ADMINISTRATION IN A NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE


by

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ABSTRACT

In recent years there has been increasing interest in the analysis and clarification of social agency administration. In the group work setting the philosophies of democracy and social group work are intimately related. The Neighbourhood House is a "society in miniature", wherein all the pressures and interactions of human relationships are active and can be observed. The effectiveness of this community experience is a measure of the compatibility of democratic aims and its practical implementation. Modern administrators believe that those who participate in an agency program should have a part in the process of policy-making. This is the core of democratic social agency administration.

The representative membership council in the leisure-time agency is a medium for self-government and a vital instrument in the development of a responsible constituency. Important to the democratic administrative process is the role played by the professional group worker.

In an attempt to learn something about the dynamic quality of agency administration and relationships, this study is focused on the House Council, as the administrative group directly related to the membership. The analysis of the effectiveness of the Council is made in terms of selected concepts and principles of democratic social agency administration. The material used is based on records of House Council meetings gathered by the writer during a student placement at Gordon House in 1952-53.
It is hoped that the findings of the study will help to point up the need for increased attention to the dynamics of administrative groups and specifically to the role of the House Council and the social group worker in the overall process.
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ADMINISTRATION IN A NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE

A Group Work Study of the Role of the House Council
CHAPTER 1

Concepts of Democratic Administration

Since the advent of professional social work, the administration of social agencies has been the subject of much discussion. Early studies of administration concerned themselves with the techniques and organizational aspects of administration. During this period there was a tendency to think of administration as synonymous with management or control. Since 600 years before the birth of Christ political philosophers have been theorizing about the democratic ideal in one form or another. In the years that followed practical philosophers have attempted to prove that the welfare of society is in fact enhanced by the implementation of the ideal. It has fallen to the social scientist to show just how democracy can be made to work. Mary Parker Follett's studies of business and management, and others, along with the modern social work concepts of participation and relationships, have placed the emphasis on the dynamic qualities of human relationships in the "process" of democratic administration.

Louis Blumenthal describes this quality of social agency administration in the following statement:

"Democratic administration is a cooperative process that uses the human resources of all the workers and that enables them to share in the common responsibility for the enterprise."

Helen Beaver defines administration, simply but very well, as "the process or means by which the aims of an organization are determined, plans are made for achieving those aims and the plans carried out." The significance of these definitions can be more fully realized when recognition is given to the fact that in these statements the focus is on the individuals who participate in administration; the groups of people who determine and execute the aims and objectives of the agency rather than a perfection of the techniques of organization and control.

Mary Parker Follett writing in the early part of this century about the administration of industry and government, in what has since become a class exposition, was one of the first to emphasize that the problems of administration were basically problems of human relations. In the same vein, A.H. Leighton in his revealing study conducted at a Japanese relocation centre during the Second World War, pointed out that the central problem of democracy was the task of obtaining and coordinating the individual's participation in matters affecting his own destiny. Leighton said that "people must save themselves; they cannot be saved from the outside". These writers have contributed much to the understanding of social agency administration.

Harleigh Trecker's definition is a conclusive statement of the concept of the democratic process of administration which has evolved.

"Administration is a creative process of thinking, planning and action inextricably bound up with the whole agency. It is seen as a process of working with people to set goals, to build organizational relationships, to distribute responsibility, to conduct programs and to evaluate accomplishments. The real focus of administration is relationships with and between people."  

This definition is based on studies in which Trecker was able to isolate and analyse something of the dynamic quality of human relationships which are stimulated in a truly democratic group situation. The quality of these relations and inter-relationships must be considered in the development of democratic administration in the social agency.

There is still evidence of the transition in social work thinking from the "care of the weak by the strong" to a form more consistent with what are generally held as democratic ideals. This cultural lag is obvious in the discrepancies between structure and the avowed purposes of many agencies. The pattern of philanthropic management with its hierarchical levels and with little contact between administration and the membership still persists in many settings. This system of control negates the integrity of the individual member and prevents him from sharing fully the opportunities and responsibilities of the organization: it denies the fundamental precepts of democracy.

Membership in recreational agencies has not been clearly defined. Generally the members are those who participate in the services of the agency, that is, the various groups and individuals who are actively engaged in some aspect of the agency program. The members are often referred to as the constituents. The membership of the agency can be distinguished from the staff, both professional and volunteer, the board with its numerous committees, and the community at large, which supports and sanctions the work of the agency.

Leisure-time social agencies, such as the Neighbourhood Houses and the "Y's", are attempting to supplement the educational and social recreation of individuals and groups. They came into being as a result of industrialized urban conditions and met a need for collective recreation. The Neighbourhood House becomes a community of individuals who have found a common interest in the services available. It becomes something of a "society in miniature". Through the media of activities and group association, agencies are attempting to meet the needs of their clientele in order to further the development of the participants and to help groups function more effectively and democratically.

The application of social group work methods to agency administration is intimately related to the belief that democratic administration is basic to successful agency operation. Trecker defines the nature of social group work in the following terms:

"Social Group work is a process and method through which individuals in groups in social agency settings are helped by a worker to relate themselves to other
people and to experience growth opportunities in accordance with their needs and capacities. In social group work, the group itself is utilized by the individual with the help of the worker as a primary means of personality growth, change and development. The worker is interested in helping to bring about individual growth and social development for the group as a whole as a result of guided group interaction.  

The group work method is an enabling process in the development of democratic relationships and therefore an important tool in the implementation of democratic administration. The guiding principles in this method are the worker's close relationship with the group and the guided interaction that results, the democratic self-determination and the continuous individualization. These are fundamental to the practice of social group work and of democratic government.

For maximum efficiency of the administration, the agency must provide for both method and structure. Structure provides channels and an orderly flow of work, through which members carry out their responsibility within the framework of representative government. Democratic structure enables groups and individuals to work together effectively in a two-way communication system. Good structure is simple and economical, both in time and leadership, and it creates unity as well as separation.

**Concepts of Democratic Social Agency Administration**

For the purposes of this thesis five main concepts of social work administration have been selected as the basis.

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of the study. These concepts are not mutually exclusive; they are key ideas that have been associated with effective administration. The philosophy of the democratic ideal is, of course, basic to, and inclusive of all these concepts.

Democracy places the focus on the integrity of the individual, his worth and value, equality of opportunity, and the significance of human life. This includes the individual's right to share in the responsibilities of government and to select leaders. Within the democratic ideal the principle of "participation" is more than a civil right; it has important psychological implications. Allport, in a discussion of the difference between activity and participation, points out "that to participate means to identify with, to become ego-involved. The true participant shares in common with others. His activity is a joint or plural activity developed as a member of a working team." Responsible participation, which is inherent in democratic administration, means that groups and individuals are helped to work together so that they share in the work and policymaking of the agency. In this way the rights and interests of all are protected and the individual develops a social consciousness for his fellow man.

The word "democracy" is generally associated with the problems of government, nevertheless, it can be applied to the operation of small groups and organizational operations

with little loss of precision. For example, one of the major problems of democratic governments hinges on the necessity of the delegation of power. This is just as important in the government of the social agency where the board is the official policy-making organ and the members are the constituents and ideally the electors. However, the delegation of power in the group work context infers also, the active participation of the constituents, their readiness to participate, and democratic channels for communication. The board of the agency delegates certain powers to its various committees and to the membership council. Therefore, this representative council of the membership, or House Council, as it is sometimes called, plays an important part in the democratic operation of the agency. Democracy stands for the basic human rights of freedom and representation which are applicable in any discussion of individuals in association with others, in the field of government and in the management of the social agency.

The concept of "circular administration" is one of the techniques of democratic organization. Circular and linear administration are not necessarily opposed to one another; in fact, it is held by many that circular administration cannot be achieved successfully without some of the framework and controls of the linear pattern. Linear administration recognizes the power of the board of the agency as the sole, responsible body for the administration of the organization. Other parts of the agency, committees, councils and members are related to the board in a vertical relationship, that
is, the lines of authority all run from the board down. This pattern of structure places the board in a hierarchical position with complete authority. Circular administration, on the other hand, provides for what is called a horizontal relationship, as opposed to the vertical relationship of the linear pattern. Wilson describes the circular administration of a group work agency as a series of concentric circles with the executive and the board in the innermost circle, the units of work with the staff and committees serving them in the next circle, and the membership in the outer circle. This organization provides channels of communication and a more democratic relationship between the various sections of the agency. Authority is delegated according to function and there is a "flowing back and forth" between the units encouraging communication and consultation. The "circular agency" not only has direct lines into all the units of the association, but it also has this horizontal relationship which gives a new meaning to the function of the membership and their role in the administration of the agency.

The concept of administration as a "process" has been advanced by writers in the field of social group work. Trecker said that the total human effort that goes into the "thinking planning and action" of the administration of an agency becomes the process of administration. In other

words, process refers to the dynamic relationships which are active in the group situation resulting from the interaction of people in communication with one another. The process of administration also takes into consideration the agency as a whole, the method of operation, the structure of organization and the human relationships. Process also refers to "movement" or the development of the total group effort. Trecker suggests that in the evolution of our understanding of social group work administration, we now identify administration with "process" rather than techniques; and that in doing so we place "administration in its proper setting as an inherent part of the whole social work process rather than merely a tool, adjunct, or facilitating device." 9

The idea that administration is fundamentally related to the problems of individual interaction and relationships has been put forth by Follett, Trecker, and others. This concept is endorsed by our knowledge and principles of the social group work method. It is in this area that social work makes its greatest contribution to the science of administration. This concept takes into consideration the human element in the administration of the agency. The creative functioning of the administration is dependent on the individual and his relationship with others in the agency. The association of these individuals creates complex interactions that influence the behaviour of the

group, whether it be the board, a committee or a council
group. Effective, purposeful working together is also
dependent on the willingness and the ability of these
individuals to cooperate on a joint project. An under-
standing of the complex relationships involved is
fundamental to productive association. The problems of
human relations cannot be ignored because their focus is
changed; that is, from the small group to the administrative
or secondary group. Perhaps social agency administration
is only truly democratic when these inter-relationships
are fully understood.

Finally, it is postulated that the social group worker
plays a major role in developing a democratic social agency
administration. The third chapter of this thesis is devoted
to a study of the role of the worker with the House Council
in an attempt to ascertain something of the relationship
between the worker and one administrative group and the
distinctive characteristics and skills of the administrative
worker.

These basic concepts of effective democratic administra-
tion, that is, the democratic ideal, the technique of
circular relationships, the idea of process, the significance
of human relationships, and the role of the worker, are
used as measuring rods in this study. Trecker has expressed
these same concepts in other terms in the following criteria
for effective administration.

"First, administration must be in harmony with
the basic objectives of the agency."
Second, administration must be based upon a
dynamic understanding of individuals and
groups in their cultural setting.
Third, administration must be flexible as to
procedures and capable of adjustment to meet
changing conditions and needs.
Fourth, the policy-making and the operating
phases of social agencies must be integrated
so that policy flows out of operation and
operations truly represent policy. ¹⁰ ¹⁰

Administration in a social agency can be used to release
creative endeavour and to assist individual members as well
as to experience new satisfactions, to gain a sense of
responsibility, and thus to carry the purpose of the agency
to realization. Included in this process are all the groups
concerned with agency operation: the board, staff and
committees and member groups. Attainment of this goal of
democratic administration depends on these groups individually,
and the relationships between them. In order to narrow the
focus of the study this discussion is chiefly concerned with
the role of the House Council as the administrative body
representing the membership of Gordon Neighbourhood House.
Nevertheless many of the findings might be applied to
other groups involved in the administration of an agency
and only by making a thorough analysis of each group and
their relationship to the total process can the effectiveness
of the administration really be measured.

Gordon House: Setting of the Study

Gordon Neighbourhood House is one of the projects
developed under the Alexandra Community Activities of

¹⁰. Ibid., p. 15.
Vancouver. The others include, Alexandra Neighbourhood House, Camp Alexander, and Strathcona Day Nursery. Gordon House was opened in 1942 in two buildings purchased from Crofton House School, on the recommendation of the Community Welfare Council of Vancouver. This Council had pointed out at that time that there was a need for recreational services in the down-town residential area, known as the West End district. Volunteer groups were already organizing local activities and they were anxious to secure permanent facilities and leadership. In little over ten years, Gordon House, staffed by professional social workers, has become one of the foremost group work centres in the city.

The West End, once the area of "first family" homes, with access to fine beaches and shopping centres, appears to be in a transition stage at this time. On one hand are the middle and low rent rooming houses and on the other an increasing number of luxurious modern apartment buildings. The population of the area has generally been considered to be a highly transient one; but a recent study\textsuperscript{11} of Gordon House revealed that, beneath this floating population which probably represents about 50\% of the residents, is a core of permanent family groups. This fact is reflected in the membership of the House.

The general purpose of the agency is to provide a family centre for recreational activities. As a neighbourhood

\textsuperscript{11} Thomas, Elizabeth, Report to Study Committee on Purpose and Function of Gordon Neighbourhood House, Gordon House, Vancouver, B.C., June, 1952.
house, people of all ages are eligible for membership. Group associations foster a spirit of friendliness so that individual members find satisfaction in the activities and purposes of the agency. The official purpose of the House is contained in a recently compiled statement of "Purpose and Function."

"Gordon House is the Neighbourhood House of the West End. Its purpose is:

1. To serve the social needs of families and individuals residing permanently or temporarily in this area.
2. To provide opportunities for individuals of all ages to make relationships and to have experiences which will contribute to their social development.
3. To enlarge the family's resources for creative living.
4. To develop neighbourliness among families and groups and to foster good relationships between the neighbourhood and the larger community.
5. To improve the neighbourhood services through cooperation with other organizations, by demonstration of new services and by influencing public bodies.
6. To participate in the social welfare movement in its broader implications."

