

" AN ASSESSMENT OF THE COMMUNITY NEEDS OF DANBURY, CT  
+ THE POTENTIAL ROLE OF DANBURY STATE COLLEGE IN  
COMMUNITY SERVICE "

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## INTRODUCTION

In June, 1966, Danbury State College asked the Bureau of Applied Social Research of Columbia University to conduct a study of the Danbury area. The purpose of this study was to identify community problems which might effectively be made the object of community service programs. The college received a special grant from the Commission on Cooperation with Federal Authorities of the State of Connecticut to support this study. Since funds were originally allocated through Title I of the Higher Education Act, it was expected that the findings of the study would have special relevance for programs of adult and continuing education, and that these findings could be used as guidelines for any future funding of the college under the provisions of Title I.

### Methodology of the Survey

Because the objective of the survey was to get a representative picture of informed opinion about the problems and needs of the Danbury area from those who were in the best position to know, our survey strategy departed from the familiar procedure of gathering a carefully selected random sample of respondents and asking each highly structured and identical questions. Instead, we set out to interview selected leaders of identifiable groups in the community. Leaders from a variety of industries, business, education (parochial and public), local and

state government, clergy, labor, utilities and public service, voluntary associations, retail establishments, medicine, law, and ethnic groups were among those included. After a preliminary list of forty respondents was drawn with the aid of college personnel, we employed a snowball sampling procedure whereby respondents were asked to name others who shared or differed with their views, or were otherwise in a position to be of help to us. These individuals named were then asked to name others. Eventually we found that most of those named had already been interviewed.

Using a similar procedure, a special sub-sample of respondents was drawn from the Negro community of Danbury by Mr. Robert Hill, a Bureau staff member and a doctoral candidate in sociology at Columbia. This special sample was drawn because it was known before the study was undertaken that there was increasing concern about problems associated with the Negroes of Danbury, and we wanted to make sure that Negroes themselves had a sufficient voice in identifying and locating these problems.

( A total of 180 interviews were conducted during the months of July, August and September, 1966. These interviews varied considerably in length but averaged slightly more than one hour. Content also varied because one objective was to get information on particular areas of knowledge and concern from each respondent. Thus many of those interviewed could more accurately be described as "informants" rather than respondents. Nevertheless, we did follow the same general structure in most interviews. We started by asking what each respondent

thought were the most important problems and needs of Danbury. We then asked about whatever special area of knowledge the respondent possessed. Finally we asked about the college itself, what the respondent thought about it, and how it might best help the community. Appointments for the initial interviews were made by Dr. Carl Pettersch of the college. All interviews were conducted on a face to face basis by the author except for those in the sub-study of the Negro community by Mr. Hill.

In addition to gathering data from interviews, a number of documents were used in preparing this report. These include various United States Census reports; "Danbury State College Annual Report," 1966; Danbury, Community Monograph Series compiled by the Danbury Chamber of Commerce, March, 1966; Town of Danbury Plan of Development, prepared by the Danbury Town Planning Commission, July, 1960; several publications and pamphlets of the State Health Department and the Danbury NAACP; a preliminary draft of an historical record of the Danbury Community Action Committee, by Don Schwartz; and several publications prepared for the Danbury Board of Education, especially Educated Manpower: Hope of the Present: Promise of the Future!, VOTECS, April, 1965; "A Project to Demonstrate the Development of Educational Programs through Federal Legislation in a Selected Connecticut City," January 8, 1965; and Regional Educational Services Concept through United Effort, September 1, 1966. We are especially indebted to the Danbury News-Times for allowing us to borrow their microfilm of the paper for the years 1960-1966.

### Organization and Rationale of the Report

The report that follows is divided into two main parts, The City and The College. We begin with the city even though our orientation is regional, because it is the peculiar character of Danbury that dominates the region. We are convinced that Danbury and its problems can be properly understood only if the observer has some knowledge of its unique history. After presenting a necessarily oversimplified and brief history of Danbury, we turn to the problems of the community that were identified by respondents. These are discussed under five general headings (1. Poverty, the Negro, and Human Relations, 2. Planning and Growth, 3. Cultural and Intellectual Leadership, 4. Government and Politics, and 5. Educational and Research Facilities) which are duplicated in succeeding parts of the report. These five problem areas are presented in the order of frequency and importance with which they were mentioned by respondents. However, no precise percentages of respondents giving specific answers are reported since these would be inappropriate and possibly misleading given the sample design. Some independent documentation is also presented in this section, but this is minimal since available statistics on Danbury are extremely limited, and most of those available have already been presented in more than one of the reports to which we have referred. Rather than repeat this limited information in detail, we try to summarize it in a manner that will not interfere with the general narrative.

The next section of the report, Existing Facilities for Meeting Community Needs, is a description of what we found to be already

happening in Danbury in relation to each of the five major problem areas. Here our information may sometimes be incomplete since gathering all the relevant materials and data could easily have developed into another study. Nevertheless, we think it is essential that the college have a general knowledge of how needs are currently being met in order to avoid possible duplication of effort and to coordinate its own activities with other agencies.

Part Two begins with the findings regarding the image held of the college by people in the community. We asked these questions because we think it necessary for the college to have a sense of its present place in the minds of the local citizenry before it attempts to launch any ambitious new programs.

Next we turn to recommendations. As originally planned, the study was limited to reporting the perceived problems and needs of the Danbury area. However, after the study was underway, representatives of the college asked whether it would be possible for us to make specific recommendations on the basis of our findings. In keeping with this request, the last section of the report starts with a discussion of the general problem which the college faces in attempting any sizeable community oriented program. Then we recommend three changes which we think the college should make in order to become a more effective force in the region. Finally we return to the five general problem areas and make specific recommendations where they seem appropriate to us.

PART ONE:

T H E C I T Y



## I

## A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DANBURY

A. The Old Danbury and the Rise and Fall of Hatting

The city of Danbury is located in Fairfield County in the southwestern section of Connecticut. It was incorporated as a town in 1687, but it grew slowly until the latter part of the 19th century when it became internationally famous as the hat manufacturing center of the world. As the hat industry developed, Danbury enjoyed relative prosperity, and the population rose from 11,666 in 1880 to 23,502 in 1910. However, in spite of the formation of the Danbury Industrial Corporation in 1917, which was ostensibly established to promote a diversification of industry in the area, Danbury remained essentially a one industry town until World War II, and its population had only reached 30,337 in 1950. Thus both the relative and absolute growth of the population were larger for the thirty years preceding 1910 than for the forty years following 1910. Population growth and the social development of the area were tied directly to the fortunes of hat manufacturing, and the hatting industry had leveled off following 1910.

