A chaplaincy model of ministry in public housing: the Boatrock community of Fulton County

Harold E. Moore Sr.
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A CHAPLAINCY MODEL OF MINISTRY IN PUBLIC HOUSING:
THE BOATROCK COMMUNITY OF FULTON COUNTY

By

Harold E. Moore, Sr.
Associate Arts Degree, Washington Jr. College, 1957
Master of Divinity, Interdenominational Theological Center, 1983

A Doctoral Project Dissertation
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A CHAPLAINCY MODEL OF MINISTRY IN PUBLIC HOUSING: THE BOATROCK COMMUNITY OF FULTON COUNTY

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Date
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ABSTRACT

A CHAPLAINCY MODEL OF MINISTRY IN PUBLIC HOUSING:
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by
Harold E. Moore, Sr.
May 1986
99 pages

Historically, public housing has existed in a state of ambivalence, particularly since its acceptance of minority families in the early forties. Residents of public housing have found themselves locked into a dependency syndrome that is most difficult to overcome. Public housing, however, has become increasingly mismanaged and most properties are improperly cared for and managed. The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) presently operates under attack from the current administration. Budgets have been cut across the board at every Public Housing Authority in America. (See Appendix III.) The future of public housing looks bleak to say the least. Many residents have shifted from being welfare cases to "working poor" persons that need subsidy in order to exist at a minimal level of existence.

Federal rules and guidelines impinge upon the "public wards" of society in such a devastating manner that many of these persons' lives are impacted with extreme daily coping crises: child abuse, battered wives, aging, black on black crime, drugs, and alcoholism. The public housing residents contend that these dilemmas create for them unnecessary stress within the community, and are usually generated from forces outside the community (i.e., drug pushers, management, etc.). These conditions, they purport, also impinge upon their spiritual, sociological, political, psychological, and economical life, thereby preventing them from being viable entities within the family and community setting.

Thus, this project dissertation's purpose was to identify what specifically the Boatrock Public Housing community's residents viewed as their most pressing need(s); and thereafter provide possible support systems that would meet those need(s). A self-reporting survey questionnaire was the methodology employed to accomplish this goal. This was done by utilizing a door-to-door, one-on-one distribution process. The questionnaire was distributed by the writer and other co-professionals of the "care-giving" community, who waited for the selected respondents to complete the questionnaire. Afterwards, the questionnaire's information was analyzed by the writer and distributors. This information revealed
that the participating residents considered a pastoral care support system as a basic need that would assist them in coping with their stress-filled lifestyle.

As a consequence of these findings, this project dissertation proposed a chaplaincy model of ministry for the Boatrock community that utilizes pastoral care as a rehabilitative resource. The project also focused on assisting the residents in establishing an independent and interdependent lifestyle. Historically, the black community has had pastoral care support systems in its midst. Unfortunately for Boatrock, this has not been the case. Hence, the need for pastoral care, as a support system, was essential to the development of independence for Boatrock's residents. It is in keeping with the African-American religious tradition, wherein the church has been the guider and sustainer of the rural and small town communities during slavery, reconstruction, and the civil rights movement; therefore, symbolically, the Church ought to provide a similar pastoral care support system to the Boatrock community.

Finally, the residents of the community were found to be willing to assume some responsibility for themselves. Although their circumstances seemed insurmountable, irresponsible behavior was found, to a large degree, to be due to the lack of an adequate pastoral care support system. So, if the people of Boatrock expected to receive independence from the oppressive forces of management, then, they had to be willing to assume some responsibility for instituting and developing a process by which that independence could occur. Thus, it was the author's hope that by joining forces with both the church and state, Boatrock could achieve its goal of an independent pastoral care support system through a well developed and adequately functioning chaplaincy model of ministry.
DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to Mrs. Alies Akins, Dr. Thomas J. Pugh, and my spouse, Doris E. Moore. These individuals inspired me to pursue this task with love and enthusiasm. Mrs. Akins encouraged pastoral involvement at Boatrock and spent many hours delineating the community's history to me. Dr. Pugh expanded my psychological horizons beyond my imagination. It was his love and patience that gave me the impetus to continue this project. Because of these three loving and caring persons, Boatrock now has a chaplain who loves and cares about them.
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Finally, to the Boatrock community of Fulton County, a special thanks to those residents who agreed to participate in the project, especially Mrs. Rosa Franklin, whose love and commitment to a better "lifestyle" for public housing residents made this project worth the effort.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Objectives of the Dissertation

The objective of this project dissertation is to establish a chaplaincy model of ministry that provides a pastoral care support system to the Boatrock public housing community. Pastoral care in this model is defined as a loving and caring support system in the community that assists the residents in coping with their crises circumstances. There are certain theological assumptions and social systems that must be taken under consideration in order to establish this model of ministry. However, the main purpose is to set forth a pastoral care chaplaincy model that can be utilized as a "coping mechanism" during crises in the Boatrock public housing community.

B. The Significance of the Study

Residents of the Boatrock community are inundated with crises that create a lifestyle of stress. Further, the Boatrock community did not have an on-site professional support system or mechanism for dealing with the residents' crises. There is also limited access to the church community, and professional services (e.g., church outreach ministries, social welfare services, mental health clinics, social workers, etc.) are miles away from the community. Most crises
circumstances were handled by the public housing manager whose training in the area of counseling is usually limited to minimal training received during attendance in an undergraduate school. After personally observing these conditions and having circulated a questionnaire (see Appendix I) within the community, it was determined by the residents that they needed a "support" system within the community. The inadequacy of the manager's counseling system was a key issue for the residents in that they viewed the manager as an enemy who used confidential information against them. The level of trust between the two entities had dissipated to the point of distrust. Nevertheless, from the residents' perspective, a "support" system with a counseling component was needed if they were to gain relief from their crisis oriented lifestyle.

Social systems (order, continuity and triviality), however, impacted the lifestyle of the Boatrock residents to such a degree that frequent rebellion is exemplified in the form of disorder and discontinuity (destruction of property, failure to pay rent and frequent altercations with one another). These behavioral patterns do not represent what "middle class" society views as normal behavior; orderly and controlled behavior that represents the society's moral and social guidelines for "good" behavioral patterns. Perhaps the Boatrock public housing resident is so inundated with rules and guidelines that he or she finds it necessary to rebel occasionally against the "good" behavioral patterns of society. Moreover, management's requirement that the
resident follow explicitly its policies and procedures, and makes these requirements without regard to the residents' need for love, care and support systems, could be another factor that causes the resident to rebel against the Public Housing Authority's policies. Each resident is required to account for all additional income, increases in family composition above what was contracted for, and if caught violating these policies and procedures, the resident is immediately evicted. These are just a few examples of crisis circumstances that occur at Boatrock's public housing site. Hence, the necessity of this project is a significant study in that it will assist in finding solutions that will enable the residents of Boatrock to gain control over their crisis oriented lifestyles.

