisions to be made concerning the project would probably have an effect on the feeling of responsibility the tenants have for the project that might be as beneficial to their well being as any concrete decisions they might actually make.

4. The proposals for change in the area of tenant participation would be simply to include the tenants in the decision making process on all major decisions concerning the authority. This should include some significant representation (hopefully equal to the management's) on the review boards reviewing tenant selection, eviction, and all discipline cases. It also should include some real voting power on policy formation or changes that will affect the tenants.

These review boards cover the main areas of operation in the authorities that the tenants are most closely concerned with and are the areas where the tenants and management are most likely to have disagreements. For this reason tenant participation in these decisions could elim-

inate a lot of bad feelings that might originate in decisions by the management that the tenants did not agree with because they would be equally responsible for the decision, or they could change some of the decisions that management would have made that the tenants would have disagreed with. Since the tenants are also very much concerned with any major policy decisions, which will after all affect them more than anyone, they should<sup>1</sup> definitely have some voting power in making any of these decisions.

One possible form for this board of review that has been used in several authorities, apparently with success, is one composed of equal numbers of tenants and board of housing commissioners members each group selected by the group from which they come, and then one additional outside member selected by these other elected board of review members.

In Quincy in particular, a major step forward in decision making policy until the day a tenant can be one of the housing commissioners, would be to have the actual decision making part of the board meetings open to the public instead of holding them in a secret executive session.

The pros and cons of this issue are fairly subjective, and are mainly ones of degree of participation advisable since any one will agree that the tenants should have the right to at least discuss all decisions and help make at least some minor decisions.

The major arguments against increased tenant participation are that it will make the operation of the authority very slow and difficult if the tenants have to be consulted on a lot of policy changes and if too many of the decisions of the authority are subject to review. It will also undermine the power of the authority, which could lead to a breakdown of discipline and a subsequent increase in the degree of difficulty of running the authority smoothly. The only other reason cited against increased tenant participation is that the tenants are not intelligent and capable enough to govern themselves, or even help some in governing themselves.

Increasing tenant participation, from the tenant's point of view, would result in increased feelings of responsibility for the project and pride in the project and themselves. It would most importantly give the tenants power to make decisions concerning their lives and their homes. The projects exist only for the benefit of the poor people that they house and therefore should be as responsive as possible to the wishes of its tenants. The projects should work to improve the condition of the lives of its residents as well as just providing shelter for them. The social atmosphere of the projects is just as important, if no more so, as the physical environment provided the tenants of public housing. Not only should the tenants be given as much power as possible to shape their environment so it would be most suited to their needs



which they are best suited to judge, but a good start towards a good social environment would be the feelings of self-rule and responsibility that goes with the decision making power.

Another benefit of this increased responsibility for their own governance would be that it might make the projects more attractive to to the more stable, intelligent, and proud families who shunned the program when they thought they would be giving up their independence to live there.

If the authority manager and board of commissioners accep the fact that their job is to help these people get back into the main stream of American life and help raise them out of the poverty and "ghetto mentality" that they are presently in; or if the authority feels that it has the job of taking care of these "permanently poor" and making their lives as comfortable as is reasonably possible; thsn the authorities should bring the tenants as much as possible into the governance of the authority as soon as possible for all the benefits listed above.

If on the other hand these authorities look upon their jobs as being to act as caretaker to these poor people and to just keep an eye on them and keep them away from the rest of the community's citizens, while keeping them out of trouble and reasonably satisfied; then the authority's reluctance to grant the poor people there any control over the authority is logical and justified.

There is also the possibility that the authorities see their jobs as being only to provide a safe, decent home for these people and that is all. In this case also the logic against tenant participation would be justified and correct. This last view probably plays a dominant role in the thinking of most housing officials and is the reason they do not want to sacrifice efficiency for the benefit of their residents. The only benefit they are concerned with providing is the house they live in, and any more concerns would decrease the number of families that they could provide housing for.