During the long years when hatting was the only significant manufacturing in Danbury, the community presented a rather conservative and sometimes feudalistic image. Almost since it was originally settled, the community was divided into both a city and a town. The central city contained just 4.4 square miles of land in which were

found much of the manufacturing, the main business district, and the homes of most of the varied ethnic groups who worked in the hat shops. The surrounding town had approximately 42 square miles of land and a smaller population including most of the old Yankee stock and a considerable number of farmers. The town also included the city which meant that city property owners had to pay a double tax. Efforts were made toward consolidation of Town and City from time to time, but each of these failed. As a result, two civic administrations coexisted side by side duplicating one another's functions and arguing over jurisdiction in the old City Hall Building on Main Street. Generally, politics followed the common pattern found in most northern states, with Democrats in control of the city, and Republicans in control in the surrounding town. The division between City and Town combined with the patchwork quilt of local ethnic groups into a fertile context for the development of a system of political spoils and patronage which eventually permeated almost all branches of civic responsibility.

Hatting drew an unusual variety of ethnic groups to Danbury. When it is compared with other communities of similar size and general location, it is seen to contain sizeable groups of people from the United Kingdom, Ireland, Germany, Poland, and Italy; the same nationality groups are found in most small New England cities. But it also contains sizeable groups of Portuguese, Lebanese, and Syrians. (These latter two are listed in the 1960 census as "Asians") Generally speaking, there were fairly distinct migrations of each of these groups into the community, and each was found in considerable numbers as far

back as the 1930's. These groups have given Danbury an unusual variety of national cultures, but the community has never developed a cosmopolitan flavor largely because of the humble origins and occupational characteristics of these groups.

When hatting became less important during World War II, other industries were successful in moving into the area for the first time in over fifty years. The hatting industry experienced a collapse following the war, and today there remains only one small hat shop operating in nearby Bethel. Yet, in spite of the fact that manufacturing in the area changed rapidly from exclusively hatting to virtually no hatting, there has never been a prolonged period of widespread unemployment in the area. Even during the depression, Danbury continued to manufacture hats; and while many hatters were left without jobs during the years when the hat shops were closing (particularly in 1951), new industries were constantly moving into the area. Average Annual Unemployment was usually above the national average for the years following World War II, but there was never a complete collapse of the local economy, and out-migration appears to have been minimal. In recent years Danbury has experienced a new spurt of growth. Its population rose to 39,382 in 1960, and it was estimated to be 46,100 in December, 1965, a 50% growth since 1950.

B. The New Danbury

A March, 1966, report by the Danbury Chamber of Commerce listed 150 local firms under 17 different general headings. Included

were numerous engineering, research, chemical, and electronics firms.

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One of the most obvious changes brought about by the change of the industrial base of Danbury is the growth in the Negro population. Negroes have lived in Danbury since before the Revolutionary War, but there were still only 218 listed in the 1930 Census, and just 243 in 1940. The number rose to 496 in 1950, to 1,359 in 1960, and was estimated at 3,000 in 1965. This represents a recent population increase which easily exceeds that of the region as a whole and one that is not approached by any other ethnic group. In addition, while every other ethnic group has come to Danbury to work in hatting, the Negroes are unique in having been attracted as relatively unskilled workers for the new industries.

The arrival of large numbers of Negroes has created many serious problems for Danbury. Some efforts have been made to cope with these, but the growth has tended to exceed the capacity of the community to adapt without making radical changes. Furthermore, while there has always been some friction between various ethnic and nationality groups in Danbury, and while some, particularly the Portuguese, Lebanese, and Syrians, continue to exhibit a strong sense of separate identity as subcommunities, only the Negro has been openly identified with serious and continuing community problems in recent years. Indeed, there were even near riots in 1965 which received extensive press coverage.

As the new industries have moved into Danbury, they have required highly educated administrators, engineers, accountants and

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other specialists for top level positions. Very few such college-  
trained workers are indigenous to Danbury, and they have had to be  
imported for the most part. In addition, many of the locally owned  
retail stores have been replaced in recent years by chain stores, and  
the local banks have become branches of larger establishments with  
headquarters in other communities. The executives and professionals  
who come to work in Danbury often choose to live in Ridgefield, New  
Milford, Wilton, or Redding rather than in Danbury which is predomi-  
nantly a working-class community. As a result, some of the benefits  
which the community might gain from a growing upper-middle-class have  
not been forthcoming. In effect, industry and commerce in Danbury  
are now run by an absentee management class. Nevertheless, the new  
educated groups have had a definite impact on the community. They  
have brought new ideas, a fresh perspective, a different way of living,  
and new approaches to problems with them, and it is the highly  
educated recent arrivals who have become the new power elite of  
Danbury.

Two events of the past five years are particularly illustra-  
tive of the rapid changes which Danbury has undergone and the shift in  
the local power structure. The first event was the passing of a nine  
million dollar school bond issue in 1962. Danbury's school system had  
been unable to keep pace with the growing population of the 1950's,  
and a major building program was required to fill the accumulated needs.  
Local resistance to any new building program and the taxes which would  
result had been particularly strong during the late 1950's, and the

Chamber of Commerce even discontinued its Education Committee during this period as a result of internal disagreements. Eventually a Committee of One Thousand was formed by a group headed largely by members of the new executive class of Danbury. This group was able to join with progressively minded older residents to persuade many of the more conservative leaders of Danbury to cease or reduce their previous resistance to the school program. The bond issue was passed largely because of these unusual efforts. During the past five years Danbury has constructed a new high school, three new elementary schools and a junior high school. Capital budget planning indicates additional construction over the next five years of three new elementary schools and a junior high school.

2) The second recent event that signaled the passing of the old power structure from making major decisions was the vote for Consolidation of City and Town in 1963. As was true with the school bond vote, increased taxes were bound to result from consolidation, and many citizens had to be persuaded to vote against the interest of their pocketbooks. The consolidation campaign was unusually bitter, and it revived the issues of many years of feuding between City and Town and threatened the political spoils of the dual system. In the end, consolidation won by a disputed margin of 87 votes. Again, it was largely the efforts of the new executive class of Danbury joining with coalitions of older residents which won the election. The will to consolidate had existed among enlightened citizens for many years, but popular support was never sufficient until the new executives arrived.

