



[Notes on the Camouflage Project]

1- 21 -43

NOTES ON THE CAMOUFLAGE PROJECT

A committee of the Council at the instigation of VK and TH was appointed to make a study of the C.P. preparatory to presenting it to the community as a community project. The committee took it as its responsibility to collect full data on the project and to present this to community leaders in all 3 units. Secondly it took the responsibility for obtaining community sanction of the project.

The former task was carried out carefully and with great vigor. the latter task was bungled. Put before the community to vote on it, the project was rejected or at least was not given community sanction as a result of a no vote.

The no vote left the council without any program. On the face of it it appeared that the community did not want to have the net project. Actually the condition on analysis seemed to be that the people were greatly confused on what they had been asked to express their opinion. The no vote seemed to have more to do with attitudes in regard to how the project was to be set up, who was to work in it, etc. Nevertheless the council had no means left at its disposal for determining further the attitude of the people to the project.

The fact that the project was to be instituted regardless of community feeling by the contractor placed the council in the position of having asked for a vote which was meaningless. Instead of having requested a vote on community regulation of the project they had requested one on general attitude towards the project.

The reaction of the council to the situation was not simple. There were two major kinds of reaction. (1) It was insisted on by some that the matter should be taken up again with the people, that they should be asked to reconsider and to take some steps to socialize the project since it was coming in anyway. (2) On the other hand, it was insisted on by others that the matter be allowed to take the course and to wait until trouble in the distribution of wages came up before any further action be taken by the council

The group which held to the first program insisted on assuming responsibility to the people for what they saw as an imminent and serious problem. The other group took the stand that their duty had been done in regard to the people and that their responsibility for the project had been fulfilled. The division in the council resulted in protracted discussion with no conclusive program being worked out.

A compromise proposal which met with the favor of both groups was that the responsibility to the people should be shouldered by the project director, that he make the appeal that a favorable attitude be registered. In this way the council should not be required to take further action and yet something would have been done to inform the people of the dangers of not establishing any community regulation of the project.

The issues as outlined above as they came up in council meetings gave rise to the following proposals: (1) Petitions for reconsideration be circulated (2) allow the contractor to come in and recruit unrestricted (3) the council authorize the camouflage etc to negotiate with the contractor (4) the council men go back to the blocks and present the results of the election and ask the people whether they favored the dividend plan (5)

the councilmen ask the block councils to ok the project (6) the block councils be asked to give the council committee powers to negotiate as they see fit with the contractor (7)

(EHS)