C. Definitions

"Chaplaincy" refers to a program of ministry designed to assist the persons in coping with their crisis situations; wherein, it utilizes the components of pastoral care in order to meet the "deep needs" of a person's personhood.¹

"Pastoral care," as a component part of this chaplaincy program, is defined as the unlimited caring and ministerial resources of the religious community.

"Pastoral counseling," on the other hand, refers to the provision of counseling services and assistance to families in crisis and in need of professional assistance.

"Chaplain," however, refers to an ordained minister whose on-site presence constitutes and validates the existence of the chaplaincy model of ministry.

"Ministry of Presence" refers to the chaplain's availability to persons in crisis, and he or she attempts to assist them in alleviating their crisis circumstances through visibility.

"Shepherd" is defined as one who oversees, protects, leads, and acts as caretaker of the people of God. In many instances, ministry of presence and the shepherd's functions will overlap.

"Model" refers to the total structure of the chaplaincy program which includes the theological, sociological, historical and cultural traditions of the people. More specifically, however, it focuses on two major norms--the theological and sociological systems of society and how these systems impact community and family life enclaves.

"Social systems" relate to the ordered structure within our society. Theoretically, these systems provide the norms by and through which we live and function in the society.

"Order" is a social system defined as a systematic organized way of functioning within a society. Each community enclave, whether

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4See Peter L. Berger's Facing Up to Modernity (New York: Basic Books, 1977) for additional information regarding society's social systems and how they impact one's "social definitions of reality."
religious or secular, is controlled by a system of "order." Every aspect of society depends on the formation of order so that things will not become "helter-skelter." Peter L. Berger validates this definition when he states that:

Every social institution, no matter how 'non-repressive' or consensual, is an imposition of order--beginning with language, which is the most basic institution of all... social life abhors disorder... the forces of order are always stronger than those of disorder... there are fairly narrow limits to the toleration or disorder in any human society... societies will react with almost instinctive violence to any fundamental or long-lasting threat to their order.5

"Continuity" refers to the "passing on" of the imperative of "order" to the children of the community. That is to say, if there is to be consistency in the society's ordered and structured form or lifestyle, then those valued components of order must be instilled in the minds of the children of the present and future. One must maintain and safeguard "continuity of the social order"6 of one's society.

"Triviality" is defined as a sociological imperative that breaks the monotony of too much order and continuity. It attempts to balance one's existence through some form of diversion from an overstructured system.7

"Biblical tradition" refers to that part of American culture which has been influenced by the Bible. An exponent of this tradition was John Winthrop (1588-1649), the Puritan who became governor of

5Berger, Facing Up to Modernity, p. xv.
6Ibid., p. xvi.
7Ibid.
Massachusetts Bay Colony. Winthrop espoused, through the biblical tradition, what he viewed as an archetypal of American life. "We must delight in each other, make other conditions our own, rejoice together, mourn together, labor and suffer together, always having before our eyes our community as members of the same body." Moreover, for Winthrop, the focus was not material wealth but a community ensconced in an ethical and spiritual way of life.

The "republican tradition" refers to that strand of American life and culture which focuses on the political dimension of one's life. Thomas Jefferson is perhaps the greatest exponent of this tradition. The republican tradition encourages the participation of citizens in some form of civic duty. Jefferson, through the republican tradition, "believed that the best defense of freedom was an educated people actively participating in government."

"Family Service Center" is the facility that houses the chaplaincy program and provides space for the chaplain, the pastoral care interns, social workers, community staff, and director.

D. Theological Assumptions

This project dissertation would be incomplete if it did not include assumptions about God. Theological assumptions in this dissertation refers to one's personal worldview about God's activities in the

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9Ibid., p. 29.

10Ibid., p. 31.
history of the created people of the universe. Each individual's concept about God varies and is usually based on some formal or informal teaching gained from religious experiences with and through a family member, preacher, friend, church member and significant other. These assumptions take form in our minds and thus become our beliefs about God. In many instances, some of us expand on these understandings and attempt to have a more personalized relationship with God, ourselves, neighbors and the world.

As stated earlier, the assumption is that God is continuously involved in the making of history. To say that God has discontinued participation in the creation of history is tantamount to irresponsibility. Every aspect of creation is perfectly placed and seemingly was done in systematic order: the seasons are consistent, vegetation continues to exist, animals continue to remain a viable force in the universe, and humankind regenerates millennium after millennium, century after century, and decade after decade. The order upon and by which the universe was created does not lose its consistency. It continues to exist regeneratively and historically.

What are the theological implications for Boatrock's residents? What role does God play in the lives of the residents? How does God impact the history of the residents and their community? One might begin with the assumption that God influences one's history here and now; and therefore, the residents of Boatrock, whether they are believers or non-believers, are a part of that history-making process. Thus, this active God of history continues to be involved in the historical process even though humankind may not be consciously or unconsciously
aware of God's involvement. The people's life experiences are those historical experiences shared with their God. It is at this point that the Creator functions as the Sovereign of all creation.

David T. Shannon's book, *The Old Testament Experience of Faith*, states that "the Old Testament is the recital of God's act in history."\(^{11}\) This writer is purporting that God continues to act in the history of human affairs. Whatever the people's "experiences," "understandings," and "crossing points"\(^{12}\) are, God actively engages them in the historical process; however, it is through their faith in God that they are enabled to experience and understand their relationship to God and to one another. Thus the "crossing point"\(^{13}\) becomes a bridge that closes a gap between God and the people of faith and therefore acts as a catalyst that strengthens their belief in the Sovereign God.

E. Methods of the Dissertation

The methodology employed in this project dissertation will focus on the theological mandate for ministry at Boatrock while taking under consideration the social systems that impact the lifestyle of the residents. In this process of examination, we set forth three imperatives as defined and utilized by Peter L. Berger: order, continuity and triviality. These imperatives are norms which Berger


\(^{12}\text{Ibid.}\)

\(^{13}\text{Ibid., p. 26.}\)
purports as being integral frameworks of a society. The society must have order and continuity so that it can maintain an orderly structured society. This writer, however, contends that these imperatives can also be found in other segments of society, particularly in the religious community.

Organizationally, the project dissertation's structure is as follows:

1. Chapter II examines foundational information about public housing and the Boatrock Community. It focuses on the need of pastoral care in the community and establishes a Family Service Center in order to meet the need.

2. In Chapter III the theological mandate is discussed by exploring the theological implications for Boatrock, the theological prospects, and the theological hope for the community's future.

3. The focus of Chapter IV attempts to establish what the relationship is between practical theories and social systems and how they impact the sociological dimension of one's existence. The framework of dependence versus independence, voluntary and involuntary community, private and public community and the Biblical and republican traditions will assist in understanding the social systems of society. It was determined that an understanding of the socialization process is necessary if one is to function viably within the American society.

4. Chapter V, however, establishes the pastoral care model for the Boatrock Family Service Center. The model presents the type of ministry to be utilized, the personnel who will oversee the
management of the facility, the resources that will provide assistance for the program, the facilities structure, and the evaluation process that will be used to cross-examine the program's viability.

