Abstract

When one considers the enormous resources of the U.S.A. - natural, technological, human - it is difficult to imagine that people are still faced with the appalling living conditions that exist in public housing projects.

It is the contention of this study that such conditions are a direct result of the class interests which the institutions that determine public housing policy (both at the federal and local level) represent. As a result, at the national level, authorities have never been interested in coming to terms with the problems of low income housing in a comprehensive manner. Policy decisions concerning low income housing have essentially been seen as part of a strategy to solve other problems. Similarly, at the local level, business and other political interests have consistently influenced the response of local authorities towards the needs of the poor.

Thus, not only has the supply of low income housing been inadequate, and the federal funding for routine and extraordinary maintenance been hopelessly inadequate, but there has been no attempt to relate housing to the other factors essential for the improvement of the quality of life of poor people - environmental quality of sites, social services, employment, security, recreation facilities, educational facilities.
The study is a modest attempt to deal with one of the issues involved: the management of public housing developments. We feel that this is one area in which a great deal can be done to reduce the level of misery of public housing tenants — if management is taken out of the hands of bureaucratic, incompetent, insensitive local authorities, and placed in the hands of those who have most to gain by sensitive and efficient administration — the tenants.

It is with this proposal in mind that the development and operation of tenant management at Bromley-Heath has been examined.
Acknowledgements

As a socially conscious person, one of the attractions that city planning holds for me is its concern with the entire range of issues that are involved when one is essentially dealing with the interrelationships of people with each other and their interaction with their environment. The notion that planning is for people and about people commits planning professionals and theoreticians to an involvement with social concerns like poverty, racism, discrimination, unemployment, the quality of living environments.

During my first three terms in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at M.I.T. I was astounded at the almost total lack of any real interest in these concerns generally displayed within the Department. To all intents and purposes the harsh realities of the world did not exist for most of the faculty. With a few exceptions, superficiality and rationalization were common approaches while causal relationships were studiously avoided.

By contrast, this last semester, during which I have been involved in the preparation of this thesis, has helped to restore sanity and meaning to my studies. It has put me in touch with what the reality of living in urban America must mean for millions of disadvantaged people. It has also involved me with persons who have very real social concerns and who have a tremendous perception and understanding of the problems that have to be confronted if the quality of
living of poor people is to be improved.

For this all-too-brief experience, I wish to thank Tunney Lee, my thesis advisor; Elaine Werby of the University of Massachusetts, a member of my thesis committee; Ellis Ash, the resident consultant at Bromley-Heath; Mildred Hailey, the Executive Director of the Bromley-Heath T.M.C.; and the Staff of T.M.C.

I am deeply indebted to Julian and Doreen Beinart whose interest and support began before my arrival at M.I.T. and continued throughout my stay.

This thesis is for Joan.

Basil J. Tommy
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1.1 Introduction

It is commonly accepted that public housing in the United States is a failure. Countless studies have been undertaken to discover and describe how this failure came about, and, although blame has been placed at every possible doorstep - from the federal government down to the tenants - very few investigations have been broached from the perspective that develops when one considers the following crucial questions:

What is housing?

Who is responsible for the provision of housing in a modern society?

Has the federal government involved itself in the provision of housing for low income families out of conviction or as a result of other pressures?

1.2 What is Housing?

A popular concept about housing is that it is a discrete physical entity, the function of which is to provide shelter. This notion has led to a variety of horrendous solutions to housing problems the world over - from serviced
sites in underdeveloped countries to monstrous public-financed structures built in countries with advanced technologies. In the modern world, however, where the activities of life have become so complex and interrelated, housing surely needs to be considered in a more holistic context.

Housing is a part of the living environment. It is within this environment that people perform their various roles - as individuals, as members of families, as members of groups, as members of communities. It is within this living environment that individuals perform their life functions - eating, sleeping, recreating, reproducing, learning, working. In the context of these roles and functions the dwelling becomes more than just a shell providing protection. It becomes an enabling mechanism capable of providing the environment and stimulation which can help the individual to enrich his life in both personal and social terms.

However, when the dwelling unit, even in respect of private living begins to be considered in the most minimal terms, its capacity to serve as an enabling mechanism is seriously impeded - even destroyed. Some of the consequences of the overcrowding resulting from inadequate space standards - a feature of low income public housing - are listed by Chester Hartman:

"...increased stress, poor development of a sense of individuality, sexual conflict, intrafamilial tensions,
and lack of adequate sleep, which contributes to poor work and school performance."

When one considers that within low incomes families, housewives, children and the elderly spend more time in the home than in any single other place, the importance of the size and design of the dwelling unit as a determinant of personal and family satisfaction becomes even more significant.

As a part of the physical environment, housing becomes an even more complex issue. In physical terms it becomes important that the relationship to other elements within the built environment be given attention - the relationships of the dwelling to the ground, to the street, to other dwellings, to other activities. Although these relationships do not determine the individual's behavior and development they can certainly affect it. Living high above the ground poses many problems and conflicts for families with young children and even for elderly people. The relationship of the dwelling to the street and to other dwellings begins to affect the degree of social interaction or privacy that is facilitated. The relationship of the dwelling to other activities - play, parking, other services seriously affects the degree of satisfaction that the individual derives from his living environment.

Further an essential part of housing in the modern residential environment is the range of necessary support
services that are made available. The lack of such facilities - especially for low income people - can seriously jeopardise the environment's capacity to perform as an enabling mechanism at a broader level. Poor education facilities, inadequate health facilities, the absence of recreation facilities, the lack of adequate public security - these are all factors which seriously affect the quality of the living environment, the social responses of individuals, and their preparation for roles as participants in the social process.

It is clear then that housing cannot be considered purely in terms of the provision of dwelling units. The complexity of living makes it imperative that housing be considered as an integral part of the living environment and that all the elements that contribute to a healthy living be addressed when the provision of dwelling units is considered. This approach becomes of paramount importance when dealing with the provision for low income families. While middle and upper class families have the financial resources to choose their living environment in terms of various priorities, - the condition of surrounding neighborhood, social life, good schools, accessibility to community facilities - low income families are trapped within the physical surroundings in which they are forced to locate - they do not have the money, the time or the mobility to seek alternatives or to compensate for the shortcomings within their neighborhood by utilising resources outside of it.
In short, while for middle class families the living environment can act as an enabling factor which "has the ability to extend man beyond his immediate experience and enable and create new opportunities which enrich his life"\(^2\), for low income families generally, that environment merely represents another indicator of their position in society - that of being "at the bottom of the heap."

### 1.3 Who is Responsible for the Provision of Housing in a Modern Society?

Most developed capitalist countries have already accepted the notion that society has a responsibility for the provision of housing for its members. For middle class families this is often reflected in the provision of tax relief and subsidies of one kind or another.

For low incomes families recognition has long ago been to the fact that the wages paid to the working class are in no way commensurate with what is necessary to meet its needs through the market mechanism. As a result public housing programs have become institutionized as a means not only of providing low income families with shelter, but also with support services necessary for the creation of a liveable environment - schools, libraries, health care and recreation facilities.

Not only has housing nationally been perceived as a societal responsibility, but even at local levels, municipalities have accepted the responsibility of providing
adequate housing for their low income citizens. Public intervention in the housing process thus has a relatively long history (dating back to 1920 in countries like Britain, Germany and the Netherlands) and the development of a comprehensive approach to housing issues in these countries resulted in the provision of support services necessary to create liveable environments - schools, libraries, health care, recreation facilities. This approach has helped to remove much of the stigma attached to living in public housing projects as well as many of the social problems associated with it in the U.S.A.

1.4 The Role of the Federal Government in the Provision of Low Income Housing.

In terms of what has broadly been defined as the constituents of adequate housing and the general recognition of the need for public sector participation in the provision of low income housing, what has been the response in the U.S.A. as reflected in the attitude and role of the federal government? By and large the commonly held view in the U.S.A. (of those who influence and make policy) has been that the provision of housing should be in the hands of the market mechanism, and any public interference in the privately-operated real estate market and home building industry was an attempt at socialist intervention in the private enterprise system.

A brief historical overview of federal intervention
will, in fact, show that public housing policy was guided by an acceptance of this philosophy with the result that government action in the provision of housing has been largely motivated by the needs of the middle class, the housing industry (real estate developers, the construction industry, the banking industry) and political and economic pressures other than those created by the need to provide adequate housing for low income families.

1.5 Review of Federal Public Housing Policy

1930 - 1939

By 1931 countries like England and Germany each had over one million government-aided dwelling units, while in the Netherlands one-fifth of the population had been housed with government assistance. In contrast, despite the fact that one third of the population of the United States was estimated to be living in housing that was "definitely subnormal by any decent standards," the federal government had played virtually no role in the need to provide housing for U.S. families. During the course of the Great Depression the dramatic decline in living conditions saw a third of the nation facing severe economic and housing problems. The housing problem was further exacerbated by the collapse of the building industry (which by mid-1930 already had resulted in new housing constructions being reduced to ten percent of the pre-Depression level) as well as the threat of evic-
tions for countless families unable to meet their mortgage payments.

The significant intervention by the federal government in the housing process came in the early 1930's - not to deal with the housing crisis of the swollen ranks of those forced to live in sub-standard housing but to rescue those middle class home owners facing foreclosure, and the various lenders in the real estate credit market facing financial collapse. A Home Loan Bank was established in 1932 which was authorised to extend loans to savings and loan institutions with the requirement that they invest in real estate mortgages. The object of this action was not only the resuscitation of these institutions but also to prevent home building from coming to a virtual stoppage and construction industry from total collapse. Similarly in 1933 the Home Owners Loan Corporation was created:

"to rescue families for whom loss of home was imminent and also to provide an opportunity for mortgage lenders to convert 'frozen' assets to cash, thereby shoring up the banking system and protecting depositors from the loss of their savings."

These programs to help the middle class homeowners, stabilise financial institutions, to rescue the construction industry and to provide employment were further bolstered by the National Housing Act of 1934. This Act brought into being a system of mortgage insurance which would be administered by a Federal Housing Administration (F.H.A.).

"Under the F.H.A. insurance program, a lending
institution was guaranteed in effect, that the mortgage loan it made for the purchase, construction or repair of a home would be repaid even if the borrower defaulted. By providing this guarantee, the F.H.A. removed much of the risk of making such loans and encouraged financial institutions and other lenders to make them on terms far more favorable to the home owner than previously."

Thus whereas previously deposits of one-third to one-half were commonly required, families could now have homes built with down payments of only twenty percent.

The first significant effort to deal with the housing problems of low income families came with the passage of the United States Housing Act of 1937. Even though the Act was considered "indisputably a landmark in the history of American social legislation," it is nevertheless generally recognised that its primary purpose was to create jobs.

The lack of real concern for the housing problems of the poor can further be gauged from one of the provisions of the Act, known as the equivalent - elimination rule, which "required local governments to condemn, close, demolish or enforce repairs on one slum dwelling for each new unit of public housing constructed." Slum clearance was thereby set as a federal goal at a time when low income housing was at a premium and unemployment was chronic.

The federal public housing program that was created under the Act provided for the establishment of local housing authorities (L.H.A.'s) to develop, own and manage low rent public housing. Rents in the public housing projects
that were developed under this program would be lowered significantly through federal (and local) subsidies for debt servicing although no subsidy provision was made for maintenance and repair. Therefore rents set by income had to cover the cost of operations.

Thus, almost twenty years after public housing programs were introduced in the major European countries, public assistance in the provision of housing for the poor was started in the U.S. In addition, as has been observed previously, such assistance came only after numerous programs had first been introduced to solve the housing problems of the middle class - which largely centered around home-ownership - and was essentially part of vigorous federal efforts to bolster the construction industry and stimulate employment.

1.52 1940 - 1949

In the period preceding U.S. entry into World War II, the economy was stimulated by the increase in trade with both Allies and the Axis powers. However, any effect this may have had on the production of low income housing was cut short by the redirection of materials and labor into the War effort when the U.S. entered the conflict in 1941. As a result, between 1937 and 1945, fewer than 115,000 dwelling units were built under the provision of the Housing Act of 1937.8

The end of the War saw a tremendous increase in the
production of housing. However, virtually all of this housing was confined to dwellings for the middle class, stimulated by further liberalization of F.H.A. mortgage terms (larger mortgages and higher loan-to-value ratios) as well as the creation, in 1944, of the veteran mortgage guarantee program, which made it possible for qualifying veterans to borrow up to 100 percent of the cost of a house. The impact of these kinds of assistance, which gave an enormous impetus to suburban development, was that housing production expanded from 140,000 units in 1944 to 1 million in 1946 to almost 2 million in 1950.9

During this decade the concern for housing the poor is reflected in the fact that despite an estimate that 1,250,000 dwelling units would be required between 1945 and 1955 to meet the demand for new and replacement housing for low income families,10 it was only in 1949 that recognition appeared to be given to the problems of the poor with the passage of the Housing Act of 1949, which promised "a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family." The real intent of the Act, however, appears to have been geared more to providing business interests with mechanisms for stimulating commercial redevelopment in the inner cities. Thus, in terms of the slum clearance and urban redevelopment program which was an integral part of the Act:

"it was to be the responsibility of this program to clear slums and blighted areas and later to
provide sites for private enterprise to build new moderate-cost housing as well as for such residential, commercial, industrial and public facilities as were most appropriate for the sites."

Housing policies in the forties then, despite the grand promises which were made at the end of the decade, laid the ground rules which were to underly public decisions for urban areas for the next two decades and more. While the flight of middle class from the cities to suburbia was facilitated by extremely generous F.H.A. and veterans mortgage guarantee terms (which assured them of a decent home and a suitable living environment), the problems of the poor were exacerbated by:

1) the lack of public action when it was clear that private enterprise was not about to solve the housing problems of low income families.

2) the passage of housing legislation which was more likely to increase overcrowding amongst the poor than address their housing needs - slum clearance and urban redevelopment.

3) the total lack of concern about the social affects of concentrating large numbers of low income families together - the virtual ghettoization of the poor - through firstly, facilitating middle class flight and secondly creaming off the "moderate" income families through the provision of moderate cost housing in slum clearance and renewal areas - a further provision of the Housing Act of 1949.
The 1949 Housing Act thus, "ushered in a decade and a half of almost frenetic buildings, speculation development and planning intended to revitalise the central...(cities) - and incidently enrich those who took part."\textsuperscript{12}

The people whose plight the Act purported to alleviate - the poor - found that their housing conditions, if anything, became even more intolerable.

1.53 1950 - 1959

During a decade which saw enormous public spending on highway development (which gave a massive boost to the automobile industry and real estate developers) and inner city redevelopment (which allowed private capital to make investments in downtown areas with heavy subsidization), the needs of the poor for public assistance in the field of housing received scant attention. Despite the promise of '49 of "a decent home for every American family," and despite the Act's authorization of 135,000 units annually for six years, the Federal Government used every pretext to cut back this number to a ridiculously low level (given the scale of the problem), to reduce design amenities to an absolute minimum and to tie new housing production to urban renewal so that much of the federally supported housing that was produced was for moderate income families - the poor being largely ignored, except to the extent that they gradually came to move into the high density minimum amenity "horror projects" that more fortunate working class families vacated as soon
as they could.