In 1952 the total membership engaged in the various sections of the Gordon House program was approximately 1086. Two-thirds of this number were "senior citizens" or members over 55 years of age, and the remaining third were adults and children. The qualifications for membership in the House are twofold, residence in the West End and the payment of a small membership fee. According to the constitution of Alexandra Community Activities, the parent body, membership in Gordon House does not confer membership in A.C.A. A Gordon House Annual Report describes the agency membership as consisting largely of pensioners, working mothers, single

men and women living away from their families, and low-income family groups whose children in particular make use of the agency facilities.

The Gordon House program is designed to provide a variety of leisure-time activities for all ages in response to the requests and needs of the community. There are program departments for senior citizens, adults, teen-agers and children. These divisions include craft and discussion groups, dances, instruction classes, sports activities, small club groups, a nursery school and special agency events. In addition, the agency houses Night School Classes, a Well Baby Clinic, and a branch of the Public Library, and various organizations are supplied with accommodation for regular meetings. The wide variety of program for members of all ages, and the representation of the community at large, helps to make this agency, in fact, a centre for neighbourly activities.

Gordon House is a member agency of A.C.A., as it is popularly known, and as such is responsible to the A.C.A. Board. This Board at its annual meeting elects the Gordon House Committee which then takes on the responsibility for the operation of that agency. The President of the Gordon House Committee is a member of the A.C.A. Executive Committee which acts on behalf of A.C.A. throughout the year. This relationship with A.C.A. is shown graphically in the organizational structure chart in Figure 1.

By legal authority the A.C.A. Board is the policy-making body for the member associations. In the actual
Community Chest & Council

Alexandra Community Activities Board

Other agencies under A.C.A. are Strathcona Nursery School, Alexandra House and Camp Alexander.

Gordon House

Board of Directors

Program Committees

Senior Citizens' Advisory Committee
Adult Advisory Committee
Junior Advisory Committee
Nursery School Advisory Committee

Direct Board Committees

Personnel Committee
Building Committee
Finance Committee

Executive Director

House Council (see Fig. 2)

Staff

Staff

Staff

Staff

* Taken from the Volunteer's Manual which the agency circulates for information and orientation to the agency's policy and program.
management of Gordon House affairs, however, the Gordon House Committee enjoys almost complete autonomy, and refers to A.C.A. only when complete changes of policy are recommended or with the expenditure of capital funds. In many ways the A.C.A. is like a "holding company" operating without a paid executive director. This relationship does make for some confusion and there is some lack of understanding about the scope of function and responsibility.

Membership for the Gordon House Committee is filled by nominations made to the A.C.A. Board at the annual meeting. According to the A.C.A. Constitution those eligible for nomination to the Board are "members in good standing with the Society." The practice appears to be to nominate persons representative of the agency neighbourhoods, persons interested in the Society, or those who have been active in some way in one of the associations. The associated agencies have an opportunity, through their respective committees, to present nominations for the election. But because nominations are made only in sufficient number to fill the vacancies, a democratic election is not held. The status of membership in A.C.A. is not at all clear and in practice only board members have voting privileges in the election of the new board. Therefore, a bona fide democratic election would certainly involve a clarification of membership rights and the status of agency members. On election to the Board and assignment to an agency committee, the term of office

* Many times the agencies through their own Nominating Committees take on additional members on their boards which are later ratified by A.C.A.
appears to be of an indefinite length. As a private, non-profit social agency, Gordon House is a member of the greater Vancouver Community Chest and Council and as such receives an annual allocation of funds for operating expenses. This relationship insures a certain amount of financial stability and frees the staff to serve the membership more directly. This association with the Community Chest requires the agency to maintain certain standards of practice and places the agency in a position to communicate with other social agencies of the city.

Leadership in the agency is given by employed social group workers, and shared with volunteers and program specialists who make it possible to serve the large numbers who participate in the program. The professional worker is delegated certain exclusive functions and also shares the responsibility for the agency in a partnership relationship with the Gordon House Committee, or Board as it is generally known. Effective programs depend on an adequate supply of both professional and volunteer leaders. The volunteer in the agency serves both in an administrative capacity, that is a board or committee member, and as a program volunteer.

The function of administration in Gordon House is defined in the agency's statement of "Purpose and Function".

"The administration and policy of Gordon House is supervised and developed by a Board of Directors elected by the members of Alexandra Community Activities. The Board enlists the assistance of Advisory Committees representative of the community. Every effort is made in the development of the agency to provide a structure of councils and committees which enables members to participate in the formulation of policy and government of
the agency so their knowledge and skill in the
use of democratic methods may be enhanced. 13

The final phrase in this statement suggests that, though
the Board have made some movement toward democratic procedures
through a system of councils and committees, they have not
fully accepted the right of the members to share in the
management or acknowledged that members have a contribution
to make in the total process of agency administration. This
perhaps indicates the stage at which the Board members in this
association are in their understanding and acceptance of member­
ship participation.

The diagram on page 15 shows the structure of committees
and council which has been instituted. There has been a real
attempt to make the advisory committee representative of the
community by including school principals, ministers and parents
who live or work in the district. Also, at least half of the
present board members live in the neighbourhood and several
have been active in the agency membership activities at some
time.

In order to relate the general membership to the Board of
Directors and to assist members to participate in the policy­
making of the agency, the House Council has direct representation
on the Board. Through the Board Nominating Committee, the House
Council can make suggestions for Board membership. In due time
these may be selected by the Board committee, presented to the
A.C.A. annual meeting and become elected as Board members. In

13. Ibid.
In this way the Board has included in its membership several members who are active in the program and who have been delegates to the House Council. Because they are Board Members they have voting rights and certain responsibilities, but in addition they have been used in a representative position, reporting to the House Council on Board activities and vice versa. This relationship makes for some confusion for the general membership and the individuals themselves about the role of the Council in the administrative picture. On the other hand, it has maintained a direct, two-way channel for communication between these two bodies.

The process of council, committees, staff, and board, working together is a part of the circular pattern of this agency. The extent to which each of these units are fulfilling their function is a measure of the effectiveness of the total process of administration and the acceptance and readiness of the Gordon House members to work together productively within the framework of relationship established.

For this reason the role of the professional staff in the operation of democratic administration is the key to the success attained. The social group worker is the representative of agency administration, assisting groups and inter-groups to function adequately according to the objectives of the agency. The functions of the worker in an administrative setting are manifold, but basic to all is the understanding of persons in their group relationships. The creative analysis of the administration process is dependent on knowledge of the subtle
dynamics of all groups working together for the enhancement of human welfare.

Method of Study

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the effectiveness of the administrative process at Gordon Neighbourhood House, with particular attention to the extent to which it is democratic and to which the members participate in the making and carrying out of policy. Examination of administrative relationships involves an analysis of the structure and method, an evaluation of the findings. Because "analysis" literally means separation of the parts, and because it is not possible to make a complete study of each of the units of administration in this discussion, the focus of this study is on the House Council, as the centre of membership participation in the administration.

The Gordon House Council is composed of representatives from the various clubs and groups of the agency. This inter-group of delegates plan joint enterprises and make policy which will facilitate the programs of the constituent groups. Their status as an administrative program council is acknowledged by the Board and by agency members through their club affiliation. A study of the House Council in this setting will indicate something of the effectiveness of the channels of communication within the organizational structure, the acceptance of the Council as an administrative body, both by the members and the board, and the extent to which the membership is capable of working in an inter-group relationship. This measurement of the process of administration is therefore attempted, making
use of the concepts of democratic administration which have been discussed and the criteria formulated by our knowledge of social group principles. Further studies of the Board and Advisory Committees will further help to clarify the total process of social agency administration.

A study of the House Council would not be complete without an analysis of the role of the worker associated with this group. Chapter III deals with the role of the worker in the inter-group setting and his relationship to administration generally. Such an analysis of the council and of the worker may help to increase our understanding of the administrative relationships in leisure-time agencies.

The records used in this study were obtained by the writer during a social work student placement in Gordon House in 1952-53. The writer acted as secretary to the Board of Directors, to Advisory Committees, and to staff meetings, and in this capacity kept narrative records of these meetings. In addition, the writer was assigned to the House Council as the direct worker and therefore was active in assisting this group throughout the year. These records and other relevant material are used as the basis of the analysis in this study. Significant excerpts have been taken from the Board and Committee records and statements of policy in order to describe the total process of administration. It should be made clear that the object of this thesis is not just to make an isolated study of the House Council. Rather, the Council is used to illustrate the overall approach to administration and more specifically the extent to which the role of the House
Council is accepted. This study is an attempt to determine something of the dynamics of administration, and in particular the roles which the House Council and the worker can and should play in the total plan.
CHAPTER 11
The Role of the House Council

The representative council is peculiar to leisure-time agencies and is an effective instrument of democratic membership participation. The membership council occupies a middle position in the system of representative government of the agency and provides a channel of communication between the Board of Directors and the constituent groups. The council is used where agencies are successfully coordinating their work.

The membership of the agency functions through organized groups and program activities which are in the main self-governing. It is at this level that participation and responsible membership is encouraged and developed. The officers of club groups and their advisors, in their planning and carrying out of their own programs, set the pattern for democratic operation. When the members of these primary groups have developed a sense of belonging and identity with their own group, and feel some security and satisfaction in working with each other, they are ready to participate in inter-group associations. To this council of representatives the clubs and groups of the agency send their delegates to plan and carry out joint enterprises and make rules and regulations which facilitate the program of the constituent groups. The council must respect the rights and functions of both the primary groups and of agency committees and board. The authority of the council must be clearly defined and it must be recognized that certain areas, such as the membership of primary groups and the expenditure of agency funds, are not
the concern of this group. The council is a group of representa-
tives or delegates from the member groups. It cuts across
departmental and functional lines and deals with problems common
to all. It exists to serve the groups represented and the agency
of which it is a part rather than the individual delegates.
In this sense the council is not a group, but rather an
"intergroup". Newstetter describes the difference in focus
between social group work and social intergroup work in this
way:

"The first focus in the social intergroup work process
deals with the adjustmental relations between groups
and not the personal needs of the members of the
intergroup who are primarily representatives of some
group or groups. The need, therefore, is not primarily
that of particular individuals for adjusting them­
selves to other individuals; it is the need of groups
in a given community to maintain mutually satisfying
relations with other groups. In the social group work
process one main focus is in terms of the interpersonal
relations of group members. Here this is important
only as a means to an end, the end being the relations
between groups."

The "community" is the total membership and program of the
agency; the democratic society "in miniature". The House
Council is the medium for coordinating the constituent groups
and encouraging harmonious relationships amongst the member­
ship. The council is the intergroup body, a further step
from the primary group.

The representative to the council is involved in a dual
relationship. He is a club member as well as an elected
delegate to the council. The delegate who maintains his

1. Newstetter, W.I., The Social Intergroup Process,
208-209.
identity with the primary group and also functions as an effective representative has attained a reasonable degree of maturity and has accepted the purposes of the agency. Healthy relations between groups and council will help to protect the integrity of the member groups and free the council to do its job as a coordinating, administrative unit. The council is a work group; it does not have a program for its own recreation. This is the distinctive difference between groups and a council. The council represents primary groups and is a channel for communication to the membership and to other parts of the agency administration.

The membership of the council will be determined by its constitution or the policy of the agency. Active, organized groups within the agency program usually elect their delegates to represent them in association with other agency groups. In an attempt to make the council truly representative of the entire program, all groups are urged to participate. Sometimes, because of wide differences in age and variations in types of program, the agency has more than one council group. Frequently these are developed on a departmental basis and may or may not be brought together at intervals during the year according to the plans and needs of the situation.

The purpose and objectives of a council are directed towards the planning and execution of joint events and activities: making rules and regulations for facilitating group associations and coordinating and integrating the total program and membership of the agency. The program of the council involves the members in a very real cooperative
experience as they select goals, single out problems for
discussion, and take on responsibilities and authority. The
activities of the council enlists the membership in the
process of deliberation and decision-making concerning the
affairs of the agency program. The council assists groups
and members to become a part of the agency and to increase their
understanding of and skill in democratic procedures.

The effectiveness of the council is dependent on the
operation of the council within the administrative structure
and of the abilities of the delegates to be representative.
As Newstetter puts it, "the from and to is the life line of
the social intergroup process." The extent to which this
"from and to" is effective is directly related to the readi­
ness of the membership for participation in this representative
group. It means that members must understand the purpose and
function of the council and their role as a delegate and be
capable of working in the situation. Responsibilities and
functioning must be clearly defined within the context of the
purposes of the agency and the limitations of the membership.

The fact that a council occupies a middle position in
the administrative structure means that it must be a part of
the "line organization" of the agency--i.e. there must be
direct working channels of communication which permit the
council to make representation to the board and staff and to
participate in the policy-making of the agency. The council

2. Ibid., p. 211
is the medium for membership, expression and organization. On the other hand, the council is a reflection of membership activities for the board and the staff and as such provides certain services and performs services, moreover, which are unique to a House Council. In this way the lines run to and from board, staff, and council in an horizontal relationship and a pattern of circular administration is established.

**Purpose and Function of Gordon House Council**

Gordon Neighbourhood House operates under the legal sanction of the Constitution and By-laws of Alexandra Community Activities. This document makes no recommendations for agency structure. As already mentioned, membership and voting rights in A.C.A. are restricted to board members. The constitution rather suggests a simple, straight linear pattern without consideration of the general membership's role in the affairs of the agency. But, in effect, the vagueness of the constitution and the lack of any definite statement on structure have permitted a more liberal interpretation and implementation. Some of the A.C.A. agencies, therefore, have developed a more democratic structure and policy, according to the purposes and understanding of the agency committee, than might otherwise be thought possible.

Gordon House, pursuing its aim of providing opportunities for a real understanding and appreciation of the democratic process, states in its "Purpose and Function":

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"That every effort is made in the development of the agency to provide a structure of councils and committees which enables members to participate in the formulation of policy and government of the agency so their knowledge and skill in the use of democratic methods may be enhanced."