F. Limitations

Public housing has traditionally had limited support systems for its residents. For a brief period, social workers were hired during the development of the "Great Society." However, under the current federal administration, the provision of social service was discontinued. The attempt to provide a continuation of counseling services in a climate of negativity toward public housing poses a threat to this program. Juxtaposed with the aforementioned limitation is the fact that access to financial resources is also limited to Public Housing Authorities (see Appendix III). Heretofore, the state and county have not been willing to support this program financially, reason being that it would duplicate the service provided by the county to its citizens. Nevertheless, they acknowledged that the need exists at Boatrock but could not place this project in the current budget. Subsequent to these prior meetings with the county commission, we have been told to resubmit our proposal for future consideration.

Educationally, the residents are limited in terms of understanding how to utilize the societal systems. The limitation, therefore, creates communication difficulty for the residents and management. The consequences of a limited education is devastating to both the resident and the children of the community. Before the chaplain,
director of the Family Service Center, interns and assistant director can proceed with the provision of service to the community, they must first engage in an educational process for the purpose of enlightening the residents on the "how to's" of living within this society. Anything short of this educational process will be inadequate.

The limitations depicted will focus this project on private funding sources, and will not limit its success. Further, even with limited governmental funding, the program has been sustained and maintained by local, private funding sources. Subsequently, the success of this project will not depend upon the church and state for its subsistence; rather, it will attempt to maintain existence outside these institutions so that it can function within a framework of independence; a difficult task, nonetheless a necessary posture. Independence from the system has given more freedom to the staff and recipients of the service; each entity seems to function without fear of potential perils or reprisal from governmental bodies and church structures. Thus, the Boatrock public housing site's limitations have become opportunities for the writer, the residents, and management to unify their efforts in the development of this chaplaincy model of ministry.
CHAPTER II

FOUNDATIONAL INFORMATION

A. The Need

Boatrock is a public housing community located and isolated in the unincorporated Fulton County area near Fulton Industrial Boulevard, Atlanta, Georgia. The residents of Boatrock are a mixture of "working poor," welfare assisted, and/or social security recipients. Their lifestyle is relatively simple. However, the community is inundated with daily crises: alcoholism, drug abuse, child abuse, battered wives, abject poverty, high male unemployment and black on black crime. All of these factors create stress and coping crisis for the residents of this community. Juxtapose these conditions with economical, political and social pressures from governmental and community structures occasionally cause many residents to withdraw from involvement and participation in coping mechanisms that could probably relieve them of these crises circumstances. The critical question, however, is how can the residents abate such crises situations? What can they do to minimize the extreme pressures brought upon them by these unsavory conditions? Realistically, can a crisis-oriented community such as Boatrock become alleviated from its crisis orientation by establishing what the community's needs are?

Like other community enclaves, Boatrock residents have a need to be self-sufficient; but they are unable to develop and establish a
methodology by which they can achieve self-sufficiency. It is incumbent and critical that this project focus on what Boatrock residents view as its most urgent need and attempt to identify a methodology by and through which the community can fulfill that need. A questionnaire was developed for the purpose of identifying that need (see Appendix I). This questionnaire consisted of "yes" and "no" answers to eleven questions for two reasons: (1) Management and community officers indicated that many of the participants had minimal reading skills and felt that "yes" and "no" answers would be more appropriate and (2) that by considering this fact more residents might be encouraged to participate. Thus, the questionnaire was so structured as desired by the community officers and management.

Before beginning the process, however, the resident commissioner had a concern regarding management's role: Would the entire process be controlled by management? There was also concern about whether management would invalidate the information if it found the answers to be threatening to management's authority. One needs to observe the relationship between management and the residents in order to understand the aforementioned skepticism. However, reassuring the resident commissioner of the independence of the surveying process did not convince her that it was not controlled by management. The resident commissioner was convinced in her mind that management would obstruct the process as it had always done in the past when surveys opposed its managerial style or pinpointed some social needs of the community. So in order to gain the resident commissioner's confidence, the writer agreed to include additional residential elected officers of the
community in the formation of the questionnaire and the distribution process.

The governing body that represents the residents of Boatrock, the Tenant Association president, the vice president, and the resident commissioner assisted in the surveying process. Many residents, however, were suspicious of the officers of their Tenant Association because they believed that management had hand picked these officers, thereby nullifying their ability to be objective and effective. Before proceeding further into the surveying process, it had to be determined whether management would interfere with the effectiveness of the community officers. A meeting was arranged with management, the Tenant Association's president, the vice president and the community's resident commissioner, who sits on the Board of Directors of the Authority. At this meeting, it was agreed by all persons present that the survey could proceed without interference; however, the information obtained therefrom would have to be cleared through the Office of the Authority. This arrangement was acceptable to the writer and the resident officers, but with the following oral agreement: (1) that management would not use the information against the residents; and (2) that the residents would not be evicted because of a particular stance taken against management.

Once the community was convinced that the resident officers and the surveying process was independent from the control of management, they then proceeded to participate in the surveying process. The survey took place October 12, 1983. It focused on the needs of the residents of Boatrock in its entirety. The methodology was a self-report,
with a door-to-door/one-on-one surveying framework, and was administered to the respondents by the writer, the Tenant Association president, the resident commissioner, two social work interns, and a pastoral care intern. Each questionnaire distributor remained with the respondents until they completed the questionnaire. By December 15, 1983, the survey was completed and at the end of February 1984 all information had been evaluated and compiled so that each interested entity could utilize the completed information. Thus, the following information is a result of the responses given by the responding participants.

B. Report of Findings

The data was collected for this study by circulating a questionnaire in the Boatrock public housing community. It consisted of thirteen questions. "Yes" and "no" answers were the categories of responses to the questionnaire items. There were one hundred resident participants selected by the Tenant Association president, management and the resident commissioner. Adults only participated in the process; age ranges were 25 to 55 years. Each participant was distributed a questionnaire by the writer, the Tenant Association president, the resident commissioner, two social workers, and a pastoral care intern, as stated earlier.

1. Community Population

Boatrock's public housing community consists of 800 residents, which include approximately 227 heads of household. Through communication with the Tenant Association president, the resident commissioner, and management, one hundred heads of household were identified as
participants in the surveying process. The writer expressed concern about the low level of acceptance; however, it was revealed by an Atlanta University School of Social Work researcher that this was a high participation level and a great response, considering the fact that public housing's residents have been inundated with research groups seeking information about their lifestyle and had thus become suspicious of surveys. The percent of participants was 44.05.

The selection process for resident participants was handled by the Tenant Association president and the resident commissioner, because they had developed a relationship of trust with them. Management's role, however, consisted of providing statistical data on each selected person. The participating residents' backgrounds varied economically and educationally. Sixty-two percent did not have a high school education; 38 percent had a high school education and 87 percent of them were employed at minimum wage and above. On the other hand, 75 percent of the participants received welfare or some other form of governmental assistance.

The average age was 31 while their actual ages ranged from 25 to 55. Eighty-five percent were single-family members and heads of household, and 15 percent were fathers and heads of household. The female heads of household were 95 percent of the 38 percent of high school graduates. On the other hand, male heads of household were only five percent of the high school graduates.

