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is **PEOPLE**
power

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For
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LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS EDUCATION FUND

The League of Women Voters Education Fund, established in 1957, works to strengthen citizens' knowledge of the principles and techniques of representative government in the United States.

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VOTING IS PEOPLE POWER

Registration and Voting Manual for Inner-City Drives

*Power in America rises in its most primitive form
from the citizens voting their will at secret polling places.*

—Theodore H. White

“The Making of the President 1964”

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FOREWORD

This Manual is based on three years of practical experience in reaching the citizens of the inner city in nine metropolitan areas in eight states.

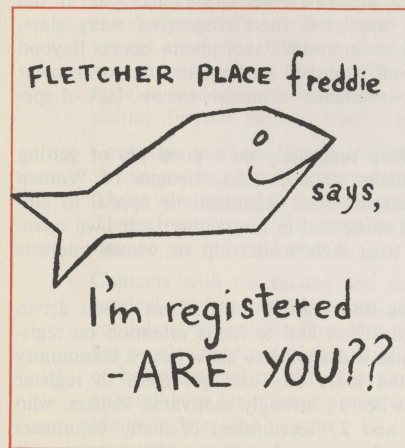
The League of Women Voters Education Fund, under a grant from The Sears-Roebuck Foundation, initiated projects to increase registration and voting by the "hard to reach," especially Negroes, Puerto Ricans, and newcomers from Appalachia and other depressed rural areas. The Fund's decision to set up these projects grew from realization of four separate but parallel developments: the desire of local Leagues of Women Voters in large industrial centers to work with rapidly growing in-migrant groups, civil rights movements which have focused nationwide attention on the democratic ideal of participation of all citizens in government, widespread concern about the future of our cities and the importance of developing political leadership among the new residents who have moved into the city, and the vital need to encourage communication between those who live within the walls of the ghetto areas and those who live outside.

In 1964, a presidential election year, pilot projects were initiated in Bridgeport, Connecticut; Cincinnati and Cleveland, Ohio; Indianapolis, Indiana; Milwaukee, Wisconsin. In 1965, the accent was on local elections in Detroit, Michigan; Long Beach, California; New Orleans, Louisiana; Rochester, New York. In most of these cities the work continues from election to election.

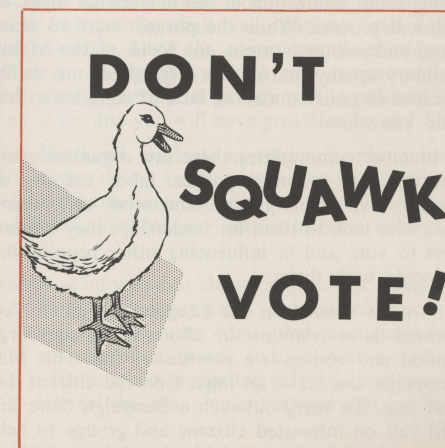
For specific information about these projects contact the League of Women Voters Education Fund. Also see Appendix, pages 32-34.

The nine projects were carried on under the general direction of Willie Dickins Campbell and Jane Ross Hammer, Trustees of the League of Women Voters Education Fund.

Printing of this Manual was partially financed through a grant from The Field Foundation.



Indianapolis Project



Cleveland Project



Chapter 1

CAMPAIGN TO VOTE

If liberty and equality are chiefly to be found in democracy, they will be best attained when all persons alike share in the government to the utmost.
—Aristotle

When a citizen exercises his constitutional right to vote, he makes a judgment and states his choice. His vote is his personal act of power; by voting he takes part in running his government. This does not mean that he will get all he wants all of the time, because interests compete, even conflict, and compromises must be made; but everyone has the right to expect that his interests will be taken into account by public officials before decisions are made. In a healthy and vigorous democracy the interests of all the various segments of a community should be represented on a fundamentally equitable basis all of the time.

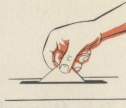
Leaders who are concerned about getting action for better housing, schools, and health and welfare services need to ask themselves why it is that many do not register and will not vote in any elections. If it is voting that gives the people power in a democracy, why do not more of them use this power? For, despite the hard work of many organizations, there are still hundreds of thousands who are not registered, and do not vote. In the 1964 national election, only about 63 percent of those who could have voted did. One third of the voting age population of the United States is not even registered, according to the Report of the President's Commission on Registration and Voting Participation, issued in 1963.

In some areas of our large cities seven or eight out of ten are not registered. These are citizens who are not reached by the usual "go and register" or "get out the vote" campaigns. Many of them are the "hard to reach" of the ghetto and inner-core areas of the cities.

This Manual is an attempt to outline ways in which individuals and groups can help to bring about realization of the democratic ideal: every citizen a voter and a participant in the political process. While the phrase "hard to reach" applies to inert citizens of every class, race, and national origin, the focus of the Manual is on residents of ghetto areas. Beyond ordinary apathy many inner-city people are walled off from full participation in government because of poor education, lack of confidence, fear, insufficient economic means, lack of specific know-how.

In most communities there are organizations which separately do a good job of getting out the vote: political parties, labor unions, business organizations, League of Women Voters, civil rights groups, and other civic associations. Such organizations appeal to citizens who look to them for leadership; they are most successful in motivating their own members to vote and in influencing other people who trust their leadership or whose interests coincide with theirs.

What is needed, as the League of Women Voters Education Fund's recent urban drives showed, is to combine the efforts of all such organizations and to focus attention on registration and voting as a *community* job. This Manual is designed to show how a community campaign can make an impact on the citizens of the inner city and get them to register and vote. To carry out such a campaign there must be: 1) strongly motivated leaders, who will call on interested citizens and groups to help, and 2) recruitment of many volunteers to get the job done, neighborhood by neighborhood, person by person. Some money is needed, chiefly for staff to coordinate and carry through the campaign.



Chapter 2

CONCERN FOR THE CORE

Like all citizens, residents of core (inner-city) areas are important to the governments they elect and which serve as their agents. But because these citizens have not in the past been motivated to register and vote by the traditional methods which have kept others in touch with government, a special effort must be made to help them to increase their political effectiveness.

The whole community, not just inner-city residents, needs to be concerned. If citizens, or groups of citizens, get out of touch and do not get action to meet their needs, it is not only those individuals who suffer but the whole community. The life and growth of society depends upon the welfare and development of all sectors.

In the nine community campaigns, the leaders, who represented a cross section of each city population, discovered that special techniques are necessary:

- ★ In a registration and voting drive, personal contact is needed more than any other single factor. Disadvantaged persons in the ghetto are likely to feel alienated and cut off from the rest of the city. Life revolves around the neighborhood. Reasons for voting need to be explained. Printed materials are not enough to arouse interest and get information across.
- ★ The connection between "gut issues" and voting must be made. Gut issues are those which affect jobs, homes, schools—*right now*. The goals of the poor are the needs of the day and hour, not abstract values and long-range objectives. Talk and action tend to be personal and specific.
- ★ Neighborhood leaders need to participate in front leadership positions throughout the campaign. Ties to the ghetto and to its typically small civic, business, and social groups are strong. There is distrust of outsiders. Even the government is considered an enemy by many. Neighborhood leaders already play a vital role—sometimes in spite of inadequate education—with limited opportunities to take part in political activities. Interest the real leaders in the drive and you will have greater success.
- ★ Campaign workers should include neighborhood residents at all levels, particularly in canvassing. A visit from a friend is better than a knock on the door by a stranger. Those who campaign in their own neighborhoods have the advantage of belonging. Those from outside the neighborhood must allow for time, lots of it, because it takes time to get to know people.
- ★ Contacts with candidates and provision of information about their qualifications are particularly important because quite a distance often separates inner-city citizens and candidates for public office. Not only do we need to know what candidates stand for, but we also need to feel that candidates understand our needs, to have some assurance of being listened to after Election Day. Finding and supporting neighborhood people as candidates for office is a sure way to interest the whole neighborhood and get people to register and to vote.
- ★ The political parties, which work hard for partisan support for candidates and issues, may not always be of much help in getting more people to register and to vote in the



inner city. New voters sometimes pose a threat to a party leader. He does not know how they will vote. Their votes may upset the balance of power and cost him his position of leadership.

Thoughts and Things

In any campaign, barriers will be met. Some that severely affect minority groups are:

Psychological

- ★ *Timidity*—"Where do I go?" or "How do I do it?" or "What do I say?"
- ★ *Lack of concern*—"No one cares what I think" as much as "I don't care"
- ★ *Feeling of futility*—"My vote doesn't count"
- ★ *Feeling of disgust*—"Politics is dirty business"
- ★ *Shame*—"I will show my ignorance" ("Will the machine bite or backfire? Will it do what I want?")
- ★ *Pride*—"I want to be treated with dignity"
- ★ *Fear*—"They won't let me register" or "If they let me register they'll report me to . . ." or "They'll know how I vote and . . ."

Mechanical

- ★ The trouble of making two trips to the voting place—one to register and another to vote
- ★ The time and money it takes to get to that place—especially if there is only one in the center of the city
- ★ Registration possible only on special days at inconvenient hours—even if there are scattered neighborhood places that can be reached more quickly and cheaply
- ★ Requirement of literacy tests, sometimes difficult in their own right, sometimes used to intimidate
- ★ Residence requirements—even local moves may make reregistration necessary and prevent voting in the upcoming election
- ★ Complexities of the registration form and the voting machine or the paper ballot.

These barriers are not easy to remove. Strong positive action is required by the public and officials for some, such as illegal obstructions and intimidation. Laws may have to be changed. Some situations cannot be altered—for example, the mobility of people. It is up to the leaders and the concerned to motivate, to find solutions if possible, and to help overcome difficulties—both psychological and mechanical.