Thus Danbury has a new power structure today which is dependent in large part on the educated groups which have recently come to work in the area. However, this new power structure does not run the community on a regular daily basis, it merely rallies for important causes, such as school bond issues and consolidation. It has left the daily operation of the community largely in the hands of the older residents who have a tendency to try to run it in the same old ways.

The Danbury of today is a peculiar mixture of the old and the new. It is old buildings and hatting factories, inconvenient streets, settled citizens from varied origins, conservative ways, and the famous Danbury State Fair combined with absentee college-educated management, diversified industry, new schools, the war on poverty, suburban living, and progressive reform. It is this Danbury, the old and the new combined, the New England one-industry factory town given a new lease on life, that we visited during the summer of 1966.

## II

## COMMUNITY PROBLEMS PERCEIVED BY THE CITIZENS OF DANBURY

Because respondents were encouraged to talk freely about whatever they considered to be important problems and needs of the community, the answers we received appeared at first to vary considerably. In a few cases these seemed to reflect a vested interest, and in others the point of view was obviously colored by the position of the respondent in the community. However, in all cases, we found that concern for the community was high, and there was a conspicuous desire to see Danbury improved. But in spite of the freedom given to respondents to talk freely about whatever was thought to be most important, content analysis of the interviews revealed a remarkable consensus. We have grouped the responses into five general problem areas which, although not always mutually exclusive, seem to best represent the problems identified and discussed. Every respondent mentioned problems which could be coded as belonging in at least two of these major categories, and several individuals mentioned something in four of the five categories.

A. Poverty, the Negro, and Human Relations



## II

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A. Poverty, the Negro, and Human Relations

Virtually all respondents spoke about the poor, the growing Negro population of Danbury, or some aspect of human relations as being a serious problem in Danbury. These were not the first problems

mentioned by some, particularly a few of the older, more conservative members of the community; but these are problems of such magnitude and timeliness that they cannot be ignored or denied even by those who have little sympathy for the poor or different. No other problem area received such unanimous recognition. But poverty takes many forms, and we have found it useful to organize the discussion of this general problem under three sub-headings which appear to best represent the goals implicit in the statements made by respondents.

1. Bettering the Living Conditions of the Poor

Uppermost in the minds of the Negroes of Danbury is the need for better housing. Virtually all the Negro respondents and a large majority of the whites cited this problem. The housing situation in Danbury is different from most cities with a rising Negro population in that there is no real "black belt." Negroes are scattered in clusters throughout a large portion of the city, as one respondent said, "like salt and pepper." But while a large number of homes in predominantly Negro sections (especially those of which Negroes are the owners) are quite fashionable and well kept, the majority of homes (particularly where Negroes are tenants) are in states of disrepair similar to those found in the large urban ghettos.

The following are some especially revealing comments made by respondents about the housing situation in Danbury:

An outsider looking at the way Negroes are spread throughout Danbury would think that this city believed in integration. Yet, we are not scattered because the "powers-that-be" in the white community are for integration, but because Negroes had to be

relocated as a result of the damage done to the Negro ghetto by the flood around 1956. And where did most of the Negroes who were relocated end up? In predominantly Negro sections with sub-standard housing! So we are really segregated within a so-called integrated setting which is just a front.

Since there is no rent control here, landlords get away with charging very high rents without providing essential services. In some cases families have to pay up to \$135 a month for a three room apartment and have to use their kitchen stove to heat the place. In other cases, landlords don't provide any or adequate garbage cans, and then blame the tenants because garbage is spread about the yard. These landlords are able to violate housing codes without fear of punishment from the city housing authorities.

It is true that some Negroes do not maintain their apartments like they should. But it is also true that some whites are sloppy housekeepers. Yet we do not condemn all whites as being slobes for the actions of a few. The fact of the matter is that they do not even want respectable Negroes living near them. Look what happened when the Negro couple from Norwalk tried to purchase a home in the white section. After it was carried to court the development firm (East Lake Estates) gave in. A sloppy white person would have had no trouble buying that home. But a Negro, no matter how neat and respectable, has great difficulty finding a decent place to live in Danbury. Even Marian Anderson, who now lives in Mill Plains (in Danbury), was refused housing in the all-white Ridgefield section because of her color.

The need for better housing was also one of the major points covered in the Connecticut Civil Rights Commission Report on Danbury made by David Sherwood during the summer of 1966. The discriminatory practices behind the lack of adequate housing received special attention in his report, and thirty-three specific streets in Danbury were named as the sites of apartments where Negroes complained of having been rejected as tenants because of their color.

In addition to housing, many of our respondents mentioned related living conditions of the poor as needing attention. Adult literacy and basic education were seen by several as lying behind many

of these problems, and available statistics tend to support this assertion. According to the 1960 Census, Danbury fell into the upper quartile of cities with families with incomes of less than \$3,000 per year, and it had the highest percentage of adults over twenty-five who had not completed high school of any city in Connecticut. In addition, estimates made by the Connecticut State Board of Education (based on 1960 Census population characteristics applied to 1965 estimated population) were that 4,300 adults in Danbury were in need of elementary level education. Given the fact that the Negro working-class population of Danbury has increased much more rapidly since 1960 than the population of the city as a whole, these estimates by the State Department are probably conservative. Furthermore, if the movement of poorly educated Negroes into Danbury continues at anything near the rate it has maintained during the past decade, it follows that the problem of adult basic education and each of the other problems of the poor will increase accordingly if no special action is taken.

Other problems of living as poor people which were mentioned by various respondents are: consumer education, health care and education, family counseling, and the need to develop indigenous leadership. It is more difficult to document the need for these special services than for those previously discussed because the public records bearing on them are fragmentary and sometimes completely non-existent. Yet each of these problems is known to thrive under the living conditions of the poor and can be regarded as almost

axiomatic when there is bad housing, discrimination, and low education. Court records for the area make it difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain the extent to which the poor of Danbury are involved in litigations as a result of spending or incurring debts beyond their capacity to pay. But judging from the statements made by our respondents, the major findings of Caplovitz's study, The Poor Pay More, would apply to Danbury as well as to New York City.

Public records for health care and family counseling are also rather limited at the present time, but this is a situation which should improve in the near future. However, there is no reason to believe that Danbury is any different from other urban areas in that its problems of health and the tenuousness of family living are also much more acute among the poor and especially among the poor who are also Negroes. Curiously, it was not the poor and the Negroes who mentioned these as problems in interviews. It was the middle-class whites who dealt with the poor who were most concerned about health and family counseling. It would seem that the poor themselves regard health and family counseling as less immediate problems, and even luxuries, compared with the problem of housing.