Family size of the participants varied; however, female heads of household had three or more children, male heads of household had two or more children. The community population information for the
project was provided by the Housing Authority of Fulton County from its central office records.

2. Administration of Questionnaire

The questionnaire was administered to the selected group consisting of one hundred people: 62 women and 38 men. The administrative methodology was explained in a previous section. Each questionnaire distributor was assigned to 16 participants and was instructed by the writer to assist the residents whenever he or she sensed that they needed assistance in understanding the meaning of the questions. The questionnaire distributors were also apprised that 62 percent of the participants had minimal reading skills. Those persons lacking reading skills were identified on the questionnaire with an appropriate symbol for comparative purposes.

3. Summarization of Findings

Question 1 regarding what influences the residents' values and beliefs, 89 percent identified the church and family as their greatest influence while 7 percent related their influence to a significant other (i.e., family friend, a distant relative, or second or third cousin). The African-American and American religious tradition received no response.

But when asked in question 2 if the church could assist you in relieving your stress, 35 percent said "Yes"; and 65 percent said "No".

On the other hand, when asked in question 3, are you receiving pastoral care from a church or community organization, 100 percent
answered "No."

In question 4, they were asked, "Would you be willing to participate in and support a pastoral care center that is designed to assist you in limiting daily stress?" One hundred percent said "Yes."

In question 5, they were asked, "Do you believe that your current lifestyle can be improved?" Twenty-five percent believed that a change could occur; 75 percent of the group did not believe a change could occur.

Then when asked in question 6, "Would a Family Service Center assist you in gaining control over your daily life?", 98 percent of the participants said they believed that an on-site Family Service Center could assist them in coping with stress and in gaining control of their lifestyle; two percent said "No."

When asked in question 7 to name the component you would support in a Family Service Center, pastoral care received a 100 percent support response.

Question 8 asked, "Would you be willing to participate in and give time toward the development of this Family Service Center?" Ninety-seven percent said "Yes" and three percent said "No."

Question 9 asked if day care services were provided, would you be interested in participating in an on-the-job training program? One hundred percent said "Yes."

Question 10 asked, "Would you be willing to donate your time, a few hours per week, in assisting the director with the children?" Ninety-seven percent said "Yes;" three percent said "No."
Question 11 asked, "Would you support a community worship service?" Ninety-nine percent answered "Yes;" one percent said "No."

Question 12, "Are you presently a member of a church?" Eighty-seven percent said "No"; 13 percent said "Yes."

Question 13 asked, "Would you support a chaplaincy program for the community?" The response was 99 percent "Yes." One percent said "No."

Based on the responses to the questionnaire, it was clear that a Family Service Center with a Day Care component would be appropriate. The answers also indicated that the community was willing to support such a venture through the allotment of personal time and effort. These data also supported developing a chaplaincy program. Both of these programs will need financial and other support from management.

In short, these findings were shared with management and were received with genuine concern. Thus, tangible action has followed these desired expressions in that the Family Service Center/Day Care was organized March 1, 1984 and was fully operable by May 1, 1984.

In retrospect, while establishing the Family Service Center in March of 1984, the community experienced a murdered mother crisis that brought them together as a support group. This incident is just one of several supportive cases that identifies the level of crisis existent in the community, and substantiates the need for a "caring person" among the administrative leaders at Boatrock.
4. Cases

The following cases demonstrate the level of crises existent in the Boatrock community. Each of these cases deals with unexpected crisis circumstances that require the presence of a professional "care-giver."

Murdered Mother Crisis

The following incident occurred at Boatrock's public housing site on the evening of March 10, 1984 just before midnight:

A father returned to his apartment intoxicated. His wife was very disturbed about his condition and began "nagging" him about his drunkenness. The father's intoxicated condition seems to have been a frequent occurrence, at least according to neighbors and other family members.¹ There were four children--two males and two females--ranging in ages eight, nine, and eleven. The children became concerned, as reported by David, the oldest child,² about the mother's continuous admonishment of the father and began moving about in the apartment in anxiousness and excitement. Perhaps their behavior was done in hope that they could offset possible violence. Consequently, the children's behavior did not circumvent the eventuality that occurred.

¹From this point, he will be referred to as Richard; his wife as Mamie. These are not their real names, of course. These names have been chosen for confidential reasons and to protect the innocent. Anyone who may be identified with a similar name is purely coincidental.

²From this point, he will be referred to as David. This is not his real name, of course. This name has been chosen for confidential reasons and to protect the innocent. Anyone who may be identified with a similar name is purely coincidental.
David says his father, Richard, drew his handgun and fired one bullet into Mamie's chest. She walked away from him, as though she had not been hit, toward the kitchen door leading outside of the apartment, where upon she turned facing Richard; he fired a second bullet into her chest. Receiving the second bullet, Mamie then leaned forward upon Richard's shoulders, looked into his eyes and said, "You have shot me." She then collapsed, falling upon the concrete of the back porch leading into the apartment's kitchen area, hitting her head on the concrete porch. Richard stood there watching as she fell to the floor as though he did not realize what he had done.

David states that he and his sisters and brother were devastated by this act: he said they had witnessed their father's verbal and physical abuse to their mother in the past but never an act so final as their mother's death. David continues, "We began moving about the community in alarm and shock, telling the neighbors that our father had just killed our mother." The resident neighbors responded reluctantly, according to David, because Richard and Mamie had a history of frequent "family arguments." However, several residents responded out of curiosity and discovered the mother lying on the concrete back porch near the kitchen. The police officers were summoned by a neighbor immediately. Mamie's sister was also summoned. There was no single support system in the community that could provide immediate attention to the needs of the family; Richard, the children and Mamie's sister. Although the community center had a pastoral care
intern in place, whom we shall refer to as George, he was unavailable at the time of the dilemma.

When George arrived the next day at approximately 2:00 p.m., he could get only a flat response from the sister of the deceased. Her actions or lack of them frustrated the intern, thus forcing him to retreat to the community center. As George reflected on the sister's response toward him, he was approached by the Tenant Association president, whom we shall refer to here as Mary, who questioned him about his dilemma and thereafter agreed to volunteer her assistance in approaching the sister again. They immediately returned to the sister's apartment. Mary began by asking the sister to identify her needs. Although Mary lacked a professional's theoretical approach, nonetheless she appropriately dealt with the crisis circumstance as though she had had professional training. Mary indicated to the sister that "George and I are here to assist you by whatever means possible; please trust us to do our best to help you." Sometime thereafter, the sister did evidence trust by crying and then she fell into the arms of Mary and commenced relating what the family's needs were. She indicated that they had no money or insurance for burial. There was no food for the four additional children as she had two of her own to feed.

In this crisis circumstance the community members became supporters and provided food and clothing for the family. This support

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3George is not the name of the intern. It is used for reference and to camouflage his true identity.