Above all, core-city people have pride. Once motivated, people will register—and they will vote. Hit the nerve that makes them want the needed information; convince them that their voice is silent—silent when it comes to garbage collection, police brutality, rats, even discrimination—unless they register and vote. Once they have seen that each vote is as important as any other vote, and know that voting sets the policy until the next election, they will register and vote. Education, work experience, and social position do not by themselves make citizens alert and active. *Wanting to vote and knowing how do.*



Chapter 3

HOW TO GET STARTED

Some individual or some organization has to spark a campaign to stimulate the hard-to-reach. For a campaign to take place, a person or group or two have to get the idea and sit down together. The more there are who come up with plans separately, the better. But the sooner they discuss their plans together—to decide what and where and how to carry them out—the better. A well-planned and carried-out campaign may need to start as long as six months before Election Day.

Look Before You Leap

The first thing such an initiating group has to do is to decide whether it is to be, in fact, a planning group—with continuous functions—for a drive. Representatives of interested groups should ask themselves honestly:

- ✓ Can the leaders work together in a systematic way?
- ✓ Can they find other people with needed skills and contacts to enlarge the group?
- ✓ Are the groups they represent willing to work through a central planning committee?
- ✓ Do they have a common goal? Or do labor groups want one thing and parents groups another?
- ✓ Can civil rights groups safeguard and develop their leadership roles in conjunction with a joint committee? Under one title?
- ✓ Who will "run" the campaign?
- ✓ Can a nonpartisan approach be maintained while working to arouse motivation based on "gut issues"?

These and a host of other questions pop up immediately.

The organization of groups and individuals to carry out a campaign can be tightly or loosely knit. It can be centrally directed and depend on division of jobs and areas of concentration for involvement of many different kinds of groups and people in one general plan. Or it can be quite informal—for example, merely provide for exchanging material or operating separate programs in totally different ways under a joint advisory committee.

At first glance a highly organized campaign, drawing personnel from all cooperating groups but with leadership roles clearly defined and with committees set up to perform needed functions (gathering registration and voting statistics, recruiting canvassers and other volunteers, raising money, etc.), would seem to be the most effective way of getting the job done. But when individuals and groups that have not known or worked with one another in the past come together for the first time in a registration and voting campaign, they may not want to lose their own identities in such a tightly knit organization. Some leaders may feel threatened; moreover, their memberships may work better under the direction of their own leaders within their own groups. In addition, those the campaign is designed to reach may respond more readily to some of the cooperating groups than to others. They will relate to individuals and groups they know, rather than to a new overall community organization designed to "run" a campaign.

Both highly organized and loosely coordinated drives will work—have worked. It is well

to realize in the beginning that, because communities differ, and the relationships of groups in communities differ, no one plan of organization is best for all.

It is also wise to remember that not everything suggested in this Manual needs to be done in a first campaign. Not every campaign can start with a large number of groups and individuals or with a wide range of community resources. This Manual presents a variety of practical suggestions learned from the nine pilot projects, but campaign planners need to choose a campaign blueprint—modest or ambitious—that fits their own situation. Plan what is best and what is possible for your groups and your community.

Whatever the plan agreed upon, it must be one that has been discussed in an open, cooperative manner with all initially interested individuals and groups. The decision as to degree and type of organization should be a joint decision, democratically based on majority opinion.

How Extensive A Drive?

One of the most important factors to be determined, along with the degree of organization, is the extent of the area to be reached in the drive. Is the entire city or town to be provided information, with intensive door-to-door campaigning in the precincts or wards where the minority groups live? Is the inner city or ghetto to be the sole target area? If so, are there several scattered ghetto areas, or one contiguous area of several political subdivisions? The geographical areas need to be precisely defined in either case.

City-Wide Campaign?

A community- (i.e., city-) wide campaign requires more extensive activity, greater organization, and probably more financing over a longer period. Arguments for conducting a city-wide drive include the following:

- ✓ A greater number and variety of organizations may be persuaded to join in a coordinated effort, thus making available more community resources.
- ✓ Timidity about tackling the problems of contacting the alienated can be overcome in the supportive situation afforded by the larger effort.
- ✓ Pooling of efforts cuts duplication—may be less expensive for all in the long run.
- ✓ Leadership reservoirs are larger and previous experience presumably more accessible.
- ✓ More volunteers can be reached more easily and effectively.
- ✓ Greater potential exists for raising money to pay skeleton staff and to provide for neighborhood centers and canvassers.
- ✓ Better publicity can be attracted.
- ✓ You may get more support for your efforts (and less opposition) from both political parties.

Inner-City Target Areas Only?

Certain difficulties argue against the community-wide approach, however:

- ✓ The larger the number and the more varied the groups participating, the greater the difficulties of reaching agreement on basic goals and methods.
- ✓ Joint planning is most successful if the size of the group is rather small; either representation has to be restricted, at the risk of alienating powerful groups and individuals (organizations in the inner city tend to be small and numerous, each

jealous of its voice), or ways must be found to prevent bogging down from sheer size.

- ✓ Diversity of techniques required for a community-wide campaign (“traditional” ones for middle-class largely white segments, plus new “experimental” ones for target areas) could cause difficulties.
- ✓ Possible competition among leaders and organizations, for dominance and for “credit,” may tend to prevent opportunities for developing new leaders and new organizational strength needed for success.
- ✓ Use of mass media, appropriate for the easily motivated, has proved to be of little value in arousing interest among those who are alienated—spot announcements on radio stations popular with the poor are more effective than expensive and extensive TV and city-wide newspaper coverage.

First Steps

Once your initiating group has decided generally about the degree of organization and the extent of the area to be covered in the campaign, you are ready to start making more detailed decisions. Your first step, in order to get the job done, will be to enlist more groups—groups that can help provide the resources you will need: volunteers, time, talent, tools, and money. You will find these groups among organizations with a high interest in registration and voting or with knowledge about inner-city problems: civic groups, civil rights organizations, settlement houses, neighborhood centers, inner-city churches, labor unions, etc. Some groups may be community-wide. Others may be neighborhood-oriented.

The First Meeting

- ✓ Invite the president of each organization (a telephone call or personal contact will be better than a letter) or a key person connected with the organization who you know has an interest in the goals of the project.
- ✓ Set a meeting in a “neutral” place acceptable to all at a time when working people can come.
- ✓ Prepare an agenda for the meeting, one that is orderly but allows for flexibility.

TYPICAL AGENDA

1. Purpose of meeting (not long-range goals)
2. Why representatives were invited
3. Give information about but don't go into too much detail:
 - a. National registration and voting figures
 - b. Problems of getting more people to register and vote in inner city (see Chapter 2)
 - c. What a community campaign can do (see Chapter 1)
 - d. Local statistics, if you have them, indicating (preferably on a map) target areas of low registration and voting.
4. Get group to list resources that are needed (partial list in Chapter 10). Allow plenty of time for discussion.
5. Talk about who can provide what. If at all possible, have someone from the initiating committee primed to get things started. Have someone ready to offer space for a central office; another, the use of a staff person, or materials, or money. Others will be more likely to respond if a start has been made.

6. Discuss next steps:

- a. Assignments to get the project under way*
- b. What and when the next meeting will be
- c. If an overall chairman has not already been recommended by the initiating committee, it would be well to choose one now to coordinate activities.
- d. Get names of other individuals and groups to recruit for campaign.

After this first meeting a designated member of the initiating committee or the staff person will need to follow up, through personal contacts or telephone calls, to get new recruits and to check on jobs being done.

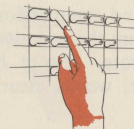


New Orleans Project

* If this is to be a structured, highly organized campaign, appoint the following committees to start functioning and to report at next meeting:

- ✓ Committee to look up state and local registration and voting laws and regulations
- ✓ Committee to supply such tools as
 - precinct lists of registered voters
 - lists of votes cast in each precinct in preceding election
 - city directories
 - ward and precinct maps
- ✓ Committee on publicity
- ✓ Committee on recruiting volunteers and/or paid workers (especially canvassers)
- ✓ Committee on raising money
- ✓ Committee to prepare materials such as flyers and posters, also gimmicks.

If less formal organization is in order, ask for volunteers to do jobs. These people can get helpers and go to work.



Chapter 4

STATISTICS ARE VITAL



Some basic information about your community as a whole will be needed in planning your campaign. Detailed information will be absolutely essential in pinpointing target areas.

Getting Basic Information

- Start with a map, a simple one showing the numbers and borders of all precincts (or wards, or districts—whatever the designation) in your city or at least the inner city.
- Obtain detailed figures (precinct by precinct) on registration and voting in the preceding election at the same level as the one you're planning for, i.e., local election, or state, or congressional, or presidential.
- Insofar as possible, find out what is the potential vote, precinct by precinct. This means the number of citizens who have reached voting age (21 years in most states) who are legally eligible to register and vote. An official figure is not usually readily available, unless there has been a recent national census or a survey. In the Bridgeport project, a survey showed the potential (see table below). Most often, you will have to arrive at an estimate by consulting leaders of each precinct, or labor leaders, or political leaders. In most cities you will have to make an "educated guess" of the potential by talking to people who know about the community, neighborhood by neighborhood. In the Indianapolis project, two inner-city areas with known high percentages of low-income and low-education and high-mobility populations were selected for concentrated efforts.