Thus, despite the fact that in 1950 it was estimated by T.E.M.P.O. (General Electrics Center for Advanced Studies) that there were more than 15.25 million occupied substandard housing units in the U.S.A. (occupied mainly by poor families) and despite the fact that, in terms of families living in such housing, the number was probably much larger (through overcrowding), public housing units authorized by Congress between 1951 and 1954 were as indicated in Table 1.1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1949 Housing Act Provision</th>
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<td>1951</td>
<td>135,000</td>
<td>50,000</td>
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<td>20,000</td>
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<td>1954</td>
<td>135,000</td>
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Although the need to conserve materials, to hold down inflationary pressures and the Korean War, were given as justifications for these meagre authorizations, it must be noted that the funding for planning, site acquisition, slum
demolition - the federally subsidized tools for urban renewal - escaped the axe.

The Housing Act of 1954 continued the charade of using the housing crisis of the poor as the pretext for urban renewal funding. In fact, the Eisenhower administration clearly indicated its priorities and concerns when it tied public housing funding to slum clearance and urban renewal programs. In the Act, "before a locality could qualify for federal aid...it had to produce a 'workable program' - which had to include such elements as housing and building codes, long range plans for orderly growth (and) arrangements for relocating renewal displaced families and businesses."

Thus not only did the authorization of public housing production remain painfully meagre, but now local authorities had federal blessing for the location of such housing in areas vastly hostile to the creation of satisfactory living environments, and ensuring those middle class families drawn back to the inner cities by urban renewal that sufficient distance would be created between them and the poor.
TABLE 1.2
Dwelling Units Authorized by Congress

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>35,000</td>
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<td>1957</td>
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<td>1958</td>
<td>37,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>1959</td>
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1.54 1960 - 1969

The first half of the sixties saw the continuation of the programs of the past decade which, instead of addressing the housing problems of the poor, had succeeded in increasing their misery. Highway programs and easy F.H.A. mortgaging continued to facilitate the process of suburbanisation which provided the white middle class with a decent home away from the distressing and depressing urban centers where they earned their livelihoods. On the other hand highway programs in the cities together with urban renewal ensured the destruction of poor neglected neighborhoods - while creating a stock of new housing through which the cities hoped to stem the white middle class flight.

For blacks in the urban areas - whose number had rapidly increased as a result of migration from the rural areas - living conditions became even more intolerable especially
since their neighborhoods became prime renewal areas. The economic condition of black workers in the urban areas is graphically described by Piven and Cloward:

"The grossest forms of racial discrimination persisted, indeed hardened, in many occupations which unskilled and semi-skilled blacks might otherwise have entered...meanwhile automation wiped out thousands of other low-skill jobs. To make matters much worse, the years after the Korean War were marked by periodic recession and rising unemployment...(so that even those blacks) who did get work often remained in financial straits. Many found their wages too small to support a family in the expensive urban environment. Others were employed only sporadically, never sure from week to week when there would be another paycheck." 14

The process of "negro removal" as urban renewal came to be called, the absence of cheap housing in the private market ensured that blacks either lived in overcrowded conditions in the ghettos that had not been bulldozed or moved in greater numbers to the public housing projects - which many whites left either because they had always viewed it as transitional housing or because the racial balance of the projects began to change. As a result, by 1965 blacks occupies 51 percent of all public housing projects whereas in 1952 the figure had been 38 percent. 15

The social problems related to low income housing in general, and poor black neighborhoods in particular, predictably increased with the instability that accompanies economic insecurity. The number of female-headed black families for example grew, from 19 percent in 1949 to almost 27 percent in 1968. 16
Unemployment, poor housing and its attendant effects on family stability were also directly responsible for:

"rising rate of gang delinquency and other forms of juvenile delinquency such as school vandalism, spreading drug addiction, an alarming increase in serious crimes, such as armed robbery and burglary."\(^{17}\)

In the face of this overwhelming aggregation of social problems (which were economic at base) very little was done to deal with the housing needs for the poor - which, if nothing else, might at least have been indicative of some federal concern. Between 1960 and 1964 - 137,000 new low income dwelling units (an average of 27,500 p.a.) were authorized by Congress, with few changes in accommodation or environmental standards. These authorizations should be compared with T.E.M.P.O.'s estimate that in 1960 there were 8.3 million households unable to afford adequate housing without government assistance.\(^{18}\) Such tokenism is further exemplified by Kennedy's Executive Order in 1962 which barred discrimination in federally-subsidised housing but made no provision for its implementation.

Other gestures which merely skirted the real issues at stake in meeting the housing needs of the poor included permission for private commercial undertakings to operate facilities within public housing projects (one can but imagine at the number, quality and range of commerical undertakings that would rush to open up in these economically depressed and unsafe areas) and section 221 (d)(3) by means of which profit motivated private organizations could develop
subsidised housing through the provision of mortgages at below market interest rates. This latter provision of the 1961 Housing Act aside from providing investment opportunities for small developers, merely served to cream moderate income families from the housing demand list, since it was this group that was largely served by the measure.

The frustration that built up as a result of the neglect of the economic, social and housing problems of the poor exploded in the latter half of the decade.

The middle class led Civil Rights movement of the early sixties had been unable to arouse any significant response to the demands for "a halt to urban renewal, integrated school, access to white neighborhoods, apprenticeships in white unions." However, the plight of the poor became a national discovery with the protests, demonstrations and riots that erupted in the cities between 1964 and 1968. The urban uprisings, which threatened, disrupted and destroyed commercial activity in the cities, suddenly led to the realisation that unemployment, poverty, inadequate housing, social decay had reached epidemic proportions and ushered in the "War on Poverty."

Thus, during the period between 1964 and 1968, the war in Vietnam notwithstanding, a series of legislative measures were adopted to address the problems of the poor - not necessarily in a comprehensive manner, but at least (for a time) from many directions. In 1964, 350 million dollars
were allocated to community action programs through Title II of the Economic Opportunity Act. The Housing Act of 1965 gave recognition to the extent of the poverty of those in need of housing by providing part supplements. The Model Cities program of 1966 - though only a demonstration program - attempted to coordinate the physical and social policies of the government within selected and defined neighborhoods with the object of trying to: "help close the gap in the services and community facilities between poverty neighborhoods and the rest of the city." The Housing Act of 1968, though still reflecting the belief that home ownership and the private market are the panacea for social problems, nevertheless made a substantial effort to increase the stock of low income housing through construction and rehabilitation and provided authorization for 395,000 dwellings in three years.

After 1970, however, once the crisis had been defused, with the energies of the poor dissipated and many of the leaders incorporated into the system, the housing problems of the poor lost its urgency as a federal government issue - even though "the deterioration of poverty neighborhoods has become still more striking in recent years than it was earlier." Most of the recent public housing provisions have been made for the elderly rather than the poor generally, the provision of community facilities has been replaced by rhetoric centering around the concern for the development
of a sense of community (without jobs, facilities, rehabilitation programs), community participation to articulate needs that receive scant attention or funding (but which dissipates anger and energy) has been emphasised, while the provision of low income housing is once again the responsibility for the private market (with subsidies and rent supplements that ensure healthy profits).

1.6 **Summary**

The attempt to determine the extent of federal blame for the crisis in lower income housing in general and public housing in particular has focused on these issues:

What is housing?

Who is responsible for housing the poor?

What has been the philosophical approach of the federal government in making housing policy?

The answers to these questions clearly demonstrate that the government has been monumentally inept and callous in its handling of the housing needs of the poor. Until the urban uprisings of the late sixties it had not been prepared to consider that housing for low income families meant anything other than the provision of minimal accommodation that served almost exclusively to provide shelter—spartan design and space standards denied its inhabitants any amenities beyond the level of mere existence. This is not because the state was unaware of what a good living environment im-
plied. Since the 1930's it has made it a major goal - through its tax exemptions, its subsidies and guaranteed mortgages, its later highway urban renewal programs - to ensure that the middle class not only has a choice of the kind of environment in which it wishes to live in - urban or suburban - but ensured that the living spaces were adequate and that the necessary support systems were available. Thus in physical terms alone, public housing projects were designed to fail and they were located in environments which ensured that this happened.

In social terms too, no effort was made (except for a brief period when cities were under siege) to deal with the problems of the poor - support services that would address anti-social behaviour, and educational services that would (theoretically at least) provide a springboard out of poverty.

In economic terms, the government showed little inclination to deal with the problems of the poor with any enthusiasm. The persistent and spreading unemployment, especially among minorities and women, with its resultant effect on the housing problem - has consistently been ignored. The hopelessly inadequate welfare payments only began to receive attention in the sixties as a result of the civil unrest. In these terms then, the deprivation, devastation and decay so characteristic of public housing in the U.S.A. are hardly surprising. In fact can conditions be
otherwise?

The cavalier manner in which the delivery of housing for the poor has been treated is of course related to the veneration of the market place. The provision of public housing has often been related to assistance for private enterprise. In the thirties it was the financing, real estate and construction industries. In the fifties and sixties it was urban commercial interests at large. In considering the provision of housing for low income families the government has always ensured that the interests of the market were paramount. Thus it is no accident that the National Housing Policy statement included in the 1949 Housing Act set out that "private enterprise shall be encouraged to serve as large a part of the total market as it can, and that governmental assistance shall be utilized where feasible to enable private enterprise to serve more of the total need." 22

Fundamentally of course, the root cause of the housing problems of low income families is economic. Any real concern by the state to deal with the housing crisis must revolve around either a redistribution of incomes* or a re-

*Of course some will claim that this argument is not relevant to the reality of conditions in the U.S. today - where a substantial part of the problem is not so much related to low wages but to the fact that so many families are on welfare. Since this is essentially not an economic treatise (which may well have been a more productive exercise) suffice it to say that welfare payments and unemployment are totally related and that the existence of large numbers of unemployed - boom or depression, inflation or stable prices notwithstanding - is consistent with the theory that relates low wages to the maintenance of a reserve pool of labor.
duction in the cost of housing. Both alternatives are totally unacceptable since they stand in contradiction to the essence of the private enterprize system - profit maximization. Thus the closest the federal government has come to facing the issue has been the subsidization of low income housing - which ensures satisfactory profit levels for all the sectors involved in housing production (from finance to construction) while at the same time giving recognition to the gross inequality of income distribution by subsidizing the wages of low income families. That this has nevertheless been done with little conviction or enthusiasm is attested to the fact that it has been estimated that there are still 7.5 million families living in substandard housing in the U.S.A. today.
Chapter 1: References


5. Op cit, Fried, p. 66.


8. Op cit, A Decent Home, p. 57.


13. Op cit, Fried, p. 44.


18. Op cit, A Decent Home, p. 41.


21. Ibid, p. 244

22. Op cit, A Decent Home, p. 57.
2.1 Introduction

In Chapter 1 we saw that Federal housing policies, through its concern for middle class and business interests, created a system that provided only a fraction of the housing units required to meet the needs of the poor and which virtually guaranteed that public housing projects would become social disaster areas by refusing to provide the support services necessary for the creation of liveable environments.

The local authorities, which administered federal housing policies, did not deal with the needs of the poor with very much more sensitivity. In Boston, the local authorities - the Mayor's Office, the Boston Redevelopment Authority (B.R.A.) and the Boston Housing Authority (B.H.A.) - took full advantage of the opportunities the various housing acts created to ensure that the interests of the business community and the middle class dominated the planning and development programs were tied to slum clearance in the fringe areas of the city and extensive urban renewal projects were developed to revitalize the commercial sectors of the city and to provide housing for the middle and lower middle class citizens, while housing programs for the poor
(with the exception of elderly housing programs) virtually ended in 1954.

This chapter will briefly examine the role of the three local authorities responsible for promoting public housing interests in Boston and will attempt to show that because of the political control (in one form or another) that vested interests wield over all three authorities, the essential needs of low income families will continue to be neglected at the local level. It will also examine in greater detail the performance of the major public housing authority - the B.H.A. - to determine the extent to which the organisation of that body, its relationship to city hall and the scale of its operation are responsible for the problems that plague public housing projects in Boston. Such an examination should lead to a determination of whether or not there are institutionalized defects which have led to failure of public housing in Boston.

If the problems are systemic, as we believe they are, then as far as the question of the management of public housing is concerned, calls for reform are not very realistic. Consideration should rather be given to an alternative form of public housing management.*

*Such a proposal of course does not deal with the other major issues related to the provision of housing - such as location, design production, etc. The resolution of these issues, however, fall beyond the scope of this thesis.
2.2 The Mayor's Office

Because of the mechanisms of the election process in the U.S.A., elected public positions - whether they be federal, state or city - are largely the domain of the representatives of the propertied classes. Although officials are not elected to office without wider support, the process - which involves huge sums of money (some of which comes from personal wealth, much of which comes from corporate donations), the necessity of favourable media exposure (determined by the class interests of the media), and middle class support generally - ensures that those who take office invariably are not hostile to business interests and usually are very supportive of such interests.

The mayor's office in Boston has historically been a position which, in the first instance is strongly supportive of conservative business interests which have facilitated its participation in the election process. In the second instance it has represented the most organized section of its electoral base - the white middle class - whose interests are fundamentally the same as those of the business sector. Where the above interests have not been seriously threatened, it has also represented the rest of its support base - the white workers. However, in a conflict of interest, white workers generally come off second best - as witnessed by the destruction of the West End. Of little consequence on the mayor's list of priorities - because they
are a numerical minority and are generally apathetic ballotwise - are the poor minorities at present almost 50 percent of public housing tenants.

Given the interests that the mayor's office represents then, it is not surprising that the plight of the poor, and of public housing tenants in particular, has received very little attention from City Hall.

Such deliberate neglect is reflected in the City's unimaginative approach to doling out C.D.B.G. dollars to crisis-ridden housing projects, an almost total absence of city maintenance services in the proximity of public housing and constant public outcries about the ineffectual police surveillance, and the less than half hearted response to tenant calls for police assistance.

2.3 The Boston Redevelopment Authority

The B.R.A., which is the city's general planning arm and renewal agent, is a local authority corporation which is technically not part of the city government. However, since the mayor appoints four of the five members of the board which governs the organization, and since staff appointments generally are not free of political patronage, the planning decisions of the B.R.A. and the Mayor's development priorities are seldom in conflict.

Given the kind of relationship previously described - between the propertied classes and the mayor - on the one
hand and the mayor and the B.R.A. on the other hand - it is not surprising that most of the efforts of the B.R.A. have gone into business revitalization (Government Center, the renewal of the downtown commercial center, the Waterfront) and housing to serve the city's more affluent citizens. This is not to argue against the validity of strategies to improve the city's tax base and increase employment opportunities. However, an organization entrusted with making planning proposal dealing with the development of the whole city, surely needs to address itself to the problems of the city in a more comprehensive manner. For example, the 1960 census indicated that about 15% of the families living in Boston had incomes which were "hardly enough to afford anything but public housing, sometimes too little to afford even that." ¹ By 1968 a survey commissioned by the B.R.A. itself indicated that this figure had increased to at least 19%. ² In addition, data from the Massachusetts Department of Community Affairs indicated that in 1970 96,045 families in Boston were in need of public housing assistance. ³ These statistics notwithstanding, the B.R.A. showed little concern that no public housing had been built since 1954, despite "large waiting lists." In fact, its redevelopment proposals actually served to exacerbate the problem as can be seen from the following examples:

i) The Government Center Project displaced 440 families of which 300 were eligible for public housing: no program
for additional public or public-assisted housing accompanied the project.

ii) The South End Renewal Plan which proposed that 5215 units be torn down while providing accommodation for only 1100 of the 2368 displaced families that qualified for public housing.