The problem of developing indigenous leadership from among the poor was also mentioned as a problem more often by middle-class whites than by the poor or the Negroes. Virtually all of the public leadership of the Negro community of Danbury has come either from the older settled residents of the area who have attained middle-class status or from among the well-educated recent arrivals from other northern

communities. The former group is regarded by many of the latter as "Uncle Tomish" and socially conservative, and the latter group has been the spearhead of the local NAACP and of an aggressive policy of social reform. But the bulk of the new population of recent arrivals from the North Carolina area has not as yet produced a conspicuous leadership group from among its ranks, and this newly arrived group continues to have things done "for it" or "to it" for the most part. One of the frequent statements we heard from respondents was, "I wonder how much those few (leaders) really represent the Negro community." This was often little more than a thinly disguised expression of conservatism on the part of a white citizen, but it sometimes was echoed by those who are in sympathy with radical reform.

## 2. Reducing the Ranks of the Poor

The proportion of blue collar workers in Danbury has long been one of the highest for any community in the State of Connecticut, and as we stated in the introduction, Danbury is what might be regarded as a working-class community. However, the proportions of unskilled jobs in the labor market have been decreasing steadily everywhere in the United States during the past few decades, and it is the unskilled who are most likely to be unemployed at any given time.

A study of the vocational education needs of the Danbury area made in 1965 for the Danbury Board of Education and the Connecticut State Board of Education (Educated Manpower: Hope of the Present: Promise of the Future), pointed out that it was the unskilled, both

men and women, who constituted more than half the unemployed; and projections for the future were that the number of unskilled jobs in the area would decrease in the next five years. It is, of course, the poor who constitute the largest group of unskilled workers in Danbury, and they are the poor largely because they are unskilled. We were told by every manufacturer interviewed that his greatest need was for skilled workers, but the poor are not equipped to fill the available jobs. From the standpoint of the industrialists and the educators we spoke with, the need was to educate the poor so they could fill the skilled jobs that are available. But these same people complained that the poor did not seek training when it was offered, and that the poor did not seem to want to get ahead. It was pointed out to us that only nine Negroes had graduated from Danbury High School in June of 1966 out of a class of approximately 500, and that only two of these nine were boys. The dropout rate among the poor, and especially among the Negroes, has been alarming and there seemed to be genuine concern about this among all categories of respondents.

Dropout rates which are reliable or have much meaning are difficult to come by; but we came up with the following statistics as a result of our discussions.

Estimates of Dropout Rate at Danbury High School  
for Class of 1966

	<u>White</u>	<u>Negro</u>
<u>Number of Freshmen 1962</u>	666	30
Number of graduates 1966	<u>-500</u>	<u>- 9</u>
Number of Dropouts:	166	21

White Dropout Rate  $166/666 = 25\%$       Negro Dropout Rate  $21/30 = 70\%$

It should be stressed that these figures are only estimates rather than exact, but whatever inaccuracies they contain could hardly begin to account for the differences in dropout rate for the two groups. At present, it is estimated that there are about 75 Negro Freshmen at Danbury High School. If the Negro dropout rate remained the same as our estimates, this would mean that less than 20 Negroes would graduate in 1970. (This, of course, is what the Board of Education is trying to prevent through its many educational programs which are discussed later.)

Talking with the Negroes, one gets the impression that although motivation and job training are serious problems among the poor of Danbury, they would not be nearly as serious if there were more reason to hope that education and training would pay off and that jobs would actually be made available. Particularly noticeable is the lack of employment of Negroes in white collar jobs in Danbury, and there were even some complaints of craft unions rejecting qualified Negroes. As one respondent described it:

One of the city's most distressing features is its refusal to give the Negro an effective voice in policy-making decisions directly affecting the Negro community. The administrative staff of the public school system, the courts, the City Planning boards, and City Hall are all segregated, lily-white institutions. We couldn't even get a highly qualified Negro secretary hired at City Hall.

Thus while the white leadership of the community points to the need for Negroes to become trained and motivated for "self improvement," the Negroes, while acknowledging a high dropout rate in the local high school, claim they are discriminated against when they do seek advancement.



### 3. Learning to Live Together

Perhaps the best summary of the sentiments of many of our respondents is contained in the following statement made by one of Danbury's most popular citizens:

What this community needs is a good course in human relations . . . whatever that means!

Strongly related to the problems of the poor already discussed is the need for the members of different ethnic and social groups in Danbury to learn to live with one another in harmony. Behind the lack of housing and jobs for Negroes are many deep-seeded fears, prejudices and discriminatory practices. Any community with a large working class of varied ethnic composition can expect that there will be tensions and misunderstandings between these groups from time to time, but the Negroes of Danbury have complained of poor relations with public officials as well, including police, teachers, housing officials, and welfare workers. Often city officials do not realize that the smallest discourtesy shown by any representatives can result in a major crisis. For example, after recent nights of rioting in Benton Harbor, Michigan, the city officials declared that policemen would no longer refer to adult Negro men and women as "boys" and "girls." Ever since the near riots among teenagers in 1965, Danbury has been regarded by many as a potential trouble spot, and yet racial incidents involving public officials persist. Complaints of discriminatory treatment by police in Danbury have received publicity in the local newspaper during the past several months, and there was even one incident involving a representative of the State Civil Rights Commission!

Several respondents mentioned "hanging around" the bar owned by one of the older Negro residents, or the "situation on Elm Street" as a particularly sensitive problem, but Negroes complain that they are not made to feel welcome anywhere else in the downtown area.

We were somewhat surprised to encounter open expression of prejudice against Negroes on the part of some of the leading white citizens interviewed. We expected that some would hold such opinions, but we did not expect that they would volunteer them to a sociologist without at least having been asked. Sometimes prejudice was thinly disguised by common stereotypes, but three different individuals in positions of public responsibility made statements supporting one or another discriminatory practice during interviews. Under the circumstances, it does not seem surprising to us that so many people mentioned the need for human relations training in Danbury. Fortunately, these were exceptional cases. The vast majority of respondents were keenly aware of the need for greater understanding of the problems of the poor, and many were taking action in recognition of this need.