Making Figures Come Alive

In Bridgeport, the campaign leaders decided to concentrate their efforts in districts which a survey showed to contain the highest proportions of unregistered citizens. And, during the summer of 1964, these people were identified by name and address through checking the voting lists against the city directory. Here is what the figures showed:

District	Population Over 21 Years of Age	Registered Voters in 1963	Not Registered in 1963	Percentage Not Registered
1	1,262	810	452	36
2	5,427	2,762	2,665	49
3-1	4,260	2,066	2,194	52
7	3,972	2,117	1,855	47
10	4,621	2,007	2,614	57
11	2,162	894	1,268	59

Any such set of figures can be tabulated in a number of different ways. The first is obvious: voting unit by voting unit (district, as above, or precinct, or ward) in numerical order in the first column; then a column on potential vote (if you have it); next, a column on registered voters; then one on not-registered voters, and so on. By study and comparison of the figures, you can select the target areas. Since Bridgeport had conducted a survey and had

already selected its target areas, the chart shown above is a short one and comparisons are relatively simple. Even so, let us say that Bridgeport had wanted to "accent the negative"—the high degree of not-registered citizens in relation to the potential vote, district by district. In that case, the same statistics, arranged in the following manner, would clearly indicate where registration drives were most needed:

Percentage Not Registered	Population Over 21 Years of Age	Not Registered in 1963	Registered Voters in 1963	District
59	2,162	1,268	894	11
57	4,621	2,614	2,007	10
52	4,260	2,194	2,066	3-1
49	5,427	2,665	2,762	2
47	3,972	1,855	2,117	7
36	1,262	452	810	1

You might ask a volunteer to make one tabulation or another—or more than one—according to which form or forms will be most useful to you in your own campaign. Tabulations require more work to begin with, but they make the "sore thumbs" stand out and speed up your study and comparison. Besides, you'll be collecting facts and figures for tabulations in the natural course of your campaign and you'll need them in the end in order to make a full report on the success of your campaign.

But keep in mind that statistics and tables are not just figures. *They are people*—people who registered and voted; people who registered but did not vote; and, if you have the potential vote, people who neither registered nor voted.

Choosing Target Areas

- You will need to set some criteria in deciding how big your target area will be. You might include all those precincts in which the registration and/or the voting figures were very low in the preceding election. The area you choose should be one you can cover with the number of canvassers you have. You will want enough manpower to follow through to Election Day.
- In choosing your target areas, you will need to have facts beyond the "vital statistics." Areas of very low registration and voting may be those of highest mobility—where "homeless ones" or transients live, for example. For a registration and voting drive, it might be wise *not* to canvass such neighborhoods because few inhabitants there are even legally eligible to vote.
- Even if you "know without looking" what your target area is, your first step is to get the figures on registration and voting in the preceding comparable election. The figures are on public record. In some communities they are available from city hall or county courthouse, political parties, labor unions, newspapers. In other communities you may find that public officials are reluctant to release them but, especially if your group is a community-wide one, with the single common purpose of increasing registration and voting, you should not meet with much resistance. There are statisticians who make a business of compiling such lists and selling them, so buy one if necessary. If you are working on a congressional or presidential election project, your Congressmen—Representative or Senators—might provide you with the figures.



Chapter 5

BREAKING THE BARRIERS

Election systems vary from state to state. Find out exactly what the system is in your state—and in your community. Know the facts about local, state, and federal registration and voting provisions.

Pinpoint what is mandatory, i.e., established by statute. Practically speaking, if you find inequities in the law you cannot do much to achieve a change immediately. But from experience in your project you can begin to work, individually and in groups, to bring about improvements in the law after the upcoming election. Many organizations work constantly in this field; the League of Women Voters is one of them.

However, barriers which are administrative or mechanical can sometimes be removed rather quickly. Some of these are set by law, so be sure you know the current law. But lowering barriers can be as simple as convincing the Election Board that, for example, firehouses and schoolhouses can be appropriate places for registration—not just that one office downtown.



Long Beach Project

Registration systems originally were established to provide up-to-date lists of eligible voters so as to prevent multiple voting and other electoral frauds. But often the systems used have had a different effect. Sometimes, with the best of intentions, the system is so cumbersome that it discourages rather than facilitates registration. Sometimes it is willfully used to disfranchise certain segments of the population in order to keep political power in the hands of one group or another.

Certainly the most democratic system is that which, with sufficient safeguards to prevent fraud, makes it easy for every citizen to register and to vote. Most existing systems can be im-

proved to provide, for registration:

- longer periods (number of months, or certain weeks within those months)
- increased number of "high traffic" places, such as schools and neighborhood centers, firehouses and the like, rather than just one or too few places—and this (or these) far away or hard to reach
- hours for the greatest convenience to the most people—late afternoon and evening hours and Saturdays are more convenient for many
- registration closing dates as near to Election Day as possible—otherwise the citizen who does not become interested in the coming election until the campaign begins to "get hot" will find that he has lost the opportunity to vote because he failed to register
- mobile units in your neighborhoods so that the sick, elderly, or physically handicapped can register more easily.

The above can be accomplished only by public officials, whose powers are in some states limited by legal restrictions. But look into it. For example, in some places it is possible to deputize volunteers as registrars to supplement an insufficient number of registrars. Where restrictions are not set by law, interested citizens and organizations, by questions, probings, and requests for change, can bring about improved registration proceedings. This is an important job for you to do before the drive begins.

Regardless of what your public officials can or cannot do, will or will not do, there is work for civic-minded organizations to do. They can provide:

- information about the mechanics of voting: hand out sample ballots and show how they are to be marked . . . answer questions relating to forms to be filled out or literacy tests to be passed . . . demonstrate voting machines (the nine projects conducted by the Education Fund have shown that merely touching and handling a voting machine may make the difference in giving a new voter confidence enough to register and vote)
- baby-sitters, available at a number of specified times to individual mothers or at least to groups of mothers in one block, in a large apartment house, or in a housing development, so the mothers can get to the registration point
- transportation—for the timid who don't want to leave their neighborhood alone; for the sick or elderly or physically handicapped; for mothers who cannot leave their children long enough to make the trip to the registration point by public transportation.

What About Help From The Political Parties?

Political party officials do not generally consider registration efforts an innocuous nonpartisan activity, whatever your motives may be. Politicians prefer to concentrate their registration efforts on groups or on areas whose people are likely to vote for them. Some geographic areas are considered more "Democratic" or "Republican" than others. Consequently, if a party believes your registration efforts are likely to benefit it, that party will smile on you and even offer help. But the other party may be very unhappy with you, try to obstruct your efforts, accuse you of partisanship.

It is possible that neither party will welcome your drive. New voters can upset old party power balances, overthrow entrenched party leadership, nominate and elect candidates of their own choosing.

Once you have analyzed the political situation in your community, there are alternative ways of handling it.

- To avoid accusations of partisanship in such situations, you may be able to offer materials or services in all areas of the city, to the benefit of all parties and candidates, even while concentrating efforts in your target areas. This is particularly true if yours is a city-wide drive.
- If yours is not a city-wide drive and your efforts are interpreted as helping one party or candidate, you can point out that your commitment is to promote the full participation of every citizen in every election and that you have selected your target areas *only* on the basis of low registration and voting figures for those areas. Not concentrating where the work needs to be done could be interpreted as reverse partisanship.
- Seek help and advice from the political parties and other organizations. A friendly county chairman can be of enormous help in breaking down mechanical barriers, particularly if registration officials belong to his party. You may be able to get voting and registration lists precinct by precinct free or at little cost, and cooperation of party officials may make it easier to get voting machines for demonstration.

The whole matter of the relationship of your drive to the parties and to candidates will vary from community to community. By and large, you will be successful if your total efforts are honestly nonpartisan in nature, and if you keep in mind that your goal is to persuade as many people as possible to become involved in the electoral process—no matter which candidate or which party benefits. Remember also that if you are encountering some hostility it may well be because your drive is really needed—the people you are trying to get to register and vote have been truly underrepresented.

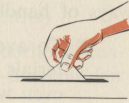


Learning how to be canvassers in Bridgeport Project



Chapter 6

FINDING WORKERS



The jobs that volunteers are needed to do are many and varied. The important ones that require the most people are:

- ★ door-to-door canvassing in neighborhoods
- ★ working in information centers
- ★ manning the telephones

Other jobs, which have been mentioned in connection with the first planning meeting (Chapter 3) are: getting the facts on election laws and the figures on registration and voting in previous elections; obtaining or compiling lists of unregistered voters; raising money or soliciting donations; designing flyers, posters, and signs; handling publicity.

To recruit workers, begin by appealing to members of the organizations that are working on your drive. Ask members of other groups, even if they are not taking an active part in the project, to recommend people. Your total roster should include people from:

neighborhood groups	civic groups
labor unions	youth groups
settlement houses	men's clubs
churches	women's clubs
schools	business and industry
civil rights groups	sororities, fraternities

Be sure to recruit workers from inside your target areas and give them visibility in leadership positions. You will need them to gain the confidence of the people you want to reach. You will need their advice and their help.

But whatever their walk of life, whether young or old, whether men or women, volunteers should have:

- ★ interest in getting everyone eligible to register and vote
- ★ enthusiasm for their part in the effort to achieve this goal
- ★ willingness to work as steadily as possible through your drive.

Volunteers Bring Volunteers

Start by seeing that each one of your volunteers who is eligible to vote is registered. And ask them to be on the lookout for others who might join in the effort.

- ★ This could mean some personal friend or acquaintance who is not a part of any organized group.
- ★ Or it could mean a person who is approached by a canvasser (or who approaches an information center) and shows such lively interest in your project that you think he would be an enthusiastic volunteer himself.

By these two methods of recruiting you may set off a chain reaction and enlist many workers who are only waiting to be asked. Usually such workers are willing to be volunteers. But you will need many to man your information centers and canvass from door to door, especial-

ly near the registration deadline, so be prepared to pay when necessary, in order to finish the job.

Working in teams keeps the volunteer enthusiastic and interested.

Try teaming people in different ways:

- ★ one from the inner city with one from outside
- ★ a man with a woman
- ★ a young person with an older one
- ★ a church representative with a civil rights worker
- ★ one from a settlement house with one from a women's club
- ★ . . . as well as the more common groupings such as two from the same organization, or the same neighborhood, or the same walk of life, or personal friends.