The actions of the B.R.A. (representing the development objectives of the mayor's office) clearly demonstrate the lack of concern of that authority about the housing plight of low income families.

2.4 **The Boston Housing Authority**

The B.H.A. is the authority responsible for the development, management and ownership of public housing in Boston. Like the B.R.A. it is a supposedly independent local authority corporation, but like the B.R.A., four of its members are appointed by the mayor, the fifth by the governor. The influence of City Hall in the determination of B.H.A. policy is thus substantial, to say the least.

Since its establishment in 1935 the B.H.A. has taken charge of 14,000 public housing units for families, 3,000 units for the elderly as well as 2,700 units leased from private landlords. Relative to the rest of the country this may appear to be an impressive quantity of low income housing (Boston's housing program is the fourth largest in the country), but when one considers when most of these units
were built, where they were built and the scale of sub-
standard housing and poverty in Boston, the picture changes
somewhat. Even more significant is the fact that these
factors have a direct bearing on the quality of life in many
of the projects at this time.

In the spirit of federal guidelines that public hous-
ing be used as a mechanism for slum clearance, the B.H.A.
at the very outset determined not to build public housing
on vacant land, but instead to build its projects in some
of the most deteriorated parts of the city. As a result
projects like Charlestown, Mission Hill, Lennox Street,
Heath Street were developed in areas that, in the words of
the 1940 B.R.A. Annual Report "contained some of the worst
substandard housing conditions existent in the city." 4

The projects that were developed during the 1950's did
not fare any better as far as location was concerned as is
witnessed by the siting of Bromley Park and Mission Hill
Extension.

The concentration of low income housing in declared
slum areas can hardly be considered a strategy for neigh-
borhood revival, especially since the social conditions that
contributed to the decay were completely ignored - unemploy-
ment, lack of community facilities, poverty. Thus the claim
by the B.H.A. at the time that: "Housing projects tend to
increase the construction of new buildings and improvements
in the vicinity of the projects and should serve as a stim-
ulus to private housing construction" was either very naive or a dishonest rationalization. More important, however, is the fact that this attitude of the B.H.A. virtually ensured that in the long run - through its concentration of the poor in physically hostile environments, with its attendant social implications - public housing projects would become the wastelands that most of them are at present.

Worse still, despite the range of opportunities available for rehousing purposes (e.g. land write downs in urban renewal areas) the B.H.A. showed little interest in including low income housing in the urban renewal plans developed during the fifties and sixties - despite the obvious advantage to low income families of close proximity to employment opportunities and access to a wide range of services and facilities. In fact, in the face of rising land acquisition costs the B.H.A. stopped building public housing for families after 1954 rather than utilize the land write-down opportunities available for developing public housing in urban renewal areas.* The attitude of the B.H.A. in this regard must then be construed as being consistent with those of the propertied interests of the city; to ensure that the poor - especially the black poor - were kept out of those areas in the city earmarked as the preserve of business interests.

*In one of the few instances when the B.H.A. did support the inclusion of public housing in a redevelopment scheme, middle class residents in Roxbury opposed the proposal. As a result no public housing was constructed in Washington Park, that are in question.
the middle class and white collar workers. The reluctance of the B.H.A. to come to terms with the housing needs of the poor - is reflected in the fact that despite the range of alternative housing mechanisms that have become available since 1965 (rent supplements, leased housing, etc.) only 2,700 additional family units (leased housing) have been added to its housing stock in the last twelve years or more. This level of performance becomes even more shocking when one considers that 2,300 units of existing stock are vacant. Effectively then it has added 400 family dwellings to the supply of low income housing for a city in which 96,000 families had a need for public housing assistance as far back as 1970.

Up to this point what has been attempted is an outline of the B.H.A.'s general attitude to housing the poor. The rest of this section will deal with the issues of its actual management of public housing projects in order to show that this lack of concern is also reflected in the B.H.A.'s treatment of its tenants.

The condition of the living environment of Boston's public housing tenants does not require an extensive analysis. Much has already been written in this respect and the poor performance that has been revealed can be pointedly
summarised from the findings in the Perez case.* In its "Findings, Rulings, Opinions and Orders" the court found that:

"...throughout B.H.A. developments there exists severely substandard housing conditions with devastating effects on the tenants... (as reflected in)... the existence of individual apartments with faulty plumbing, roach infestation, broken windows, plaster and paint peeling, ceiling leaks and inadequate heat. Upon investigation, exterior buildings appeared bombed out, mailboxes were broken, windows broken out, protruding glass shards remained. Incinerators were burning without covers. Copper flashing had been removed from roofs, causing leaks in top floor apartments.... The court also found high rates of crime and victimization at B.H.A. developments. Furthermore, the courts found that Boston's public housing was racially segregated."  

The reasons the deplorable conditions outlined above cannot be analysed in a mechanical manner - as has, in fact, been the approach of many of the critics of the B.H.A.

The deterioration of the physical condition of the public housing stock is undoubtedly largely attributable to the insensitivity of the B.H.A. to its tenants, to the incompetence of its management procedures and to inflexible federal and state laws and regulations. The extent to which such insensitivity and mismanagement can be overcome by reform

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*"The case of Armondo Perez, et als. versus the Boston Housing Authority was brought as a class action in the Housing Court of the City of Boston in February of 1975 by tenants living in apartments owned and operated by the B.H.A. The suit sought to have B.H.A. rectify living conditions in apartments and buildings which were in violation of the State Sanitary Code and to have the Commonwealth of Massachusetts provide the funds for that rectification."  

7
is questionable. This conclusion is reached in the light of the following realities:

a) 4/5 of the board of the B.H.A. is comprised of mayoral appointees. Since such appointments are both prestigious and lucrative (the chairman receives $12,500 and board members $12,500 per annum) it is unlikely that the board, which is the policy making body of the B.H.A., would embarrass the city by drawing attention to the crisis in Boston's low income housing or by making policy decisions that would necessitate city spending in the provision of additional services - maintenance as well as support facilities. Nor it is likely to question the city's priorities in determining the support it gives to applications for special federal funds that are allocated to cities from time to time.

b) The tradition of political patronage in making administrative and maintenance appointments has virtually become institutionalized in Boston. Thus not matter how sincere the efforts in certain quarters to make competent appointments or how vigilant the opposition to City Hall control, the practice of appointing inefficient people (with its consequent disastrous effects on the projects) will be very hard to overcome. At best short periods of reform may occur (as is at present the case with a court-appointed Master overseeing the operations of the B.H.A.) after which the organization will again relapse into its former appoint-
ment practices.
c) It is impossible to separate policy from day-to-day operations as is at present being suggested as a possible means of separating the administration of the B.H.A. from the activities of the Board. So much of what is wrong within the housing projects relate directly to policy decisions - the locations of new developments, the need for a housing-related social policy, the provision of community services - that it is inconceivable that one can consider separating the two areas.
d) Attempts have already been made to introduce tenant input into the administrative process - as witnessed by the creation of the Tenants Policy Council (T.P.C.). Notwithstanding the fact that this body was created in 1968, and notwithstanding the many concessions won from the B.H.A. by the T.P.C. (see "A struggle for survival") the existence of this organization has not caused any fundamental change in the living conditions in the public housing projects it represents.

Thus to the extent that the physical deterioration of public housing projects has resulted from poor management practices it may well be possible to arrest further deterioration and improve the overall maintenance of these developments. However, if one is looking to reform of the B.H.A. to turn around the deterioration, of which physical decline is but one aspect, then we feel one is being somewhat naive
in the light of what has just been outlined. A turn around of conditions in public housing projects would have to deal not only with the physical manifestations of decay. It would, more significantly, have to deal with the poverty that is so prevalent in the worst projects as well as the social instability that results from such poverty - family breakdown, delinquency, crime, drug addiction, alcoholism. In addition it would also have to consider the whole question of the kind of living environments that have been created in these wastelands devoid of community services and community-building facilities.

2.5 **Summary**

The problems of public housing then - we must re-emphasise - do not merely relate to poor maintenance and repair services, to questionable tenant selection practices or inadequate security. These of course are important to tenants - especially tenants who have to do without such services. More fundamentally, however, a multi-faceted approach to dealing with problems of the families living in public housing is essential if the quality of life in these projects is to be improved. Such an approach, however, would require fundamental policy changes on the part of the B.H.A., it would require the organization to exert pressure on the mayor to deliver a wider array of services to tenants - from jobs to sidewalk repairs - and it would require that
the housing authority play a more positive role in the activities of the B.R.A. so that the development plans that are evolved for the city begin to take into account the variety of needs of tenants that revolve around the issue of housing.

In fact, the organization - because of the scale of its operation and the conservatism of its bureaucracy, does not have the flexibility to deal with the problems of housing projects on a truly individual basis, to attempt to discover causal relationships and change policy as needs arise. Instead it considers that it would be operating at maximum efficiency (as do some of its strongest critics) if it began to deal with the manifestations of housing problems - vandalism, rent delinquency, through policing and penalties. Such an approach, of course far from eliminating the problems of low income public housing tenants merely increase the tensions in these projects and probably makes the lives of its inhabitants even more miserable. A serious involvement in the development of social policy and community - building strategies together with physical renewal goals based on the priorities of individual projects lay beyond the capacity of the B.H.A., reform notwithstanding. At the simplest level a new form of management for public housing must be introduced; at the most fundamental level, social transformation is necessary. This thesis will deal with the more modest alternative.
Chapter 2: References


5. Ibid (pages in publication not numbered).


8. Ibid, Chapter 3.
3.1 Introduction

The problems of low income public housing tenants, as have already been stated, are rooted in class exploitation. Since the unequal distribution of income is increasingly becoming more inequitable (especially for working class minorities), the social problems that arise from both the resulting poverty as well as from the conflict with social norms and values determined by the propertied classes, cannot be resolved by local authority reform.

Given these constraints, the best that can be done to improve the living conditions of public housing tenants is the design of a management system that embraces a comprehensive approach to dealing with the problems of project residents. Such an approach should be based on four essential principles:

1) that the improvement of the quality of life of public housing families can only be accomplished through mutually interactive and re-inforcing physical and social improvement programs within the projects.

2) that recognition be given to the causal relationships between poverty, social deterioration and physical neglect so that the problems of tenants are treated with sensitivity and the objectives of management are placed in
proper perspective.

3) that recognition be given to the fact that although, in physical form, most housing developments may look similar, and in economic terms, their residents share the same plight, the social fabric of each project is significantly different, and policies, objectives and strategies must therefore be tailored to the needs of individual developments.

4) that the difference between projects are also related to the broader physical and social environments within which they are located and which must also be taken into account in determining needs and evaluating opportunities and choices.

3.2 The Weakness of the Conventional Public Housing Management System.

Given these general principles it is obvious that under the present circumstances the B.H.A. (or any other local housing authority for that matter) is incapable of significantly improving the lot of its tenants. Its management structure is too inflexible for it to deal effectively with causal relationships, its organization is too vast for it to be able to handle problems on the basis of discrete project needs, its controlling board is too insensitive to the needs of low income families and too controlled by political interests to aggressively forge interaction between the projects and their surrounding neighborhoods and finally, the basic philosophy of housing authorities is still too bound
up with laws and regulations and the physical manifestations of sound management to seriously embark on programs of social rehabilitation. Given the paralysis that results from these institutionalized shortcomings, the only form of management that can vigorously pursue the interests of public housing residents is one which is controlled, directed and operated by the tenants of individual housing projects - tenant management. Tenant management organizations, operating with the independence just described have the potential for creating the flexibility necessary for the sensitive handling of social issues, for developing a fine understanding of the relationship between physical and social problems within their projects, for mobilizing the entire tenant community in a development program and for energetically pursuing the interests of its residents at a range of different levels - neighborhood, city, state, and national - public or private.

3.3 Preconditions for a Tenant Management Alternative.

However, the extent to which tenant management systems can accomplish these objectives - financial considerations aside (for the moment) - will depend upon the extent to which such organizations, or corporations as they have come to be called, have been given effective control of the management of projects and the extent to which the goals they have set themselves reflect a thorough understanding of the causal
factors behind the manifestations of physical and social
deterioration that are so very visible. If they show the
same lack of understanding displayed by local authorities
(and become preoccupied with effects rather than causes),
if the power delegated to them is merely that of watchdogs
for the local authority and if they treat fellow tenants
with the same insensitivity previously meted out by the
B.H.A., the tenant management experience could become even
more disastrous for those suffering most from the effects
of poverty. In its desire to please its local authority
masters, to flex its newly acquired muscle and improve con-
ditions for "better tenants," such T.M.C.'s will act with
the same callousness and inflexibility previously displayed
by housing authorities in hounding those tenants guilty of
transgressing the "tenant made" or "tenant sanctioned" laws
that govern conduct within the projects.

Clearly the successful management of a public housing
project by tenants depends on three crucial factors:

1) the extent to which they have obtained control of
the handling of their affairs from the local housing author-
ity.

2) the extent to which they represent the needs of all
tenants.

3) the extent to which a genuine attempt is made to in-
corporate the tenant body into the community-building process.
The concept of tenant management is essentially the brainchild of Ellis Ash, a former administrator of the B.H.A., whose sensitivity to the needs of public housing residents and whose awareness of the limited capacity of housing authorities to satisfy these needs led him to propose that the B.H.A. approve a tenant management demonstration program in Boston in 1968.

3.4 The Bromley-Heath Tenant Management Model.

The essence of tenant management as conceived by Ash is tenant control - which allows residents the opportunity to design and tailor a development program to their requirements and the reduction of management to a scale where it serves a distinct public housing population so that it can harness the resources of that community, accommodate itself to the specific needs of its tenants and have the flexibility to deal not only with issues as they arise but also the unanticipated consequences of particular management resources.

The soundness of the concept notwithstanding, it is unlikely that the B.H.A. and City Hall would have endorsed it had the historical moment not been appropriate. This was after all the late sixties - with government under heavy fire for neglecting the needs of the poor, with the B.H.A. under constant attack for the crisis of low income housing in Boston, and with public housing tenants becoming demonstrably more dissatisfied with their conditions.
The embodiment of Ash's concept is found in the model of tenant management that was developed by the tenants of Bromley-Heath. A lengthy quotation is necessary to capture the spirit and substance of tenant management as perceived by the residents of Bromley Park and Heath Street who worked together to create the Bromly-Heath Tenant Management Corporation.

"(Under the agreement entered into with the B.H.A.) The T.M.C. assumes the responsibility to perform ALL management functions except to certify to the eligibility of new tenants. This one function must be reserved to the B.H.A. The T.M.C. employs staff, conducts the maintenance program, buys supplies, enters into service contracts as required, deals with tenant complaints, and more. In brief, it manages, and in accord with the principle that management must be concerned with the whole of peoples' needs and respond to them as part of creating and maintaining a community.

"This summary description thus far emphasizes structure and form and process. All of these things are involved. T.M.C. knows that it must demonstrate professional expertise. There is no hang up here. The T.M.C. seeks knowledge, absorbs it, and applies it to improving the quality of service to the tenants -- the boss.

"These characteristics, however, do not convey much that explains what makes the T.M.C. something special -- what makes it work -- what makes it worth supporting and protecting.

"Structure and process, are characteristics, after all, that all good management organizations must have. It just seems evident that the conventional recipes and ingredients for management organizations don't work for a lot of low income housing.

"So without downgrading the importance of management hardware, the T.M.C. attaches particular importance to more subtle, less specific features. These might be called parts of its software. They are difficult to achieve and they seldom can be reduced to written steps for insertion in a manual.
They are concerned more with the spirit of the organization than its body.