This concern for democratic structure and the development of membership is basic to the group work method and the present thinking of the board and staff, and is borne out in the structure devised. The nature of circular administration which is in operation at Gordon House (shown in Figure 11) indicates the importance attached to the House Council in the overall organization of the agency. It is important to state, however, that despite the lines from council to staff, membership and board, there is still some confusion and doubt about the role of the council and its method of representation to the board. Because of the relationship with the parent body, A.C.A., and the lack of an agency constitution, the position of the House Council is actually a part of the "unwritten" policy of Gordon House. This "unwritten" authority and responsibility makes for some confusion concerning the status of the council.

The Gordon House Council was formed soon after the establishment of the agency itself. There are few records to trace the progress of this body over the years, but it is evident that the council has maintained an important place in the life of the agency. The council meets once a month throughout the year with the Executive Director and/or a student social worker giving leadership to the group. The Executive Director, a professional social group worker, is
Board Committees
- Personnel
- Building
- Finance

Executive Director

Assistant Executive Director

Director

Assistant

Board of Directors

Director

Assistant

Young Adults & Teen-agers (184)
Advisory Committee

Children (419)
Advisory Committee

House Council

Nursery School (40)
Advisory Committee

Senior Citizens (460)
Advisory Committee

Fig. II GORDON HOUSE: CIRCULAR ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE
employed by the Board as the chief administrator of the board's policy and program.

In 1952 some minor changes were made to the council constitution as regards representation from the member groups. The following is the statement of purpose of the council taken from the 1952 constitution (Article 2):

The objects of the association shall be:
(a) To work in cooperation with the Directors and staff and to make suggestions for the operation and improvement of Gordon House.
(b) To unite those persons who are interested in any phase of the activities of Gordon House.
(c) To assist the management in developing a real community spirit in the West End. 4

The membership of the council, according to the constitution, is composed of clubs which meet regularly in the House. It states that each member organization shall have three representatives, two active and one alternative. The officers of the council are the president, vice-president, and the secretary-treasurer, who are elected at the annual meeting for a period of one year.

The by-laws outline the duties of the officers and provide for the appointment of committees as they are required. Before the annual meeting the chairman appoints a nominating committee which presents a slate covering the offices to be filled. The constitution defines the area of council activity in fairly general terms, giving some indication of the intended function of the body. It is written in a way that leaves a margin of

interpretation permitting considerable flexibility and creativity to future council activities. A closer analysis of the constitution would no doubt reveal that, while the general outline is probably similar to that of councils in other settings, the objectives and the provisos are directly related to the atmosphere and needs of Gordon House.

**Membership of the Council**

The House Council at their annual Meeting in January, 1953, listed 26 delegates, representing 13 groups active in the House program. The delegates included 6 men and 20 women with an average attendance at meetings of 14 throughout the year. The thirteen groups include five club groups, and seven interest groups in the senior citizen's program and the Nursery School parents, a young adult program. In addition the council has three standing committees, Sick Visiting, Friday Entertainment, and Potluck Suppers, with members at large serving on the council.

There has been a small turnover of membership during the year with about 25% of the members inactive. The largest group of delegates are between 65 and 70 years of age with four members under 50 years. Representatives are selected by their groups by election or appointment, according to the policy of each group. Normally a council group is composed of adults, since children have not usually developed their capacity sufficiently to participate at this level. In this setting the council includes an older-age group, reflecting the membership of the agency.
The officers of the council are elected by the delegates by secret ballot at the annual meeting. A nominating committee appointed by the chairman presents a slate of names to fill each office at the meeting and the delegates can make further nominations from the floor. This year the president was returned for a second year, with only a slight majority. Mrs. T., the former secretary, was elected vice-president, with the former vice-president immediately retiring from the council upon his defeat. A younger woman, new to the House, was elected secretary.

The following are brief sketches of some of the key members of the council.

Mrs. U. - Very active in senior program and House activities for some time. She is between 60 and 65 years of age and her status is high with the membership because of her leadership ability. She is very vocal in meetings and understands the council function very well. She has some difficulty working with the president.

Mrs. C. - Active in a number of clubs and is about 67 years old. She has a wonderful sense of humour, is fairly relaxed in handling situations and tends to give supportive leadership rather than taking any initiative.

Miss G. - New to the program this year and came to the council and Miss B. as representatives of the evening crafts groups. They are both in their thirties and were active in council committee planning at Christmas time but since then they have not attended council meetings; though they continue to come to the crafts program.

Mrs. N. - Active in the House and the Council since its beginning. She is about 70 years old, is a volunteer on intake and has been the council representative to the board for three years. She is partially deaf and not very active in meetings. At this point she is more closely identified with board and staff than with the membership.

Mr. Nt. - A comparatively new member who has aroused strong feelings from the members because of his aggressiveness and impulsive behaviour. He is about 62 years of age and retired.
Mr. K. - His behaviour is quite erratic but he has gained the support of the members because of his willingness and active interest. Tends to feel that he is the spokesman for the membership and has shown some need to place himself in conflict situations.

Mr. O. - A comparatively new member who spends a good deal of his time at the House and identifies closely with the staff. In his anxiety to avoid conflict he has aroused considerable criticism from the members.

Mr. T. - Chairman of the House Council for two years and for an earlier period in the council. He has never lived in the West End but became associated with the House as representative to the council from the Legion. He has no telephone, has many outside interests and attends the House program infrequently. He is very charming and speaks very easily, is well-liked particularly by the women. He is a capable chairman in many ways but tends to be quite authoritarian.

Mrs. I. - Mrs. I. was sponsored in her election to the council as secretary by Mrs. T. who felt that it would help Mrs. I. There was quite a fuss about this election because Mrs. I. was not a member of the council at the time. Mrs. I. has had marital difficulties which have been discussed at length by the members and one delegate has not returned to the council because of Mrs. I's election. Mrs. I. was very nervous at first and not too capable in her job but has since improved. She tends to be critical of teen-agers.

Mr. Q. - A new member to the House and Council. He has outside interests and tends to be more objective and less involved in House affairs. His appearance has made the members look to him for support but he is cautious of his participation.

Mrs. D. - The representative from the Nursery School Parents group. She is a very attractive person and well-liked by the older members, almost in the role of a daughter. She is quite creative and liberal in her thinking but lacks the organizational ability for the responsibilities the group has given her.

Analysis of the records indicates that the quality of the interaction within the group and the capacity of the group to perform as a council is directly related to the strengths and understanding of the individual members.
Although the council membership is almost entirely composed of delegates from the senior citizen's department, through its program and staff assistance the council attempts to coordinate and relate to the entire membership of the agency. The young-adult program is largely on an interest-group basis at present, and therefore the membership is not closely identified with the House. Statistics show too, that this age group represents a relatively small number of members. During the year, there have been opportunities to introduce these members to the larger membership and purposes of the agency. It is felt that increased association with other members and overall program will help them to feel a part of the agency and more responsible for council participation. In 1952-53, the Council had three young-adult groups represented who were an integral part of the council at that time.

Representation from the children's membership on the House Council is necessarily limited because of the difference in age and experience. Therefore, the emphasis has been on developing the participation of children through their own councils and to introduce them to House Council through special events and staff interpretation.

Program of House Council

The House Council records indicate that the content of meetings falls into three main areas, (a) the planning and reporting on events sponsored by the council, (b) the reports of group activities from the delegates, and (c) other House and group business, including board reports, conferences, and complaints.
During the year, four special events, Open House, Christmas celebrations, the Members' Annual Meeting, and the Carnival, were sponsored by the House Council. The execution of these agency activities involved discussion in council meetings, the setting up of committees to do detailed planning, reports to and from the member groups, and evaluations and recommendations. Except for the Annual Meeting, these affairs were planned to include the total membership, and all groups were encouraged to participate in the planning and work involved.

The following excerpts from Council records indicate the way in which the group plans for an event, the setting up of a committee, the reporting back to council, and the final evaluation.

October 7, 1952:
"The Chairman said that it was time for the meeting to think about Christmas planning. There was some comment about the weather not being suitable to get them in the mood, and some recalling of last year's program. The worker pointed out the importance for delegates to get their groups thinking about the event and to make suggestions for the program. The chairman said that a committee would be set up next month."

December 2, 1952:
"Mrs. D. (Christmas Planning Committee Chairman) gave a detailed report of plans to date, giving subcommittee chairmen an opportunity to add their comments. Certain changes in date were recommended by the committee and these were discussed at some length and finally accepted. Mrs. D. cleared with the members about acting as hosts for evening and the responsibilities of various groups. Mr. K. said that everyone should be on hand for the hanging of the decorations and there was some amusement about who would do the hammering and climb the ladders."

January 6, 1953: An excerpt from the evaluation of the events.
"Mrs. D. praised the children's contribution to the concert and said that it was too bad that they could not be seen from the audience. She suggested a raised platform for next year. Mr. K. said that we had a portable stage and explained the difficulties in putting it up and the dangers of it moving and people being hurt. Most of them agreed that something should be done about this. The chairman said that he thought there should be more efficient running of the concert so that the audience didn't have to wait
between numbers. Mr. K. commented that the people who were complaining hadn't done any of the work and he thought the ladies had done a wonderful job. Mr. O. stepped in and said that next year we would try just a little harder."

These excerpts give a picture of the council in the process of executing one of the highlights of the agency program. The subcommittees mentioned included the planning for decorations, refreshments, concert, and a dance. Through group representation on these committees and individual enlistment a good portion of the total membership of the House was brought into the planning for this event.

The reports from the groups given by the delegates at each meeting constitute a major part of the meeting's agenda. These reports are the culmination of the business of the individual groups and depending on the delegate represent a real effort to keep both the group and the council informed about current happenings. The practice of highlighting these reports has helped the members retain their identity with the club group and to distinguish between council and group function. In addition, the importance attached to this part of council business, gives thereby a considerable amount of status to the individual members and helps them to work more effectively in the situation. The reports really serve a multiple function as they help to integrate activities, identify the autonomy of groups, and stimulate democratic participation. For the worker these reports provide information about group activities, reveal the thinking and feeling prevalent among the membership, and indicate the development and change going on.

This is an illustration from a section of the record where the group reports are being given:
October 7, 1952:

The Chairman announced that the group would now have their little stories from the clubs. Mrs. D. said that she had nothing to report, that their first meeting would be next week. The chairman coaxed her to say something and then said that he'd have to put a big "no" against her name. They all laughed. Mrs. D. reported on their plans for the next Potluck and asked the council to forward to the Board a request for $25.00. Mr. O. said that he thought children saw enough movies and he enjoyed the sing songs and the concerts at Potluck. He said he hoped that Mrs. O. didn't mind his suggestions. Mrs. O. made no comment. The worker commented on the Board's interest in Potluck and said that she thought the request would be granted. The chairman said that the matter would be forwarded to the Board. Mrs. J. reported very timidly on Friday concerts and there was some discussion about locating a chairman for this project. Mrs. X. told about the interesting trips the Art Groups were taking. Mrs. C. said that she had nothing to report. The chairman said that there must be something. Mrs. U. reminded her of their trip to Bellingham and several of them exchanged humorous incidents of the group's journey. They all enjoyed this and the chairman encouraged them. Mr. O. presented the Sick Report and they exchanged news of sick members. They agreed to send a letter to one of the sick members through the secretary.

Reports from a board meeting and the handling of conflicts are illustrated in these excerpts from council records.

May 5, 1953:

The chairman asked Mrs. N. for the Board report. Mrs. N. said that certain changes were being made to the fence around Senior House that the members should know about and she described the alterations to be made. She said that she had a copy of the A.C.A. constitution, in connection with their questions about membership, and that since the constitution was so general and not a little confusing, the council should invite a member of the Board to discuss its meaning with them. The chairman said that he was always happy to see any Board member come to their meetings and he asked the executive director if Mr. T. was still President. There was a motion to invite a member from the Board and Mr. T. thanked Mrs. N. for her report.

March 3, 1953:

"Mr. T. asked if there was any new business. Mrs. T. gathered herself together, had a conversation with her neighbour and then launched into an excited description of one of the group's activities. She complained that she had been accused of being a newcomer and told that she could not sit at a certain card table and she wanted to know if "they could reserve a table like that?"
Several members comforted her in her obvious distress, and added that Mrs. T. was a very old member and intimated that old members should never be so treated. Mr. K. defended the policy of the group and suggested that the next time the lady see the M.C. There was a heated discussion back and forth and finally the chairman called for order. Mrs. U. said she had always thought they needed a receptionist on these evenings, and that even she had been embarrassed when she couldn't find a place to sit. Mr. X. said that certain people liked to play together and it was unwise to break up friendships. Mrs. T. was almost in tears by now and her neighbours were consoling her and singing her praises. Mr. N. said he thought this was supposed to be a social club but it didn't sound very sociable. Mrs. N. suggested that the delegate from the club take this complaint to them and have them discuss it and make some suggestions for a solution. The delegate then reported on the policy of the club in this connection. Mrs. W. commented on the autonomy of clubs to make their own arrangements. Mrs. U. said that this problem had been glossed over before. Worker suggested that Mr. P. discuss it with his club as a complaint brought to council. The chairman asked Mr. P. to report on this at the next meeting. He added that he was sorry that Mrs. T. was peeved and said that he thought the discussion had been helpful, saying that "it should do us a lot of good."

These excerpts give a fairly adequate picture of the general conduct of council meetings and of the main concerns of this representative group. It indicates that the content is geared to the level of the members, that it attempts to coordinate and to make decisions on problems presented. It shows too, that duties are allocated, that there is some evaluation of activities, and that the council is interested in helping groups to effectively use the channels set up. The major weakness, at this point, probably rests in the type of leadership given by the chairman, though this is not so clearly portrayed in these excerpts. Because he is not willing to give proper preparation to meetings or sufficiently interested to follow through with committees and events planned, the council lacks the kind of leadership that would bring out new interests and develop the capacities of the members. His authoritarian pattern coupled
with a pleasing manner tends to keep the group pretty static. Nevertheless this measurement is relative, and in view of the potential abilities of this group they have been able to maintain a fairly satisfactory record and have given considerable leadership to the membership and also have reflected the thinking of a large section of the membership to the board and the staff.