But mixing people will help spread the idea that your workers do represent a cross section of the community and that your project is aimed at all prospective voters.

Tender Loving Care For Volunteers

Enthusiastic volunteers are needed for many hours of door-to-door canvassing, staffing the information centers, manning the telephones. One of the problems is finding volunteers who can work the hours when most people are home—between 4:00 and 8:00 p.m. Women volunteers are uneasy canvassing after dark and/or out of their own neighborhood. Ask them to man the telephones. Young men often prove best for canvassing in the evening hours. New Orleans had luck using very young canvassers (6th and 7th grade boys) with adult supervision block by block.

Have the volunteers take part in feed-back meetings. Such meetings keep enthusiasm and interest alive, encourage airing and sharing of problems, clear up misunderstandings, and provide healthy competition. A listening ear, a coke or coffee and sandwiches, or transportation will often keep the volunteer participating.



Worker in Milwaukee Project shows a would-be voter how to operate a voting machine



Chapter 7

PLANNING TOGETHER



Once the beginning plans for the campaign are underway, and not too long after the first meeting has been held (see Chapter 3), planning for subsequent meetings for leaders and workshops for canvassers should begin. Much of the work described in Chapters 4, 5, and 6 can be planned by the initiating committee or by the headquarters staff. But the drive runs the risk of falling apart unless the leaders of the cooperating organizations are actively involved and are kept informed. The point to keep in mind is that there has to be genuine commitment to a drive on the part of cooperating organizations or the work will not get done. Meetings will be necessary to coordinate the plans and activities. This is especially true in a city-wide campaign that combines the efforts of organizations which have not worked together before.

If the first meeting was successful in setting up an organization plan, the next meeting of leaders of all groups could be for the purpose of confirming the plan and reporting on success to date. This is necessary—even if good telephone and individual contact has been maintained—particularly if differences have arisen or if modifications have to be made. Confidence is crucial. Explanations of changes after they have been made should be presented to all leaders promptly to allow for full understanding, discussion, and the working out of improvements together. Meetings provide this opportunity.

A second meeting also provides an opportunity to add other organizations to the drive. Since no one meeting—day, hour, place—is equally convenient for all groups, you may have to vary your meeting schedule from time to time. New leaders should be brought up to date by reviewing plans and repeating basic information, and should be encouraged to contribute materials, manpower, and ideas.

If wide disagreements develop as the drive continues or if organizations fail to send representatives to meetings or to pick up material and report on commitments, it is the job of the headquarters staff, through the initiating or central committee, to find out why and to recommend proper steps to remedy the situation if possible. The solution may involve nothing more than the setting up of a more convenient schedule of meetings or contacts, for misunderstandings are more often than not caused by failure to communicate information. Throughout, the relationship among members of the initiating committee and between the staff and committee should be very close.

One common cause of difficulty is the failure to delegate responsibility. Presidents of organizations are usually overworked and cannot attend many meetings. It is helpful to assign a special person, not already too busy with other activities, to handle the registration and voting work and to attend meetings—if care is taken to maintain the line of authority, to consult with the presidents and to keep them in the public eye so their leadership role is not threatened.

Bear in mind that volunteers—leaders, committee members, workers—will need to learn that

- New techniques and ways of working, even if they do not seem very different, are required. Being open-minded is important—the so-called “leader” who knows it all can be counted out or you will rue the consequences.
- New tools are needed—flyers, voting machine information (simpler descriptions,

etc.), publicity (that is based in neighborhoods and that doesn't antagonize), and candidate contacts (in fresh formats).

- New standards for success must be devised and adopted. What are reasonable expectations, given the barriers to be overcome? What kind of an increase in registration and voting figures will you consider a “success”? Will more patience, more time, more endurance be necessary than on other kinds of projects?

Remember that this is a special kind of registration and voting campaign, and all workers will need some kind of training—special training on the giving and getting of information, involvement in planning in the early stages, and adoption of an open-minded attitude that will encourage the looking for and learning of new techniques throughout the course of the campaign.

One kind of meeting that may be helpful quite early, if registration and voting drives have not been carried out in the area before, is a workshop for leaders. The meeting could feature an outside expert on the problems of motivation and participation of inner-city people in the political process. The overall plan for the drive can be explained, as can the ways in which the organizations and leaders fit into the overall picture.

In addition, use this occasion to encourage project leaders to

- find the real neighborhood or block leader, whether housewife, bartender, or schoolteacher
- ask for and follow advice of these leaders
- report any new ideas and suggestions to headquarters
- make friends (and keep up with them between elections. A Christmas card will be remembered the next time around. Even if this campaign organization has dissolved, there will be other campaigns. Perhaps workers will “get the bug” and be candidates themselves one day!)

There is a great need for getting acquainted, for building confidence and enthusiasm, and for clarifying goals. A social occasion beginning with a simple supper in the evening, utilizing experts from the neighborhoods, and relying on informal discussion, will be very helpful.

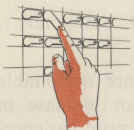
Later on, it will be necessary for each group to hold meetings—area captains and precinct captains, precinct captains and block captains, and block captains and workers. Such meetings can be used for training, for progress reports, for “keeping together.”

At these subsequent meetings, as reports are made and progress is determined, it may be necessary to shift gears. Be flexible, and look frankly at the job to be done with the resources actually available.

- How much door-to-door canvassing can you manage?
- Are information centers meeting needs?
- Is telephoning the best way to reach a lot of people?
- When will publicity help?
- Have you enough money for the job? (see Chapter 10)

Each job will take considerable man-hours. Jobs can be combined to suit the situation in your community. But beware of spreading your volunteer work force too thin and losing it.

Talking and planning together as the drive progresses will keep everyone on the beam, encourage continued commitments and enthusiasm.



Chapter 8

THE DRIVE BEGINS

Up to this moment in the campaign, the coordinating committee has

- ✓ determined the type of community organization needed to tackle the voter registration campaign in your community: 1) highly organized or 2) loosely coordinated
- ✓ determined the kind of voter registration campaign: 1) city-wide with designated target areas in the inner city or 2) limited to selected target areas of focus in the inner city
- ✓ gathered statistics and information about voters and potential voters
- ✓ set up a central office with staff
- ✓ set in motion plans for raising money, recruiting volunteers, mobilizing community resources through the organizations involved
- ✓ removed as many mechanical barriers as possible.

Now you are ready to begin the drive.

Door-To-Door Canvass

There is no substitute for the person-to-person approach.

The door-to-door canvass should start the day the registration books open, for some potential voters will have to be contacted more than once before the registration period ends. The best hours are from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. on weekdays.

Each person enlisted to do canvassing should be well trained in how to do the job. He should not be given such a big area or so many names that his task is impossible. He should be given kits of all materials needed for canvassing. He should keep a complete record of each interview, including notes on information that will help in later follow-up either in person or by telephone (see Chapter 9).

Assigning a captain and teams to each district to be covered is a good method. If the drive is a highly organized one, the captain will report back to the central committee as to the work being done by his teams. If the drive is loosely coordinated, he will report back to whichever organization is responsible for that portion of the target area. In either case he sees that the district is covered, and checks to see that households missed on first visits are reached later. He will also see that reports are complete and that volunteers are working well together. Frequent and regular reports back to the central office are necessary. The headquarters staff will be mapping the progress of the drive.

Some registration experts believe it is worth the money and effort to get lists of all unregistered voters and then send canvassers to contact only these. However, keep in mind that in your target areas mobility will be high, and if you work only from a list of the unregistered you will find that 1) some of them have moved out and 2) you will miss those who have moved in since the list was prepared. As a practical matter the canvasser should knock on the door of everyone in the area to which he is assigned so that everyone will be reached. If you do get the list of unregistered voters, it can be used as a cross-check. Some persons will not be sure whether they are registered or not.



Training For Canvassers

Training should start early. More than one session may be necessary to accommodate canvassers available at different hours of the day or on different days of the week. Moreover, as the project gains momentum, new canvassers who need training will be added to your list.

Allow enough time for training meetings so that canvassers can ask as many questions as they need to ask to feel secure before starting out. This is also the time for campaign leaders, district captains, etc., to get to know the workers, and vice versa. A simple meal or social hour will more than pay dividends.

At training meetings, canvassers will need to get the following information:

- ✓ Precise areas to be covered—background information on kind of area (ethnic and racial characteristics, natural meeting places, social life, etc.) as well as geographic information
- ✓ Legal and administrative requirements for registration and voting—in as simple words as possible (if there is threat of intimidation, workers will have to be trained how to deal with it)
- ✓ Dates of canvassing, beginning with opening of registration period if possible and running until the close
- ✓ Data on places and times of registration, routes of traveling registrar if any
- ✓ Information about headquarters: address, telephone number, staffing, procedures, deadlines
- ✓ Hours to canvass
- ✓ Flyers to leave with residents. One basic flyer, for the prospective voter to keep and refer to, should contain all factual information:

where to register
when to register
date of Election Day
hours at which polls open and close
name of project
headquarters address
headquarters telephone number
project's trademark
canvasser's name (hand-written on line provided)

Most of this information should be given verbally so that questions can be answered, but it should also be written and included in the kit for each canvasser. (Chairman, be sure to delegate the job of assembling kit to someone not already loaded with other responsibilities.)

The kit should also contain a sample interview. Work up one that you think would be appropriate in the areas you are canvassing. After it has been tried by the canvassers, ask them for suggestions on how, based on their experience so far, they think it might be improved.

As important as giving canvassers specific data on registration and voting that they can relay to residents is discussion of attitudes and approaches to the people they will be calling on. Stress:

- ✓ taking time to visit, if invited
- ✓ being courteous, natural, and informal
- ✓ listening as well as talking
- ✓ making the connection between registration/voting and issues of immediate concern

- ✓ encouraging the asking of questions
- ✓ trying to establish confidence: if the canvasser knows the resident, well and good; if not, mention "Joe," whom he does know.