"Illustratively, then, here are a few examples of what is meant. Tenant management means tenant control. Tenant control is the ultimate -- the far-out extension of tenant participation. Tenant management aims to harness and to utilize the vast untapped resources represented in the tenant population and to focus their intelligence and interest on the task of creating and maintaining a viable community.

"Tenant management gives leaders the opportunity to put together a program and deliver it rather than being faced only with problems and no route to solutions.

"Tenant management gives followers the potential of programs that are designed to fit their definition of the problems.

"Tenant management concentrates on serving a precise tenant population. Management isn't faced with the almost impossible task of serving a program made up of scattered pockets, big and small, of tenants. In short, there is a manageable scale which incorporates an emphatic sponsorship of human values."¹

From the above description the following noteworthy features of the Bromley-Heath model of tenant management emerge:

1) that the tenants have insisted that they would be unable to deal with the problems of their community unless they had full control over the formulation of policy for and the administration of their community.

2) that the practice of management efficiency must go hand-in-hand with flexibility - that management is not an end in itself. It is a means to an end; the improvement of the quality of life of public housing tenants.

3) that tenant management provides the opportunity to
involve the body of residents in a cooperative effort to improve their living conditions.

4) that a scale of management is created which provides an opportunity for policy-making geared to specific needs and the flexibility to change or adapt such policy as conditions warrant.

The underlying philosophy guiding the Bromly-Heath T.M.C. approach is that the development does not have "problem tenants" - rather it has "tenants with problems." As a result it has geared its efforts to develop the resources necessary to address those problems rather than make the problems go away by constant evictions under the label of "problem tenants."

In contrast to this approach is the St. Louis model of tenant management. This model was formulated by Richard Baron, who, after a careful study of Ellis Ash's concept and its development at Bromley-Heath, incorporated some of the principles but not the spirit of the Bromly-Heath model.

3.5 The St. Louis Tenant Management Model.

Whereas the cornerstone of the Bromley-Heath model is tenant control, the St. Louis model leaves effective control in the hands of the L.H.A.; and whereas the Bromley-Heath T.M.C. believes that the "software" of management is of particular importance, the St. Louis concept emphasizes the "hardware" aspect of management. The model of tenant manage-
ment that evolves from this approach is a compromise which on the one hand ensures the L.H.A. control of public housing by its retention of crucial management functions while on the other hand responds to the demand for tenant participation by delegating its policing and maintenance duties to the T.M.C.

The extent to which the local housing authority maintains its control over public housing policy, and, by implication the extent to which tenant management under the St. Louis model can bring about fundamental improvement in the living condition of the project it administers is clearly demonstrated by some of the terms of agreement between the St. Louis L.H.A. and the T.M.C.:

- The local housing authority retains charge of rent collection. This means flexibility in dealing with tenants, who for any one of a number of socio-economic reasons may have constant difficulty meeting their rental payments, is virtually non-existent for it is hard to believe that authorities who responded to this issue with little sensitivity in the past are going to be overly considerate when tenants can now be used as agents in the rent collection process (the T.M.C. investigates rent delinquency on behalf of the L.H.A. and recommends action in terms of prescribed rules).

- The L.H.A. reviews T.M.C. recommendations for job positions. The independence in making appointments in terms of the specific needs of the tenants is considerably reduced
in a situation where final approval has to be given by the housing authority.

- The L.H.A. approves the annual budget requests of T.M.C. and provides a development budget based on its allocations. This is a crucial area of control for it implies that not only does a T.M.C. not have the freedom to determine its priorities, it cannot even plan priorities since it cannot anticipate its allocations from year to year. In addition, the controlled development budget means that the flexibility, necessary to change budget expenditures in terms of changing needs, is lost. In other words the rigidity that has given rise to many of the problems of public housing is left virtually unaltered.

- The L.H.A. controls extraordinary maintenance work, e.g., major apartment renovations, elevator maintenance, etc. The advantages of a manageable scale of operations, where the tenant management can organize and phase its maintenance and renovation in terms of a comprehensive plan for physical and social development, is virtually destroyed when its requirements are not evaluated with the same understanding and urgency by the authority, which invariably determines its course of action by bureaucratic prescription.

Given these controls wielded by the local housing agency, little authority is left in the hands of the T.M.C. except policing powers for enforcing rules and regulations and a low key involvement in the software of management which revolves around the organization of social gatherings,
gardening and a community newspaper.

It must be pointed out that these T.M.C.'s based on the St. Louis model do have boards of directors (five members) elected by tenants as well as managers (sometimes contracted positions); but the extent to which they are free to make policy based on fundamental project needs must surely be restricted by the financial controls wielded by the L.H.A. In addition they seem to have accepted the Baron notion that emphasis should be on the hardware of management - that rent delinquency, vandalism, animal nuisance, should be treated with firmness, so that the measure of management success, for example, appears to be the extent to which rent delinquency has been eliminated; while "software" of management does not appear to receive significant attention.

Thus in contrast to the Bromley-Heath model, which asserts that public housing tenants have the human resources, the capacity, and the motivation to effectively control their affairs in their best interests, the St. Louis Model appears to be based on the following premises:

1) that the values that operate in middle class environments should be the guiding principles of management in public housing projects. As a result the hostile, aggressive and unsympathetic responses of the middle classes to transgressors of their norms of social conduct relating to rent delinquency, animal nuisances, littering, noise, etc. be-
come the determinants of efficient tenant management. Administrators thus try to create living areas in the image of middle class neighborhoods - refusing to deal with the contradictions in and realities of social conditions which separate the two kinds of environments and which thus require more sensitive responses.

2) that families who deviate from prescribed norms should be treated as "problem families" who should be dealt with firmly in the interests of the rest of the community whose image as "good citizens" would be adversely affected by the conduct of such deviants.

3) that "policing" is an effective means of ensuring healthy living environments - from control of criminal behavior to the elimination of graffiti. Thus dealing with effects rather than discovering causal relationships and coming to terms with the roots of community problems seems to be the modus operandi of tenant management under this model.

4) that bureaucratic control should be extended to incorporate tenants, who will act as watchdogs over fellow residents. As a result evidence of "community responsibility" does not flow from the development of community spirit but from a fear of retribution by authority as represented by T.M.C. or its tenant supervisors in individual buildings.

5) that the paternalism and bureaucratic control that generally determines the relationship between local author-
ities and tenants should not be undermined. Thus critical management functions, such as rent collection, budget control, remain in the hands of the housing authority.

3.6 Summary

As has been stated at the beginning of this chapter, tenant management can only be presented as an alternative to local authority management if it has the necessary control which would enable it to act differently from the L.H.A. - otherwise it merely becomes the agent of the authority. Further, unless its policies are rooted in a genuine attempt to understand the whole range of tenant needs - social and physical - it is not going to be any more effective in improving the quality of life within the development it serves.
Chapter 3: References

4.1 Introduction

In physical appearance, Bromley-Heath resembles most of the public housing built during the forties and fifties, red brick buildings arranged in diagonal lines with open spaces of macadam and concrete, creating an overall picture of uniformity, harshness and overcrowding.

The development is comprised of three projects:

- Heath Street, made up of seventeen three-storey buildings - built in 1941 to accommodate 420 families.

- Bromley Park, a complex of eleven seven-storey and six three-storey buildings, built in 1954 with 732 apartments.

- Bickford Street, an eight storey building - built in 1962 with 64 apartments for the elderly.

The problems of Bromley-Heath have their roots in the choice of the location for the development. In conformity with the notion that public housing construction should be used as a tool for slum clearance, the B.H.A. chose the Heath Street site because "It was a deteriorating area which was spreading its blight rapidly." As a result the Heath Street project was built on a ten acre site, surrounded by slum housing and industrial buildings, with little environmental concern or care about the fact that the area contain-
Figure 4.1 - Bromley-Heath: Location Plan
ed none of the services or facilities that the poor who would soon be living there would find necessary. Fifteen year later, with the decision to expand the development to include Bromly Park, the thinking had not changed. Without considering it necessary to provide any support services or in fact, whether any more low income housing should be built in this neighborhood where deterioration continued, an additional 732 apartments were constructed in high rise buildings.

Over the years this alienating environment was made even more intolerable by the incredibly bad physical conditions within the project created by the lethargy and disinterest of B.H.A. officials in general and the incompetence and hostility of B.H.A. project managers and their maintenance crews in particular - especially when the ethnic composition of the development began to change dramatically. As a result of the lack of concern on the part of the management, the project began to deteriorate very rapidly - leaking roofs were not repaired, broken window panes characterized the development, broken glass and litter covered the grounds and walkways, vacated apartments were neither secured nor rehabilitated and as a consequence were vandalized, rats began to proliferate. This was the physical setting for the social deterioration that was already taking place within Bromley-Heath and which was to accelerate very rapidly as economic conditions grew worse for the poor.
The migration of blacks to the cities and their subsequent inability to find either suitable jobs or housing was a process which accelerated during the sixties and from which Boston certainly did not escape. As with most public housing projects in the northern cities, Bromley-Heath more and more became the home of poor, unemployed, underemployed, or underpaid blacks in the early sixties. By 1968, the development, which in 1956 contained only two minority families, was predominantly occupied by blacks.

The insecurity caused by unemployment as well as the demoralization brought about by welfare dependence, resulted - as has earlier been described - in the desertion of families by husbands and the unwillingness or inability of males generally to accept the responsibility of supporting a family. As a result, the number of single-parent families began to increase rapidly. Bromley-Heath did not escape this process, which by 1968 saw the proportion of black female-headed households in the nation rise to 26.4%. At Bromley-Heath, with its concentration of the poor, this proportion had reached a disturbing level (estimated at 83% in 1970).

The social breakdown caused by the combined effects of family erosion, poverty and the inability of young people to find jobs has already been described in Section 1. In Bromley-Heath, as in many other public housing projects where such families were concentrated, social deterioration
had reached serious levels. As a consequence of the resultant anti-social behavior which reflected itself in housebreaking, common assault, drug-dealing and vandalism, the project became "...just about the worst place to live in...(Boston)."³

Bromley-Heath in 1968 thus reflected the cumulative effects of the system's inability to deal with poverty and at a local level, the lack of interest or concern by authorities to come to grips with the physical and social blight that characterized public housing.

4.2 The Tenant Management Demonstration Program

It was at this point (in 1968) that Ellis Ash, then Administrator of the B.H.A., recognizing the incapacity of the organization to deal with the problems of public housing, sought Board approval for a one year demonstration project in tenant management which would be funded by the Federal Office of Economic Opportunity (O.E.O.). The Board agreed to support such a demonstration at Columbia Point, if the tenants agreed to participate, and hired "Organiza-
tion for Social and Technical Innovation" (O.S.T.I.) to prepare the funding application to O.E.O.

The tenants of Columbia Point, however, did not wholly trust the motives of the B.H.A. and rejected the experiment which was then offered to other developments.

The B.H.A. Board designated Bromley-Heath as the site
of the demonstration on the strength of the organized efforts by tenants in the project which resulted in a petition with 600 signatures asking for the grant.

At this point it is necessary to ask how it was that a housing development, beset with the social problems previously described, could rally the community support evidenced by the petition to the B.H.A.?

The answer lies in the fact that a growing number of tenants had begun to feel strongly enough about improving conditions and had the energy and resourcefulness to rally community support for various efforts geared to bringing about change at Bromley-Heath.

The organizational efforts involved in introducing these improvements were to stand the project in good stead in due course, for not only did they give rise to the establishment of service agencies with Bromley-Heath, but they also provided the community base from which the tenant management effort could be launched as well as developing a leadership core amongst the tenants, who not only gained with respect to fellow-residents but also developed confidence in their own abilities. An added factor which assisted in this community-welding process was a project-wide resentment of the poor management and maintenance performance of the B.H.A.

Two quite disparate organizations developed into the rallying point around which community action was to take
place - one was the Mothers for Action, which organized itself around a range of community issues - from the struggle for increased welfare payment to dealing with the problems children might be encountering at school. The other was the B & B Men's Social Club - which centered around the local softball team. These two bodies provided the structural elements around which much of the initial organization took place.

An incident of alleged police brutality against a family in the project proved to be the catalyst for community action. The Mothers for Action and the B & B Club were able to rally tenant support to provide assistance to the family involved. From this point onwards a series of community-initiated and community-led efforts resulted in the establishment of:

- The Martha Elliot Health Center which opened to provide much needed maternal and infant care within the project.
- The Jamaica Plain A.P.A.C. which started with an ad hoc group of residents and developed into a community advocacy organization - especially in relation to housing issues.
- The Bromley-Heath Community Center which was organized to provide recreational services to tenants.**

*Although most of the men who have families living in the project are not formal tenants, they do care about their families and many of them spend much time in the development. **The Bromley-Heath Community Center organization had been established much earlier, but during the period under discussion, the community took it over.
The Jamaica Plain Day Care Center which provided a pre-school day care service.*

Headstart, a federally-funded day care program.

The Bromley-Heath Modernization Committee set up to make recommendations for modernization priorities at Bromley-Heath.

"From June, 1968 when Bromley-Heath was selected as the site of the demonstration, almost one year was required to complete the organizational work to enable a community-based arrangement to be created that could initiate and direct the demonstration activity." At Bromley-Heath this meant "thousands of man-hours" by tenant volunteers committed to the demonstration program.

The two organizations that assumed the major responsibility for the organizational activity that took place at this time were the Modernization Committee and the Jamaica Plain A.P.A.C. The organizational and educational tasks which aimed at establishing some structure and substance for the tenant management concept and from which the elements of a program and a sense of direction could be created, were based on the stated objectives of the demonstration program which were to show that tenant management could bring about:

1) "a reduction in the deterioration of community property which results from neglect, destruction and indifference in the maintenance of building, grounds and individual

*The Day Care Center had been established as early as 1956 by the Associated Day Care Services but at this point community members became involved in the administration.
households."

2) "An increase in control and quality of management services by tenants and a growth in their influence over other services which affect their lives."

3) "An increase in influence by residents on future projects and on developments in and around the Bromley-Heath area."

4) "An innovative approach to career development for public housing tenants by redesigning job descriptions and programs."\(^5\)

During the course of this one year of intense organization and orientation work an Interim Committee emerged which was to become the interim governing body for the conduct of the program until the formal legal incorporation of a tenant management corporation became a reality.

This Interim Committee, based on a coalition of various group interests was made up of eighteen persons representing organizations operating in Bromley-Heath:

- Bromley-Heath Modernization Committee
- Jamaica Plain A.P.A.C.
- Headstart Parents Advisory Council
- Jamaica Plain Day Care Center Policy Board
- Jamaica Plain Community Center Policy Board
- Martha Elliot Health Clinic Advisory Committee
- B & B Sportman's Club
- Golden Agers
- Mothers for Adequate Welfare.
In order to facilitate its work the Interim Committee set up three standing committees: Budget, By-laws and Program. It also prepared a budget for the first six months of the demonstration, which it described as Stage I and which aimed at:

"The development of community understanding about the future of the proposal. This would be an overall education which would communicate what skills, responsibilities and duties a perspective candidate for the office ought to demonstrate for election to the T.M.C. Simultaneously, this period would be used to educate and organize tenants towards their responsibilities as tenants. This would be done in order that all tenants realise their responsibilities from falsely assuming that a T.M.C. would handle all problems without any effort or co-operation from tenants."6

The program for the demonstration was presented to the B.H.A. by the Executive Director of A.P.A.C. in June, 1969. Following B.H.A. approval, O.E.O. concurrence was obtained. The Jamaica Plain A.P.A.C. (as an incorporated body) was chosen as the fiscal agent for the $168,024 grant which was to finance the first stage of the program. While the Interim Committee was recognized as the governing Board.