Analysis of House Council Records

The existence of a House Council within the Gordon House organization is an indication of the attempt to implement the purposes of the agency as stated in the "Purpose and Function". There is no record of the reasons for the establishment of the Council initially; although whether the group was set up at the request of the membership or whether it was imposed by staff or board is not important at this point. But there is evidence that the council, active in integrating program and planning special events, has attained considerable status and importance in the agency as a whole.

An initial glance at the list of groups represented immediately reveals that the council is not truly representative of the total membership. This agency has a clientele of over a thousand persons, aged from two to ninety-two, and almost a hundred individual groups. Yet the council reaches only a small proportion of these individuals and groups and is, therefore, limited in its major objective. In fact, the council represents one section of the membership, namely, the senior citizens, and a few of the adults. In view of this situation it is perhaps in order to question the validity of such a council at all.
The concept of respect for individuals and the principle of individual development is equally as important as the need for the distribution of group representation. For this reason some reasonable compromise is attempted considering the needs of the particular situation. In Gordon House there is a unique arrangement of membership. On one hand, there is a large group of senior members; on the other, there is an equally large section of children. In between there is a smaller group of adults who are not closely related to the agency. This represents a wide gap in the membership, both in terms of age and in ability to participate in the management of the agency. This makes a very difficult situation in spite of the tendency to idealize a "family membership". Psychologically it is accepted that, while children are wary of adults, adults, particularly older people, feel quite threatened by youth. In a membership where many of these members are further limited by difficult family relations or no families at all, as with many pensioners, the relationships between old and young are quite precarious.

The agency administration is thus faced with two important principles of social group work: (a) the importance of membership participation and the psychology of belonging and involvement, and (b) the need to begin at the level of the groups development. It has already been suggested that there are many members and groups in the activities who are not ready or capable of participating in a council. Still there is the need to make provision for the fullest development of a responsible membership who contributes in the democratic operation of the agency and shares in the "profits and losses" with the administration.
Reconciliation of these two fundamental ideas, which at times seem almost opposed to one another, involves a compromise which will be relative to the particular setting. The administration of Gordon House, if not the members themselves, have recognized the implications of the wide differences in age of the membership and what this means in an inter-group association. Certainly the staff are aware that many of the primary groups and certain individuals are not ready to move into this second step in group relationships. According to the objectives of the council, any active group has the opportunity of being represented. An important part of the democratic process of representation is the selection of delegates by the group itself. Throughout this process the staff are active in helping groups prepare for participation and setting limits to ensure a successful experience. The group decision and planning surrounding the choice of a delegate and then the actual participation in the council is a real part of the membership's participation in democratic administration. There is much learning and growth in the process of understanding the function of the council and the relationship of the club group to council.

Encouraging groups to participate in a council involves not only preparation of the council but also preparation of the council members. In Gordon House this is clearly indicated because of the tendency for senior members to take control of the council and make it difficult for younger people to gain acceptance and to move in any kind of a working relationship. The case of Miss G. and Miss C. bears this out.

"These two younger, single girls came to the House because of an interest in crafts. It was felt by
staff that the expressed need was accompanied by
a deeper need for group support and fellowship.
They were encouraged to join the House Council to
represent their group without really understanding
the nature of the council or their role in it.
They were active in a committee on Christmas decora-
tions, that is, on a functional level, but in the
New Year ceased to attend council meetings.

The group selection of delegates, the reporting and the
instructions given to club representatives and the election of
council officers is a further attempt to expose the members
to democratic functioning. The use of agendas, committees,
their group reports, and the collective thinking, evaluations
and a program geared to the interest and ability of the members
assists greatly in their understanding of democratic procedures.
Not all of these techniques are adequately carried out, just as
many of the members are not aware of the function or the
responsibilities of the council. For instance, the election of
the officers at the annual meeting has become a matter of
individual delegate selection rather than a representative
function. Where conditions are against the fullest functioning
of a council, such as with the situation this agency faces
with an overbalancing of older members, every opportunity needs
to be taken to establish the significance of the council as a
representative body. The election of officers can be an
opportunity for group decision carried out by the representative
and can help to relate council and group in a satisfying
democratic experience.

The Gordon House Council though representative in name
and function, is not actually representative of the agency member-
ship for the reasons discussed. The fact that the council is
almost entirely composed of senior members, with their limitation in attitudes and abilities, creates a number of negative elements in the situation. This block of members in a position of authority can represent an unequal control and lack of perspective, both in the coordination of the agency membership and in the execution of the purposes of the council.

By optimum standards the delegates are not representative and some of them are not adequately fulfilling their role in an inter-group association. Nevertheless, and despite the limitations, the council is probably representative of the membership that is able to participate, and to a considerable degree is operating as a delegate group, helping the members to work together on a program level and to use the channels of communication provided. The council serves as a control for the thinking and feelings of the members and gives staff the opportunity to encourage new attitudes and understanding between the entire membership of the House. It also serves as a liaison between board and membership and is in a position to keep the board informed on membership events and attitudes. In this way the House Council plays a vital role in the inter-group association of the agency primary groups, and it stands as a symbol of the potential opportunities for democratic membership participation and shared responsibility.

Analysis of the structural position of the council gives a picture of the functional relationships of agency administration. The structure of an agency provides the framework for communication and enables groups and individuals to work together
successfully. The pattern of circular administration recognizes the need for clearly defined areas of authority and the creative collective thinking which comes in a circular response.

The chart on page 29 showing the circular relationships between units of the agency indicates that the House Council is an active part of the structure with opportunities to communicate with the board and the membership. This relationship, however, is not set up by constitution but rather by the sanction and acceptance of the board and staff. There is evidence that some of the board members have questioned the position of a members' council; others feel handicapped by the A.C.A. constitution to develop further the responsibility of the membership. Some board members see the council in a limited area of responsibility and on a privilege basis, others have a wider understanding of the rights of membership to share in the affairs of the agency. Channels are only useful if they are in use and to the extent that the relationship is mutually helpful and acceptable.

According to the Council's Constitution one of the objectives is the coordination of program activities and assisting the "management". This represents administration on the membership level, with the focus on program and group relationships. A second function is for "suggestions for the operation and improvement of Gordon House". This leads the council into an area of policy-making in matters concerning the total agency. Through representation to the board the council can recommend policy. This distinction of function between the board and council needs to be clearly outlined to avoid misunderstandings.
The records of the council this year indicate that the council did not do much of this but the provision is there and properly used can contribute tremendously to the overall administrative job.

On the level of direct service, with channels to the membership at large, the council is active as an administrative organ. The following illustration is an example of this contact with the membership and the way this is used.

March 3, 1953:

"Mrs. T. discussed with the council her feelings about the reservation of card tables at one of the evening programs. The matter was discussed at length at the meeting and a variety of opinions was presented. It was agreed that this was a problem and the delegate from the group in question was asked to defend their policy in this regard. The final decision was that the delegate should discuss the problem with his club and report back to council. Mr. Q. did discuss this matter with the club executive and some solutions were offered. Because Mr. Q. was absent from the next council meeting and Carnival plans had priority at this time, there was no follow-up."

This illustration shows the kinds of problems which can be helped on an inter-group basis and the resources available for delegates and members. Without a council group it is more difficult to bring matters to a place where the members themselves work out agreements which facilitate the whole area of group relationships.

To the general membership the Council represents a body to which they can appeal for direction and assistance. Mr. C.'s letter is a further example of the member's use of the council.

April 17, 1953:

"Mr. C.'s letter, protesting the closing of Gordon House on Easter Monday, was read aloud punctuated by words of agreement from some of the members. The chairman immediately said that this was entirely out of the area of the council and in so many words, dismissed the matter. Mr. K. was very upset by the chairman's attitude and said that the members demanded their rights, said this was a matter for
the House Council, and said he wanted the Executive Director to deal with this. Several agreed with him but Mrs. N. suggested that this should go to the board. Mr. K. insisted that this was a matter to be settled by the "management". The chairman said that the Executive Director was represented in the meeting by Miss A. and that complaints could be handled through her. The worker explained that the House had always been closed on the Easter Monday but that they could present their feelings about this if they thought this should be changed. It was agreed that the matter should be referred to the Executive Director.

May 5, 1953:

The Executive Director referred to Mr. C.'s letter and suggested that the council could make recommendation to the board to change the policy if they felt changes were in order. Mr. K. said he couldn't understand a delegate sending a letter, why didn't he come and defend his complaint. They picked up on this and agreed that Mr. C. should have come to the meeting. Mr. N. said that the council should just ignore it if Mr. C. didn't feel that it was worth following up. The chairman said that at least we could be polite and send him a letter inviting him to present his protest to the council. There was further discussion and they agreed that Mr. C. had been out of order in writing as an individual; that he should have worked "through his group."

This illustrates, not only the members' understanding, and use of the Council, but also the delegates' feelings about group representation and the proper procedures to follow. The fact that this is a negative use of the council, (i.e. the registration of a complaint), and that it does show some of the limitations of the council members, does not diminish the function which the council performs. In fact, it indicates another important function of the council; it provides a setting in which the membership at large and the delegates too, can release hostile feelings that have developed towards one another or towards the agency and its staff.

The organization of committees set up by the council is another example of the use of circular relationships. The
annual Gordon House Carnival is one of the biggest membership events of the year. The overall Carnival committee is appointed by the council and is responsible to them, and indirectly of course through the council to the Board. Because the Carnival is planned as an agency project, all sections of the membership are reached through subcommittees of the council planning and through the staff.

The committee structure and the membership for this event are shown on page 48. The extent of the planning of this program involves a rather complicated structure and many individuals, and for this reason there are both positive and negative factors. A democratic structure is set up and the opportunities for learning and experience in such a cooperative project has real value for many persons. It does unite the membership in one activity for the benefit of the agency and indirectly themselves as members. For some members it is the first time they have been made aware of the possibilities of the membership working together and they begin to feel a part of the larger organization. Many groups not previously active in the council are helped to take on responsibilities, and more active groups find new strength in their ability to organize and participate.

This year it had been hoped that the children and their parents would take on the responsibility for the Decorating Committee and do the necessary planning for this area of Carnival activities. Faced with the realities of the situation, it proved impossible to include the children in the membership of the committee; and so, where the children helped to make decorations in their small groups, the adults took on the overall
COMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CARNIVAL PLANNING

GORDON HOUSE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOUSE COUNCIL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OVERALL CARNIVAL COMMITTEE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

REFRESHMENT COMMITTEE  GYM COMMITTEE  ENTERTAINMENT COMMITTEE  NOVELTIES & DECORATIONS COMMITTEE  SENIOR HOUSE COMMITTEE  PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Overall Carnival Committee - Responsible for co-ordinating all plans for Carnival.
Mrs. T. (Chairman)  Mr. N. - Chairman of Gym Committee
Mrs. C. (former Chairman)  Mrs. H. - Chairman of Entertainment Committee
Mrs. J.  Mrs. M. - Chairman of Senior House Committee
Mr. P.  Mrs. M. - Novelties & Decorations
Staff

Gym Committee - Responsible for planning for and obtaining games, construction of booths, and manning of games throughout Carnival.
Mr. N. (Chairman)  Mr. H.R.
Mr. M.  Mr. P.
Mr. C.  Staff
Miss M.H.

Entertainment Committee - Responsible for Band Wagon Spot entertainment, Official Opening, and Saturday Night Dance.
Mrs. H. (Chairman)  Mrs. I.
Mrs. B.  Mrs. J.
Staff

Novelties & Decorations - Responsible for planning and providing decorations and special novelty stunts.
Mrs. M. (Chairman)  Mrs. B.
Mrs. W.  Staff

Senior House Committee - Responsible for planning booths & stalls in Senior House.
Mr. M. (Chairman)  Mrs. A.
Mrs. B.  Mr. W.
Mrs. M.  Mrs. M.
Mrs. H.  Staff

Public Relations Committee - Responsible for tickets, publicity & public relations.
Chairman of Overall Carnival Committee
Mr. H.
Mr. H. - Board Member
Staff

Refreshment Committee - Tuesday Social Club
Chairman - Mrs. T.

* Represents individuals who are not House Council members.
planning. Some of the committees in this project were more able to carry out their responsibilities than others depending on the experience and ability of the individuals concerned. Some members were confused by the intricacy of the "channels" and had difficulty relating their own responsibilities to the total plan. This is the kind of activity in which members have fun together and in the process experience a wider conception of the purposes of the agency and the function of the membership. Included in this is the process of collective thinking, the formulation of decisions and plans, and the pressures of group responsibility which the members come face to face with.

Another source of communication with the membership at large is through the regular reports which the delegates make to their groups. The content and consistency of these reports depends of course on the individual delegate, but where there is some attempt to make use of the delegate and the relationship with the council, the club members are kept informed on the activities of the council and are encouraged to make use of the council as the representative group of the total membership. Not all of the groups represented on the council are conscious of the relationship between groups and council or make use of their delegates. Some of the council executive are aware of this weakness and fairly often remind the delegates of their responsibility in this matter. The regularity and prominence of group reports in council meetings is a help in this regard. The chairman of the Council is quite concerned about delegates reporting to their groups and bringing back their suggestions and opinions.
November 1, 1952: A planning session between Chairman and Worker.

"Mrs. T. (President of Council) launched into a discussion of the member's responsibilities for reporting back to their clubs, and said she would remind them of this again at the next meeting. Worker suggested that posting of council minutes on the House bulletin board for all to read might help. Mrs. T. said that the delegates should take notes at the meeting."

April 7, 1953: During a discussion of Carnival -

"The Chairman requested that members discuss with their groups their suggestions for the use of Carnival proceeds."

This continual reminder of the "from and to" keeps the focus on the role of the delegate and the purpose of the council.