Remember: the relationship established by the canvasser with those he is urging to register and vote lies at the heart of this campaign and will ensure its success or failure. In this person-to-person give and take, it is up to the canvasser to bridge the gap and make the connection between the vote and the everyday needs and aspirations of those with whom he talks.

Information Centers

Try to establish neighborhood information centers for the duration of the registration period and keep them manned through Election Day. Locate the centers in places where people go or pass by in numbers—outside supermarkets, in shopping centers, in storefronts, in housing developments, outside industrial plants, near churches and other gathering places. Storefronts may have to be rented but perhaps you can get some free space or find a donor to pay the rent. Locations in such areas as shopping centers can probably be provided free if you enlist the interest of those in charge.

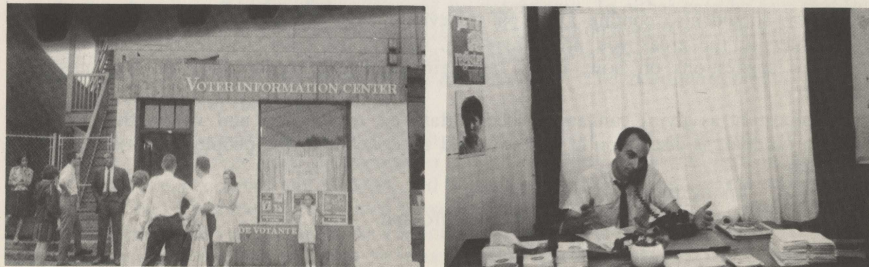
Locations next to or in existing centers that are already serving a purpose will attract more people than single-purpose registration and voting information centers. For this reason private and public agencies, including health or planned-parenthood clinics, or some of the federal anti-poverty program centers, would be good places to establish your information centers. A mobile center in a bus works well and can go "where the action is."

Those manning the centers should be able to answer basic questions about registration and voting. If they do not have the answers to the more complicated questions that will be asked, they should get the answers through the main headquarters and relay the information directly to the questioner or have someone at headquarters do so. If a person is interested enough to ask a question and then does not get an answer, he will be discouraged from going any further toward registering.

Do not expect too many questions at first. You will have to take the initiative. It may be merely a friendly smile as you catch the eye of someone looking your way as if he were interested or at least curious.

From time to time one of the volunteers manning the center should act as a "barker" and liven things up. Canned music played in the center will attract attention, will "invite" passers-by in. Centers should look gay, lively, colorful.

By all means have a voting machine in each center so that those coming in can handle it and practice voting until they feel confident. Simple flyers with registration and/or voting



Bridgeport neighborhood center—outside and inside

information that people can take home are a must. Centers should also have material on:

- ✓ what offices are to be filled at this election
- ✓ who is running for these offices
- ✓ how candidates stand on issues of importance to people in the target areas.

Perhaps someone overseeing the information centers might arrange to have candidates come into the centers to talk with people or to appear before organizations, church or neighborhood groups in the area.

Going To People By Sitting Still

A very important part of your registration and voting drive is *the telephone*. It can be a "substitute" information center. The person at the phone is a key person in the project. By his manner, his tone of voice, his patience in supplying information, his persistence, he can influence the hesitant to register and vote.

Your central headquarters should have not one but several telephones—a bank of phones so that when one is in use the next one will ring—or a switchboard. You will need to have phones manned during the normal working day and on into the early hours of the evening.

The job of manning a phone is ideal for those who want to have a part in your drive but cannot—because of age, physical condition, or even just feet that get tired—canvass from door to door. Women, who are reluctant to go out in the evening, are usually good at this work. Some volunteers are hesitant in face-to-face canvassing, for one reason or another, but feel assured on the telephone.

The duty of the telephone squad is twofold: 1) to answer questions on incoming calls, and 2) to call out—to canvass by phone. No matter how many workers you have in the field, they will not be able to reach everyone on a person-to-person basis. Telephoners can try to reach those who were out or somehow missed when a neighborhood was canvassed in person. Or they can work from lists prepared by headquarters and call people who are eligible to vote but have not registered.

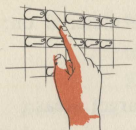
Your telephoners will need the same sort of basic information which you will supply to your canvassers and information centers. They will need to know:

- ✓ beginning and closing dates for registration
- ✓ residence requirements
- ✓ list of *all* registration places in entire community
- ✓ days and hours applicable to *each* registration place (they may or may not be uniform throughout the entire community)
- ✓ places and dates and hours of *all* demonstrations of use of voting machines
- ✓ places and dates and hours of *all* neighborhood meetings
- ✓ places and dates and hours of *all* candidates meetings

And, since door-to-door canvassers and voting information centers will pass on to your telephone centers the more complicated questions, the telephoners there will need to have the most complete information possible about, for example, absentee voting and ballot issues.

In Bridgeport a highly organized drive, which had great success with a telephone information service, proved that paid ads in city-wide and neighborhood newspapers were worth the money in letting people know about the service. Radio spot announcements—particularly on those radio stations and associated with those programs popular in the target areas (disc jockeys)—also paid off. This particular project had telephoners who could speak both Spanish and English.

But remember that *canvassing* by telephone is second-best to canvassing in person—and many people in the ghetto do not have telephones.



Chapter 9

KEEP GOOD RECORDS

In your training sessions before the registration drive, and periodically while the drive is going on, and if possible just before Election Day, stress to all your workers that they should keep detailed records of facts and figures and make whatever comments they think will be helpful, as they go along.

Data forms should be mimeographed and given to house-to-house canvassers for their use while covering each block or area assigned. Leaders in each community will want to design forms to meet their own needs. (The form used by one organization is reproduced on the next page of this Manual.) At required intervals the data sheets are turned in to block captains. For greatest effectiveness:

- House-to-house canvassers should keep an index file containing a separate card for each person they call on, including address, telephone number, names of that person and other members of the family (those of voting age principally, but also, if possible, ages of others approaching voting age).
- The canvasser should also note other information he may gather incidentally in the interview—where husband works or his line of work, if and where wife or other members of the family work, response of householder (friendly, enthusiastic, terse, negative, hostile), if and when members of that family register, if they vote or do not vote. Purely factual details will, at least, be helpful in your campaign. But incidental information can be most helpful in evaluating the reaction of that family, that neighborhood, that precinct, and relating it to the turnout on Election Day.
- If some interviewee seems highly interested in your project, his or her card could be marked for a possible volunteer job in your current or your next project.
- Block captains will need to keep very accurate records just to do their job of getting people to register and to vote—and their other job, reporting to your central office. The captains should also make whatever comments they think would be helpful the next time; they, too, should note which helpers did an outstanding job and might be enlisted again in your next operation.
- Information-center workers, telephoners—all your volunteers—should make notes of necessary facts and also reactions of those they contact, to assist you in compiling your report and in evaluating your project.
- In other words, impress upon all your participating groups and all your workers, from the beginning, that you are building not just for this one election but also for future elections an ever-higher degree of participation of local citizens in matters of public interest. Setting this tone and impressing upon them the need of their best effort and cooperation will encourage them to do a good job, to keep detailed records, and thus make a very real contribution to your project, to your report, and to the future of the community.



REGISTER AND VOTE CAMPAIGN

DATA SHEET FOR BLOCK CANVASSERS

STREET _____ BLOCK NUMBER _____

DISTRICT NUMBER _____ PRECINCT NUMBER _____

BLOCK CAPTAIN _____

PRECINCT LEADER _____

DISTRICT CAPTAIN _____

Name of Block Canvasser _____

Address of Block Canvasser _____

DATE _____ HOUR BEGINNING _____ HOUR ENDING _____

House No., Name of Citizen Canvassed	Regis-tered	Not regis-tered	Will regis. at once	Wish trans-port.	Need to report new add.	Out

Begin at one corner and circle the block without crossing the street, turning right at each corner. Call at each house or apartment, check each item carefully.

Data sheet used by NAACP in registration and voting drive



Indianapolis Project



Chapter 10



HOW TO RAISE MONEY—AND SPEND IT

Money is useful, but it is not as necessary as you think.

Many of the services and materials needed in the campaign—such as staff, office space, and printed materials—can be solicited from the cooperating organizations or, through them, from the community.

At an early meeting with representatives of cooperating organizations, a list of campaign needs should be drawn up. Such a list might include:

- ✓ A staff person (full- or part-time)
- ✓ A central office
- ✓ Neighborhood information centers
- ✓ Printed materials—registration flyers, sample registration forms, sample ballots, posters
- ✓ Transportation—to get people to registration centers or voting booths, to cart voting machines, to assist canvassers
- ✓ Mobile registration units and soundtrucks
- ✓ Canvassers—volunteer or paid
- ✓ Food—for training sessions, for canvassers and other workers
- ✓ Telephones
- ✓ Supplies—paper, stamps
- ✓ Registration and voting lists
- ✓ Equipment—furniture, typewriters, mimeograph machine, etc.
- ✓ Prizes to be given in neighborhood, organization, block, or individual competitions

Remember that not every drive needs all of these. But a central office, some staff, and basic tools are essential.

The representatives present can check the resources of their organizations and determine the amount of money or services you need to ask the broader community to contribute. Who can donate staff? office space? publications? transportation? What services will you need to buy? Be perfectly clear that each organization knows what service or materials it is responsible for.

To get the committee started, try to get a token donation of \$10 to \$20 from each organization. This will cover the initial costs of mailing and telephoning. Remember that some organizations will not have available funds.

Next, draw up a simple budget. You now have some information about what services or materials you may have to purchase. The budget should show anticipated expenses and needed income above the donations from organizations.