The goal for the demonstration program as set out in the application for the O.E.O. grant was to "develop a process to assume management responsibilities through a tenant organization with which the B.H.A. can contract management services."

The initial tasks undertaken by the Interim Committee to meet this goal were:

1. The selection of an executive director as well as
the employment of three persons to form the nucleus of a staff.

2. Training programs for the Interim Committee in the basic principles of:

- Respecting the operation of public housing projects, housing codes and laws
- Community organizing and publicizing
- Intra-group relations
- Tenant management relation.

As part of this training the Committee would also make a comparative investigation of the operation of and tenant-management relationships in other housing projects throughout the country; as well as take over some B.H.A. management functions - to give the Committee actual experience and to actually demonstrate the feasibility of a T.M.C. operation.

3. The "development of a broad scale community organization program emphasizing communication devices to intensify the efforts to educate the entire community on the tenant management concept."

The process of training and organizing were not separate stages of the demonstration program. They became integrated in the organization of tenants around building units. This operation took the following form:

- A building committee was established in each building.
Each committee was comprised of a chairman, a vice chairman, a secretary, and, in certain instances, a building captain.

During the course of its operations the committees became responsible for expressing opinions on maintenance priorities, directly approaching tenants who littered hallways or stairhalls, identifying households who required special assistance and monitoring hallways as a deterrent to vandalism, burglaries and the unauthorized use of vacant apartments.

Although by May, 1970 committees had been organized in twelve buildings and although tenants were responding to the organizational drives, the Interim Committee became aware that tenant support and the organizational momentum would be difficult to maintain in a situation where it was without authority or resources to perform any management functions directly and thus was unable to clearly demonstrate that a new approach could substantially improve management services. This situation was exacerbated by the fact that the B.H.A., during the period of demonstration program, had done nothing to visibly slow down the further deterioration of services in the project.

It was at this crucial point that the Interim Committee realized that in order to save the demonstration it would be necessary to initiate an activity that "provided explicit and direct participation in the management process." In
June, 1970 the Interim Committee submitted a proposal for a pilot project in management to the B.H.A.

4.3 The Pilot Program in Tenant Management.

"The basis for the Pilot Program... (which was approved by the B.H.A.) was the success in organizing several well-established building committees. The Interim Committee selected five buildings (later expanded to include an additional seven buildings) where there was the greatest evidence of establishing stability and long term commitment."

A Pilot Program Committee consisting of a manager for each building (elected by each building committee) and two Interim Committee members was designated to guide and monitor specific management functions delegated by the B.H.A. These functions were tenant selection, tenant eviction, tenant employment, tenant training, and building improvements.

Unfortunately, despite B.H.A. Board approval of the delegation of these functions, lower echelon members of the B.H.A. refused to cooperate. This made the work of the T.M.C. (as the Interim Committee came to be called) extremely difficult and in fact began to erode its authority. A compromise was reached whereby the Pilot Program would focus on the task of physical rehabilitation and maintenance - the most visible area of B.H.A. deficiency. The maintenance program would be controlled by the Pilot
FORMING OF BROMLEY HEATH'S T.M.C.

ORGANIZE

NEGOTIATE

- SECURITY PATROL
- NEW WAGE RATES
- RECLASSIFICATION
- MAINTENANCE

COMMUNICATE

EDUCATE

THE TENANTS WILL HAVE A MEETING NEXT WEEK!

GOOD! I'LL BE THERE!

NEW RENTS MODERNIZATION BUILDING MEETINGS YOUTH BEAUTIFICATION ROOFS, KITCHENS

T.M.C. NEWSLETTER
- SEN. BROKE AMEND.
- TENANT SELECTION
- NEW CEILING RENTS
- BUDGET
- LEASE & GRIEVANCE

Figure 4.3 - Poster Promotion Concept of Tenant Management
Program Committee.

Notwithstanding the improved quality of service delivery that took place under the Pilot Program Committee (so much so that it became "clearly established in the thinking of Bromley-Heath tenants that certain buildings are 'T.M.C. buildings'"^9 T.M.C. more and more became aware of the fact that it would not be possible for tenant management to operate effectively unless it had full control.

A case in point was the question of vacancies. One of the objectives of the T.M.C. was to have all units in buildings occupied. However, it was dependent upon the B.H.A. crews and materials for the preparation of vacant units. "The T.M.C. (had) taken a firm position that all units or initial occupancy should have operable and functioning ranges and refrigerators, plumbing equipment, electric lights and service outlets, fully enclosed window openings, safe locks on entrance doors, plaster repairs and properly painted wall surfaces and other standard conditions, apart from being clean. The T.M.C.'s position (was) based on the sound and demonstrated experience that the potential for the performance of tenant responsibilities is correlated directly with the provision of a standard unit of occupancy....The B.H.A., however, consistently (was) unable to provide the materials and manpower when dwelling units required major renovations. Occasionally the T.M.C....responded to B.H.A. requests to modify its standards in order to accommodate
emergency circumstances.\textsuperscript{10} This dependence on B.H.A. left T.M.C. very vulnerable to criticism from its tenants because, as Ash states:

"...the B.H.A. can be less of a target for tenant hostility than T.M.C. in such circumstances because the tenants have learned not to expect B.H.A. performance. Good performance by B.H.A. is a shock, an accident, at best - a pleasant surprise, whereas the T.M.C. is expected to produce consistently well and there is no forgiveness."\textsuperscript{11}

It was under such circumstances, bolstered by the growing self confidence of T.M.C. in its ability to serve tenants needs efficiently and effectively, that an incorporated tenant management operation, invested with the necessary control, became the goal of the Interim Committee. Towards this end the T.M.C. "proceeded steadily to heighten the visibility of...(its efforts) and to organize (its) tenants."\textsuperscript{12}

The timeless and often dramatic efforts of the T.M.C. Board, staff and other organizers to continue the tenant management drive, to sustain tenant support and cooperation - often on the basis of faith rather than performance - is a story in itself.* For the purpose of this thesis, it is sufficient to say that the commitment and energy of the T.M.C. leadership, as exemplified in the early struggle to sustain the demonstration program, eventually led to the achievement of the goal of an incorporated tenant body with

*See Ellis Ash, \textit{A Light in the Hallway}. 72
Deciding whether or not to seek a management agreement with the B.H.A.

Other interested parties deciding whether T.M.C should be supported or not.
full management control.

In February, 1971 the Demonstration Program was extended and more significantly, T.M.C. was formally incorporated thus enabling it to administer the O.E.O. funds directly. In addition the B.H.A. voted $45,000 to supplement a New Careers grant to train seven T.M.C. employees in actual management functions.

Later in the year the T.M.C. moved beyond the procedural confines set by the B.H.A., when, in an effort to convince H.U.D. of its serious need for more modernization funds than had been allocated, it organized a "sit in" of Board members, senior staff and tenants at the H.U.D. regional office. The act succeeded in its purpose - it drew official attention to the desperate need for modernization funds at Bromley-Heath and resulted in the allocation of an additional $600,000 to the project by the Federal government.

In December, 1972, after favourable impartial evaluation of the T.M.C. operation by a team from the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (N.A.H. R.O.), the B.H.A. Board approved a five year contract with T.M.C. for the management of Bromley-Heath.

4.4 Summary

The history of the struggle of Bromley-Heath tenants to have an effective role in the management of their development highlights a number of important lessons that we have been trying to convey up to this point: These are:
1. Up to, and during the period when physical and social conditions at Bromley-Heath had deteriorated to the point where they reach crisis proportion for the people living in the development, neither City Hall nor B.H.A. displayed any real concern for the plight of the project tenants. The question of the high crime rate and the lack of social services was almost totally ignored by city officials. The vandalism, vacancy, breakdown in maintenance services and management contempt for tenants left the B.H.A. Board unmoved and organizational inertia made it impossible for a concerned administrator to act effectively. For Bromley-Heath, like every other public housing development, the system of public housing administration had proved to be a failure.

2. Whatever the intention of the bureaucracy in promoting reform, such action - as in the case of the demonstration program proposal - will not be very effective (indeed may not even get off the ground) without the participation of those it is intended to serve.

3. That public housing tenants, contrary to reactionary notions about their psychological condition, have a natural concern about their living environment, but unlike those middle class citizens who "get things done" in their communities, do not have political power or access to political influence necessary to facilitate improvements.

4. That notwithstanding the paralysis that exists with-
in such communities resulting from the socially dislocating pressures they live with, the hopelessness of their economic and social position (which is institutionally maintained), and their preoccupation with basic survival issues, it is still possible to rally public housing tenants around issues that deal with their physical and social problems. However, as the community accomplishments prior to the demonstration indicate, such issues must be at a scale which has immediate meaning and which produces tangible benefits relatively quickly. In addition, a prerequisite is the presence of a small body of concerned and community conscious residents prepared to take the responsibility of the major part of the effort.

5. Similarly, as the demonstration program illustrated, any effort which is able to galvanise community action at a larger scale, must also begin to produce results, otherwise momentum will be lost and support will dwindle.

6. That if tenant management is going to produce a significant improvement in conditions within public housing projects, there cannot be any compromise on the controls delegated by the L.H.A. If tenant management is still going to be dependent upon local authorities, notorious for their inability to deliver services for important management components, it will produce little of real consequence, however well intentioned the efforts may be.

7. That a tenant management operation cannot satis-
factorily serve the needs of public housing tenants if it is going to operate strictly in terms of the performance criteria and management rules that are used in conventional administration. Unless it is fully aware of and sympathetic to the many social and economic problems that confront the project's residents, and has the flexibility necessary to take those into account, - while at the same time remaining an efficient operation - it will not significantly contribute to the improvement of the living conditions of its tenants.

8. That an effective tenant management operation is one where recognition is given to the fact that in the eyes of the tenant, it has taken over all the landlord duties. In this respect it should clearly recognise its accountability - function and in situations where it cannot deliver, it owes the community an explanation for poor performance or failure. Otherwise it may well find itself functioning with the same arrogance and insensitivity as the landlord it replaced.
Chapter 4: References


CHAPTER 5: THE FIRST FIVE YEARS OF TENANT MANAGEMENT.

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will describe the problems that T.M.C. had to contend with - problems that have been referred to throughout the course of this paper. It will set out the goals and objectives that were defined to improve conditions within the development as well as the specific objectives which were related to the goals. It will also describe the organizational structure that was set up to manage the project as well as outline the extent to which management was able to achieve its objectives.

5.2 The Problems Confronting T.M.C.

5.21 Management Deficiencies

Despite the fact that during the demonstration program a considerable investment had been made in management training programs and despite the fact that the Pilot Program had provided the opportunity for some limited management experience, the most serious problem facing T.M.C. was the lack of actual management experience. The extent to which this deficiency presented a problem must be gauged from the fact that:

- there is an enormous difference between theory and
Figure 5.1 - Heath Street: Site Plan
Figure 5.2 - Bromley Park: Site Plan
actual practice - especially in a situation that demands
the tremendous flexibility already referred to.

- with the B.H.A., community response had been one
  of resignation; with T.M.C., expectations were high and
  there was enormous pressure on management to deliver.

- in the initial stage mistakes would be many -
  based not on management inefficiency but rather in the trial
  and error that was necessary when introducing a new approach
  for which there was no model

5.22 The Physical Deterioration of the Project

When T.M.C. took over the management of the project,
the level of physical deterioration that confronted it,
is difficult to describe. The overall picture was one of
devastation and total neglect. The devastation was symbol-
ized by the thousands of broken window panes while the neg-
lect could be seen in the unbelievable accumulation of
garbage throughout the project.

Roofs - The roofs in every building were leaking and in need
of a major overall. It can be imagined what the effect of
such leaks were on the condition of apartments, hallways,
elevators.

Paintwork and masonry - The combined effect of exposure to
the weather, vandalism and maintenance apathy gave rise to
a situation where throughout the development apartments,
hallways and stairwells were in serious need of masonry
repairs and repainting.
Outside Doors - Most of the building entrances were either without doors or had doors which could not close properly.

Windows - T.M.C. estimated that at least 6000 window panes had to be replaced when it took over. Included in this number were hallway windows. Not a single building had a hallway window that was intact.

Boiler Plants - The boiler plants were not functioning properly, and, as a result, apartments were often without water or heat.

General Repairs and Maintenance - Because of the hostility of maintenance workers towards tenants and management inefficiency, routine maintenance work in apartments had virtually come to a standstill so that apartments generally were in a very poor condition.

Garbage - Because B.H.A. staff refused to clear grounds, hallways and stairwells, garbage had accumulated to the point where in most buildings it was impossible for tenants to use the stairways.

Basements - Basements were not secured and thus had become garbage infested with rats.

Vacancy - The B.H.A. had made little effort to secure vacant apartments, and, as a result these apartments were often so badly vandalized, that they required major repair work.

5.23 Social Deterioration in Bromley-Heath

One of the major thrusts of this thesis has been to
clearly indicate how public housing projects came to be the areas where the unemployed, poor, and insecure were concentrated. As has already been indicated Bromley-Heath was no exception. In fact, it came to be regarded as the development in Boston where social deterioration had reached its worst levels.

**Family Breakdown**

In 1973 at least 83% of the households in Bromley-Heath were comprised of single-parent families. The attendant effects of this social condition have already been described. We need only repeat that this situation was highly indicative of the extent of juvenile antisocial behaviour prevalent in the project at the time as manifested by teen-age vandalism, the incidence of school dropout, petty assaults and graffiti.

**Unemployment**

As has already been described also, unemployment rates among blacks were very high. This condition too was present in Bromley-Heath - among teen-agers as well as the few male household heads present in the project. In addition, the rates of pay for black women generally were so low, that there was little incentive for female household heads to forego A.F.D.C. payments and find employment, even when they could find child care services.

**Drugs and Alcoholism**

Given the insecurity just described, it is not surprising that alcoholism and drug addiction were rampant in
the project. What made the situation even worse was the fact that as a result of police indifference Bromley-Heath became a major drug drop-off in the city.

**Crime and Vandalism**

As was to be expected social breakdown and unemployment gave rise to the proliferation of criminal activity in the project - involving not only local residents but also outsiders drawn to the development by the relative freedom from police interference. Bromley-Heath, in fact, became the area with the highest incidence of crime in Boston - assault, break-ins, robbery and vandalism reached levels which led a Wall Street Journal reporter to describe the project as "just about the worst place to live in... [Boston]."¹

This summary description of physical and social conditions does little to give the reader a vivid impression of what living in Bromley-Heath must have been like, for it cannot capture the comprehensive humiliation resulting from the combined and interactive effects of such appalling living conditions.

5.3 **The Goals of T.M.C.**

In the light of the conditions just described it is not surprising that the goals that T.M.C. set for itself and the objectives it designed to meet them were essentially problem-solving responses to the situation. Given the scale
of the problems such an approach was entirely valid. Longer term goals could be entertained only after the essential task of stabilization had been achieved. Given the fact that little significant change had taken place between 1968 and 1973, T.M.C. essentially adopted the goals that had been defined for the demonstration project:

**To reduce deterioration due to neglect, destruction or indifference:**

- To promote the recruitment of maintenance personnel from the tenant body - to ensure sensitive response to tenant needs.
- To deliver prompt and efficient maintenance service.
- To heighten tenant awareness of their own responsibilities in the upkeep of the development.
- To develop priorities for extraordinary maintenance expenditures in a manner which will bring maximum benefit from limited funds.
- To sustain the Community Security Patrol in an effort to eliminate vandalism and reduce other anti-social behaviour.