4Mary is not the name of the Tenant Association president. It is used for reference and to camouflage her true identity.
group became the supportive mechanism needed for sustaining the family through its crisis. As stated earlier, some brought clothing, others came with food, and many supplied money for burial of the deceased. Each of these acts of kindness demonstrated a **caring** and **loving** support group. It also exemplified for the surviving sister that she was not alone in her crisis; that she had a support system in her midst--her neighbors. These supportive persons were there for the family and remained so after the burial of the deceased.

Although this crisis incident is just one of many such occurrences at Boatrock, it does demonstrate that when a community resident faces adversity, other residents will come to the aid of their neighbor experiencing difficulty. However, this does not lessen the need for a professional pastoral care person in the community. The intent and purpose of this project is to demonstrate the relevancy of a chaplaincy program as a basic component of a support system for meeting the community's needs. Surely an additional support system can minimize the impact of such crisis circumstance previously depicted.

**Unexpected Death Crisis**

In June of 1984, Mrs. C was notified that her daughter had been killed in an automobile accident. The cause of this accident was not known at the time, but Mrs. C was suddenly thrust into additional responsibility of caring for her daughter's two children, age ranges eight and ten. There was no mechanism or support system available to Mrs. C. In an effort to offset some of the responsibilities of final arrangements for Mrs. C's daughter, the community residents formed a temporary support system. George, the pastoral care student intern,
assisted the family with funeral arrangements. Mary, the Tenant Association president, arranged for food to be distributed to Mrs. C's family, and the resident commissioner provided solace to Mrs. C in terms of allowing her to express some deep feelings about her daughter's death.

This case typifies, as did the prior case, the crisis circumstances faced by Boatrock residents. It indicates and supports the need for the existence of a caring person within the community enclave. Mrs. C could face her trauma better because the community persons responded to her need. Moreover, the children of the deceased daughter could have also experienced psychological devastation had it not been for the loving and caring manner in which the community caregivers related to them. The children became a primary concern of the caregivers with each child receiving special attention for the purpose of minimizing those feelings of isolation and aloneness that usually follow the loss of a loved one.

The care and love of the caregivers that went into the caregiving process indicate the community's capacity to support its own during crisis situations; however, it does not lessen the need for a professionally trained careperson. Furthermore, a professional would add considerable strength to the community's emergency crisis support system because the carepersons would be on-site at the time of a crisis and could immediately establish a mechanism that would respond to the emergency needs of a family or individual resident.

Fortunately for Mrs. C, the resident commissioner, the Tenant Association president, and the pastoral care student intern were in
place and could immediately respond to her needs. This has not always been the case in the past. In many instances, residents with emergencies such as Mrs. C's were required to call upon agencies outside of the community for assistance; it is only in the past two years that emergency assistance has been provided by the residents of the community and a pastoral care intern.

The need for pastoral care is evident; however, in order to establish the chaplaincy program, one has to understand the historical background of public housing's original intent and purpose (which will be explained in the next section) and who the relevant players are in management, and who provides the funding for public housing, especially Boatrock.

Mother and Son Adjustment Crisis

This case attempts to demonstrate two aspects of this family's crisis circumstance: (1) the mother's difficulty adjusting to the public housing sector and (2) the mental anguish experienced by the son as a result of the move to public housing. The mother, who we shall refer to as Mrs. A, was referred to the writer by a mutual friend who expressed deep concern about Mrs. A's emotional condition. The writer agreed to meet with Mrs. A. The following is the result of our first visit:

I arrived at an appointed time to Mrs. A's home and was warmly greeted. Upon my entry into her apartment, I could sense a feeling of sincerity and warmth coming from Mrs. A. She offered me coffee and a seat. It was quite difficult for me to believe that she had a problem.
There was a Bible and a copy of "Daily Word" on the coffee table. Mrs. A had been an active church member but church attendance had ceased since coming to Boatrock. 

I tried to relax as I was nervous and hoped by so doing she would relax. Mrs. A continued: I have had much difficulty these past few years keeping my family together. I was forced to move into public housing because I could not continue paying my house note. This was due to the fact that I lost my job at one of the leading automobile manufacturers' plant. It resulted from inhaling some kind of chemical that affected my nervous system. I went to several doctors and each of them told me that something had happened to my nervous system. This condition causes me to regurgitate my food and I also lose control of my bowels. So I was forced to resign and the company placed me on permanent disability. It was very untimely because I had just made line supervisor. Things were just beginning to break for me and my family.

a. Cultural Background

One has to understand that a move to public housing for Mrs. A, formerly a middle-class black person, was traumatic. Mrs. A had come from a very independent family background. Her family owned land and they also worked that land. In fact, her grandfather, an
American Indian, still owns property on which he currently lives. Land ownership means a great deal to the family. In a discussion with Mrs. A's American Indian grandfather, he states that historically, "the American Indians viewed themselves as caretakers of the land, not as owners, but stewards who were ordained by God to be caretakers" thereof. Mrs. A maintains that her grandfather still believes in this tradition. Mrs. A's mother and father were referred to sparsely. However, the grandparents' religious background, their cultural heritage, and their love for Mrs. A perhaps drew her closer to the grandparents than to her mother and father.

b. Educational Background

Educationally, Mrs. A finished high school and completed one full year of college. She also had extensive work experience as a nurse in the office of a physician, and several years as line employee, union representative, and later as a supervisor at a leading automobile manufacturer.

All of Mrs. A's employment and educational experiences have prepared her for a lifestyle of independence. Now, however, she is faced with a dilemma that she was not quite prepared for, moving from a lifestyle where she had had relative control over her destiny to a lifestyle of dependency. Mrs. A was not prepared for such a "setback" as the loss of her independence. This is, perhaps, the shortcoming of America's educational system; it prepares one for job opportunities rather than developing one's inner creative ability to become self-employed or independent from social welfare systems.
Although Mrs. A had a good educational background, she could not entertain a thought that focused her on ways of becoming independent from the welfare system. In her panic, she stated:

Since I have been here at Boatrock, I have experienced one problem after another. Management harasses me, my children are unhappy and I just don't see how I can continue on this way. Nothing seems to work out for me, even suicide. 'I took a bottle of pills before going to bed one evening. I went to each child as he/she slept and took one final look at him/her and then went back to my room. I stretched out comfortably and closed my eyes to await my oncoming death. As I went deeper into my sleep state, I saw myself at a river where upon I heard a voice on the other side of the river denying me the opportunity to cross over. I was told that I could not cross. I responded by stating that I had been a failure as a mother and therefore desired to end it all. The voice replied by implying that I had been an excellent mother. Sure I had made errors, but overall I had demonstrated love and compassion toward my family as well as my children. Then I was told that I could not cross over because I had unfinished work to do on earth. I awakened and reflected on my experience and attempted to understand what had taken place. You are the first person that I have shared this experience with.
Mrs. A shared the fact that she was under the care of a psychiatrist. She indicated that she did not know whether her attempted suicide experience was a form of hallucination or an illusion; however, she believed the experience was a real encounter with death. She then shared with me the problem facing her son, Mr. H. This young man (21 years old) had disappeared from home for several months presumably in good mental health, only to return in a catatonic state of mind. This was extremely disturbing to Mrs. A because she felt there was a connection between her mental health condition and her son's. H had been an excellent student and athlete; now he was mentally ill, she implied.