Communication with the Board of Directors has been by a procedure of representation from the House Council. The Council has the opportunity of presenting two names to the nomination committee of the agency for their selection. These names are then on a similar basis as other nominations and therefore may or may not become board members. In the last few years the nominations committee has made it a practice to present the names suggested by the council for nomination and in the course of the A.C.A. annual meeting these have been made board members on the Gordon House Committee. In this way they do not have delegate status except as they represent the general community, which is the policy of the board. Nevertheless, the board member, who is also a member of the council, has been used in a representative position and with the help of the director makes reports to the council on board activities and vice versa. This rather ambiguous position in which the council member has been placed, though it has given the council a real contact with the board, makes for a good deal of confusion in the minds of the council members and of the membership at large. Unconsciously the membership tends to identify with the board member who is
also active in the membership and to feel that this is their only link with the board and their only share in the governing of their affairs.

This year there has been only one council member serving on the board; the former member was deceased and the council had not moved to make any further nomination to the board. Other board members, and there are two or three who became board members through council recommendation, have ceased to participate in agency program and to some extent have lost their identification with the general membership. At least the membership feels that this is so, and that "the only board member they have is this one council member". The following excerpt from Council and Board meetings is an example of the role of the member who is both council member and board member and who acts in a delegate position.

"The Chairman called on Mrs. N. for the Board report. Mrs. N. distributed the financial summary sheets, and then in a very quiet voice, read from her notes indicating that the Board was investigating the status of membership representation."

March 18, 1955: Board Meeting.
"Mrs. N. reported that House Council was counting on the support of the Board in connection with the Carnival. A letter from the Dance Club was read requesting some minor adjustment in ventilation in the Social Room. This matter was turned over to the Building Committee."

The effectiveness of this reporting back and forth is dependent on the capacity of the individual member and the help given by the staff. Mrs. N. is not very active in either setting and is not too efficient in using the opportunities to develop the possible relationships from this source. Nevertheless it does represent some consideration of the function and position of the Council.
Perhaps one of the best examples in this process of circular administration are the following chronological excerpts from various meetings. The first is from a House Council Meeting.

December 2, 1952:

"The Chairman said that we should consider plans for the Council Annual Meeting. Mr. K. asked what reports there would be, and thought there should be a meeting where suggestions came from the groups. The Chairman said those should come to regular meetings of the council. The Director related Mr. K's idea to the membership meeting which was held two years ago. The Chairman took support from this and began to push for a Members' Meeting. After considerable discussion it was agreed on and a date arranged."

A month later at the Annual Members' Meeting (January 22):

"All senior groups represented on the agenda and gave detailed reports on their group's activities. In the question period which followed there was only one question from a member about Gordon House finances, staff and some critical remarks about certain program activities. The Executive Director and the President of the Board spoke to these questions and suggested that some of these questions would be answered at the Annual A.C.A. meeting and he encouraged members to attend."

At the A.C.A. meeting Mr. K. (member of House Council), questioned the representation of the membership on the Gordon House Board and the money spent on their building. Mr. J. said that "Gordon House members only had one member on that Board, Mrs. M."

House Council Meeting: March 3, 1953

"Mr. T. (President) described what had happened at the Annual Members' Meeting and commented on the function of the council. Mr. K. interrupted and said that membership should have more than one member on the Board. He became very excited and inferred that the Board members didn't know anything about what the members were doing. There was discussion of their representation with the worker attempting to explain the policy in this connection. Mrs. N. agreed to ask the Board about their representation."

Minutes of Senior House Advisory Committee: March 1, 1953

"The Executive Director reported on House Council and listed committee structure for the Carnival. She mentioned that Mr. K. had again questioned the structure of the Board and the rights of members as representatives. There was much discussion on this point. The committee felt that
this should be cleared by the A.C.A. and the following
questions channeled through the Board.
1. are members of Gordon House members of A.C.A.?
2. what are their voting rights?
3. do they have the right to Board representation;
and if so, how?

Minutes of Board Meeting: April 15, 1953
"Mr. T. reported that a constitution of A.C.A. indicated
that members of Gordon House are not members of A.C.A.,
that Gordon House members have no voting privileges
and that there is no specific organization structure that
would give members representation to the Board. Mr. T.
recommended that copies of the constitution be circulated
to Board members. It was agreed that there were channels
for House Council representation to the Board and that
nothing in the constitution prevented Gordon House from
setting up some structure for representation. It was felt
that since House Council had asked for clarification on
these matters, that someone from the Board should discuss
it with them."

House Council Meeting: May 5, 1953
"Mrs. N. said that the Council had asked about their
representation to the Board and that the Board had been
investigating the status of membership in Gordon House
and representation. She said that a study of the
constitution was not very revealing, that the constitution
was so general and confusing on this point. She suggested
that the Council invite a member of the Board to come to
their next meeting and discuss it with them."

The democratic process is frequently a lengthy procedure;
but in these excerpts the members of the House are seen using
the channels of democratic administration to probe one of the
vital elements of membership participation. The illustration
indicates the numbers of people and groups which are drawn into
the discussion, and the way they are helped to channel their
questions and make some decision. It is always a positive note
when individuals are alerted to their rights and responsibilities,
and the reconciliation of the differences in agency purpose and
operation, membership capacity, and constitutional authority are
the major problems facing group work agencies at this time.
The creative functioning of administration is dependent on the quality of relationships established within the group and subsequently on the degree of maturity of the individuals involved. Maturity has been defined as warmth, responsiveness, ability to work with others, to give and take, willingness to make reasonable compromises, clarity of thought, and acceptance of change. The inter-relationships established in the House Council determines in fact the extent to which this group performs its function in the practice of democratic administration.

In the Council, where individuals are assuming a dual role, the relationships between representative persons is even more intricate. The member has the need to express himself and establish his status with other individuals and the worker, and also to be representative of the feelings of his group. The two roles cannot entirely be separated and are a part of the total personality which the delegate brings to the Council group. A further consideration in this situation is the age of the members and what this means in terms of capacity, participation and attitudes.

Trecker has said that "administration is a creative process of thinking, planning and action". This involves the total administrative plan, the use of democratic techniques, committees and reports, the structural framework, and the enabling of individuals to work productively within the purposes of the agency. Analysis and measurement of this process within any one agency can probably best be viewed in terms of comparison; but since every setting and administrative group is peculiar to that situation, it is difficult to judge success or failure on
that basis. Measurement of social case work has been based on the principle of "movement", that is, the evidence of change and growth. Measurement of this kind necessitates a rating of the level of operation at specific times by accepted standards. Groups are rated on the amount of group feeling, their feelings of responsibility, the development of program, and what the group thinks of itself. To conclude this analysis an attempt has been made to measure the productivity of the Gordon House Council at the end of the program year 1952-53. The schedule (Figure 111) is based on an adaptation of Bernstein\(^4\) and Trecker's\(^5\) evaluation charts.

This evaluation indicates, in summary form, a measurement of the development of the House Council as a working group. The rating shows that the group maintains at least an average productivity, and this, in view of the difficulties encountered in any representative body, is a noteworthy fact. If the group shows limitations in potential growth, it also shows that the council has already attained a high degree of organization and ability to cope with the business at hand. Measurement here, is a relative thing, for no group operates in an optimum setting. Therefore, it is important that ratings be considered not only in terms of standard practice in social group work, but also in the light of the potential in the particular setting. The Gordon House Council, with its


### Fig. III  EVALUATION OF GROUP PRODUCTIVITY
House Council 1952-53

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Items</th>
<th>Scale #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Attendance</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Group Organization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- parliamentary procedure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- reports, minutes</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- committees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. To what extent is there a balance of participation on the part of council members?</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. To what extent is there collective thinking and co-operative planning?</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. To what extent does the chairman do an effective job of leadership?</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. To what extent do the members feel representative and understand the function of the Council?</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. To what extent are the members able to deal with differences of opinion?</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. To what extent is the group developing &quot;wider horizons&quot;?</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The scale is from low to high in numerical progression.
limitations of age, representation, and perhaps of understanding, is doing a worthwhile job in the agency, assisting the membership, the staff and the Board to carry out the democratic purposes of a leisure-time social agency.
CHAPTER III

The Role of the Group Worker

The social group worker is primarily the helper, the enabler, the catalyst. He is skilled in understanding human relationships and the meaning of group behaviour. He believes that group interaction is the basis of social growth and development, and that the democratic process is conducive to satisfying group living. The professional worker is skilled in diagnosing the level of the group's development and in assisting the group to realize its maximum capacity. Therefore the worker plays a real part in the development of a democratic community from the membership of a Neighbourhood House.

Consideration of the role of the worker in this discussion is an attempt to ascertain something of the specific skills involved in democratic administration. In this connection it is reasonable to ask: to what extent is the worker responsible for creating a responsible membership and how is this accomplished? What is the distinction between leadership and manipulation of the group; and how does the worker guide the process of democratic decision-making and corporate action?

What is the role of the group worker in the administrative setting? Some writers suggest that the characteristics of the effective administrator are not unlike those of the direct service worker, that is, the worker who is in contact with the primary group. Trecker, however, suggests that the worker in

1. Trecker, H., Study Project on the Job of the Executive Director, National Board, Y.W.C.A., New York, 1950
the administrative process assumes additional roles and responsibilities. He states that the way in which the administrator works clearly affects the behaviour of the group, (this holds true for every group of course), also, that only through complete recording of the group interaction can the worker evaluate his own role in the situation. Whereas the recording of the primary group is pretty well accepted, the recording board and committee meetings is not so common. Trecker claims too, that the administrator must be skilled in "helping people become engaged or involved in a participating way as they work together in all forms of administrative thinking and action". Further, he assumes that the role of the administrator must change as the group proceeds, and that the role of the administrator changes, not according to a prearranged plan, but in terms of the group development from meeting to meeting. Trecker points out that the administrator must bring to the group a sense of wholeness and coordination since every unit affects the total agency but the units themselves have a limited vision.

In analyzing the role of the worker in the intergroup setting Newstetter puts forth the following statement of function.

"Generally the role of the Social Intergroup Worker is, (1) to enable the intergroup to develop suitable structure and operating practices to attain the achievement of the social goals selected; (2) to enable individuals in the intergroup to function adequately both with respect to the activities of the intergroup and respect to the group they are representative of; (3) to enable groups represented to participate appropriately in the process." 2

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It appears that the worker related to the representative group has responsibilities in four main areas: to the intergroup itself, to the individuals who make up the group, to the groups they represent, and to the total agency. Analysis of the role of the worker, in what follows, is made in terms of these divisions.

The records of the Gordon House Council this year are not sufficiently complete to give a comprehensive picture of the various roles that the worker has assumed throughout the entire process. Therefore a certain amount of observation and evaluation of the overall agency pattern will be supplemented. The validity of such material is subject of course to the objectivity of the observer and some comparison of the role of the worker in other settings and previous experiences.

The fact that both the Executive Director and a student worker were associated with the council this year presents a factor of dual leadership which makes this situation differ somewhat from the usual. There is no attempt to compare the role of the one worker with the other since the student was attempting to fulfill the role of the administrator in this instance. The executive is referred to as the director in the material and the student as the worker, but in effect the analysis is in terms of the worker as if it were one person.

Worker's responsibility to the Intergroup

This general area of concern can be further broken down into the worker's responsibility for establishing a sound relationship with the group, for providing suitable structure, for the program content and expression, and for interpreting to the group the role of the worker.
The worker is able to work successfully with a group because of the relationship which is established. This "relationship" is a way of thinking and doing, a way of interacting with group members that ensures mutual acceptance and confidence. A relationship can of course be either a negative or a positive one. The onus is on the worker to establish and maintain the kind of relationship that is both productive and satisfying. Relationship is the essence of group living; a guided relationship is the basis of democratic participation and responsibility. The aim of the relationship established with an administrative group, may differ somewhat from that of the relationship the worker has with the club group, but the quality is the same.

A measurement of the relationship established by the worker is not easily described because it is a part of the total interaction and therefore not easily separated and set apart. It becomes more evident in the tone and mood of the group than in the verbalized expression of either the group member or the worker. Observation of the Gordon House Council reveals that a precedent of positive relationships between the group and the worker has been established by the director over a period of time. It is not by accident that the following is the most usual mood of the members as they gather for their meetings.

March 3, 1953:
"At 8:00 p.m. the members poured into the meeting room and several of the men went out after more chairs. They all seemed in good spirits and pleased that so many had turned out. They chatted with each other and with the worker. Mr. T. finally called the meeting to order. He helped Mrs. I. (the new secretary) find the minutes and asked her to read them. Previous to this Mr. T. welcomed all the new faces. Mrs. U. said that hers wasn't new, just in a different place. They all enjoyed this and laughed heartily."
This example comes as a result of a continuing strong relationship between the worker and the group. The director sets much of the relaxed enjoyable atmosphere of the meetings with her sense of humour and her genuine interest in the group. One of the techniques the director uses is her natural humor. In discussing plans for Christmas activities at the December meeting the members quickly focused on the director's fondness for plum pudding and in the fun over this, shared with the worker, the worker relates the group more quickly to the planning process.

In establishing this kind of a relationship the worker has to understand the composition and the background of the group. Mutual respect and liking is dependent on the worker's acceptance of himself and his role in the group and on his acceptance of the group and their level of operation. Periods of regression in the group's development, sometimes illustrated by lengthy discussions of petty complaints and criticisms of younger members in the agency, such as are recorded in council meetings, can be difficult for the worker to accept and deal with constructively. It is at this point that the worker needs to assess the beginning level of the group, accept their limitations and strengths, realistically and with objectivity.

A further evidence of the stability of the relationship between group and worker is the comparable ease with which the student was able to move into the group. This indicates that the group had been secure enough with their worker to transfer their acceptance to another person.