**To increase the quality and control of management services:**

- To ensure that all units are fully prepared before tenants move into apartments.
- To organize the delivery of repair services in such a manner that such needs are attended to promptly.
o To develop strategies that will lead to the elimination of vacancy in the development.

o To develop and expand T.M.C.'s communications programs with tenants.

o To encourage the location of social service services at Bromley-Heath.

o To develop an effective referral service for tenants with family problems.

To develop a positive influence of tenants on the immediate neighborhood:

o To improve the image of Bromley-Heath in order to facilitate the process of neighborhood revitalization.

o To assist local agencies in the establishment of commercial, recreational and social facilities.

To develop career and job opportunities for the tenants at Bromley-Heath:

o To place a major emphasis on the hiring of tenants both in administrative and maintenance positions.

o To create new job opportunities through the expansion of services.

o To provide career training through the use of staff training programs and the hiring of consultants.

5.4 The Organizational Structure

During the course of the demonstration program - through its perception of the problems at Bromley-Heath, its manage-
Figure 5.3 - Bromley-Heath T.M.C.: Organizational Structure
ment experience, its commitment to tenant involvement, its training programs, its consultant's reports - T.M.C. had created (on paper and in practice) the structure for taking over the management of the project. Not only had it developed an organizational framework and defined tasks at all levels, but from the beginning it had accepted the principle that the actual management experience would reveal failures and flaws it had not foreseen. It thus adopted the approach that flexibility was needed to adjust the structure and form of management to meet these conditions. The organizational structure that developed was thus based on the needs of the project, rather than a static abstract management model.

5.41 Components of the Bromley-Heath T.M.C.

In concept and practice there were to be three parts to the Bromley-Heath Tenant Management Corporation: "The Board, the Staff and the Resident. These three parts make up the T.M.C. Without any one of these parts there can be no T.M.C. The T.M.C. is an integrated effort of the three parts."²

1. The Board: It is the legal entity responsible for the overall operation of the T.M.C. - including policy determination, goal setting and financial solvency.

2. The Staff: It is responsible for the administration of policy set by the Board, managing programs as well as assisting in the development of policy.
3. **The Residents**: They "are the users of the services... (that T.M.C. provides)...They are the reason there is a T.M.C." Board policy and Staff programs are a response to and an anticipation of tenant needs.

5.42 **Policy Determination at Bromley-Heath.**

1. **The Board.** The Board has final authority with respect to the determination of policy even though in the policy-making process it may consult with staff or outsiders, involve tenants or hire consultants.

2. **The Staff.** The staff's role in the process of developing policy is that of participation, but not decision-making. Staff input takes the form of the presentation of reports by staff members, invitations to staff members involved in particular issues to join Board discussion or to clarify issues for the Board.

3. **The Residents.** The residents' response to T.M.C.'s policies may be the best expression as to whether the policy is good or bad. "The use of service, the quality of service, the very delivery system of service, are what the residents relate to. The residents' participation or lack of participation, or the constraints placed on the residents should give the staff and Board some understanding of whether the policy is effective."³
5.43 The Development of (Service) Programs.

o The Board. Programs are determined by the Board after consultation with the staff. The Board puts its stamp of approval on programs by allocating funds and developing policies that put programs into action.

o The Staff. The staff recommends programs to the Board. It is responsible for research and program development and also has to keep the residents involved so that programs are relevant to the needs of the residents.

o The Residents. Since the residents are the recipients of the programs, their needs and priorities should be reflected in such programs.

5.44 The Delegation of Operational Responsibilities.

A. The Chairman of the Board:
   1) Presides over Board meetings.
   2) Serves as contact and communications link between Board and Executive Director.
   3) Makes suggestions to Executive Director.

B. The Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is comprised of twelve members, all of whom must be tenants of the development. The Board, in turn, is allowed under the bylaws of the Corporation to increase its membership by five "community" members. These community members are persons the Board feels add expertise to other assets of its activities. Elections for Board
Election time at Bromley-Heath
membership are held every two years and all tenants at least 18 years of age are eligible to vote. The Board of Directors meet once a month. The functions of the Board are:

1) Develops and approves the budget.
2) Makes agency policy and decisions.
3) Identifies needs of the residents.
4) Sets need priorities.
5) Sets goals to meet priorities.
6) Reviews programs to meet goals.
7) Approve programs and program proposals for financial assistance.
8) Evaluates programs.
9) Awards contracts.
10) Knows staff talents so they are realistic about programs that fit staff abilities.
11) Hires and fires Executive Director.

C. The Executive Director

1) Is employed by the Board and accepts direction from the Board.
2) Prepares the budget for Board approval.
3) Gives information to Board on agency problems, program application, and how programs are being implemented.
4) Hires, fires and supervises staff.
5) Oversees the obtaining of equipment and supplies.
6) Sets overall policy for agency to follow.
7) Asks Board Chairman for advice.
8) Plans how projects will be run.
9) Sits down with each staff member to define the staff member's job, responsibilities and authority.
10) Sets up internal agency procedures.
11) Is in day-to-day contact with residents and area.

D. The Assistant Housing Manager
   1) Acts in the absence of the Executive Director.
   2) Supervises management staff.
   3) Oversees the rent collection program.

E. Finance and Accounting
   1) Responsible for the payment of bills and the payroll.
   2) Performs the routine accounting function.
   3) Responsible for financial reports.

F. Maintenance
   1) Performs all routine maintenance repairs.
   2) Responsible for cleaning of hallways, stairwells and grounds.
   3) Responsible for the operations and maintenance of the boiler plants.
   4) Provides a twenty-four hour emergency service to tenants.
   5) Repairs vacant apartments for occupancy.
   6) Rehabilitates badly vandalized apartments.
G. Tenant Services
1) Deals with all tenant complaints.
2) Supervises T.M.C.'s referral service.
3) Supervises the Summer Beautification Program.
4) Conducts the annual Tenant Status Review Survey.
5) Handles juvenile problems.

H. Tenant Selection
1) Conducts the tenant orientation program.
2) Inspects vacant and rehabilitated apartments.
3) Rents apartments.
4) Handles applications for apartments and transfers.

I. Tenant Protection
The tenant protection component of T.M.C. developed in response to the need to contain and control the high level of anti-social behaviour in the project which was a serious obstacle to tenant efforts to improve the quality of life at Bromley-Heath. As a consequence funding was obtained for the training and introduction of a Community Service Patrol. More will be said about the Patrol later.

J. Modernization
A special department was set up under a Modernization Coordinator to handle the extraordinary - maintenance programs that were funded under the federally-funded Modernization Program. The Modernization Coordinator has also taken charge of the special federally-funded C.E.T.A. and C.D.A. programs which are essentially geared to renovate
vandalized buildings and apartments in the project, as well as any other programs that are developed as a result of federal funds. In all these programs the Modernization Coordinator acts as T.M.C.'s negotiator with H.U.D., B.H.A. and City Hall (in the case of C.D.B.G. allocations).

5.5 The Performance of T.M.C.

In evaluating the accomplishments of T.M.C. during the first five years one must not lose sight of the fact that the scale and pervasiveness of the many problems that the organization had to confront were such that all things being equal it was impossible that a complete turn around could be accomplished within the first five years. As it was, all things were not equal. The financial resources that management had to operate with were very restrictive. For virtually all of the period the budget was essentially an operating budget in the narrowest sense of the word - it allowed T.M.C. little latitude for stepping up services beyond that which efficiency and enthusiasm facilitated.

In addition the resources for extraordinary maintenance - essentially the modernization funds - were not allocated to Bromley-Heath on the basis of the size of the project and the degree of seriousness of the physical and social conditions of the project and the neighborhood in which it was located (which was the mandate of the Modernization regulations). As a result annual allocations fell far short
of what was required to make a substantial and visible improvement in physical conditions.

Further, in spite of the social orientation of management, no money was available to introduce programs or even employ staff that could deal with the social issues that required urgent attention.

Given this perspective for evaluating T.M.C.'s performance, what were the priorities that the organization set itself and what was the level of its accomplishments?

Essentially a three-pronged attack was launched to improve conditions within the project. This was consistent with the acceptance by management of the view that the ills within the development had to be addressed in a comprehensive manner. As a result, efforts were directed at physical improvements (to the extent that federal funding allowed), maintenance efficiency to ensure that residents would be free of the service discomfort they had suffered in the past and to provide the social stability necessary for the effective operation of the social services located in the project.

The limited development of any one of these programs was determined only by financial constraints. However, within the different program - physical renewal, maintenance services, social services - priorities were developed. These are discussed below.
5.51 Physical Renewal (extraordinary maintenance)

T.M.C. decided very early that rather than perform the cosmetic (though necessary) repairs which would improve the external appearance of the project, it would spend whatever money it could get to reduce the hardship that years of B.H.A. neglect had caused in peoples lives. This was a difficult decision in one sense only - the improvements that were made were not very visible. Under the circumstances that prevailed - where tenants were expecting to see over-night changes and B.H.A. officials were expectantly waiting for failure - it would, in fact, have been easy to decide to spend money on painting window frames and putting up new fencing. T.M.C., however, decided to spend its money where it made the most difference to peoples daily lives - the provision of heat and hot water to every apartment, steps to eliminate the incidence of electrical breakdown, the repair of roofs.

Roofs

When T.M.C. took over the management of the project the roofs in all the buildings were leaking. The inconvenience to tenants who had to suffer this hardship can easily be imagined. As a result one of the first tasks completed by T.M.C. (with modernization funds it had applied for in addition to funds made available to B.H.A. for this purpose at Bromley-Heath but not utilized) was to reroof both parts of the development, Bromley Park and Heath Street.
Boiler Plant Renovation

The two boiler plants in the project were in poor working condition. In Bromley Park especially the boiler room was in shambles with only two out of the four boilers in working condition. As a result tenants' heat and hot water were frequently cut off in winter or else the heat was very unevenly distributed through the development. In order to eliminate this serious problem the boiler plant in Bromley Park was repaired at a cost of over $400,000 while major renovations of the Heath Street boiler room (budgeted at over $1 million) are presently under way.

Electrical Repairs

Because of the low amptage of the electrical system and the deterioration of the wiring, tenants are unable to use many electrical appliances, which again seriously affects their daily living. As a result T.M.C. has considered it necessary to make the overhaul of the electrical distribution system a priority. To this end new transformers were installed in the Heath Street side of the development. Money has however, not been forthcoming for the rewiring of the apartments.

Windows

As has already been mentioned when T.M.C. took over there were over 6000 broken window panes in the project. Hallways were the most seriously affected - in fact not a single hallway window pane was intact. One of the first
tasks that were undertaken were the replacement of all window panes. Later all hallway window frames were replaced.

Doors

It has previously been mentioned too that virtually all the buildings were without entrance doors. T.M.C. was only able to install twelve heavy steel doors while its maintenance crew made and fitted wooden doors to the rest of the entrance ways. Work is at present underway to have security doors installed throughout the development before next winter.

Rehabilitation of Apartments

T.M.C. was concerned not only with the elimination of vacancies throughout the development but the provision of adequate accommodation to its residents. To this end it geared much of its renovation work to breakthroughs - joining two small apartments to provide better accommodation for larger families. In this respect it has already completed thirty such breakthrough renovations.

5.52 Maintenance

From its experience under B.H.A. management T.M.C., placed a very high priority on the provision of prompt and efficient maintenance service to tenants. It developed a maintenance team of thirty-two maintenance personnel (nineteen skilled and thirteen unskilled workers) who do all maintenance work (except elevator repairs) - from cleaning
vacant apartments, hallways and grounds, the repair of appliances to the complete renovation of vacant apartments. This work is facilitated by carefully organized work schedules, a well supplied stock room (T.M.C. does its own purchasing) as well as a monitoring system which involves the Director of Maintenance (service calls), the Assistant Housing Manager (complaints), Tenant Selection (vacant apartments) and the Modernization Coordinator (extraordinary in-house maintenance).

As a result one of the most serious tenant complaints - unsatisfactory maintenance service - has been eliminated. The grounds and hallways are cleaned daily, vacant apartments are secured, newly rented apartments are completely renovated before tenants move in, occupied apartments are repainted as the need arises and a qualified boiler room staff (with an emergency 24 hour service) ensures a constant supply of heat and hot water.

5.53 Social Service

Although T.M.C. has had little money to expand the level of social services within the project, it has geared it efforts to provide social stability and the creation of an environment within existing social services can operate effectively. In addition its tenant service office is actively involved in referring tenants who need social services care to the relevant agencies within the development or
to outside agencies. T.M.C.'s social services should more accurately be called its community development component, for its efforts in this direction are geared to provide a social environment in which community participation and community interaction can develop. In order to accomplish this its efforts have been directed in four key areas - security, community activities, community services and communication.

Security

The T.M.C. attitude towards security centers around the creation of a stable social environment in which healthy community relations can develop. It therefore clearly recognizes that the presence of a security force will not be the panacea for all the social ills of Bromley-Heath. Essentially a security presence is seen as a deterrent to anti-social behaviour as a result of which management and agencies can provide services to tenants free from inter-conference and tenants can utilize these services, participate in community activities and develop healthy neighborly relations without the inhibition and insecurity that fear of intimidation, assault or burglary create.

A security patrol has operated in the project since 1969 when the Bromley-Heath Community Services Patrol was founded by the residents. In 1971 it was formally organized into an eighteen person unit, administered by the Jamaica Plain A.P.A.C. until 1975, when T.M.C. took over the patrol's
Figure 5.4 - Security Patrol Organizational Structure
The Community Security Patrol has played a significant role in detering anti-social behavior.
administration and incorporated its program as a department of the corporation. Later that year L.E.A.A. informed T.M.C. that since the Patrol was no longer an experimental program its funding would not be continued. Since then T.M.C. has received a grant of $100,000 from H.U.D. and two grants of $50,000 from the City of Boston through the C.D.B.G. program. These funds were supplemented by allocations from T.M.C.'s operational budget which enabled an eight person patrol to operate until December, 1978. The Patrol was forced to disband at that point because not only was T.M.C.'s resources severely strained when it had to foot the entire bill for the Patrol during 1977 and 1978 since the grants from the City were not received (the 1977 grant was only paid in March, 1979). In addition, Bromley-Heath received no further funding for the 1978-79 financial year. However, it appears that the Patrol will be reinstated since the City has proposed to provide $80,000 for security during the 1979-80 financial year.

The Patrol, which was comprised of a Director, a dispatcher and three two-man foot patrols equipped with two-way radios, has proved to be a highly successful deterrent to anti-social behaviour. In addition its assistance in the conduct of social and recreational activities and the escort services it provided to delivery services (outside services refused to enter the project prior to the establishment of the Patrol) and the elderly (who previously were
afraid to leave their apartments) have assisted consider-
ably to reduce the tensions that previously existed in the
development.

The effectiveness of the patrol as a deterrent to anti-
social behavior can be gauged from the fact that crime has
been reduced considerably in Bromley-Heath - the drug traffic
ring no longer operates, while burglaries, assault robbery
and vandalism no longer plague the development. The activ-
ities of the Patrol are supervised by a Security Advisory
Committee existing of T.M.C. Board Members, agency represent-
atives, tenants and police officials.