c. Mental Health

I was asked by Mrs. A to communicate with her son to which I agreed. H slept three-fourths of the day and generally walked the floor of the apartment at night. Mrs. A could not control his activity. He continued this behavior upon his return home from the hospital until he began sleeping almost twenty-four hours daily. H would neither eat nor bathe and he talked with no one either. I attempted to establish a communication channel. This process took several weeks before I could establish such a channel. Finally, H began to respond with a series of grunts and moans, but would never establish eye contact with me. We continued our usual twice weekly silent communication time together. At last one day, H decided he would like to go for a walk with me. On this walk he began to talk with me.
Mr. H shared his concerns with me. He believed his mother could have made an alternative choice to public housing. He had not been informed why they had to give up their "lovely home to move into public housing." This desperate move perplexed him to the point of mental anxiety. He had much difficulty relating to his new community surroundings. He would disappear for several days and was usually found at his old home site either in the nude or without shoes and other attire. His condition began to worsen and I recommended to Mrs. A that she place him under structured care at the Georgia Regional Mental Health Center. Mrs. A was devastated by this recommendation; however, she realized that if we did not get professional assistance that her son would face even further mental setback. He was admitted to a mental health hospital.

Mr. H found difficulty in relating to his doctor (a Chinese) and began reverting back to non-communication. Mrs. A and I communicated with the doctor and gave him an overview of Mr. H's past history. This information, of course, was helpful to the doctor. There was a breakthrough, after which the doctor was able to have more meaningful visits with him. In the interim, Mrs. A began experiencing problems with her nervous system. She became obsessed with worry over her son's condition. It became necessary to re-schedule counseling sessions for Mrs. A. These sessions were ventilating sessions for her. It was an opportunity for her to "talk through" her concerns and discover her own solutions. This required great care and patience from me as her pastoral care intern. I had to understand the implied principles of pastoral care as stated by Edward E. Thornton in his
article, "Finding Center in Pastoral Care," in order to provide the caring framework needed to empower Mrs. A with the ability to find her own solutions. Thornton states:

Behaviorally, pastoral care is about caring. It is caring for the neighbor without pretense and without expecting personal reward. It is caring in the knowledge of the behavioral sciences and the skills of disciplined professional training. It is caring in the faith that a person's care-giving communicates a sense of the God who cares. It is caring enough to know how to give first aid, how to see people through their convalescence, how to predict breakdowns, and thus, how to prevent them.5

Basically, I attempted to provide a caring structure that would sustain Mrs. A through her crisis circumstances. She, on the other hand, found her own solutions and answers. It would not have been frugal to me to impose my opinions upon Mrs. A. The experience offered both of us an opportunity to learn how to be present for one another without intimidating each other. It taught us both how to co-jointly provide a loving and caring support system for the other. More specifically, for me, it provided an understanding of how to do ministry in a crisis.

d. Summary

On reporting these cases, they illustrate the need for pastoral care and counseling in the Boatrock community. Although Mrs. A's crisis was only one case of many in the community, it gives added support to the need for a full-time chaplain in the Boatrock community. Two other

cases were discussed in previous sections of this chapter; however, Mrs. A is highlighted because of the complexity of her case: personal loss of independence; disorder and discontinuity in her family structure; and mental health problems for both her and her son. These conditions so impacted Mrs. A's lifestyle that she attempted suicide. It is a serious crisis when one is compelled to commit suicide, and believes that there are no other alternatives to the suicidal state of mind.

Mrs. A's family crisis and the family who experienced the murder of their mother indicates the importance of the need for a chaplaincy program at Boatrock. The public housing sector does not provide professional crisis counseling to the families living in their dwellings. The welfare system, however, does provide social services to the community but the resident must travel a distance in order to receive this service. In extreme emergencies, the residents must use the General Hospital's Social Services Department. This facility is quite a distance from the Boatrock site. Therefore, an on-site chaplain would provide the emergency crisis services needed by the residents.

C. Historical Overview of Public Housing in General and the Boatrock Community in Particular

Public housing, prior to the depression, had been discussed by legislators, but its establishment did not come into fruition until the 1937 Housing Act. Basically, this act attempted to provide temporary housing for those persons who suffered losses after the depression, many of whom had social and vocational skills. Public housing for these
individuals was a temporary provision until such time as they could regain their social and vocational economic status. Further, this housing act was also designed for the purpose of stimulating the economy, particularly for developers who had also suffered great losses.6

In the 1940's, however, the housing act was expanded to include returning World War II veterans and their families. But in 1949, public housing became housing for the permanently poor and for the growing numbers of minority families who became residents.7 In summary, public housing's original intent and purpose was twofold: (1) to provide temporary housing and (2) to stimulate the economy for the purpose of providing employment for the unemployed builders. However, in the interim, African-Americans became permanent residents of public housing. Many residents became recipients of welfare and food assistance programs, and began depending on these programs for their subsistence. Many fathers had neither vocational skills nor educational background.

Boatrock was originally designed as townhouses to serve moderate income persons; however, after the inspection of the facility by governmental authorities, it was determined that the facility was inadequate, structurally, by their standards. And so, the housing site was assigned to the Atlanta Housing Authority. Inasmuch as there were many problems of structure, Boatrock became a dilemma for the


7Ibid.
authority. In the meantime, a dispute between Fulton County and the City of Atlanta over territorial rights placed Boatrock in legal jeopardy. The Federal Court, however, resolved this territorial issue by awarding Boatrock to Fulton County on September 21, 1979.8

The following demographic information is relevant to Boatrock's history because it gives insight into the complexity of the community:

1. Familial Composition

Boatrock consists of 260 apartments, 33 or which are unoccupied. The remaining units are occupied by 227 heads of household. The total number of residents is 800. Since the Authority has no restrictive gender rules regarding who can lease an apartment, male and female heads of household are acceptable. Boatrock has 82 percent female heads of household, approximately 186 persons; and 18 percent male heads of household, approximately 41 persons. There are approximately 290 male and 260 female children in the community.9

Although public housing does not differentiate between male and female heads of household, it does, however, have an established rule that requires one to have a high-needs score in order to be admitted to public housing. For example, a score of 400 is the highest possible score and is determined by a family's being homeless and unable to afford private housing. Once admitted, the residents are recertified annually by the authority to determine their continued eligibility.

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8This information can be obtained from the public records of the Housing Authority of Fulton County, 10 Park Place, Suite 215, Atlanta, Georgia 30303.

9Ibid.
2. Economic Status

The economic status of this community is an essential aspect of this study because it enlightens us about the economic changes that are occurring in public housing communities; what is known as the "working poor." Boatrock has approximately 44 percent "working poor" persons, with many receiving minimum wages. On the other hand, 56 percent are on fixed incomes and receive welfare, social security, veterans' benefits, disability and other governmental assistance programs. In addition to the fixed income, many receive food stamps. Each head of household must recertify annually his/her financial status for purposes of readjustment of rent either upward or downward, depending upon the resident's financial status at the time of recertification.\(^{10}\)

The income levels range from zero to $12,000 annually, with most family incomes between zero and $8,000, which meets the national poverty levels established by the federal government.

