

Jackson Street Council Is Lesson in Race Cooperation



Upward of 70 organizations and five races of people are represented on the newly formed Jackson Street Community Council, which has begun a program of community betterment in the Jackson Street area. Shown discussing new projects which will be carried out by the council are: (Standing, left to right) Lew G. Kay and Toru Sakahara; (seated, left to right) Mrs. Lela Hall, Victorio A. Valesco and Robert Groves.

For the first time in the history of the Jackson Street area, minority groups—Chinese, Japanese, Filipino and Negro—have sat down with their white neighbors to work out a program of "community betterment."

It was about a year ago that interested agencies and community leaders organized to meet their problems of housing, insanitary conditions, minority-group problems, and rising juvenile delinquency.

The groups' efforts have paid off. The newly organized Jackson Street Community Council now is a member agency of the Community Chest.

E. L. Skeel, Chest president, in announcing the recent action of the board, said funds will be allocated to the group for the balance of this year, and the agency will be placed on the regular budget for next year.

Cooperation Praised

"It wasn't conceivable to some that the present council, within a mere 12 months, could have achieved the cooperation of some 60 community and church organizations, social agencies, clubs, lodges, schools and labor organizations in this area," said Mrs. Lela Hall, council chairman. Mrs. Hall is an employee at the Seattle Housing Authority.

"In this transient area the people have many difficult problems, both sociological and otherwise," Mrs. Hall added, "and they are making a sincere effort to help themselves. They aren't looking to the outside to come in and do it for them."

Among the projects conducted so far was a clean-up drive, publicized in several languages. Workers knocked on doors in the residential districts and asked cooperation. They obtained the aid of the City Health Department in a rodent-eradication project, and the Fire Department in fire-hazard inspections.

Truckloads of trash were hauled to the city dump. Owners began renovating and remodeling old buildings, and a drive got under way to start beautification of the area. University students helped.

Health Week was held. The Anti-Tuberculosis League's X-ray unit

was called in and 879 persons responded. Of that number, 309 were white; 279 Negro, 171 Chinese, 53 Japanese and 49 Filipino, which relates closely to the ratio of race population in the area.

The whole thing began with a search for recreational activities "to keep the children off the streets." University of Washington sociology students were asked to help survey needs. They cooperated, and worked right on through the clean-up campaign.

"At the end of our second meeting we found the need was far deeper than just recreational activities," said Mrs. Charles F. Clise, chairman of the recreational division of the Council of Social Agencies.

"We are attempting to carry out in our small community some of the principles the war was fought to accomplish," said Lew G. Kay, representative of the Chinese population and the Mayor's Civic Unity Committee. "One of those principles is to live together in peace, regardless of race or creed."

Victorio A. Valesco, representative of the Cannery Workers' Union and last year's president of the local Filipino colony, said the welfare of the Jackson Street area is of No. 1 importance to him, because most Seattle Filipinos live in that area. Valesco is editor of the colony's newspaper, The Filipino Forum.

Japanese-American Welfare

Toru Sakahara, young Japanese-American attorney who was admitted to the bar in Washington State last week, said he was working with the committee because of a personal interest of his people here.

"The war experience of the Japanese-American children resulted in making them shy and reticent," Sakahara said, "so we began to organize a recreation program on a rather segregated basis, but now the dances, ball games and other activities always draw a number of Chinese-Americans, Negro youngsters and whites. We feel we are setting a pattern in this neighborhood."

Robert Groves, council vice chairman, who is a delegate from the Negro Elks Club, No. 109, is one of the council's most ardent boosters.

"Just Getting Started"

"We are just getting started," said Groves. "The fact much of the population is transient and that about 75 per cent are newcomers means that the council's job will be constant, and it is very necessary."

The by-laws of the council were drawn up and approved by representatives of 70 organizations and individuals. The Community Chest funds will be used to hire a full-time secretary and cover other expenses, officials said.

Driver Uses Head To Save His Hide

PUEBLO, Colo., July 27.—(AP)—

J. H. Cassidy avoided electrocution by sitting motionless in his car—hardly twitching a muscle—for eight minutes after a trolley wire snapped and fell on his automobile.

Cassidy had the presence of mind not to touch any metal part of the car until repair crews removed the