**Community Activities**

The T.M.C. community activities efforts are geared to
provide a wide range of activities for different age groups
and interests. The objective is not only to provide re-
creational activities but to develop a closely-knit community.
In this respect the efforts in terms of the actual pro-
vision of recreational services, have been limited. However,
T.M.C. has been largely responsible for creating the environ-
ment of stability and security - in which existing organiza-
tions could operate effectively, in which efforts could be
made to induce outside organizations to fund new facilities
and in which residents could feel free to actively partic-
ipate. In addition it has actively promoted these facili-
ties through the management office and its community com-
munications efforts.
W.T.M.C. - an important link between T.M.C. and the tenants.
T.M.C. - Sponsored Activities

- The summer beautification program. This is essentially a gardening campaign organized every summer by the staff member in charge of Tenant Services. Gardening space is allocated around the project to tenants who have an interest in vegetable or flower gardening. About forty to fifty families normally participate in this program and T.M.C. does its best to see that tenants are allocated space adjacent or close to their dwellings and that such spaces are adequately protected. In more public spaces, the Beautification supervisor is also involved in public planting - mainly shrubs, grass and flowers. The program also receives assistance from A.B.D. which assigns one hundred youth to the project each summer and they are allotted various tasks that mainly involve the clearing and improvement of the grounds.

- Radio Station - WTMC. - This is T.M.C.'s own carrier current radio station which acts as an important communications link with tenants of the development. The radio station originally established through O.E.O. funding, is staffed and operated through T.M.C.'s operating budget. The station operates from 6 p.m. to 12 p.m., Monday through Friday; 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. on Saturdays; and 1 p.m. to 12 p.m. on Sundays. The programs offered include popular music and community information.

- The Bromley-Heath newsletter. - This is a news-
Preparations for the Summer Beautification Program
The Summer Beautification Campaign
letter produced by management to keep tenants informed of management efforts, community issues as well as publishing letters and articles submitted by residents.

Community Recreation Facilities

A range of community facilities are operated by the Community Centers Organization funded through a variety of private sources. These facilities are located in the basements of T.M.C. buildings (with the exception of Bromley-Hall). The programs available include:

- A teen 'drop-in' center which operates a coffee shop and billiard room.
- A pre-teen drop-in center which emphasises games and indoor play for younger children.
- A sewing club equipped with sewing machines.
- A fully equipped pottery room.
- Bromley-Hall, a function hall with a fully equipped kitchen used for meetings, dances and receptions.

The project also contains a limited number of outdoor facilities that are maintained by T.M.C.:

- A well cared for, extensively used, basketball court.
- Three tot-lots distributed across the project.
- A mini-park - a grassed area equipped with concrete seats.
- Two spray pools - for use by children during the summer.

Although the recreation facilities at Bromley-Heath
Outdoor play facilities
are limited, they are characterized by extensive use and have operated free of vandalism.

Social Services

The social services that operate in Bromley-Heath are located in T.M.C. buildings. However, they are privately run although T.M.C. plays a part in determining and monitoring their program through:

- The Inter-Agency Council - a monthly meeting of agency heads and the T.M.C. Executive Director. At these meetings issues of mutual concern are discussed and programs are initiated.

- Representation on the Board of Directors of the various agencies.

The social services in operation are:

- The Martha Elliot Health Center which occupies an entire three storey building and which provides the following services:

  Pediatrics, adult health, obstetrics/gynecology, surgical consultation, dental care, speech and hearing problems/difficulties, nutrition counselling, podiatry, dermatology, allergy care for children, counselling for alcoholism, counselling for emotional problems.

- The Jamaica Plain Area Planning Council (A.P.A.C.) which operates a wide range of community services from tax assistance programs to job training programs.

- The Elderly Drop-in Center which is operated by
A.P.A.C. but is located in one of the buildings set aside for elderly tenants. The center helps to secure services like special needs, social securities benefits as well as organizing shopping expeditions, excursions and other social activities.

- Jamaica Plain Day Care Center - this program is funded through Title XX welfare slots and operates a day care service for approximately eighty pre-school children.

- Headstart - a federally funded, A.P.A.C. operated day care program which provides accommodation for approximately eighty children.

- Infant Day Care Center - provides day care service for about twenty children between the ages of three months and three years.

5.6 **Summary**

Given the abysmal conditions that existed at Bromley-Heath at the beginning of 1973, it can fairly be stated that the first five years of tenant management produced a marked improvement over the level of services delivered to tenants by management. These included a dramatic decline in anti-social behavior, the development of a maintenance service that responded promptly and competently to tenants needs, the delivery of extraordinary maintenance which was geared to reduce the level of discomfort suffered by residents as well as an overall management system that displayed
a politeness, sensitivity and commitment that had not been in evidence before. The extent to which T.M.C. has not accomplished its objectives during the first five years has not been explicitly dealt with in this chapter. This will be dealt with in the next chapter, since such unresolved issues essentially form part of the problem that should be confronted in the next five years.
Chapter 5: References


2. Bromley-Heath T.M.C. - Memorandum to the Board of Directors. (note dated)

3. Ibid.
CHAPTER 6: THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.

6.1 Introduction

As we have seen, the first five years of tenant management brought many improvements to Bromley-Heath. However, there is also much that was not accomplished, which remain as priorities. In addition new priorities have arisen as a result of changing, or even deteriorating conditions in certain areas. The objective of this chapter is to review the present position, gauge the possible trends over the next five years, review T.M.C.'s objectives for this period and recommend additional steps that might be taken to accelerate the process of revitalizing the development. The focus of the review will essentially be on what T.M.C. can do (given the available financial responses) - as opposed to what the federal government and the City should be doing. Such proposals must of course take place in the context of conditions within the project and its surrounding neighborhood, including changes that might be taking place - physical, economic, social - as well as the problems and opportunities arising from such changes.

6.2 The Neighborhood Context

During the past six or seven years a process of neighborhood revitalization has been taking place in Jamaica
Figure 6.1 - Jamaica Plain
Plain. However, most of this redevelopment is taking place in the central portion of the neighborhood - in the area close to the stable middle class southern portion, where access to public transportation and the local commercial center is convenient. Most of the northern part of the neighborhood - the part in which Bromley-Heath is located - is still plagued by vacancy, abandonment, neglect by absentee landlords, and rundown industrial buildings.

Most of the families who have moved into this part of the area over the last five years have been poor hispanics, for who the relatively cheap accommodation has been attractive and who have not been unduly perturbed at living in close proximity to a large, black, public housing project. Like the residential component, commercial development in this part of the district has also declined, partly because of the low income thresholds and partly because of the existence of a fairly strong commercial strip in the central portion of the neighborhood. As a result, the residents of northern Jamaica Plain are faced not only with an unattractive residential environment, but are poorly served by shopping and other facilities. In fact, to all intents and purposes, this area bounded as it is by the South-west corridor on the east and run-down buildings on the north, has been separated from the mainstream of activity and change in Jamaica Plain. For Bromley-Heath this isolation is even worse since its location in the north-eastern
corner of Jamaica Plain gives it very few links with even its immediate neighborhood.

However, the relocation of the Orange Line and the siting of a rapid transit station at Jackson Square holds some promise for the future development for the area. The extent of such development (despite the optimism of neighborhood groups) is open to speculation - given the general economic decline in Boston. In terms of improving conditions in Bromley-Heath. However, the new station site and the accompanying development of land adjacent to the project as open space has enormous amenity value (see figure 6.2). Not only will accessibility to the city be vastly improved (thus also making the project a more attractive residential prospect) but considerable new facilities in terms of playgrounds, playing fields, landscaping, and a possible commercial node will help considerably to improve living conditions.

In addition, neighborhood coalitions are developing to force landlords to improve properties while pedestrian movement to the station and related facilities provide an opportunity for breaking down neighborhood isolation. The extent to which the station will stimulate overall commercial development in the adjacent area, however, is questionable.

6.3 The Local Context

Notwithstanding the efforts of T.M.C. to make struct-
ural improvements at Bromley-Heath, the overall physical appearance of the project is still one of starkness and physical neglect. Although for example, broken window panes have been replaced, window frames have not been repainted and bare wood is exposed to the elements. Vacancy is still a serious problem with almost 400 apartments being boarded up - adding to the impression of abandonment that many parts of the project convey. This overall picture of decline is made worse by the fact that no money has been available for landscaping during the past five years; and before that, B.H.A. certainly had no interest in improving the spaces around the buildings.

While serious effort is made to keep the grounds clean, little attempt has been made to repair the very limited play facilities for young children that are dotted around the development. As a result although about 26% of the population of the development is under ten years of age, very few safe outdoor play facilities exist for these young children.

The overall visual picture then is one of deterioration. Some of the buildings are completely vacant - some burnt out, other vandalized beyond repair. Others are occupied but display few of the outward manifestations of management care and attention.

The fencing around the project is in need of attention - either repair, replacement or removal - parking is a serious problem, unused washline space another, while broken-
down, stripped vehicles pose a safety hazard to children. In addition, City Hall neglect (poor street lighting, non-maintenance of streets and side-walks) and the general physical decline of the surrounding area have combined to make the overall physical environment extremely depressing.

Within this physical environment social conditions are virtually unchanged from what they were five years ago. T.M.C.'s efforts to deal with anti-social behavior in the project have been tremendous but the poverty and the resultant family and personal breakdown continues. Of the 654 families* living in the project, only 15% of the household heads are employed - 85% of the families are thus dependent on A.F.D.C. or other welfare grants.** Only 11% of the households are made up of the two-parent families while female-headed households comprise 85% of all families. The hopelessness, helplessness and resignation that must result from such conditions need not be described. The difficulty of developing any sense of community in such a dispirited population is enormous - especially where social breakdown manifests itself in a very high incidence of alcoholism and mental illness (as appears to be the case at Bromley-Heath).

A more serious problem that has arisen is that the participatory process - on which the foundation of T.M.C. was based has broken down. In a distressed community like

*Excludes families in apartments for the elderly.
**The average family income (all families) is $420 per month while the average family size is 3.8 (see table 6.1).
Table 6.1

Bromley-Heath: Family Size Structure

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<th>Family Size</th>
<th>Number of Families*</th>
<th>%</th>
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<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Refers to tenants in family apartments only.
Bromley-Heath this is especially serious since not only does it retard the community building process, but the lack of participation is destructive because it gives rise to suspicion, rumor-mongering and misunderstanding among tenants already frustrated beyond reason. As a result of poor communications, for example, much controversy has arisen around the issue of the closing down of the Security Patrol program* and managements' stand on the question of unionization of maintenance workers.** In addition, a small group of disgruntled tenants led by individuals who have had personal disputes with T.M.C. have made serious accusations about the integrity of T.M.C. officials and management competence. These disputes also have other serious implications for T.M.C. Since the operation is so dependent on outside funding for extraordinary maintenance spending, signs of community dissention and dissatisfaction will adversely affect T.M.C. efforts to solicit outside financial aid—both public and private.

In terms of the larger socio-economic issues, there is

*The closing down of the Patrol because T.M.C. had run out of funds for this program (see Chapter 5) coincided with Patrol members' representation for pay raises. It thus appeared that the Patrol was disbanded because T.M.C. was unwilling to negotiate pay increases.

**T.M.C. employment policy has always been the promotion of tenant employment within the organization. This means that when employment opportunities arise, tenants should get preference. Similarly, when staff reductions become necessary tenant employees should be the last to be fired. This is in conflict with union policies of employing only unionized workers and seniority preferences in firing procedures.
little if anything, that T.M.C. can do, but then that is not the reason why tenant management was formed. T.M.C.'s mandate was, and still is the efficient management of a low income public housing project in order to improve the quality of life at Bromley-Heath. To the extent that this entails improving the physical conditions within the project, ensuring the efficient delivery of maintenance service, combating anti-social behavior, facilitating the delivery of existing social services, these still remain its primary duties. However, since quality of life must also be defined in terms of the stability that comes with employment and sound family relations T.M.C. must involve itself in these efforts to the extent that its' resources allow it. But above all, T.M.C. represents a community, it is responsible to that community, and, however, unresponsive the residents might appear, it is accountable to them. In its own words, "without the tenants there is no T.M.C." A basic tenet of such accountability is participation and since tenant participation is based on tenant organization, community development must be a cornerstone of T.M.C.'s efforts. In other words, the T.M.C. management effort must consist of interactive physical and social development programs - it must be comprehensive.

6.4 The Development Objectives for the Next Five Years.

The previous sections have described the problems confronting T.M.C. at present. As we have shown many of these have been, and will continue to be, beyond T.M.C.'s control.
Others, however, can be addressed by management. This section is a brief outline of the main problems that T.M.C. can address within the next five years, the steps that T.M.C. has taken, or plans to take, to deal with them; as well as recommendations that we feel the corporation should seriously consider if it is to effectively build on what has been accomplished during its first five years.

6.41 Vacancy

- **The problem:** about four hundred apartments are vacant throughout the development. Many of these are in buildings where major renovations will be necessary before rerenting can take place. Others are in well-maintained buildings, but require renovations ranging from major repairs to routine preparations. Generally speaking all the family apartments require some form of preparation before they can be rented. On the other hand in the buildings set aside for the elderly, many vacant apartments are ready for occupation while others require minimal attention.

- **T.M.C. Policy:** T.M.C. quite correctly, sees the elimination of vacancy within the development not only as a means of increasing its rent rolls, but as a step towards improving the physical condition of the project; and even more important, as a strategy for developing a more tightly-knit community. To this end and with the help of C.E.T.A. funded crews and modernization money, T.M.C. has already
### Bromley-Heath: Occupancy/Vacancy Rates

#### Occupancy Rates - Family Apartments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Apartments</th>
<th>Heath Street</th>
<th>Bromley Park</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. available tenants for occupancy</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>598</td>
<td>961</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. occupied</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>654</td>
<td>68.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. being prepared for occupancy</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent of Vacancy Problem</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>23.1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Occupancy Rates - Elderly Apartments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Apartments</th>
<th>Bromley Park</th>
<th>Bickford Street</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. available for tenants</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. occupied</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>47.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. Vacant</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
rehabilitated about twenty apartments during the past year. Present C.E.T.A. funding, in addition to some $600,000 in E.D.A. funding will enable T.M.C. to rehabilitate a further 83 apartments before the end of this year. This will reduce the vacancy level in the family units to about 23% (about 220 apartments). The recent proposal of a special in-house renovation team should accelerate the renovation process and reduce the vacancy levels even further. An important factor that must be borne in mind when evaluating T.M.C.'s vacancy-elimination program, is that there are a number of buildings where the destruction - through fire or vandalism - has been so extensive that rehabilitation could only come about through substantial H.U.D. funding.

Recommendations: 1) Thought should be given to a stabilization strategy. In Heath Street, for example, with the exception of the burnt-out buildings, a number of buildings have one or two vacancies only. Renovating these apartments and fully renting these buildings may be a good strategy for accelerating the development of social cohesion in this part of the development. In this respect a carefully organized strategy could be devised where rehabilitation efforts, for example, center around those parts of the development which: a) are the focus of community activity e.g., the managment office building; b) have developed and cared for open space (courts or private gardens); c) have fully rented buildings. In this way development nodes can
The scale of the vacancy problem
be created at the same time that federally funded efforts are directed to other parts of the development where more serious damage exists.