If large sums of money are needed—or even modest sums—

- ✓ Ask for it from
 - ✓ individuals with a special commitment to registration and voting or civil rights

- ✓ businesses, corporations, labor unions, church groups
- ✓ newspapers, radio and television stations
- ✓ local foundations
- ✓ national foundations or national organizations with an interest in registration and voting
- ✓ Raise it yourself through
 - ✓ appeals to members of cooperating organizations for many small contributions
 - ✓ special fund-raising events.

Most of the nine pilot projects got by with very little money. They used a great deal of volunteer time and contributions of materials and services. All could have used more money—for emergencies when there was not time to solicit services, and to save manpower for project work rather than for fund-raising.

One project, unable to get enough volunteer canvassers in the last few days of the registration period, found money useful to hire canvassers.

Another city drive, because it was able to get foundation funds, found it possible to do a comprehensive and professional job in registering thousands of people in a large city where the cooperating organizations had volunteer time to give but lacked financial resources. With a budget close to \$10,000 in cash for a 10-month period a city-wide drive was conducted, the money going for a variety of printed materials, clerical and administrative staff, telephone service, office supplies, postage, food and transportation for canvassers.

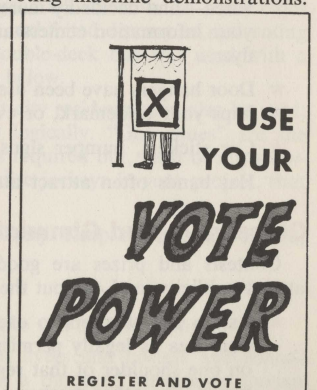
One community did a bang-up job with practically no money: a neighborhood community center donated full-time staff, a central office, and telephone; a labor union furnished sound-truck equipment, which another organization scheduled for the largest areas; a cooperating organization paid for flyers and materials that a local printer provided at cost; other cooperating organizations (churches, civil rights groups, youth groups) furnished volunteer canvassers; other inner-city churches and community centers set up neighborhood information centers on registration and voting on their own premises and transported neighborhood people to a downtown registration center; the League of Women Voters worked with registration officials and both parties to deputize more registrars, to open up more neighborhood registration centers for longer periods and later hours, to get more sites for voting machine demonstrations.



New Orleans Project



Cincinnati Project



Milwaukee Project



Chapter 11

SPREAD THE WORD AROUND



What printed materials do you need? Sample ballots, flyers, and posters.

Find out what appeals to inner-city residents and prepare material accordingly. Most feel they have been treated as second-class citizens, so the abstract and intangible approach about "doing your duty" or "good citizenship" will not draw many to the registration table or to the polling booth. Better housing, cleaner streets, more playgrounds, better jobs, higher wages, quality schools, equal opportunity—material about "gut issues" like these is what will influence people to register and vote.

General Guidelines That Apply To All

- ★ Simple materials are the most effective. The written word should be brief and simple—but it should be well illustrated with pictures, drawings, cartoons, diagrams. The picture and caption should capture the interest of the inner-city people, should relate to their experience and concern. Repeating one picture or slogan on several flyers may make it the trademark of the drive.
- ★ Costs can be held down by persuading experts in the fields of writing, design, and printing to donate their services. Be careful not to ask too much from any one person or firm. Give contributors a credit line on material they produce. This is not only a thank-you to them, it reinforces in the minds of readers that your project has widely based cooperation in the community.
- ★ *And before you print any material, try it out on residents of the inner city.* They will tell you quickly if the message comes through.

Other Popular Materials

- ★ Reprints of sample ballots are most useful—especially to those who have never before voted—and decidedly more useful than printing a piece on why to vote. Post them in all your information centers and in other places, too. And distribute them as you would a flyer.
- ★ Door hangers have been used successfully. They should carry a very brief message, perhaps your trademark, or even just "Register and Vote."
- ★ Car stickers, bumper signs, and buttons are time-honored effective devices.
- ★ Hat bands often attract attention. Inexpensive paper hats are sometimes used.

Giveaways And Gimmicks

Contests and prizes are good if you have time and manpower to handle them. They attract publicity, and can put the message over effectively. The following plan has worked:

- ★ Assign two workers to each registration place. Have them stand as close to the registration area as legally permissible. As soon as a voter has registered, one worker can pin on one shoulder of that registrant a card reading (for example) "I've registered. Have you?" The other worker can pin on the other shoulder a small inexpensive real or paper flower or button.

- ★ Carrying this idea further, have one worker pin on both card and flower. Let the other worker tally count of registrants and as, say, every 25th person registers, pin on a more expensive flower, and at the 100-mark give a bouquet. The contest is to see how many people you can attract to the registration table. If the idea catches on, the better the chance a person has to draw a special token the more likely he or she is to register. Keep your tally secret so that no one but your two workers at the registration place will know when the next lucky number is about to come up.
- ★ Have a poster contest—among school children in the area, block clubs, neighborhood organizations. It will attract publicity and you probably will get more posters at less cost. Besides, area residents are more likely to produce posters which appeal to their fellow residents.
- ★ Have a get-out-the-vote contest with prizes going to canvassing teams (if a highly organized drive) or to cooperating organizations responsible for the highest percentage of new registrants or new voters in relation to similar elections in the past. Cash prizes could be awarded to organizations; but sometimes simple, amusing, and inexpensive awards at a final party are even better. Recognition of achievement—not cash value of prizes—is the important thing!
- ★ "Brainstorm" on giveaways and gimmicks. Maybe you'll have a better idea!

Publicity

Publicity in a voting campaign is directed at these groups: 1) the cooperating organizations, 2) the workers in your drive, 3) the public—the potential voters.

If your drive is city-wide, the mass media can provide: 1) information on candidates and issues, 2) listing of registration and voting places and dates, in newspapers and on radio and television, 3) spot announcements on radio and television.

If you are conducting only an inner-city drive, don't spend time and money on the mass media. It may be useful in attracting the help of community organizations and workers (although personal contacts are far better). But, by and large, experts say "Don't worry about city-wide publicity. All this does is to alert the potentially hostile people."

Take the publicity where the people are—in the neighborhood.

Get signs for reproduction in store ads in neighborhood newspapers, and in bulletins of organizations, especially churches.

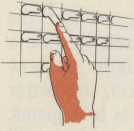
Votemobiles and soundtrucks that move through target areas are effective. In some cities these vehicles carried registrars, showed filmstrips on issues, exhibited dummy or real voting machines for people to touch and try out. In one city a double-deck bus was used with a band playing dixieland jazz on the top deck and registrars below.

Radio stations with regular programs beamed toward inner-city residents may also be used; but issues should be presented dramatically, not necessarily logically. "Gut issues" are the *only* ones to talk about. Talent to get your message across is required but, most of all, showmanship is needed. Spots are great; but if you can interest disc jockeys in your project, that helps, too.

The same standards that apply to materials apply to publicity. Keep the message simple, clear, dramatic—with a sense of humor!

Remember:

- ★ If you have money for only one piece of literature, *make it a sample ballot!*
- ★ If you have to choose, *people* are more important than flyers and posters and soundtrucks. The friendly approach and the warm voice are worth a thousand written or spoken impersonal words!



Chapter 12

E-DAY



Election Day . . . the day you have been working toward is here. Now nothing counts but VOTES. Everything you have done to this point has been only a preparation.

Your statistics show that not all potential voters register—and that some who register do not vote. The challenge is to change these statistics.

All the work done to get people to register was the down payment toward the day when they cast their votes.

Since the closing of the registration period, you have been making plans for E-Day.

Before E-Day

- ✓ Plan ahead with all organizations for Election Day (some of them may have fallen by the wayside during the registration drive; revive their interest). This campaign, like the registration drive, can be highly organized or loosely coordinated.
- ✓ Carry out house-to-house canvass.
- ✓ Print (or mimeograph) and distribute get-out-the-vote flyers. In these flyers include election issues, where and when to vote, where to call for a ride to the polls or for a baby-sitter.
- ✓ If your drive is a loosely coordinated one, get the participating organizations to set up a telephone squad to call their own members—and those they helped register—to be certain they get to the polls on Election Day.
- ✓ If yours is a highly organized drive, get complete registration lists for the districts which were your target areas so you can check those voting on Election Day against those registered to vote.
- ✓ Concentrate on demonstrating voting machines; or, if paper ballots are used, provide sample ballots ahead of time so that people can practice. Remind voters that if a square is to be marked "X" that *means* "X"—a check mark will not count; if the mark, whatever it is, is to be made in ink, that *means* ink—pencil will not count. Many ballots are invalidated by such slight deviations from the rule.
- ✓ Encourage inner-city churches, block clubs, neighborhood organizations to hold candidates meetings and forums to discuss issues. Distribute information on candidates and issues. Invite candidates to your headquarters and information centers to talk informally.

On E-Day

- ✓ Your central office should have telephones manned—from the hour when the polls open to the hour they close—to answer questions, give information, receive complaints. Have someone available to investigate complaints.
- ✓ If you have kept accurate, detailed, and up-to-date records while canvassing or have been able to get up-to-date registration lists, you know the name and address and telephone number of every registered voter. Call these people and remind them to get to the polls.
- ✓ If at all possible, set up and man a table or booth at the proper legal distance from

voting booths to give last-minute information and to encourage by a friendly presence those who are timid about voting.

One of the pilot projects made such arrangements in an area where there were many new voters and there was concern over intimidation. Those manning the booth furnished sample ballots for last-minute practicing; they told people exactly what the physical arrangements were inside the voting place so the timid voters wouldn't be frightened by strange people in a strange room; they were there to hear complaints if any were made.

