

GALLEY

"Since September of this year I have been teaching 7th grade in a ghetto school located on the periphery of the area where the Newark Community Union Project has been most heavily involved for almost three years. Eric Mann (who recently was suspended from his job) and I had decided for a variety of reasons to get into the system to discover the possibilities of using teaching as a vehicle for reaching parents.

"The clearest result so far has been that parents are very receptive to a teacher who has won the affection of their children, who is interested enough to visit them in their homes, and who talks nitty gritty shit instead of the paternalistic garbage hurled at them in the schools by most teachers and administrators.

"It is very clear to us that the issue of education is a basic although initially vague concern of most parents; that as with other issues we have worked on, it offers a means of organizing around a specific problem in a way that builds-in an understanding of the workings of the city and the possible roads to change.

"During the next year or so we are hoping to recruit a group of young radicals who would come to Newark to teach. Ideally these people would take an MAT somewhere before coming; if not, there is a summer program at the local teachers' college which provides the basis for a provisional contract. With the increasing need for teachers here, we believe it entirely possible for people with a 'respectable' background to get hired. Furthermore, the situations which have led to Eric's suspension and to the projected termination of my contract this summer can be avoided with some care.

"We hope eventually to have a group of teachers, living and working in different neighborhoods who would be organizing groups around their respective schools, who would be meeting regularly with each other and with NCUP organizers who have been in Newark for some time, and who would become involved generally in the life of the community.

"For people who are unsure about what to do with their lives, who are interested in relating directly to the kind of movement we have been building in Newark, this proposal may suggest an important and challenging contribution."

The above was written by Steve Block, Williams '65, who has been working for NCUP since he graduated. He will be at Bennington this coming Sunday, April 23, to talk about the project. He is particularly interested in speaking with students who are interested in education/teaching and social change. Everyone invited.
2:00 p.m. Dewey House Livingroom.

Nancy Seldin

[1967]