October 7, 1952:

"Student waited in meeting room for members to arrive and introduced herself to the first to come. Mrs. X. particularly was very friendly and introduced the
student to the others as they arrived. Mrs. X. seemed to have a good understanding of the reasons for the student's presence and she talked about what the previous student had done. When the chairman arrived he called the student over, told her where to sit and thanked her for having the agendas ready."

An important factor in a relationship is the use of language and the ease with which thoughts are communicated to the group at their level of understanding and acceptance. In order to determine the core of the senior membership it had been agreed in a staff meeting that the total attendance figures should be recorded for one month. Previous experience had shown that older people disliked being asked to sign in and so it was felt that some interpretation should be done through the Council members. The procedure would be considerably easier once the council understood why the check was being made and their support was obtained. With singular skill, that is not adequately illustrated in the narrative record, the director was able to choose words and expression that won unanimous support for this innovation.

December 3, 1952:
"The President asked the Director if she had any announcements to make. The Director first of all complimented two of the members for the job they had done as hostesses on behalf of the council at the party for New Canadians. Then she said we would be taking attendance each day for the next month at the front desk and that the delegates should explain this to the members in advance so that they would be prepared. She explained that statistics were needed to show how large our program had grown and just how this would be done without asking each member to sign every day."

Some may feel that the worker in this instance was manipulating the situation by means of flattery, and of course, motives should always be examined. Nevertheless, the use of praise
which is justified is not only helpful to the individual and the group, but it can also assist the group to accept an otherwise difficult move. Here the emphasis is on a full explanation of the procedure to the group and helping them to feel some responsibility for the undertaking.

Another important factor in establishing a positive relationship is the need for the worker to keep her feelings under control and to avoid becoming defensive. This is even more important in an administrative setting because of the worker's responsibility to the total agency and the dangers of overidentifying with any one element of the structure.

In a council where the group is handicapped by the lack of an overall representative and the personal limitations of the members, the worker is often in danger of becoming defensive or on the other hand of giving unlimited support to the section represented.

"In the February meeting a letter was read complaining of teen-age behaviour at a recent agency event. The director by way of explanation gave the particulars of the situation and said that the President of the Board had already spoken to the complainant. Several of the Council members were outspoken in their criticism of teen-age behaviour and the inability of the staff to manage them. They suggested that notices should be posted in the building describing the standards of behaviour expected of participants in the program. Some of them also offered their services in coping with the discipline problems. The Director thanked the men for their offer and added that this was not just a Gordon House problem, etc. There was some further discussion pro and con teen-age behaviour and finally the chairman said that a letter should go to the writer of the letter indicating the steps taken in this regard and he added that it was a hard job handling teen-agers and perhaps we did need to have the rules more clearly outlined."

The Director here does not negate the member's concern for teen-age behaviour, neither is she on the defensive. She does attempt
to help the members understand some of the reasons for such behaviour and suggests ways in which it can be controlled.

It is not always possible to keep one's feelings under control especially when the worker feels the individuals are making unreasonable demands. There is a place here for a firmness of position which protects the interests of all concerned. A positive, enduring relationship is aided by the group's feeling that the worker is accepting and dependable. The kind of support which is given to the group in establishing a relationship is dependent on the particular needs of the group.

In order to function successfully the members need to feel themselves a part of the group and the worker is therefore active in helping the council develop and maintain a bond of group strength. This is sometimes a difficult position to attain because once the members become "a group unto themselves", they cease to function as a representative council. In the Gordon House Council the function of the delegates has been emphasized through regular group reports and this has served to reinforce the relationship of the delegates to each other and also increased their understanding and interest in the council as a group. This attitude appears to have developed as a kind of contagion caught from the worker and the procedures which have resulted have produced a real measure of group feeling. This has come about too, as a result of the satisfaction and prestige which the members enjoy in their status as an administrative group.

It is the function of the worker to stimulate the feelings of security and freedom among the members. Some of this comes through the active participation in activities as a group, but
it also comes as a result of the attitudes which are developed and encouraged as the worker relates to the group as a whole. Perhaps one of the tests of the strength of the group feeling is the ability of the members to express both positive and negative opinions and the ease with which they integrate the differences presented.

In the House Council the active members appear quite free and anxious to express their feelings and the role of the worker has been largely that of introducing "reality" and limits to their discussions and helping them to accept and integrate differences of opinion. At the same time, the members who are inactive in the meeting situation, because of the freedom of the others to participate, are, in a sense, rejected and the group lacks real unity. Also, older people, like children, sometimes act out of proportion to the situation and their expression is not necessarily a sign of health or security with the group. In this group, such instances of impulsive behaviour are usually quickly resolved without prolonged bad feelings. But this does point to the need for the worker to assess continually the health of the group and to accept certain limitations.

In these records the worker serves to bring the members in touch with reality at the point of their fantasies and to assist the group to select their decisions carefully. One instance of this is the behaviour of Mrs. C. in relation to a discussion of teen-age behaviour. Mrs. C. became highly indignant and upset as the discussion proceeded and her near-hysteria was rapidly spreading to the group. Her outrage finally settled on the director as she projected all her feelings about the disciplining of young people. The director, finding that a logical explanation
of the situation and the plans to handle it failed to reach her, added an element of humour to the discussion and immediately the mounting tension broke and the protest lost its magnitude. Mrs. C. retired fairly graciously and without feeling defeated or ridiculed. This type of behaviour may be peculiar to certain individuals in the group but also it may be closely related to the psychology of the older person. In the case of the latter, it is questionable how much growth or change can be expected. On the other hand there is evidence that the older people in this group association have grown in certain instances and it may be that one cannot really know when change is no longer possible.

Perhaps more important than the verbalization of feelings is the process of integration where growth is evidenced. This process involves participation and a kind of compromise as individual members accept decisions other than their own. Older folk find it more difficult to accept change and therefore integration is a real sign of development. It is difficult to find examples of this process in the records because of the leadership of the President in the group, which tends to be authoritarian; but the general level of the group feeling does indicate that there are instances of real group thinking and action.

The group tends to rely heavily on parliamentary order and procedure. This may be directly related to the background and experience of the group but it tends to suggest that arbitrary decisions are made using a democratic form, rather than a thorough discussion. In this way there is no real integration of group thinking.
It was Follett\textsuperscript{3} who referred to integration as "the third thing": that is, not conflict, or compromise, but a new something which emerges as the result of cooperative thinking.

Worker's Responsibility for Structure

In order that the intergroup function adequately it must have some kind of framework of operation. One of the most obvious roles of the worker is in this area of developing suitable structure and operating procedures. This is the working level of the group - the group has a job to do and the worker must assist them to perform it efficiently and reasonably well. This is the area, too, where the members most easily see the place of the worker. In the December meeting of the House Council, the worker was active in helping the group set up its structure for annual elections:

"During a discussion of the annual meeting reports the worker suggested that this was the time to set up the nominations committee. Thereupon the chairman appointed three members to act in this capacity and instructed them to present a slate of names for the council offices at the next meeting. Following the adjournment of the meeting the worker arranged a meeting time with this committee."

This example gives a picture of the worker as the advisor and the enabler, helping the group to implement its objectives and carry out its program.

A closer look at the process, which was involved within the nominating committee and the implications that it held for the total council group and the membership at large, reveals a further role of the worker. The worker is responsible for assisting the members to understand and to use the democratic

\textsuperscript{3} Metcalf & Urevich, \textit{Dynamic Administration - The Collected Papers of Mary Parke Follett}, Harper Bros., N.Y., 1942.
processes of responsible membership and decision-making. The excerpts from the meetings of the nominating committee illustrate the way in which the worker functions in this capacity.

**December 12:**

"Mr. K. took charge and said that there was no need for a meeting, that they would "just put the same bunch back in office." At this time the group were standing in the lounge, amidst the setting up of the Christmas decorations. Finally the worker was able to persuade them to take a few minutes off and go upstairs and talk the matter over. Mr. K. was reluctant but Mr. O. supported worker intimating that he was always anxious to please "the management". They discussed different types of elections and Mrs. I. insisted that it wasn't their job just to return all the existing officers. They said they couldn't think of anyone else who could run. The worker suggested a letter to the clubs to bring out further nominations. They agreed to this, named Mr. K. chairman and arranged for a further meeting after letter had been circulated."

**January 5:**

"Mr. K. did not arrive and the others felt that they could not do much without him. Mrs. J. said that some of the members were dissatisfied with Mr. T. as president and she gave some of their reasons. Mr. O. immediately pointed out Mr. T.'s good qualities but agreed that maybe it was time for a change. He said that he understood that Mr. K. had made some contacts for nominations and a list was made of the possibilities Mrs. I. and Mr. O. knew about."

At the third meeting which was just prior to the Council Meeting:

"Mrs. J. and Mr. O. came in early and talked with worker about their report. Mr. K. came in later, quite panicky about what they were going to do. He had neglected to contact any of the names suggested and at the last meeting stated asking some of the members who were getting ready for the meeting. Mrs. J. and Mr. O. did some last minute checking with some of the members in order to get some nominations from the floor."
distinction comes at the point of motivation. Democratic methods come only with the understanding and acceptance of the group and cannot be imposed.

One of the most helpful ways in which the worker assists the council to attain its objectives and to learn from each experience is through periodic evaluation of their activities. These reminders strengthen the program of the council and help the members to question their role in the administration of the agency. In this regard, the council has made a practice of evaluating their special events. The worker has attempted to assist the committee in charge to evaluate the job done and to discuss their findings with the council. Because of the limitations of the members themselves this has not always been too successful and the evaluation not too thorough or searching. Probably the worker could be more helpful in this process and with supportive help the members could be more critical of their activities.

A further area of responsibility, which the worker has toward the council, is the job of interpreting the role of the worker to the group. The extent to which the members appreciate and understand that the worker is the representative of the agency and a resource person, will in part determine the way in which they are able to use the worker's services.

The work with the chairman could be considered within the scope of assistance to individuals, and certainly it is that too, but because of the relation of the chairman to the group, it comes more directly in the worker's responsibility to the group. The worker has the opportunity to work more directly with the chairman than with any other individuals in the group and in gaining his understanding of the processes involved; helping
him to assume his duties and to prepare for meetings, the worker is helping the group. One of the chief difficulties in this council grouping has been the attitude of this particular chairman and his apparent lack of understanding of individuals and of democratic procedures. Although there have been times when the president spent time with the worker preparing for meetings these are relatively infrequent. Even these sessions have failed to help the chairman become more understanding and to take more responsibility in following through on his job. With considerable confidence in his own ability to manipulate situations and people, his policy has become one of dependence on the worker to assist in areas where he lacks current information. His dependency on the worker in such things as preparation of agendas and reports indicates that he has not really accepted the role of the worker and that he places her somewhat in the role of the "daughter person". This is a part of his authoritarian pattern and the worker has to understand the limitations of the relationship and continue to work with him hoping that a more creative relationship will be possible. The limits that he has placed on his time and his lack of responsibility towards committees and planning sessions indicates a good deal of resistance which probably has not been too thoroughly investigated. It is possible that a more critical examination of the behaviour of this man and his relationship to the worker would prove helpful.

Worker's responsibility to individual members

A second responsibility of the worker is in the area of service to individual members. This is so because of the overall objectives of the agency and because the individual figures so
large in the group relationship. In order to fulfill this role adequately, the worker must be skilled in understanding the meaning of the individual's behaviour and sensitive to his needs. In this situation we are particularly interested in the behaviour of the older person since so many of the members are well past middle-age.

The adult normally attains a degree of maturity and retains this up to a period in his life depending on his health and general circumstances. Regression may be detected by a sharp decline of the individual's effectiveness or, (and more likely), by a very gradual decline. Nevertheless, persons in late adulthood, or old age, as with some of our council's members, are approaching senility and the loss of effectiveness. Senility is, among other things, a loss of the degree of maturity which has been previously attained, or as Linden suggests "childhood in reverse". At this time certain characteristics of the adult, such as dependency, avoidance of reality, and others, become comparable to those of the child. Some authorities in the field of geriatrics, among them Dr. Linden, are beginning to feel that much of the regression attached to old age is the product of the culture and can be retarded and perhaps diminished by group association, continued recognition and activity.

The behaviour and emotional needs displayed by the members of the council gives a general picture of their adjustment to old age and group situations. One of the most significant attitudes of the members is their feelings about "management"

and authority. Some individuals are more aggressive in this respect than others but the general tone is of a group with considerable ambivalence about dependency and authority. The older person, threatened by the diminution of his effectiveness, becomes anxious and fearful and so he tends to cling to the most powerful support. Within the group, a powerful natural leader or a staff person fulfills this need. At the same time as he looks for this support he challenges it because it represents his own weakness.

The president of the council, with his firm and authoritarian approach, combined with a good deal of charm and humour, offers a very pleasant and secure support. The more stable members are still free to challenge his leadership and do so, for example, the aggressiveness between Mr. T. and Mrs. U. But when it comes to a vote the members rally behind the person who presents the most authoritative position; this is their strength. The ambivalence and the measure to which they feel acceptance within the group occasionally prompts them to question the chairman's techniques, but this is short-lived. Despite the president's lack of democratic and creative attitudes, he does have the faculty of helping people to enjoy themselves, of giving individual and group recognition, and his natural charm is supportive and accepting. This combination of authority and support wins him considerable support, particularly from the ladies.

The concern of the senior members, as expressed in the council for the "management", is further evidence of their ambivalence to dependency. Mr. X.'s earnest remark about "we have to maintain the autonomy of our groups - that's what we
are fighting for!", sounds more like a personal plea for his own fight for independence. The tendency is to project their feelings onto the staff in either a negative or positive way depending on their needs of the moment.

All individuals, and particularly older people, are fearful of exclusion and isolation. Because the aged feel a good deal of rejection and neglect from society, to counterbalance this they need to feel important and to be part of a unified group. With a large membership of "senior citizens" this is apt to take on the semblance of possessiveness and control as they attempt to hold on to what they feel should be their own. In this respect the delegates threatened the proper functioning of a representative council. This is illustrated in their lack of perspective as they plan for the agency in terms of their own "preferred rights". It is shown too in the group's regression as they focus on the petty troubles which occur in the round of human associations and in their critical attitude towards young people and their behaviour in the agency.