- ✓ The best of all possible ways to be sure people vote is to take them to the polls. Some are still not convinced that their one vote is going to affect the election one way or another, although most of those who have registered *intend* to vote. But Election Day comes, and, for various reasons, they may keep postponing their trip to the polls until it's too late. So make it easy for them—*take them*. Don't stop with an offer of transportation if they need it. Tell them a car will call for them, or that a bus will be leaving a nearby point at such-and-such an hour. Plan in advance to have a baby-sitter—maybe the Girl Scouts will help.

Keep the transportation moving, with the one in charge of each trip *staying with the voters* until they have voted, returning them to their homes, and immediately picking up another group. Broken down by blocks, the task is not too time-consuming.

Keep A Check List

- ✓ Taking people to the polls not only gets more people to vote, it will also help you with your check list. On the complete registration list for the district you will check off the name of each person you take to the polls. If you are allowed a checker at the polls, you can find out which voters have cast a ballot. By checking off the names of those who have voted, you can concentrate your phoning on those who have not.
- ✓ This is the time to use your team captains again. They know their neighborhoods and can divide up the job of reaching everyone, either by phone or in person. Each captain should keep a check list, reporting to headquarters frequently.

All Day Long

If you have soundtrucks or any sort of mobile units, send them touring all over your target area, with loudspeakers calling out messages, for example:

- ✓ "Today's Election Day. Don't forget to vote."
- ✓ "Polls close at . . . (exact hour) today. Be sure to vote."
- ✓ "Don't miss the boat. Don't lose your vote. Today's the day—the only day. Hurry."
- ✓ "If you need transportation we'll get you to the polls on time. Phone . . . (your central office number)."

If you tried the flower-and-card idea which appears in Chapter 11 of this Manual, and if it was successful, you might repeat it at each polling place, with a card reading "I've voted. Have you?"

On Election Day use all you can muster in the way of helpers, showmanship, ingenuity, persistence, from the time the polls open until they close. Many extra volunteers might be willing to devote their full time this one day even though they could not spare the time to work throughout your registration drive.

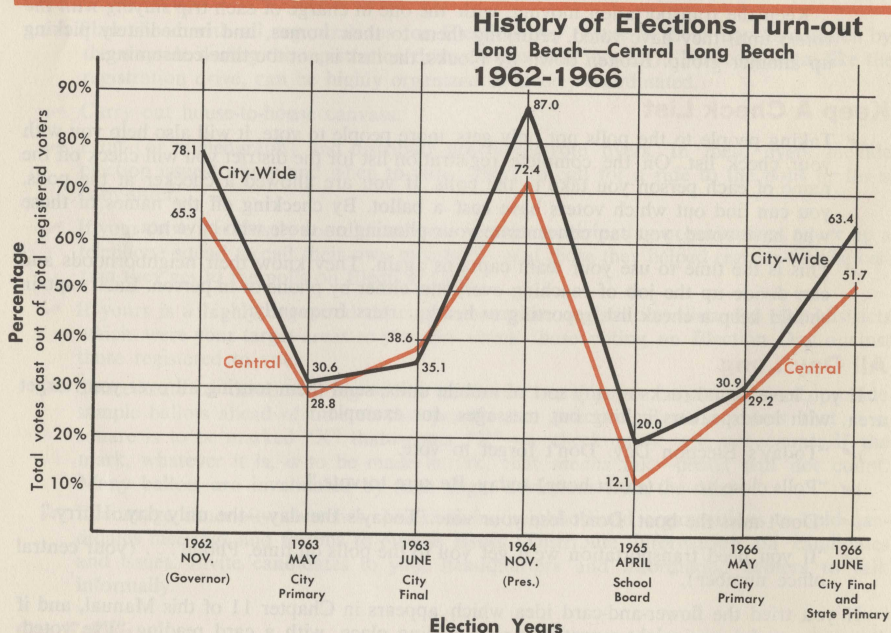
Do everything you can think of to keep interest high on E-Day, to create an atmosphere of excitement about voting.

Running Tally

About noontime on Election Day your central office could start writing on a big blackboard the number of votes that have been cast in your target area, precinct by precinct. Such a tally is always interesting to watch. If your office is big enough to accommodate the possible crowd, you might make a point of inviting people to stop by *after they've voted* (if you use the flower-and-card idea you could stipulate that only those wearing that official card will be admitted) and watch the board as the figures change. This would not only enliven the day, it would probably heighten the competition among precincts and help get out those who have registered but have not yet voted. If people are there from a precinct showing a low turnout and they want their precinct to make a better showing, they could go after their friends and neighbors and personally escort them to the polls.

The scoreboard could be manned until the polls close, all votes are counted, and the record of your whole target area is there for everyone to see.

Have a "victory party" for campaign workers; give special recognition to those districts which showed a substantial percentage of increase.



Long Beach Project. The central area turnout generally followed the same trend as the city-wide turnout. But, in city council primaries, when voter turnout is low throughout the city, the central area had almost the same percentage as that of the city. The final council election in June 1963 was not connected with a state primary and therefore showed a smaller turnout for the whole city; however, the central area had a strong candidate in that election and therefore had a better turnout than the rest of the city. It is interesting to note that the gap between the central area and the rest of the city was slightly reduced at national elections from 1962 to 1966: the gap was 12.8 percent in 1962; 14.6 percent in 1964; 11.7 percent in June 1966.



Chapter 13

WHAT HAPPENED?

Yesterday was Election Day. Did your program rate E for excellence?

Today start evaluation of your project. This is hard to do, for your organizations and workers will feel their job is done. Get facts for each precinct:

- How many registered for the preceding similar election? How many voted?
- How many registered this time? How many voted?
- How many organizations participated in your drive? How many volunteers?
- How many phone calls were made to get people to register? To vote?
- Flyers distributed and where. . . Newspaper stories, radio spots. . .
- Anecdotes and experiences. . . Financial report. . . *And other details.*

Organize facts into a report. Then evaluate. Ask many people—volunteers, captains, organization representatives, etc.—to help in assessing the drive.

- What worked well? What didn't?
- Did you have enough volunteers to do the job? Were they thoroughly trained?
- Did some of them lose interest? If so, why?
- Did you need more house-to-house canvassers? More information centers?
- Did you need more telephoners—or just more telephones?
- Was your central office adequately equipped, with manpower and machinery?
- Did you allow enough time to plan and carry out your campaign?

If every precinct in your target areas went up in registration and/or voting, by about the same percentage, you can gauge the degree of your success, though you will need to weigh other factors, e.g., ballot issues, high public interest in a contest between candidates. But if there was an increase in some precincts and a decrease in others, you will have to look further.

You may find that your effort in precincts that showed a decrease was just as intense and efficient as in the precincts that showed an increase. So keep studying facts and factors until you can judge what made the difference.

It is quite possible that this, your first attempt at increasing registration and voting in inner-city target areas, will not be a smashing success. People who feel isolated from the larger community and left out of democratic decision-making are not likely to respond all-out to a one-shot approach. Those organizations that participated in your campaign—at least some of them—will need to make a commitment 1) to work in the ghetto areas on a long-term job of voter education and 2) to communicate to the larger community what they have seen and heard and experienced about ghetto complaints and needs.

But increased registration and voting figures do not tell the whole story. You have made a beginning in reaching, on a door-to-door basis, people who have rarely been heard. Some of them have spoken through the vote and others will increasingly do so. Workers in your campaign will take an increased interest in the political process—some of them will eventually run for political office, will exert leadership roles in the community. Surely you have strengthened the democratic life of your community by making more people aware of the power they can exercise through the vote.



APPENDIX

Highlights of 1964-66 Drives

In 1964, a presidential year, five pilot projects to increase registration and voting in the inner-city areas of Bridgeport, Connecticut; Cincinnati and Cleveland, Ohio; Indianapolis, Indiana; and Milwaukee, Wisconsin, were initiated by the League of Women Voters Education Fund. In 1965 similar projects were initiated in a local election year in Detroit, Michigan; Long Beach, California; New Orleans, Louisiana; Rochester, New York. Cities were selected because the local League of Women Voters in each community indicated a willingness to participate and to help coordinate an inner-city registration and voting campaign and because each of these communities was different enough to allow for some experimentation in working with a variety of minority and ethnic groups.

In both 1964 and 1965 the local Leagues in each of the cities were asked to seek out eight to ten people in their communities with an interest in and knowledge of inner-city problems, registration and voting, or civil rights. It was anticipated that if these individuals might represent organized groups, either community-wide or neighborhood, that could be called upon for help, personnel for a sizeable registration and voting campaign might be obtained and a large variety of community resources would be made available.

These key local people were invited to come to Washington, D.C., to participate in a training conference. Following the conference they were to go back and put on coordinated campaigns in their communities. Reports of the training conferences can be obtained from the League of Women Voters Education Fund.

Although none of the nine projects required elaborate statistical correlations, the findings show that people will register and vote if they can be motivated by issues they feel will affect them directly. They will register and vote if approached individually on a person-to-person basis by people they trust so that questions can be asked and answered clearly. They will register and vote if the technical and mechanical barriers are removed.

The suggestions for conducting a successful inner-city drive set forth in this Manual are the direct result of the experiences of those who participated in the nine pilot projects.

Not all the campaigns met with the same degree of success, nor did they all use the same techniques. Space does not allow for a summary of all drives, but highlights of several are briefly described in order to illustrate successful techniques.

BRIDGEPORT

In Bridgeport, the cooperating groups merged their identity in a Citizens Voter Registration Committee, with three co-chairmen representing the League, the AFL-CIO, and a Tenants Association. Twenty-five organizations became involved in one way or another with the drive; an independent budget of \$2,500 was set up; committees on finance, training canvassers, distribution, and publicity were appointed. Target areas were clearly defined; a complete file of unregistered voters was set up for the districts chosen; training sessions for canvassers were held; all unregistered voters were canvassed (about 8,000).