3. Educational/Cultural Condition

Boatrock's educational history reveals that many residents lack basic reading, mathematical, oral and written communication skills. Many residents are high school dropouts. They became thoroughly discouraged with the systemic bureaucracy encased in the educational structure and opted to drop out. The area public schools are indifferent toward the public housing child and oftentimes proclaim the child

\(^{10}\)Ibid.
to be incapable of learning. Many public school teachers neither encourage nor inspire the child to continue the learning process. How then can these children survive in a technological world with such limited skills? How can Boatrock children achieve "dreams of hope" if the system and those who oversee it discourage them through attitudes of indifference? What role can one's cultural background play in the educational process?

The cultural dimensions of this community must be redefined so that residents can understand that their cultural "roots" extend beyond their public housing history. Boatrock's residents have viable family histories that transcend their public housing experience. Thus, it is incumbent upon the secular and church communities to engage in a new educational process that focuses also on the history and culture of the people it attempts to educate. Boatrock residents are no exception to this rule.

4. Religious Background

The religious composition of this community is varied, in that it consists of Muslims, Black Jews, Boatrock Community Baptists, Holiness, African Methodist Episcopalians, and Church of God in Christ. These residents live eight (8) to ten (10) miles from the nearest local churches. Transportation is a serious problem for the community. For that reason, many residents do not attend church. The Boatrock Community Baptist Church, which worships in the apartments of its members, attempted to establish a community worship hour by formally requesting use of the Boatrock Center from the Housing Authority of Fulton County.
This request was referred to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for consideration. However, HUD denied the request because of separation of church and state.

Residents of the community are currently attempting to establish an ecumenical community worship service which will give them access to the use of the community center. The Housing Authority believes that if the worship service is ecumenical and open to the community-at-large, then it will not be in violation of the Authority's guidelines on religion. The Fulton County's Housing Authority is open and amenable to free religious access to the community center as long as it is ecumenical in concept.

This historical overview of Boatrock's familial composition, economic status, educational/cultural condition and religious background gives us a better understanding of the community's complexity and diversity. However, based on the socioeconomic changes that are occurring in public housing nationally ("working poor" as opposed to welfare recipients and reduction in federal support, see Appendix III), the present structure, guidelines and regulations ought to be re-examined, re-evaluated and changed, if necessary. These guidelines are perhaps outmoded. Inasmuch as public housing currently has many "working poor" persons, the old concept of paternalism is no longer viable or useful and should, therefore, be replaced with a more concrete educational model. Working poor is defined as those persons employed at minimum wage.

In summation, historically, public housing was never intended to be a permanent dwelling place for its residents; it was a "temporary"
provision only until such time that a resident gained upward mobility. However, as the discussion has indicated, this has not been the case. Public housing has become a way of life for many of the working poor and welfare recipients of society. As stated earlier, economic and social change is occurring rapidly within the total society and public housing's officials must keep pace with this change. One of the ways that Boatrock attempted to meet the challenge of social change was to establish a Family Service Center on March 1, 1984 that focused on family crisis counseling and pastoral care. This center was a meaningful step for the community in terms of providing a social support system for its residents faced with crises. Moreover, this structure provided a caring and loving kind of environment in which the residents of Boatrock could alter their lifestyle of stress.

D. The Family Service Center

Boatrock's Family Service Center attempts to meet the need(s) identified by the residents of the community. The center was established for that purpose only. Each staff person has been instructed to relate to the residents with love and caring. The staff consists of a director, Dr. Peggy White; an assistant, Mrs. Susie Caswell, who oversees the direction of the Day Care Center; plus four other staff persons and three student interns (one pastoral care intern and two Master of Social Work interns). These individuals provide the intended supportive services for the families of Boatrock.

The mission statement of the center states that (1) counseling, information and referral services will be available to those who need assistance in managing and relieving various stress related problems
through the counseling program; and (2) the Child Care Center will provide an educational program (child development curriculum) and other supportive services such as nutrition, health and parent education. These are the goals of the center and thus far it has achieved many of these objectives.

The counseling program has provided employment counseling and personal counseling to many of Boatrock's residents, particularly the day care parents. Twenty-five parents and their children are being counseled daily. Ten of these parents have gained employment as a result of this assistance. In addition, personal and employment counseling and assistance (including job training opportunities) have been extended to other adult residents and youth in the community. As stated earlier, residents in crisis have been assisted as well. All of these efforts have been in full cooperation with the housing manager of Boatrock (including intervention in tenant-management disputes). The center also administers the Emergency Assistance Fund provided by the Boatrock Tenant Association: utility assistance, rental payments, etc. There are lecture/discussion series relating to money management, stress management, and teenage sexuality. A rape awareness seminar has been conducted and information distributed to the residents of the community.

The day care center, a component part of the Family Service Center, is such an integral part of the process that it would be difficult to separate it from the total part. The reason being, that each of these entities is serving a similar need: education. Both parent and child are receiving basic educational skills. These parents are
now, for the first time, being exposed to child development programs, lecture/discussion series and are encouraged to participate in the educational process in which their children are engaged. This is rather unique for many of these parents, because heretofore, they have been isolated from the educational community that educates their children.

This center is meeting needs that are unmet by society, the church, and the educational system. Its relevance is unprecedented in a society whose emphasis is on building war weapons for purposes of destruction. It is a strange paradox that a society so rich in natural and financial resources would focus its attention on destruction rather than teaching those persons who are illiterate how to think, learn and create (TLC). As purported earlier, change is occurring. Our society is no longer a society heaped in brawn; it has surpassed industrialism and has now become an informational society. This fact alone necessitates that the human inhabitants become literate; that they learn how to think, learn and create and succinctly learn how to read, write and do basic mathematics. The informational society dictates the necessity of these skills. The consequences of such a focus will yield a society of literate individuals whether they are from the private community enclaves or the public housing sector.

E. Summary

The need for family crisis counseling at Boatrock is evident. The family crisis cases depicted earlier attest to this need. Moreover, the questionnaire circulated in the community revealed that many
Boatrock residents also identified the need for crisis counseling. Thus, the establishment of the need necessitated examination of public housing's original intent and purpose so that a more realistic approach to the establishment of the chaplaincy model of ministry could be achieved. Needless to say, if one does not have a perspective on the historical dimension of public housing, one could very possibly operate out of blindness. The familial information gave the number of persons living at Boatrock, while the economical status identified the sources of income. It was determined that Boatrock had a considerable number of "working poor" persons. Although their educational background was limited, it was suggested by the writer and community leaders that the cultural dimensions of the community needed redefining. The religious background of the community varied, however, attempts are being made to develop an ecumenical worship service.