#### B. Planning and Growth

The problem of intelligently coping with planning and growth during the coming years is the area that was mentioned second most frequently by our respondents. Old-time residents are already conscious of the fact that former ways of life are a thing of the past, but there emerged from our interviews no clear sense of what the future had in store. The majority of respondents seemed aware of the fact that the

Danbury area is destined to absorb some of the expansion of the New York City metropolitan area in the next few years, but this expansion promises different things to different people. Most referred to the recent problems encountered in trying to deal with a series of local crisis situations. These included such matters as zoning and land usage, urban renewal and redevelopment, flood control, a critical water shortage, and inadequate public health facilities. None of these matters seemed to be under control at the time of our investigation and there was considerable frustration evident on the part of many citizens who were trying to provide leadership.

Some citizens seemed to be especially interested in attracting new industries to the area in order to keep the local economy healthy and taxes at a reasonable level. However, aside from the relatively low wages and taxes and the presence of Lake Candlewood for recreation, many local citizens feel that there is little to attract industry at the present time.

Others expressed the fear that if present trends continue, Danbury will go the way of many other cities which have poor people living in old storefronts in the central area and wealthy residents living in outlying districts using new shopping centers. Fairfield County, in which Danbury is located, is the fastest growing in the state. Much of the area south of Danbury is already densely settled or zoned for the wealthy. The recently completed highways and planned improvements of highways leading into Danbury cannot help but facilitate the continued arrival of large numbers of new residents during

the next few years. Without careful planning, many fear that the present problems of Danbury may seem small compared with those of the near future.

### C. Cultural and Intellectual Leadership

The third most frequently mentioned problem, closely connected with the sense of impending growth for the Danbury area, is a concern about the higher educational facilities of the region. Many industrialists are frank in admitting that a well-known college in the community would help them attract the highly educated technicians and professionals who sometimes find Danbury an undesirable place to move with their families. This was expressed partly as a matter of the need to have a local higher educational facility for the children of the educated. But more often the desire for an expanded educational facility was put in terms of the need for quality "subsidized education for the common people of Danbury," and the need for a center to provide cultural and intellectual leadership for the area.

As the population of Danbury and the surrounding communities has increased and changed its social composition, many potential opportunities for excellence in cultural and intellectual activities present themselves which were not available in the past. These were mentioned in the interviews in two general forms.

### 1. The Area Culture Center Concept

The first type of cultural and intellectual leadership for which the citizens of Danbury have expressed a need is quite general in character; and while a great many respondents volunteered this need, some had difficulty specifying exactly what they meant. As one put it:

What Danbury needs is a place where people can go when they want good music, art, literature, or the stimulation of the mind. We really have no such place now. It is ironic that many of the world's finest musicians, artists, writers, and intellectuals live within just a few miles of Danbury; but while they buy their groceries and other supplies here, they have nothing else to do with the community.

Another respondent added:

If Danbury ever expects to change from an industrial or working man's town to something more stimulating or diversified, it will have to have intellectual leadership. We don't have that leadership now, but there are certainly people here capable of providing it. This is just a matter of organization and drive.

A third respondent related this need to the problem of motivating and stimulating the poor:

I do think there is something to the assertion that the values held by people have a great deal to do with the kinds of lives they end up living and the goals they seek. This is obvious in the case of the Jews who have been able to produce so many highly creative and productive intellectuals from a population which was not favored economically. The trouble is, around here none of the poorer groups has a tradition of seeking intellectual goals. Without such a tradition, I guess they have to be exposed to it and made to see its value by the larger community. We haven't been doing a very good job of that. If there were a place where the poor could be exposed to quality and given the opportunity to discover its worth, that would be a help. I'm not sure how this can best be done, but we need to find out before it's too late.

The many respondents who spoke of the need for a cultural and intellectual center seemed to be partly concerned with the symbolic

role that it could play. They suggested that such a center could become the source of great community pride, and that it could provide an opportunity for citizens from diverse backgrounds to participate together in a variety of activities. It was continually pointed out that many people living in the area turned to New York for culture when a broad base of support could now be found for such activities among local residents. Concerts, art exhibits, and lectures have all had some success in Danbury during recent years, but it was felt that these must have a more solid institutional base under them if they are to become truly a part of the community life.

## 2. The Public Forum Concept

Another way in which the need for intellectual leadership was mentioned was not in terms of the desire for culture for its own sake, but in terms of intellectual leadership as a necessary part of a democratic community. Many respondents feel that Danbury will be unable to deal adequately with the many problems which now confront it unless the public becomes better educated to the realities and opportunities of contemporary political and social life. It is the opinion of these respondents that no existing public agency is presently capable of doing this job. As one put it:

It was not so long ago that we had general town meetings here in Danbury. It was impossible to run a modern community that way, but maybe that wasn't what town meetings were really good for anyway. I have always believed in the value of getting together with those who differ from me and exchanging views and information. There are a great many differences in this community that go back a number of years, but these differences never seem to get properly aired. Everything is so damn political in this down that ideas

never get a chance to be judged on their own merit. We need a place where we can hear others' ideas and offer our own without having to worry about politics all the time.

Another respondent said:

Somehow we have got to educate the citizenry about the complicated world in which they are living. As the population grows here and new industries come in, many important decisions are made which the average citizen either has not heard about or does not understand. In order for democracy to operate properly there must be an informed public, but we don't have one right now. I'm not sure how one would get some of the local people to participate in community discussions, but we've got to try.

A third was concerned about the tendency to conform or to watch from the sidelines.

You know, we don't have many beatniks or any draft card burners around here, and I sometimes wish we did. People only get away from their television sets long enough to go to work and back home again. Participation in community affairs is limited to just a small group, and there is never any open debate over important issues.

It appears to us from what these respondents and others like them said that a considerable amount of faith in the democratic process was being expressed. While we had asked for "problems," answers in this category seemed to suggest a "solution" to a number of closely related community problems. The public forum was mentioned in connection with human relations training, area planning and growth, and the problem we are about to discuss, government and politics. Again, when pressed, most respondents were unable to explain just how they felt such a forum would operate, and some admitted that it might be very difficult to get widely based participation in any such venture. In fact, one went so far as to suggest that in order to succeed, such a forum would have to be "entertaining" and capable of openly competing

with TV and the movies. Nevertheless, it seems a good sign to us that in this day of widespread complaints about mass communications and public apathy, the citizens of Danbury are asking for the opportunity to talk with one another about community problems in order to reach solutions.

#### D. Government and Politics

The area of politics was mentioned specifically as a community problem by a slight majority of respondents, which makes it the fourth-ranking problem according to our tally. As we suggested in the introduction, Danbury is a very political community. By that we do not mean to infer that the average citizen participates in politics more than is true in other communities. Indeed, just the opposite may be the case. Rather we mean that issues of public welfare are often treated as political matters, that public service positions which are largely determined by civil service ratings in other communities have sometimes been regarded as political spoils, and that there is a great deal of public controversy about the daily operation of government in Danbury.