Attractive and simple flyers were produced in English and Spanish. About 20,000 of the first flyers were distributed through schools in the districts where the project was concentrating. In addition, these flyers and the ones in Spanish were distributed through theaters, bars, beauty and barber shops just before the canvassing began and before the first registration date.

The Bridgeport Committee, in cooperation with a local radio station, also developed a telephone answering service, manned by the Negro women's organizations. Spanish-speaking recruits were on hand to answer some of the phones.

INDIANAPOLIS

In Indianapolis, coordination was good but the drive was not as formal or as highly organized. Here two target areas were selected and settlement houses in those areas became the focus for operation. One of the settlement houses, Broadway Christian Center, offered headquarters space and assigned full-time staff assistance to coordinate the project. Fletcher Place Community Center and Meyer Chapel, in one of the target areas, are well known and used their own personnel to make contacts in their neighborhoods. Church, youth, and labor groups worked in these areas on their own or in coordinated efforts with the centers. Broadway Christian Center, however, directed efforts over a larger area where it was not very widely known and where it did not have the personnel to do any door-to-door canvassing.

By and large, organizations carried on independently—trying, however, to select and clear with headquarters the areas that were not being covered by other groups. But this resulted in heavy coverage in some areas and no coverage in others as far as person-to-person contact was concerned.

The project furnished materials for all the groups who needed it and served as a clearing house for information. Communications among those working on the project remained good. The local League of Women Voters representative acted as coordinating chairman and the League served a valuable function in servicing the other groups working in the areas: by finding money for supplies and postage; by getting publications printed free or at low cost; by contacting officials for extra voting machines for demonstrations, clearing where necessary with Democratic and Republican local chairmen; and by helping the labor unions to schedule—to coincide with neighborhood registration dates—sound equipment they were donating to the project.

This kind of random saturation seemed to work very well. Of 25 inner-city wards, only five showed registration and voting increases over 1960. Of these five, two were the project target areas and the other three were areas of strong party leadership.

NEW ORLEANS

This was a city-wide drive called Operation Registration. Voter registration and education were carried on in every section, with concentrated canvassing, telephoning, and promoting done in ten target-area wards. Activities can be grouped in two phases: phase one consisted of work in two primaries, a special election in part of the target area, and the general election of April 5, 1966; phase two ran from April 6 through the November 1966 congressional elections and included a school board sales tax election and two primaries. Funds from two national foundations in addition to local sources provided a budget of nearly \$10,000 for phase one; with help from the Voter Education Project of the Southern Regional Council, phase two was able to operate with a budget of \$5,000.

The Planning Committee of both phases included representatives of NAACP, CORE, League of Women Voters of New Orleans, League of Good Government, American Association of University Women, Council of Jewish Women, and Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance. Thirty other organizations cooperated. Initial plans called for use of separate organization names and publicity, but as the campaign advanced it graduated from a loosely coordinated drive into a highly organized campaign widely publicized under the umbrella name of Operation Registration. By the time the 1966 first primary rolled around, the whole paraphernalia of a concerted drive were in use.

In the registration drive from August 11 to October 6, 1965, over 18,500 new registrants were added, 90 percent of whom were Negro. The passage of the Federal Voting Rights Act and the immediate compliance of the Registrar was a large factor in a successful campaign, as was the cooperation of the mass media and others asked to help.

There were 107,000 eligible to vote for the first time in history. Previously, Negro registration had comprised about 10 percent of the total. By the time of the first primary in November 1965, the total Negro registration of over 47,000 represented almost 25 percent of city-wide lists. Voting participation in the target areas averaged over 80 percent higher in every precinct.



Detroit Project

All stops were pulled in this campaign. Two hundred thousand sample ballots were printed and distributed. Two hundred and fifty thousand flyers—"Your Voice is Silent Unless You Register and Vote"—were printed and distributed. Since Hurricane Betsy closed most schools, plans to distribute the flyers through schools were curtailed. Ministers and priests, insurance agents, and canvassers helped. Fifty thousand were given out through a large chain drugstore at all check-out counters. Local newspapers and the advertising of many merchants carried reproductions of the flyer.

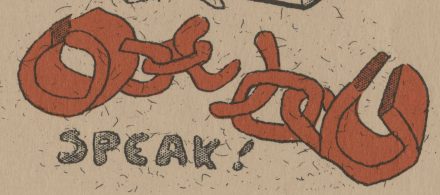
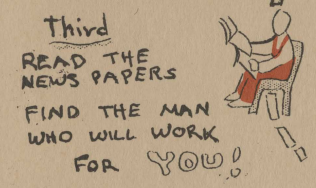
Door-to-door canvassing was carried out in the target areas. Four training sessions attended by 300 residents from the target areas were held. Soundtrucks toured these and other sections. Voting machines were demonstrated in city hall during registration hours. One thousand Candidate Questionnaires were distributed by the League of Women Voters. A TV simulcast over three commercial stations and educational television was put on with the cooperation of the Times-Picayune Publishing Company, reviewing the ballot and explaining the duties and patronage of each elected office.

During phase two, the same procedures were repeated: a training session for over 200 workers, with each canvasser receiving an Operation Registration tag, flyers, change-of-address cards, and mimeographed materials, including a guide for workers. Assignment breakdowns were made at an organization meeting of all district chairmen. A special effort was made to keep clergymen informed and involved. Over 200,000 flyers were distributed. Most precincts in New Orleans were canvassed; however, the area of concentration was 35 precincts in the target zones. The importance of issues of concern in motivating registration and voting was evident during phase two. Interest in a school board sales tax election May 3, 1966, added almost 4,000 new registrants to the rolls; but after that election, even with a great deal of effort and organization, relatively few new registrants were added in the period that closed July 13.

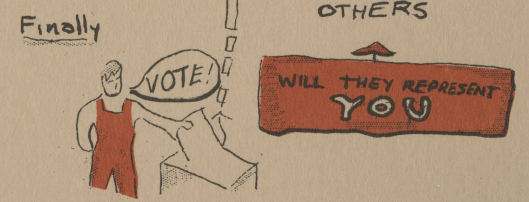


New Orleans Project

**YOUR VOTE
IS YOUR VOICE
AS A FREE MAN**



- TO CHOOSE
ELECTED
OFFICIALS**
- GOVERNOR
 - CONGRESS MAN
 - STATE SENATOR
 - ASSEMBLYMAN
 - YOUR COUNTY
LEGISLATOR
 - AND
OTHERS



Rochester Project

REGISTER TO VOTE

"**ՄԵՐՈՍԻՆԻ ԻՆԻՆ ԸՐԱՎ՝**

God, through his prophets, gave the people of ancient Israel, the message of choice. The prophets described it as something each man must choose. The CHOICE, as the prophets described it was set out. On one side there was righteousness on the other unrighteousness; on the other side there was death.

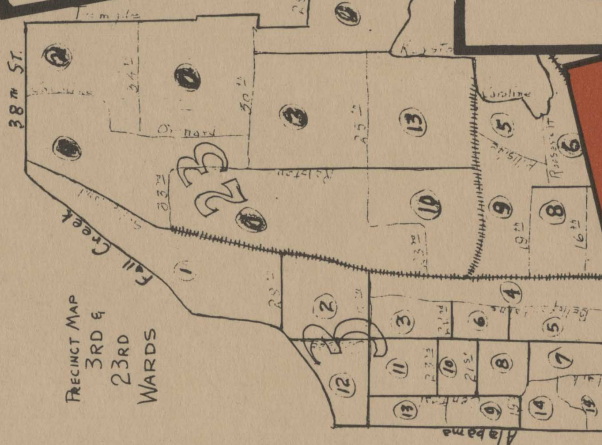
Some men choose life and righteousness. Other men choose unrighteousness and death.

But all men made a CHOICE - no man could avoid choosing, even though he wanted to "hesitate between".

We who acknowledge God's rule over the world and for our own lives here in Indianapolis is whether we choose life or death.

38th St.

Precinct Map
3RD &
23RD
WARDS



**DON'T FORGET!
TO REGISTER**

THIS IS NO BULL!
YOU CAN'T VOTE UNLESS YOU ARE REGISTERED!
YOU CAN REGISTER AT THESE LOCATIONS

WHO... YOU CAN REGISTER AT THESE PLACES AT THESE LOCATIONS TODAY



WHAW!
THIS COULD BE YOU AFTER ELECTION DAY UNLESS YOU REGISTER AND VOTE
VISIT YOUR NEAREST NEIGHBORHOOD REGISTRATION BRANCH



TIME TO REGISTER!
AT THESE LOCATIONS



Behind the **EIGHT BALL**
COME ON OUT AND REGISTER



3RD WARD

**REGISTER NOW!
VOTE IN NOVEMBER**

157th St.

BROADWAY CHRISTIAN CENTER
17th and Broadway
Indianapolis, Indiana

This will serve to introduce you to Mrs. Louise Bell, who is working on behalf of the Citizens' Committee for Voter Registration in Indianapolis.

Louise Bell
Mrs. F. WHITE
Associate Director
Phone RA 9-5151



ARE YOU ONE OF THE PUPPETS?

VOTE [X] and the CHOICE IS YOURS.

DON'T VOTE and the CHOICE IS THEIRS.

REGISTER OR YOU HAVE NO CHOICE!

IMPORTANT! Neighborhood Registration Date and Place:

August 27
B. F. Watson - 16 W. Washington
Kroger Shopping Center
Kroger Grocery - 16th & Park

August 28

Davington Shopping Center
Kroger Grocery - 16th & Park

August 29

Davington Shopping Center
Kroger Grocery - 16th & Park

4:30 pm - 8:30 pm
5:30 pm - 8:30 pm
6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
3:30 pm - 8:30 pm
4:30 pm - 8:30 pm
5:30 pm - 8:30 pm
6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
10:00 am - 6:00 pm
10:00 am - 6:00 pm

A Special Traveling Registration