This last view is understandable, but to really help the poor they must be given the necessary social atmosphere that goes along with the physical one. Any less will just perpetuate the problem of having poor people to house. Also the tenants today are reaching the stage where they will demand more control and will not merely accept a shelter that gives them no independence or any of the other factors of human life that are just as important as having "decent, safe and sanitary dwellings for families of low income". The originators and builders of public housing realized this in 1949, which is why they changed the intent of the program to one of supplying "a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family". ( my emphasis)

### Conclusion

As can be seen from the discussion of the model policy proposals there are no clear cut definite rules for managing such complex problems as are found in public housing. Only the area of tenant participation seems to clearly call for a specific action of increased participation for the residents giving them as much control as possible, hopefully putting them on an equal footing with the housing board on decision-making.

The other proposals are seen as beneficial overall, but each should really depend on the conditions of the local authority to determine whether it is needed or not and to what extent the proposals should be followed. Methods of review are necessary if something is not being done equitably but are just a cumbersome bother if they are not needed.

The best solution would be to implement the tenant participation segment of this plan as soon as possible and to as great an extent as possible. This is the most important portion of the plan and the one that seems to be universally applicable. This would solve most of the major problems that tenants have in receiving as much benefit from the authorities as possible, as well as giving them the most immediate benefits through increased pride and sense of responsibility. Also from this any other parts of this model policy that are felt needed can then be established with the increased power and responsibility for their own governance that this step will give them. From here the tenants should know what to do if my assumptions are correct.

FOOTNOTES

1. Public law 171, 63 statute 413 (1949).
2. United States Housing Act of 1937, ch.896, 50 stat. 888.
3. Leonard Freeman, Public Housing: The Politics of Poverty (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1969) pp.59-60
4. Ibid. pp.75-76.
5. Friedman, Public Housing and the Poor: An Overview, 54 Calif. Law Review 642 (1966).
6. U.S. Housing Act of 1937, supra.
7. Friedman, supra p.646.
8. U.S.Housing Act of 1937, supra.
9. A. Schorr, Slums and Social Insecurity (1963) p. 112.
10. Freedman, supra p. 101.
11. Friedman, supra p.649.
12. Ibid., p. 651.
13. Public Law 171, supra.
14. Freedman, supra pp. 59-60.
15. Ibid., p. 75.
16. Friedman, supra p. 644.
17. "Congressional record". XCV, Pt. 7, 81st. Cong., 1st. session, June 29, 1949.
18. Freedman, supra pp.22-37.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid., p. 32.
21. M. Meyerson and Ed Banfield, Politics, Planning, and the Public Interest(New York: The Free Press, 1955), p. 116-17.

22. Freedman, supra pp. 112-15.
23. U.S. Congress, Senate, Banking and Currency Subcommittee, Housing and Urban Development Legislation of 1968, Hearings on proposed Housing Legislation for 1968, 90th Cong., 2d sess., 1968, Pt. 1 p. 76.
24. Freedman, supra p. 53.
25. Ibid. p. 34.
26. Friedman, supra p. 656.
27. D.J.R. Bruckner, Los Angeles Times (February 2, 1967),  
pt. 1 p. 22.
28. Friedman, supra p. 660
29. Ibid. p. 650.
30. Ibid. P. 650
31. A. Schorr, supra p. 110
32. Ibid. p. 112: Friedman, supra, p. 653.
33. Friedman, supra p. 650-53
34. Ibid. p. 652.
35. A. Schorr, supra pp. 110-12.
36. R. Taggart III, Low-income Housing: a Critique of Federal Aid (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Press, 1970) p. 36.
37. Friedman, supra p. 655.
38. A. Schorr, supra p. 112.
39. Friedman, supra p. 665.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid. p. 653.
42. A. Schorr supra p. 110-12.
43. Freedman, supra p. 165
44. see Friedman supra .
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