The council members have shown some impatience with too much advance planning. This is a childlike reaction. They tend to expect that they will not be held responsible and that "things will take care of themselves". This is further evidence of their dependency. In the same vein, many of the members are not reliable in carrying out responsibilities taken on and plead that they have not been told or that they have forgotten. Fearful of what the future holds they limit their focus to the present and cope with each day as it comes. This is an important defence and needs to be considered in planning activities with older
people. The real need is to find a balance between dependence and independence where the person feels comfortable and secure.

The tenacity with which older people hold on to conventions and routines is further evidence of their efforts to cope with the loss of ego-integration and certain faculties and self-mastery. It is difficult to vary the program of council-sponsored activities for this reason and innovations are difficult for them to accept. Nevertheless, security within the group setting and acceptance and understanding of staff leadership often tends to counterbalance the rigidity of older folk.

The decreased capacity to learn, to accept change and to think clearly, are all symptoms of old age. Within the council, each member has his own limitations and abilities which may or may not have been affected by approaching old age. A minority of the group are still active and alert and able to participate effectively and responsibly. Apparently they still have the ability to change and grow. A smaller group are quite ineffective and either do not participate at all or have so much trouble relating to others that they obviously impede the progress of the group. The membership of the council seems to fall into three groups, those who are quite ineffective, those who maintain a rather static position, and those who have some insight and understanding of the group relationship.

The worker should be active in helping the member to function in the council setting; helping him to understand his function and to adjust to the secondary group experience. The member requires the supportive help of the worker so that he feels some satisfaction himself and is able to carry this over to the group he represents.
Because of the worker's understanding of the needs of the individual and from the observation of his behaviour in the representative setting, the worker is in a position to secure further help for the person. Opportunities to assist individual members come in a variety of ways and are possible to the extent that a relationship has been established. The actions and attitudes of the worker, both in the meeting and in casual conversations outside, which are communicated to the individual, give him support and confidence in his role in the group. Indirectly the staff is able to pass on information to workers giving direct service and so supplement and coordinate their understanding of the individual and his needs. This latter is one of the most important contributions of the worker and can improve the service which the agency is able to give to its clientele and assist in the operation of the council itself.

Because of the nature of this particular council group, there has been a real need for the worker to give individuals supportive help. This supportive relationship with the worker is one of the creative ways in which the worker can help individuals to participate and to take on responsible membership. The following examples are instances where the worker has been able to give this kind of assistance.

February 3, 1953:

"Before the meeting Mr. O. told the worker that his club had selected another council delegate in his place. He seemed quite upset about this and the worker encouraged him to talk. He said that the group were not satisfied with his representation. The worker assured him that he still had a job on the council with the Sick Visiting and Friday Concert Committees. "He went on about wishing the staff and members could get together and talk things out. He assured the worker that he admired the job that the management was doing and said that he wanted to help."
Quite a lot of help has been given to Mrs. I., as a new member who found herself the centre of considerable hostility because she was elected secretary of the council. She felt the members' criticism rather keenly and actually did tender her resignation. With the help of the worker this crisis was allayed and both the group and Mrs. I. were assisted. Mr. K. too, has been helped to unload his feelings and has been able to maintain some degree of objectivity. Through sessions with Mrs. U., as committee chairman of one of the events, she has been helped to become more responsible and function more effectively. Analysis of the interaction between the members in the course of the meetings shows that the worker responds quickly to individuals who need support and yet she does not interfere with the normal responses of the members towards one another.

Worker's responsibility to the Groups Represented

The worker also has a responsibility to the groups represented in the council. The worker is in a position, either through other staff or directly, to help groups become active in the council, to select suitable delegates, and to examine the groups' interests in relation to the council. One instance of this during the year came when one group invited the worker to speak to their executive about the function of the House Council and its relationship to their club. This request was encouraged by the workers who felt that the group did not really understand the objectives of the council group and therefore were not supporting their delegates.

Because of the need for the members to maintain their identity as club delegates, the worker has been active in
assisting the council to recognize the club groups rather than individual members and has sought opportunities to relate the council to groups and vice versa. The selection of two of the council to serve as hostesses at a party for New Canadians was one instance of relating the council to a community function. These opportunities give the council a certain amount of prestige within the agency and help both the agency and the council to recognize the role of the representative membership group.

Through the worker, the council is able to refer items which are out of its province to other groups. In this way the council is made conscious of the relationships between groups, the proper procedure for channeling information, and of the functional distribution of authority. For instance, when the Potluck Committee required money to carry on its activities they were helped to channel this request through the council to the Board through their representative. In so doing they were recognizing their own limitations in the area of expenditures of agency money and using the channel available for such requests.

A further way in which the council is helped to relate to other groups in the membership is through the polling of group and individual opinion by letters and post notices. Obtaining staff representation and creating opportunities to relate the council to the general membership, administrative groups, such as Board and committees, and to the community at large is the continued responsibility of the worker.

Through staff meetings and supervisory conferences, the administrative worker is active in enlisting the interest and
support of the staff in council activities. In turn these workers can interpret to the membership the job of the council and encourage their participation. Because the council is attempting to coordinate the agency program, information shared with the staff, about the council on one hand, and of the feelings of the membership on the other, is a major function of the worker.

One of the main items of discussion in staff meetings this year has been reports of the council, their activities, recommendations and of the individual members' reactions and development. The coordination of the carnival plans would not have been possible except for the staff planning and circulation of information which ran parallel to the planning by the committees concerned. Excerpts from the records of two staff meetings indicate how this was handled by the staff.

February 8, 1953:
"Miss A. reported on the progress of the Council Carnival Committee. The date has been set for May 15 and 16 with a Coney Island theme. The committee, their function and membership and staff assignments were outlined. Because of limited time it was agreed to do further staff planning at the next meeting."

February 25, 1953:
"Miss A. described the relationship of staff planning and the role of staff with committees and groups for the carnival. It was agreed that a staff meeting committee would assist in planning and in the presentation of reports to staff meetings. Committee to include B., E., H., and A. There was further discussion of the overall objectives and the job of the steering committee."

The following excerpt from a Board meeting shows how Council plans were presented to the Board for their interest and support.

March 18, 1953:
"The Executive Director in her report to the Board said that the major emphasis in Senior House at this time was in the planning for the Annual Carnival, to be held May 15 and 16, with a Coney Island theme. House Council has set up a network of committees bringing in various elements of the membership to make the arrangements and carry out the plans."
These excerpts helped to illustrate the process by which council activities are related to other groups in the agency and the worker's responsibility in circulating information and coordinating the various groups in the agency.

The Worker's responsibility to the Total Agency

Finally, the administrative worker is responsible for the overall administration and operation of the agency. The administrative worker must have a feeling for the "whole" agency and considerable skill and insight into the problems which impede the integration of all the parts of the agency. The worker must be able to assist members and groups to understand the implications of a shared experience and help them to establish procedures and structure in accord with the purpose. The challenge of the administrator is to provide for participation in planning and policy-making by boards, staff, and constituents.

Not only is the worker responsible for the groups represented in the council, but also for those not represented. A sense of timing and of opportunity will assist the worker in helping other groups to identify themselves with the administration, through the medium of the Council, when they are ready and able to do so. There is always the need to interpret the function of the intergroup and its program to all areas of the agency. This kind of preparation supplies information about the role of the council and its place in the administration of the agency. Trecker in his book, "Group Process in Administration", suggests that the attainment of a democratic social agency administration
rests on the ability of the administrator to work with the social relationships within the organization to the end that the members are helped to grow and to take on responsible membership.

The role of the worker in the administrative setting has been discussed in terms of the relationship between the worker and the House Council. The analysis of this relationship has been divided into four main areas, the worker's responsibility to the inter-group, to the individual, to the groups represented and to the total agency. The emphasis has been placed on the first two because of the material available but the other areas are not less important. Narrative records are not always adequate in pointing out "feeling tones", which are most significant in describing interaction and intricate relationships. Nevertheless, it is obvious that the worker does play a major role in assisting the group to use the democratic processes which are available to them. In this setting particularly, the worker has been active in assisting older members whose pattern of behaviour has become somewhat static and even rigid, to work pretty successfully within the agency framework. Also, through the medium of the inter-group experience the worker has helped these individuals to gain a better understanding of their own limitations and capabilities and to work cooperatively in joint enterprises for the advancement of the agency program.
CHAPTER IV

Implications of the Study

In the western world democracy has been acknowledged as the cornerstone of human endeavour and the basis of social relationships. The concern for democratic procedures has invaded every aspect of administration and management. Nevertheless, the implementation of the democratic ideal is fraught with complications. The principles of democracy, of basic human rights, responsible participation, and of equal representation, have been clearly described but the variety of applications within the administration of social agencies indicate wide discrepancies in the interpretation of the principles. This fact suggests that there are dynamic qualities inherent in administration which cannot be accounted for simply by improved techniques or educational programs.

With increased interest in the relationship between democratic ideals and administrative functions and the contribution of social work principles to this field, the concept of social agency administration has evolved to a concern for the "administrative process". Trecker has described this concept very concisely in his almost classical statement about "creative" administration.

"We thus see administration as a creative process of thinking, planning, and action inextricably bound up with the whole agency. The real focus of administration is relationships with and between people."¹

Trecker's definition is based on the belief that "the agency is people", that is, that because the agency is composed of

individuals, administration cannot be arbitrarily separated from those who make the policy or from those who, as participants in the program, affect and in turn are affected by the administration of the agency. Therefore, in effect, the agency itself is not a building or even the organizational structure which facilitates services, but is people. In this sense the administration of the agency, its policy and purpose, is a product of the attitudes, the needs and the desires, and the relationships which have been experienced by the individuals and groups who make up the agency. The process of administration places the emphasis on "how it was done" rather than "what was accomplished." The administrative process is concerned with individuals and how they work together in groups, with the relationships between groups, and with the worker or the leader who facilitated the total procedure.

The consideration of the influence of human relationships in the administration of social agencies is a relatively new approach. Formerly, welfare organizations were founded by interested citizens to offer services to those in need. The line was quite sharply drawn between the recipients of service and the board and committees who were the directors of the agency. This philanthropic spirit of "doing for" tended to foster a hierarchical agency structure and a sort of benevolent despotism which did not provide a basis for the self-respect that is imparted through a cooperative approach to common problems. Changes in agency policy and in administrative methods come about because people change and each agency makes its own progress in making the transition to a type of administration more considered with democratic concepts. There are still wide gaps in the
acceptance of truly democratic procedures in many social agencies but the gradual evolution represents growth on the part of the total agency and therefore of the individuals involved.

The Neighbourhood House is a social agency established to provide a family centre for recreational activities. The agency is a network of inter-related groups, of participants, volunteers, and staff, who have in common the purposes of the association. The Neighbourhood House is a community of individuals and of groups; it reflects many of the complexities of contemporary society. The agency is an experiment in democratic living, a "society in miniature". Therefore, the way in which this miniature society resolves its conflicts and integrates its experiences is important, not only for the success of the agency but also for the contribution that it makes indirectly towards successful democratic living in the larger community.

This study is concerned with the effectiveness of the administration within one social agency, namely Gordon Neighbourhood House. In order to limit the scope of the study, the House Council has been selected for special study because of its relationship to the membership. Perhaps the role of the council group in the administration of an agency indicates fairly well the extent to which democratic procedures have been established. At any rate the council is the organized body through which the membership participates in the agency administration and therefore there is a need to examine the function and activities of this group in order to determine the degree of that participation. A complete study of the administration of Gordon House would necessarily include investigation of the Board and the various
Committees and of the staff group. Further studies in these areas could complete the picture and give an evaluation of the total situation.

The criteria for effective administration has been discussed at length in the first chapter and these have been used as guides in the analysis and measurement of the administrative process in this agency. Considerable emphasis has been placed on the role of the worker because it is believed that the leadership of the professional staff is a major factor in instituting democratic procedures and establishing effective relationships. The use of accepted standards of democratic administration for measurement makes the evaluation as objective as possible. Nevertheless, because any study of human relationships is, to a large extent, subjective, the findings are perhaps limited in application and are presented as a starting point for discussion. They may at least serve to stimulate further thinking in this field and to increase appreciation and concern for the following:

1. the need to be concerned about the rights of the memberships in the administration of the agency;

2. the need for more attention to the subtle dynamics inherent in the group life of people who are involved in creating administrative policies of an agency;

3. the need to establish the kind of relationships which release human endeavour rather than control it;

4. the need to understand with more certainty the role of the leader and the skills involved in facilitating the administrative process.

Findings

Perhaps the most unequivocal and important finding of this study has been that a representative body of the membership, namely, the House Council, plays an integral, efficient and
acceptable part in the administrative process of Gordon House. In this setting the inter-group body has filled a need felt by the membership and/or the administration and it has achieved a measure of success in carrying out its objectives. In an agency where the memberships divides sharply into older people and younger members, with their inimical attitudes towards each other, it might have been considered unwise to set up such a council. For this reason then it is all the more an achievement that the agency has an active council that is doing a worthwhile job. And while the council is not entirely representative of the total membership, it does represent the most active groups who are able to participate and those who have maintained a continuing interest in the agency. For the purposes of initiating democratic procedures then, the House Council is representative of the active, responsible membership. Each agency is confronted with certain limitations in its membership which will be reflected in the council, but if there is evidence that some of the membership is ready for a secondary group experience and able to take on further responsibilities formation of a council should be encouraged. Gordon House has attempted to gear the program and activities of the council to the needs of the membership and of the individuals concerned with gratifying results.

The agency in its statement of Purpose and Function has acknowledged the democratic rights of the members to participate in the formulation of agency policy and has provided a structure for this purpose.

"Every effort is made in the development of the agency to provide a structure of councils and committees which enables members to participate in the formulation of
policy and government of the agency so their knowledge and skill in the use of democratic methods may be enhanced."