2. Hand-in-hand with the apartment rehabilitation program should be a building rehabilitation program. Not only should apartments be habitable but the building in which these apartments are located should be liveable. Thus the question of hallway lighting, entrance doors, mailbox repairs, graffiti removal, cleaning and securing of apartments too badly damaged to be immediately renovated, cleaning and securing of basements, roach extermination should all be seen as an integral part of rehabilitivating a building. T.M.C. care and attention in this respect is bound to assist in the process of developing tenant responsibility.

6.42 Maintenance

The Problem: the service delivery problem that existed under B.H.A. administration has, of course, been eliminated. What remains to be done as far as maintenance is concerned is the development of strategies for the development of increased efficiency. Maintenance has also been negligent in cleaning and securing vacant apartments, basements and buildings - a situation which poses serious health hazards. In addition, the quality of repair work - especially the preparation of vacant apartments has not been very satisfactory.
Tenants do care

Maintenance negligence undermines T.M.C.'s efforts to show that it cares
T.M.C. Policy: As has already been described, T.M.C. has developed a large maintenance team comprising the skills necessary for the effective operation of maintenance services. To speed up service delivery the maintenance department has developed its own purchasing system, thus eliminating delays that previously had arisen from parts shortages. To check the quality of service a monitoring system has also been developed.

Recommendations: 1) To ensure efficient maintenance service it is necessary to introduce a cost monitoring system. This will necessitate the employment of a cost analysis clerk who would not only be able to keep a check on the frequency of different types of repairs but would be able to monitor the time that maintenance workers take for different jobs. In this way the efficiency of workers as well as the quality of particular materials can be checked. In addition planning and work schedules can be better organized since management will be able to get reasonably accurate estimates of the cost of particular jobs as well as the length of time different operations take.

2) T.M.C. has instituted a monitoring system. However, this system does not work very efficiently. Management must adopt a hardline policy about performance standards and the authority of the tenant services staff member (inspection of apartments prior to renting) and the modernization coordinator (inspection of rehabilitated apartments)
must be impressed upon the Director of Maintenance. The Tenant Service Officer should not only have the power to reject unsatisfactorily prepared apartments but should be able to insist that rejected work be redone. The same should apply to the area of control of the modernization coordinator. In a similar fashion there should also be random inspections of ordinary repair work to ensure that a high standard of work is maintained. The importance of such an approach is that not only does it ensure satisfactory levels of efficiency and service but it is an important component in the whole process of community development.

3) A more effective monitoring of vacant apartments and buildings must also be developed. The cleaning of vacant apartments and the securing of windows and doors must be made a priority. In vacant buildings entrances should be secured as well since there is a distinct risk of injury to children who wander inside.

6.43 Site Improvements

- The Problem: As has already been described, T.M.C. has not had the resources to deal with serious landscaping needs around the development. The serious fire which devastated a factory on the Heath Street side of the project has added to the problem for not only was fencing destroyed as a result, but sidewalks and pathways were severly damaged and the rubble that was left after the fire has added to
Unsecured vacant apartments and buildings are a safety hazard
the unsightly appearance of the surrounding area.

**T.M.C. Policy:** T.M.C. has already drawn up a comprehensive program for site improvements at Bromley-Heath. The program includes fencing, improved parking facilities, the provision of additional play spaces, outdoor sprays, benches, barbeque pits as well as extensive planting (trees and shrubs). It appears that T.M.C. will receive about $20,000 in C.D.B.G. funding from the City to start the program. The program and initial funding should provide the basis for refunding applications. In addition T.M.C.'s existing summer beautification campaign is probably its most successful community program at present - for not only is there active participation but the results make an enormous difference to an otherwise drab environment.

**Recommendations:**

1) Even though T.M.C. will receive only a fraction of the money it requested for its site improvement program this year, it should vigorously pursue the development of a structure plan for site improvements. Such a plan will enable it to target development priorities as well as funding applications.

2) T.M.C. should also actively pursue university involvement in its landscape planning. Architectural and design schools in the area should be approached with a view to getting students to prepare small design proposals, e.g. totlots, as part of their studio work and as part of a community involvement process. In fact, the overall site
Parking

Landscaping problems that T.M.C. would like to address

Unused washing lines
improvement plan might also be considered as such a design exercise.

Future site planning should also take into account the outdoor facilities being proposed as part of the landscaping plan for the Bromley-Heath side of the Jackson Square Station development (see site plan). This is essential if the site planning structure plan is to produce a rational distribution of facilities and take into account the edge conditions between the buildings and the proposed open space development.

3) Even without special funding T.M.C. should try to organize its maintenance work schedules so that some outside improvements can be done. The removal of bent posts, broken or unnecessary fencing and the repair of totlot play facilities could all be done at little cost. The A.B.C.D. summer youth program could also be involved in such projects — especially repair work.

4) Efforts should be made to rally community support to exert pressure on City Hall to repair damage done to sidewalks, and to force whoever is responsible for the vacant site adjoining the property to clean it up.

6.44 Community Services

- The Problem: The high level of emotional problems among tenants, the chronic economic problems resulting from poverty-level incomes, the family instability, the unusually large number of children (almost 60% of the popula-
Parts of the project are already quite attractive.

In other parts only a small effort is required to produce a pleasant environment.
tion is under 18 years of age) are all indicative of the need for a wide range of community services - ranging from an alcoholic rehabilitation center to day care facilities.

The two infant day care services within the project provide accommodation for twenty-one children. There are about one-hundred and thirty children in this age group (one month to 2 1/2 years) in the project. Preschool day care exists for about one-hundred and thirty children. Over one-hundred and fifty children (3 to 5) are in need of this important socialising facility.* The absence of such facilities also severely handicap the ability of young mothers to look for employment - as does the absence of after school programs for older children. Although the Martha Elliot Health Center runs a small program for alcoholism, there is no outreach program that could deal with this problem more effectively. Nor are there any social welfare programs that can begin to examine family problems at any significant level.

T.M.C. Policy: T.M.C. does not have the resources to provide such services as part of its program. However, through the operation of the security patrol it has provided the security necessary for the effective operation of the service agencies that have located in the development; through the functions of its tenant services office it has

*Preschool day care services in the project also serve the surrounding neighborhood (including Roxbury). The service needs in Bromley-Heath is thus considerably greater than the figures indicate.
Figure 6.3 - Heath Street: Distribution of Community Facilities
Key:
1 Little Cave (Pre-teen recreation center)
2 Teen Cave/Pottery Room/Coffee Shop
3 A.P.A.C.
4 Headstart
5 Jamaica Plain Day Care Center
6 Infant Day Care Center
7 Community Hall
8 Play area (in need of repairs)
9 Totlot (in need of repairs)
10 Spray Pool

Figure 6.4 - Bromley Park: Distribution of Community Facilities
made referrals to these agencies and through the Inter-Agency Council it has played a role the determination of the range of services these agencies have provided.

**Recommendations:** 1) It must readily be conceded that in the face of the overwhelming problems that confront the residents of Bromley-Heath there is little that T.M.C. can achieve in this area.

2) However, T.M.C., in conjunction with the other agencies, must draw up a list of support services that are required to address the social problems within the community. It could then begin to design programs and approach foundations and corporations for assistance. Assistance could also be sought from various universities which might have an interest in opening 'clinics' of various kinds within the project to provide practical experience for their students, e.g. schools of social welfare, law schools.

3) One disappointing feature of the agencies operating in the project is the bleak and depressing atmospheres that they generate. The overall impression - which is probably unrelated to the quality of the service - is one of a lack of concern, interest or enthusiasm. None of the agencies is particularly well sign-posted. The entrance doors are as battered and neglected as those of the tenants' dwellings. The reception areas are dingy and lack warmth. We can readily concede that most of these agencies operate on very tight budgets but the kinds of changes we are talking
Facilities located in basements or with ugly facades do not help to improve the visual image of the project.
about are relatively inexpensive and require little effort. However, such changes would make a substantial difference to the tenants perception of the agencies.

4) T.M.C. should also give serious thought to the location of any new facilities within the project. In the past there appears to have been a pre-occupation with using basement spaces - the "Teen Cave," the Pottery Room, the Day Care Center, the Gymnasium (in need of repair at present) are all located in the basement areas. The psychological effect of having all these facilities 'underground' is not inconsequential and in addition such locations do not contribute to creating an impression of diversity and liveliness. For the present basement areas should be written off as useless spaces and secured.

5) T.M.C. should also entertain the idea of trying to introduce small scale commercial services. The necessary thresholds exist for the establishment of small, outward facing outlets for vegetables, shoe repairs, cigarettes and candy, etc.

6) Thought should also be given to creation of a covered parking area where car repairs may be carried out without cluttering the courtyard and parking spaces with immobilized vehicles (as occurs at present).

7) Ideas like some of those described above may be quite simplistic and impractical, but they need to be considered before being discarded, for useful innovations would cer-
tainly help to change the prison-like monotony and emptiness that prevails at present.

6.45 **Neighborhood Relations**

- **The Problem:** Because of the geographical isolation of Bromley-Heath, the cultural differences between its tenants and the residents of the immediate neighborhood, and the lack of surrounding facilities to promote interaction, neighborhood relations between the project and the adjacent residential areas are poor. These factors notwithstanding, the development of Bromley-Heath is bound up with the redevelopment of the neighboring area - not in the narrow sense of the displacement of the poor, but in terms of devising strategies for improving living conditions in the area.

- **T.M.C. Policy:** T.M.C. has recognized the need for closer ties with its neighbors. To this end it has recognized the importance of stabilizing the development and projecting a better image. The work of the community patrol has assisted in these efforts. The process of reducing vacancy and structural improvements as funds become available will help considerably.

**Recommendations:** 1) An important strategy for bringing about improvements in the area is political leverage. The existence of an active neighborhood coalition in Jamaica Plain makes it possible for the benefits of such leverage to accrue to this, the poorer part of the neighborhood as
well. The influence of this coalition is probably one of the factors resulting in recent City Hall proposals to allocate $315,000 in C.D.B.G. money for the provision of better street lighting in the vicinity of Bromley-Heath (the respect the developments' leadership has won at City Hall was probably also a significant factor).

Although T.M.C. has recognized the importance of linking up with this coalition, it has not actively pursued this effort. This must be done and the relationship should be formalised. In this way Bromley-Heath can be an active participant in the formulation of neighborhood policy and can ensure that development strategies are devised which are beneficial to the area surrounding the project. Such an association could also provide useful support for funding proposals T.M.C. might make in the future - both to public and private bodies.

2) The major community facility in the immediate neighborhood is the Hennigan Community School which offers a wide range of afternoon and evening programs for children and adults. T.M.C. should vigorously publicise the activities of the school both in its newsletter as well as on its radio station. Participation in these programs will not only promote personal development but increased interaction will also promote better community relations.
6.46 Tenant Selection/Marketing

- **The Problem:** Insofar as finding tenants for the apartments that are presently being made available are concerned, Bromley-Heath, unlike many B.H.A. developments, does not have a problem (see Table 6.4). However, T.M.C. is still bound by rules of tenant selection set by B.H.A. This has resulted in the absence of any marketing policy, since B.H.A. does not promote developments but merely accepts applications for housing - listing these in terms of the applicants stated preferences. The disadvantage of this process is that T.M.C. is unable to solicit tenants which might assist in the process of stabilizing the development - two parent families or families with working parents, for example. This does not mean that T.M.C. desires to develop exclusionary tenant practices. It would, however, like to have a more balanced tenant population.

- **T.M.C. Policy:** At present T.M.C. has not developed a policy in this respect. It continues to function under the management agreement with B.H.A. whereby it receives applications from the housing authority and allocations are made in terms of the chronological order of the application, family size as well as the recent court order which attempts to promote integration. T.M.C. hopes that the development of Jackson Square will make the development more attractive for more stable families in the future. It also recognized its role in developing the project to attract such families.
Table 6.3

Current Waiting List for Apartments at Bromley-Heath

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Apartment Size</th>
<th>No. of Applicants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recommendations: 1) Serious efforts should be made to develop a promotion campaign. The design and distribution of an attractive brochure or handbook highlighting the special features and planned developments of the project should be the starting point. Community interest should also be developed through the preparation of information articles about the project which should be distributed through the media.

6.47 Community Participation

The Problem: This is probably the most sensitive issue at Bromley-Heath at present. The whole concept of tenant management was based on tenant participation in the decision-making process - tenants determining what their needs and priorities were. Not only was this approach correct in principle, but it was also a precondition for community development. It was the mechanism for raising community consciousness, for developing community responsibility and most important for ensuring management accountability. This important process has been neglected in recent years. The consequences are alarming for the tenant management concept in general and for T.M.C. in particular. The Board of Directors and staff are no longer perceived as the management instrument of the tenants. They are the landlords - the local substitute for the B.H.A. bureaucracy. The lack of communication between T.M.C. and the residents
has resulted in alienation - hostility in certain instances, apathy in most cases. The failure to communicate has also led T.M.C. actions to be viewed with scepticism or mistrust in the recent crises that have confronted the organization (see page 121).

The delegation of executive responsibility by the tenants to the Board of Directors is a fact. However, in the spirit of the participatory process such power is a legal nicety. The Board, in return must feel obliged to respond, unsolicited to the tenants. It should feel compelled to explain major decisions to the residents, to keep them informed of what progress has been made, what plans are being formulated. It should feel obliged even to obtain tenant response to its actions (even though there may be no legal need to do so). Such communications should be made formally as well as informally - irrespective of whether tenant interest is indicative of T.M.C. success or failure.

**T.M.C. Policy:** T.M.C., it would appear, feels that it is sufficient if it communicates with tenants through the management office and through its news media (both the radio and the newsletter have been out of operation for some time - the radio station has recently begun operations, the newsletter is in the planning stage).

**Recommendations:** 1) In the interest of the concept of tenant management, of community development at Bromley-Heath and of the strengthening of T.M.C., the Board must
reintroduce the participation process:

- elections should be held regularly (so that no accusing fingers can be raised about arbitrary powers).
- annual general meetings should be held so that tenants can be kept informed of overall performance and can make their individual input into future planning.
- special meetings should be held to obtain mandates for major programs, and to inform residents of impending crises (e.g., the lay-off of the community patrol), to explain the reasons for controversial positions T.M.C. might take (e.g., disagreement with maintenance workers about unionization issues).

2) It is not sufficient to explain such policies through the press. Most tenants probably do not appreciate the precise language of press reports. Neither should such issues be viewed as "management's business." In the tenant management concept "management business" is the "tenants business."

3) T.M.C. should also consider sending special letters to tenants explaining particular issues - outlining both T.M.C. action and tenant responsibility. These should be done in addition to local reports.

4) All of these actions are going to be time consuming; in view of some of the response, they may even appear a waste of time. However, if T.M.C. sincerely believes that participation is the cornerstone of tenant management, then such
actions become a necessity.

6.5 Summary

Although the issues that have been dealt with in this chapter have been fragmented to facilitate explanation, they are all integral parts of one issue - the improvement of the quality of life at Bromley-Heath. As a result a discussion of site improvement also implies strategies to develop community spirit, community development also refers to efforts to arrest the deterioration of buildings. The approach to improving conditions at Bromley-Heath must be a comprehensive one. As we have said before, this is recognized by T.M.C. It is also practiced by T.M.C. However, at times the practice is not as consistent as it should be. Greater participation may well be the key to ensuring greater consistency.
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