Many of the political and governmental problems of the community stem directly from the recent consolidation and from the long standing feuds between City and Town which preceded it. Danbury is now governed by a Mayor and a common Council composed of 21 members, three from each of seven different voting districts. Many respondents complained that this structure was an awkward one and that the Council



was far too large for such a small community. However, changing this structure would require further Charter revision and would be difficult to accomplish without careful planning and a well organized campaign.

When the City and Town were separate, many essential services including police and fire protection, water and sewage, and street building and maintenance were under separate jurisdictions. Since consolidation, these services have been under single management, but none is generally regarded as adequate. Many different respondents reported that appointments and promotions in both the police and fire departments had been made on a political basis for many years, and a merit system was first adopted in late 1965. Sewage, street cleaning, and snow removing facilities have been under public attack recently as well. However, the most striking recent example of the inadequacies of the local governmental structure and of the difficulties caused by playing politics with the public interest is the handling of the water supply crisis.

The widespread drought in the Northeastern States has been a matter of national concern during the past several years. Danbury suffered from a severe flood in 1955, it is situated within ten miles of the seriously affected New York City reservoir system, and unpopular increases in rates for water and sewage were some of the immediate outgrowths of the recent consolidation. Furthermore, an abundant water supply was one of the conditions which made it possible for the hatting industry, which was estimated to use three million gallons of water

per day, to locate and remain in Danbury. Thus the city has had good reason to be conscious of its water supply. Warnings of local shortages and of an impending crisis were made by many private citizens and city officials during the previous few years, but no action was taken until the situation was beyond control. It was not until the summer of 1966 that the Mayor declared a local water emergency and placed restrictions on the use of water. By this time it was clear that there was not enough water to last the year even with less than normal usage. Business concerns were ordered to cease using their air conditioners within just three weeks unless water recirculators were installed, and this time period had to be extended. A frantic search for other sources of water was already underway, but soon after the emergency was declared, one of the Democratic Councilmen hired a private concern to drill on a promising site without going through the formality of clearing with the Republican mayor. Soon charges and counter charges were being printed in the local paper, and even the problem of providing the water for a public wading pool became a political question. To the outsider, the makeshift and temporary arrangements for getting more water, and the constant exchanges of political accusations were sometimes difficult to take seriously. But not one of the local citizens we interviewed was amused.

A common complaint about the political situation in Danbury is that the responsible citizens rarely run for local public office. Most respondents had nothing but praise for the men who represent them in Hartford, and a majority had only criticism for the local politicians

and officeholders. We were told that the everyday operation of politics was still in the hands of the old-time residents, and that the political pie was usually cut in such a way that each of several different ethnic groups in the community received its share. It was not possible for us to fully document such claims as these during the brief time allotted for the study, and thus we report them only in the most general way without quoting many specific accusations. Nevertheless, it is clear that there is a widespread sense of moral indignation about the political situation in Danbury. It is also clear that the present governmental structure is perceived as combining with the political situation in such a manner that intelligent solutions for important community problems are being prevented. Thus, if it were not for the peculiar structure of government and politics in Danbury, many respondents would not have found it necessary to suggest that a public forum was needed. Similarly, the sense of frustration about regional planning and urban renewal are direct outgrowths of outmoded and sometimes unworkable governmental and political structures. If these could be changed, many related problems could be solved.

#### E. Educational and Research Facilities

In addition to those already discussed, a number of problems were mentioned by minorities of respondents. Some of these were directly tied to the special needs of the individuals being interviewed or to the organizations they represented. We shall not report needs which were mentioned by only a few respondents, and thus we exclude

such matters as the need for a radio station or a weather station. Those listed below came from diverse or reliable enough sources that they represent genuine needs which can easily be demonstrated. However, unlike the problem areas already discussed, none was volunteered as a problem area or need by a majority of respondents.

1. The Need for Special Courses for Businessmen, Teachers, and Engineers

Representatives of each of the larger industrial organizations and of the local schools were all agreed that there is a need for continued training in a variety of work skills in the Danbury region. These respondents were aware of the purpose of this study, and each had a fairly clear notion of an educational service that he would like to see Danbury State College perform. Many of them had given considerable thought to these problems, and some had even discussed these services with representatives of the College on previous occasions. Chief among these needs were in-service courses for teachers, businessmen, and engineers. Such courses are required throughout the business and educational world in order to keep pace with our rapidly changing society and technology where yesterday's skills are seldom adequate to meet the challenge of today's problems. We do not feel it is necessary to document these obvious needs in such a report, but we shall discuss them again in a later section.

2. The Need for a Responsible Social Bookkeeping Agency to Collect and Process Information Through the Use of Modern Computer Facilities

Several respondents mentioned the lack of a high speed data processing facility in the Danbury area as presenting a problem for them in the operation of their business or public service. Some added to this the fact that it is difficult to get reliable information about the Danbury area. Separate agencies such as health, welfare, and the housing authority have seemingly unrelated ways of gathering data and processing it. As a result, if City Hall or the Chamber of Commerce wants to find out something about the community, it often ends up duplicating the efforts of some other agency. The Re-entry Systems Department of the General Electric Company found that a lack of available statistical data was a hindrance to them in their recent study of the Danbury area (A Preliminary Operations Analysis of the Requirements for a Regional Educational Services Concept) for RESCUE, and the author encountered similar difficulties in attempting to find objective data to verify many statements made by respondents. It is reasonable to assume that the need for such information and for a data processing facilities will increase markedly during the next few years as more and more business, educational and other organizations are made aware of their potentials.

### 3. The Need for Improved Public Library Facilities

This was also mentioned by several respondents. The antiquated structure on Main Street in which the library is now housed was a gift to the city from the White family in 1879 along with the outmoded building in which City Hall and the police are still located. The fruits of this one generous act are still on view to everyone who enters the city. Such extravagant philanthropy has not been found since in Danbury, where many drives for money and the Community Chest often fail to achieve the modest goals they set. It is difficult, if not impossible, to get qualified librarians to come to work in Danbury as long as the physical limitations of the present site remain unimproved. As a result, the library is inadequate from the standpoint of both staff and equipment. In its favor are an inventory of approximately 59,000 volumes, over 16,000 borrowers' cards, and a constant stream of people entering and leaving throughout the months of our study. However, the city schools have recently added elementary school libraries, and Danbury State College has received funds from the Federal Government to improve its own library facilities. Consequently, the public library occupies a conspicuous position of relative deprivation.