This statement signifies the Board's interest in developing the participation of the Council in the administration of the agency and should stimulate the Council to be concerned about their role in their own government. The statement recognizes the need for structural organization in order to facilitate democratic practices.

Statements of policy are important but even more significant is the implementation of the policy. The existence of democratic-sounding policies does not necessarily ensure that the administration of the agency will be very democratic. Policy has to be paralleled by consistently democratic agency organization and practice.

Gordon House describes its organizational pattern in the chart "Circular Administrative Structure", Figure 11 found in Chapter 11. This chart indicates a circular pattern of organization with the House Council in a position to communicate horizontally and vertically with the other groups in the agency. This structure is a further indication of the agency's interest in obtaining membership participation and in channeling and delegating certain administrative functions through the council. Even though the council is unable, at this point at least, to use this structure fully, this organization combined with statements of method serve to alert both administration and membership to their potential development.

How effective is the Council in this organizational plan? The House Council is the organized body representing the membership. According to its purpose it has certain administrative

functions particularly in the area of agency activities and program. It has direct access to the Executive Director and to the Board, and indirectly to other members of the staff and to the committees of the Board. It reaches the membership through its delegates and those groups not represented can be contacted through the staff. The development of annual special events has made the membership fairly aware of the function of the Council and additional council committees appointed from the general membership has helped in this process. The amount of interest which the groups show in the Council usually depends on the effectiveness of their delegates and this varies from a very casual interest to a pronounced investment and possessiveness in the affairs of the council.

Membership representation to the Board has been channeled through the Council, via Council recommendations for the nomination of Board personnel. The Board has tended to use these elected Board members, who are also Council members, as delegates from the Council to the Board. This relationship between the Council and the Board has led to some misunderstanding and confusion, particularly for the membership. However, this technique has given the Council direct access to the Board and has given them some feeling of participation through the delegates.

The success which the Council has had to date, both in the area of program-planning and in administration, must be directly related to the quality of the relationships which have been developed within the membership of the Council and between the Council and the member groups. The atmosphere of Council meetings and the quality of interaction between the members indicates
that the group is developing a sense of purpose, of security, and of satisfaction in its job. This kind of relationship is dependent on the ability of the individuals concerned to cope with the situation, to handle adequately this inter-group experience, and the skill with which the worker has assisted the group to become "an inter-group". Their ability to handle differences of opinion and to cope with new situations is sometimes limited but their sense of humour, interest in the welfare of the agency and their relationships with the worker has helped them to maintain a balance. The relationships within the Council have been developed so that the group has not lost its identity as a representative body which so easily happens. Certain techniques of regular reporting and encouraging an interest in the activities of the primary groups have been used to establish consciously the nature of the Council and to keep the members aware of their basic function and purpose.

The performance level of the Council indicates that there has been some movement in this group during the period in which they were observed by the writer. The amount of growth expected must always be in terms of the particular situation and the potential development of the individuals concerned. The Council at this time is largely composed of men and women over the age of sixty years. Many exponents in the field of geriatrics feel that little growth or change can be expected at this stage of life, yet this Council, as a group, has shown a degree of growth and only in limited areas is there evidence that the level has remained static. In the handling of conflict and program planning the group has made some advances and in other areas there has been
a very gradual growth. This, of course, is directly related to the leadership given by certain individuals in the group and the relationship which has been established with the worker. There are older members in this group who are making a real contribution to the development of the council and whose leadership is respected by the others.

It is obvious that the worker has played a major role in the group life of the Council and its development. The records indicate that the worker has established a very constructive relationship with the group and has been able to use this to work with the Council. In places where there has been considerable resistance the worker has been able to assist the group to a more positive position. Also, the worker has been active in helping the group to clarify its function and to define its purpose and limits. Through other staff personnel the worker has helped the council to work with the membership and to be a coordinating program council. Further, with the help of the worker, the council has learned to make use of the channels of communication and to use democratic procedures. The constant interpretation of agency purpose, the role of the House Council in the administration of the agency, and with an understanding of the meaning of the group's behaviour and experiences, the worker has been able to encourage the democratic process in this setting.

This study indicates that Gordon House, through its House Council, is attempting to encourage membership participation in the administration of the agency. The study also points up certain weaknesses and these are discussed in order to continue the movement towards further development in this area.
Gordon House members have made some progress in taking on administrative responsibility within their own agency, however, their status in Alexander Community Activities is not very clear. One clause from the A.C.A. constitution in section IV on membership in the society says that:

"The Society shall consist of:
1. Active members who are now enrolled, or who may hereafter be elected by the Board of Directors of the Executive Council."3

The phrase, "active members who are now enrolled", could be interpreted as those constituents of the agencies who are members in good standing in their respective agencies. On the other hand, "election to membership by the Board of the Executive Council" suggests that only Board members are members of the Society with voting privileges. In actual practice the program members of Gordon House do not have the opportunity to vote at the annual A.C.A. meetings although they are invited to attend. This relationship with the A.C.A. Executive Committee is confusing for the agency membership and creates some ambivalence on the part of agency committees in the interpretation of policy. However, the A.C.A. constitution does permit considerable flexibility in terms of agency policy and except in the area of capital expenditures Gordon House enjoys almost complete autonomy, and has implemented much of the committees' own philosophy about administrative procedures. Nevertheless, the spirit in which the constitution and policies of A.C.A., as the parent body, are conceived does influence the member agencies and will be a factor

3. Alexander Community Activities, Constitution and By-Laws, (as ammended 1947-1951), Vancouver, B.C.
in encouraging or retarding the development of the membership in the area of administration. The Gordon House members have shown concern as to their status in A.C.A.; this is a healthy sign and it might be that this is the time for A.C.A. to clarify this issue for all concerned. At the same time it must be remembered that written policy often lingers on after practices have changed to a form more consistent with the present needs and attitudes. Changes in policy come gradually and come at the point where the membership is ready to assume more responsibility and when the Board is able to delegate authority and distribute responsibilities.

If democratic administrative relationships are conceived in a democratic spirit, they are nurtured through clear definitions of responsibility and of function. For members who are moving from the club group to the representative council a clear understanding and acceptance of their job as a delegate and of the purpose of the group is most important. The study indicates that the Gordon House Council has at times attempted to clarify its function and to make some evaluation of program activities but the Council does need added help in this area. A Council cannot carry on effectively until it does understand and accept its "raison d'être". The Council has shown resistance in this regard which might be traced to the personalities of certain members and this will require special attention and an understanding of the meaning the group has to these persons and something about their feelings towards authority.

It has already been pointed out that the Council has the opportunity to communicate with other parts of the agency administration and program. The extent to which these channels are
used depends on the group's understanding of their relationship to other groups in the organization and their ability to use democratic procedures. Because of the nature of the Council group they have not been very anxious to include groups not represented in the Council in their planning, although some efforts have been made in this direction through the agency's special events. This behaviour may be regarded as a particular limitation of this Council but it is more likely that with increased assistance from the worker and interpretation of their responsibilities the Council could work closer with the total membership and particularly with the junior members. It has been suggested at different times that senior and junior House Councils should be set up on an equal level. The junior membership does have Council groups relating to its own activities but for the purposes of coordinating the total agency the House has been recognized as the group representing the entire membership. The junior Councils have channeled their business directly to the Council by letter or special representation, or and more frequently, through the staff. Setting up two Councils on the basis of age would tend to separate the membership even further and would ultimately defeat the purpose of a united membership working together to achieve the objectives of the agency. Therefore, it would seem to be more constructive to accept the limitations of representation within the agency and to accept the fact that the Council will be composed largely of older members who are able to participate in an inter-group experience up to the extent of their ability.

The Council's relationship to the Board has presented some difficulties and misunderstandings. It is possible that this stems mainly from the way in which nominations for board personnel
from the membership have been handled. The procedure has been for the House Council to appoint or elect a nominating committee whose job it is to select names and have them approved by the Council. These are subsequently passed on to the Board and if acceptable by this body they can be presented at the annual A.C.A. meeting. This established a very close relationship between these Board members and the Council. In past year this has meant that one and sometimes two council members have been elected to Board membership. These individuals have full board privileges but the Board has tended to see them as council delegates as already mentioned. The success of this technique has depended on the maturity of the individuals concerned but it has presented an awkward situation both for the Board and for the members. At the same time this relationship has been difficult for the Council as a whole to understand and latterly they have tended to feel that the membership was represented only by "their Council delegates" and that they had a rather exclusive relationship with these Board members. The aim of the agency Board is, of course, to be representative of the agency in all its phases as well as of the outside community. As already mentioned, several of the Board members have been active members in the program at one time but because of the Council's part in nominating these persons the Council tends to feel that these are their sole representatives.

The existence of opportunities for representation and participation does not necessarily mean that each unit must have direct representation to all the other units in the agency, particularly if the membership has the opportunity to elect the Board and are represented by the staff. Unfortunately Gordon House members do not have voting privileges at this time and do
not participate in the election of agency committees. Therefore in a sense the Council's participation in nominating potential Board members has acknowledged the rights of the members to participate in the elections in some way. In view of the difficulties that this procedure has presented it may be possible that the situation could be handled differently with much better results. Nominations for Board membership could still be channeled through the Council as the membership's representative body, and it is likely that the names selected by the Council would have had Council experience and probably be active Council members. However, these Board members could be used as representatives of the total membership and not delegates of the Council if representation between the Board and the Council was handled through the appointment of Board members as delegates to the Council. This technique has worked successfully in other agencies and is in line with the conception of the Council as a body representative of all aspects of the agency. In this way, the Board would have representatives on the Council in the same way that other groups do and these representatives would be able to acquaint the Council with information about Board activities that would be helpful to the Council and also keep the Board informed on Council activities. This would leave the Board members, nominated by the membership, free to act as any other Board member. It would also serve to strengthen the relationship between the Board and the Council and to increase the Board's understanding of the membership. This plan might well be considered by the agency as an alternative to the present system of representation and it is one which would perhaps make better use of the democratic channels. In the area of "inter-
relationships perhaps the primary need is for astute diagnosis of the potential capacity of the Council to function in the administration of the agency. This involves some definition of the role of the Council in relation to other administrative groups, an acceptance of the Council's development and limitations, and creative planning to develop a Council program geared to the group's capacity. In this regard, manipulation and leadership are often confused and Councils are sometimes used to obtain "democratic procedures" which have no meaning to them. The Gordon House Council has been dominated to some extent by certain individuals in the group, particularly the president. This is related to the needs of the members in this situation but need not be a negative factor if special assistance is given to these persons and to the group.

The "basic training" for inter-group experience comes in the primary group through active participation and exposure to democratic leadership and procedures. The agency might consider giving increased attention to the training of the executives of club groups in order to increase democratic participation at this level and to prepare them for Council association. Some agencies have training sessions for club executives which have increased the membership's regard for the leadership they have selected and has helped the members to meet their responsibilities more adequately. The preparation of members for a secondary-group experience could also serve to increase the membership's understanding of the Council and to stimulate interest in having delegates appointed from more of the active clubs. This technique would gradually increase the prestige of the Council; it would more truly represent the membership of the agency and the delegates
selected would more likely be the leaders of the agency community.

Throughout this study it has been evident that the worker plays a major role in facilitating democratic administration. The Council, because of its relationship to the membership and its potential role in the administration of the agency demands considerable skill and understanding from the worker. The basis of this is the relationship that is established with the group and it has already been shown that there is a history of good relations between the worker and the Council, in spite of the complications that might have arisen because of the leadership of the student worker who is attached to the group. The worker will need to be skilled in diagnosing and understanding individual and group behaviour, particularly in view of the age of the members and their resulting needs and attitudes, and objective in relating the needs of the group to the development of the total agency. The administrative worker must know how to use structure to further the development of the agency as a whole. He must be keenly sensitive to the needs of the particular situation and devoted to the attainment of maturing individuals to play their proper role in the government of the agency. L. Urwick, in his book on "The Elements of Administration" quotes Fayol as saying: "If we could eliminate the human factor, it would be easy enough to build up an organization; anyone could do it if they had some idea of current practice."

This study of the role of the House Council in the administration of Gordon House indicates that while there are gaps in the

establishment of truly democratic procedures, there is an awareness and a desire on the part of the Board and the membership to develop more consistently democratic methods and techniques. Gordon House, with a fairly responsible House Council has made considerable progress in the matter of reconciling democratic procedures and the needs and capabilities of the constituents. There will continue to be need for clarification of the membership's role in the government of the agency and for skilled leadership in assisting the Council to work together for the overall purposes of the agency. The development of a partnership relationship between Board, staff, and membership is the ultimate goal in the life of a social agency devoted to democratic ends and the enrichment of the individuals and groups who participate.

In conclusion, one might ask just what this enhanced sense of participation in the administration of the social agency does for the members in other areas of their lives? In other words, why is it so important that individuals participate in the government of this agency community? Every individual has the need and the right to belong to things; he needs to be a part of something larger than his immediate world and to be effective in that world. He needs to live fully or creatively. Man has found that in groups he can begin to achieve a balance between his needs and his satisfactions; he can find a reasonably satisfying like and one which will provide a dividend to society. If we are not born democratic we can, in association with others in a compatible environment, learn the techniques and skills of democratic living. What is learned in one setting is reflected in others. The process of the "democratic germ" may be slow
as is the process of establishing political democracy, but to the best of our knowledge at this point, it does ensure the best possible adjustment the individual can make to his society and is productive of more social beings who are able to achieve and construct a more satisfactory world in which to live. Therefore, a sharper knowledge of the dynamics of human relationships in the group setting, particularly in the administrative field, is tremendously important for our understanding of the quality of relations which makes for cooperative, productive association. For this reason the analysis of social agency administrative relationships, of Boards and committees and of representative Councils, is important in the field of social work practice and for the implications it holds for larger community experiences, because these are groups who are working at the business of making democracy work.
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