## III

## EXISTING FACILITIES FOR MEETING COMMUNITY NEEDS

A. Poverty, the Negro and Human Relations

In spite of constant pressure applied by the NAACP and others, there has been no new construction of moderate or low rental public housing units in Danbury since 1958. The 60 low-income housing units that were authorized for an appropriation of federal funds in the Beaverbrook area have been in litigation in the State courts since December, 1961. This regrettable situation was given national publicity in an article in the July, 1966, Redbook Magazine, as an example of the reasons why Negroes in the United States are not satisfied with recent developments in civil rights. In another recent incident, houses in the Roosevelt Court area which were occupied by Negroes were in such sub-standard condition that every building was condemned and razed. But the Housing Authority has applied for a Federal grant to reconstruct 100 units of housing for the elderly on that site.

As of June, 1965, Negroes accounted for 27% (40 out of 150) of the families living in low-income units, 9% (29 out of 315) of the families living in moderate rental units, and 4% (2 out of 50) of the families living in public housing for the elderly. Of the 88 Negro families which were relocated only 14 were placed in public housing. Housing and other public authorities point with pride at the public projects which exist in the community, and the extent of decentralization of housing for the Negroes of Danbury received praise in the

recent report of the Connecticut State Civil Rights Commission. However, community action with regard to public low income and integrated housing has not been able to keep pace with the rapidly increasing Negro population. This is an explosive issue, and unless positive action is taken in the near future, it appears that Danbury will soon find itself with real ghettos containing substandard housing.

Danbury has a good hospital facility which promises to expand considerably following the current drive for funds. Indeed, the fund drive for the hospital has attracted the enthusiasm and support of the new industrialists of the region, and the general improvement of the medical facilities of Danbury seems assured. There are already clinics for dentistry and ten different medical specialties, and a mental health clinic has recently been added. The visiting nurse service is also well-established. However the city has had to depend on its own health inspector, and it only recently became eligible for a State health office. Danbury State College added a nursing degree to its curriculum in 1965, and Henry Abbott Technical High School has just started a new program for training licensed practical nurses. Thus while the health services offered the poor are generally judged to have been inadequate in the past, constructive action is currently being taken by a variety of agencies which will markedly increase the potential for medical service in the region.

The efforts of various voluntary associations and service organizations to improve the conditions of the poor in Danbury through such agencies as the Community Chest have generally been well intended



but inadequate according to our informants. However, two related organizations, the Community Action Committee and the Danbury Board of Education have been notable exceptions. In both cases, it has been the influx of Federal funds that has made successful action possible.

The Danbury schools were selected as the site for a Demonstration program in the use of Federal funds for education for the State of Connecticut in January, 1965. Danbury was selected partly on the basis of its qualifications as a recipient for Federal funds under the restrictions of the various legislative acts directed at reducing poverty. Thus the existence of extensive poverty in Danbury is a matter of public record. An Assistant Superintendent and Coordinator of Federally-Aided Projects, Dr. Ernest Weeks, was appointed by the Board of Education of Danbury. His salary comes completely from outside funds. By April, 1965 a proposal for preschool education was submitted to Hartford with a budget of \$229,485. Operation Headstart became a reality in Danbury during the summer of 1965. The Catholic Diocese of Bridgeport's Danbury parochial school system joined in this venture. Soon the Neighborhood Youth Corps was funded as well. The Community Action Committee of Danbury was incorporated on October 1, 1965, but the Board of Education continued to run education programs as a delegate agency. There soon followed proposals for a Headstart Follow-up program, and a Child Development program from the Board of Education. In early 1966, the Diocese of Bridgeport submitted another Operation Headstart proposal, and the NAACP requested funds for Operation Breakthrough, a year-round cultural and educational program for

Danbury Youth. The NAACP sponsored program is still under consideration by OEO, but the other three proposals and the CAC's planning and development grant were all approved in 1966. In addition, the Wooster School ran an Upward Bound program for Danbury and Waterbury youth during the summer of 1966, and there was a combined Danbury and Bethel Neighborhood Youth Corps project. According to Don Schwartz, who has been active in CAC, the OEO poverty funds allocated to Danbury in 1966 totaled close to \$200,000.

In addition to the above programs, the Board of Education has recently received \$150,000 for a vocational training center to be added to Danbury High School. The Danbury Board of Education was also the recipient of a \$70,000 Planning Grant for a Regional Educational Services Center through Unified Effort in 1966, and has since submitted a budget estimate of \$236,000 for the first year of operation. In this latter proposal, 25 different federally supported local educational programs are listed. When the extensive educational offerings of the Henry Abbott Technical School is added to this list, it is obvious that the youth of the Danbury area are already being served in a variety of ways through the allocation of special federal funds.

The adult poor are not as fortunate. The Danbury schools do have an adult education program under the direction of Dr. Frank Repole. This program has been aided considerably by OEO funds for adult basic education, adult homemaking funds from the George Barden Act, and by lesser amounts under the Vocational Education Act. Henry Abbott Technical School runs an evening vocational program for adults

as well, but each of these programs is limited in scope and does not reach nearly the range of needs that exists in the area.

Perhaps the most serious gaps affecting the poor are the lack of a program aimed at developing indigenous leadership and the absence of a human relations program. Many of the programs aimed at the children of the poor should eventually be very productive of leadership from within these groups, but the parent generation of Danbury appears to have been almost forgotten. Similarly, while there was a one day conference on human relations at the Danbury High School in the fall of 1965, and the police were once given a day of human relations training, there has been no organized effort or continuing program within the community.

#### B. Planning and Growth

Several agencies have been struggling with the many problems associated with the planning and growth of Danbury during the past decade, and it appears that each has had more than its share of frustrations. Planning was a particularly complicated process when the division between City and Town was in effect. The City became involved with the problems of urban renewal and redevelopment following the flood in 1955 and has still not completed the initial project partly as a result of legal complications. An ambitious and comprehensive Plan of Development was produced by the Danbury Town Planning Commission with the cooperation of the Technical Planning Associates in July, 1960. This report pinpointed several serious problems facing

Danbury including recreation and open space, water supply and sewage disposal, traffic circulation, schools, and land usage. It then outlined a five year plan for implementation of its recommendations. The cornerstone of this plan was zoning, but zoning has been the subject of a series of disputes in Danbury ever since the 1960 report. A new plan of development is currently being prepared by the Planning Commission through the assistance of the Connecticut State Development Commission and will be available for publication by the end of 1966. Included in this will be "a recommendation to the Common Council for a new Zoning ordinance which will provide large areas of prime industrial land for future community development." (Letter from William W. Goodman, Chairman, Planning Commission of Danbury to Roy Jones, Director, Connecticut Development Commission, July 11, 1966.)

Despite the recurrent difficulties associated with zoning, some progress has been made in recent years. The City adopted its first capital expenditure program during 1966, and major renovation of the sewer and water facilities is being planned over the next five years. A two million dollar road building program and expansion of the airport are also planned. In addition, an incinerator, which will eliminate open burning and free 500 acres for industrial usage, is being constructed for the region. The dramatic improvement of educational facilities has already received comment. Another major development has been the decision to reconstruct Route 7 from the Connecticut Turnpike directly to Interstate 84 at Danbury. The availability of Federal and State funds has been a major factor in each of these developments.

The problems of planning and growth which confront Danbury are unquestionably regional in their origins, and they demand regional solutions. This has long been recognized by the leaders of the Planning Commission, the Chamber of Commerce, and others who have engaged in searching for solutions. But there is still a tendency for provincialism and short-sightedness on the part of many citizens. Both the State and the Federal governments have long urged Danbury to adopt regional planning, and the Federal government refused to fund the proposed incinerator until it was planned in cooperation with other communities. The Common Council finally voted in favor of regional planning during the summer of 1966, but Danbury, which was slow in providing leadership as the largest community in the area, must now wait for other communities to cast affirmative votes before concrete action can be taken.

### C. Cultural and Intellectual Leadership

#### 1. Area Cultural Center

The local cultural and intellectual facilities available to the adults of Danbury are somewhat limited in scope, but there have been noticeable signs of improvement during recent years. There are some modest museums in the community, the most promising of which is the Scott Fanton Museum which features American History. There are also some small art galleries within the region and the Candlewood Theatre has an excellent professional reputation. There is a community orchestra, the Danbury Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, and

concerts of various kinds are presented at the Danbury High School. However, there is no coordinated program of cultural activities in the community except for the varied offerings of Danbury State College. The offerings of the College are far more extensive than most of our respondents realized, and we shall return to this point in the next section.

During the academic year 1965-66, the Music Department presented monthly concerts on campus, the Dramatons produced several one act plays and a three act play, the English Society and the Foreign Language Club each sponsored series of foreign and classical films, and a Fall Dance Festival was presented by the Physical Education Department. In addition, through the cooperation of the English Society and the Nature of Man program, dancers, including Erick Hawkins, Alonzo Rivera, Nala Najan, and the Helen McGehee Dance Company, and speakers, including Robert Penn Warren and John Ciardi were brought to the community. However, the most ambitious and far-reaching presentation was the Fine Arts Festival held in March, 1966, which included art exhibits, music and literary programs. Participating artists included John Kirkpatrick, Dave Brubeck, and the Chatham String Quartet. The final concert was televised by the BBC, and Anna Hyatt Huntington, the sculptress, presented a bust of Charles Ives, a native of Danbury, to the College. All these events were open to the public.

## 2. The Public Forum

There is no public forum in Danbury at the present time. The local newspaper, The Danbury News-Times, does take seriously the job of

keeping the public informed about what is happening on the local governmental and public affairs scene. It has published some admirable articles about the history of the area, its major institutions, proposed zoning regulations, and the like, and it usually gives special coverage to cultural events in the area. However, the newspaper has had to make appeals to the public asking for letters to the editor and for more active interest and participation from its readers. Our content analysis of the newspaper revealed that there have been more Letters to the Editor printed during the past year concerning problems in the community than was true for any prior year during the period surveyed (1960-1966), but letters to the editor do not constitute a public forum. The local Radio Station, WLAD, also is regionally oriented and does make a constant effort to keep listeners informed of what is happening. However, it cannot be regarded as a public forum either. In short, there is no existing institution which provides the kind of open participation and exchange that was mentioned as needed by our respondents.

#### D. Government and Politics

Public training and education about the local government and political structures is virtually limited to what students receive in required high school courses. The C.A.C. and the NAACP have been active in attempting to activate the poor and to inform them of their citizenship rights, but there is no general program of this sort in the community. As mentioned above, the Danbury News-Times usually publishes the complete text of any referendum or proposed change in governmental

structure, but getting the citizens to read and understand these important things is a different matter. The technical and legal language contained in most governmental documents is enough to discourage reading by even the most highly educated, and it should be remembered that Danbury has one of the lowest average educational attainment levels of any city in Connecticut.

Since the recent consolidation of City and Town, there have been public statements by many leading citizens about the need for further Charter revision, but little concrete action has been taken.

#### E. Educational and Research Facilities

Danbury is fortunate in having three major institutions, which offer evening adult education courses: the public school system, the state-supported Henry Abbott Technical School, and Danbury State College. The public school system's program is mainly in adult basic education, the Henry Abbott Technical School emphasizes technical and mechanical vocational skills, and the College offers a variety of undergraduate and graduate courses as well as some special in-service courses for teachers. The Evening College and Extension Division of the College had a 1965 fall enrollment of 496, the Henry Abbott School reported 326 in the evening Supplemental program and 836 in the Technical Institute, and the average enrollment of the adult evening program of the public schools for 1965-66 is reported as 560. Thus the total evening enrollment of adults in Danbury was close to 2,000 in these combined programs. Nevertheless, we were repeatedly told that there was a shortage of



offerings of courses for adults, particularly at the college level, that businessmen and engineers find it necessary to travel to other communities in order to get the courses they need, and that this is sometimes done at great cost and inconvenience.

There is no modern data-gathering or processing facility in Danbury, and local public and private agencies have to send their materials to Bridgeport, Hartford, or New York at the present time. In conjunction with the recent proposal for RESCUE, a group of selected respondents was asked specifically about the need for data processing in the region. The authors reported that although almost everyone they interviewed was favorably disposed toward data processing, there was widespread unfamiliarity with the "function and capabilities (and limitations) of such facilities." As a result they recommended "that a complete study of requirements and resources be performed to determine the regional feasibility of such an endeavor."

A Board of Directors, with life appointments, runs the library as a private corporation supported by public funds. President Haas of the College is on this Board which has recently been enlarged, and both the Chamber of Commerce and Common Council have library committees. The newspaper has also been a strong supporter of the library. But there appears to be a chronic shortage of library funds that will best be overcome by changing the basic relationship with the city.