The above information, therefore, assisted the writer, in conjunction with the Boatrock Tenant Association and the Housing Authority of Fulton County, in developing the Family Service Center at Boatrock. The purpose of this center is to provide counseling, pastoral care, information, and referral services to the residents seeking relief from various stress factors. As a component of the center, the day care center provides a facility where the "working poor" mothers of the community can develop job skills through training programs in the work force. Thus, the relevance of the center to the community justifies the need.
CHAPTER III

THEOLOGICAL MANDATE FOR MINISTRY IN BOATROCK PUBLIC HOUSING

A. Introduction

In the previous chapter, pastoral care was identified as one of the community's needs. The focus was upon the crisis orientation of the residents. It was determined that the development of a Family Service Center was appropriate and would assist the residents in gaining relief from their daily crises. However, the focus in this chapter shifts from crisis to the possibilities that God provides to humanity; even though life's experiences may produce crisis circumstances, God continues to provide new opportunities for the creation. Specifically, God is the central figure in the historical process of a people. The Old Testament scriptures attest to this fact: God was at the center of Israel's history. Bishop Tutu states:

All life belongs to God, including politics . . . . The God of the Bible is first encountered, not in a religious setting, but in an out-and-out political experience, in helping a rabble of slaves to escape from bondage.

The theological mandate for the residents of Boatrock requires that the community's lifestyle be examined out of its own social matrix. This social matrix will include the spiritual, political, economical, psychological and educational needs of the people. Any inquiry void of these aforementioned dimensions would be an act of injustice to the
residents of this community. James H. Cone says:

What people think about God, Jesus Christ and the Church cannot be separated from their social and political status in a given society.¹

The implication of Cone's statement indicates that the spiritual, social and political dimensions of one's life ought not to be dichotomized, but should function as an integral part of the other. Although he addresses his discussion to Christians, this project, of course, cannot limit its projection to Christians only due to the religious diversity of the Boatrock community. Nevertheless, Cone's statement is relevant to this project, particularly his statement regarding people doing "theology out of the social matrix of their own existence."² As stated earlier, Boatrock's social matrix is important in this theological process.

Thus, this project will attempt to examine the theological implications of life in the Boatrock community, taking under consideration the social matrix of the community's religious, social and political life. Further, theological prospects for Boatrock suggest that perhaps a religious support system is needed in the community that will assist the residents in gaining a sense of belongingness. Additionally, a theology of hope will be suggested as a means of dealing with life's changes: birth, adolescence, illness, aging and death. Change, in this life, is a continuous process and therefore is an integral part of one's existence. Hence, hope becomes the faith of


² Ibid.
things that are to come; things as stated by Paul of honesty, purity, justice and of good report (Philippians 4:8, RSV). This should be the theological hope for the Boatrock community as well. The residents will be encouraged to envision this theological hope through the chaplaincy model of ministry.

B. Theological Implications of Life in the Boatrock Community

Previously, we quoted Bishop Tutu's notion that God had engaged in a "political experience in helping a rabble of slaves." Let us assume for a moment that Boatrock's residents are those "rabble of slaves" who are seeking liberation from the Pharaoh (Housing Authority of Fulton County, in this instance). Theologically, we must understand the historical context of Israel and her relationship with the Egyptian Pharaoh. This relationship is introduced in the Book of Exodus, wherein Israel is enslaved (Exodus 1:8-14, RSV). A series of events takes place (birth and adoption of Moses, discovery of his people and his exile) before Moses is instructed by God to deliver the people of Israel from Egypt (Exodus 2:1-23a, RSV). Moses is instructed to confront the Pharaoh (Exodus 3:11-22, RSV). In the interim, however, Moses has a vision (Exodus 3:1-6, RSV) before the "burning bush," wherein God revealed that He had come down to deliver Israel, His people, from bondage. Thus began the political struggle between God and the


4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid., p. 873.
Pharaoh or as Bishop Tutu has so aptly put it, God's political struggle on behalf of rabble slaves. This is not to imply that Boatrock's residents' struggle for liberation from its crisis orientation is analogous to the bondage which Israel experienced, rather to indicate the magnitude of Boatrock's crises.

C. Theological Prospects for Boatrock

A prospective solution to Boatrock's community crises will depend upon the community's faith in the will and power of its God. The slaves of Egypt, although they had faith, often fell short and attempted to retreat. In fact, they even expressed the desire to return to Egypt. This, no doubt, caused great stress for Moses. Nevertheless, he continued to persevere on behalf of Israel. An important point here is that Israel had a religious heritage—a faith and a God who interceded on its behalf.

J. Deotis Roberts implies that blacks use the family and the church as a primary institution. In fact, he contends that the church and family are two primary institutions in the black community. However, Roberts recommends that the black family and churches are to be understood in the context of American society. One can agree with Roberts on one hand, however, referring back to Cone's earlier postulation, people must also be understood in context with their own experience. This can be seen, of course, in the Jewish, Irish, and Hispanic communities; wherein each of these ethnic groups interpolates

8 Ibid.
its own culture, religious heritage and tradition within the American culture. They define their own experiences and tell their own story. The significance of this latter statement can be found in the Bible, which depicts the story of history of the people of Israel who are Jews.

Why have we not focused more on our African culture? Have we inculcated the culture of America to such a degree that we cannot accept our own? If God can be the center of life for the Jews and other ethnic groups, then God can also be the center of life for the Boatrock community. Roberts is on target when he purports that the church must be the institution through and by which we translate and identify our experience. According to C. Eric Lincoln, this has been the case. The Black church has been the nurturer and sustainer of its community. Many of these slaves, perhaps, had little knowledge of America's biblical and republican tradition (which will be discussed further in the next chapter); however, they had an understanding of the nature of God from the African perspective.

What does this mean for Boatrock? It means that the residents of the community are linked with this past, that they, too, are an integral part of this history. This is the theological prospect that can empower the residents of Boatrock: the linkage with the past, both biblical and cultural. It is through these disciplines that they can gain a perspective on what the present ought to be and how they must proceed in the future. There is hope for the future, but the residents must make a commitment to change their current lifestyle of dependency.

and be willing to risk failure in the process of pursuing independence.

D. Theology of Hope for Boatrock

Change is imminent and one has to realize that one's existence is in constant motion and transformation. That which is defined as "the end" is perhaps our beginning, thus the hope for the future now becomes the expectation of a new beginning. How does one begin anew? Is it through the process of contemplation? Can it be done through reasoning and critical analysis? Perhaps it is all of the above. One must think about what one desires to change and must also reason and critically analyze the issue before one can reach a resolve. If the residents of Boatrock desire to change their living condition, then they must engage in a strategic thinking process in order to gain a perspective on how to methodically gain the desired condition. Hope for the future can only be experienced if the residents dare to explore other alternative possibilities to their present condition.

In an earlier chapter, we discussed and provided some historical information that implied that management and residents were victims of a dependency syndrome. However, in this chapter, we are now recommending an alternative to this past relationship in terms of identifying a methodology by which the residents and management can experience independence. Therefore, the public housing authority's philosophy of "providing temporary housing for the poor" can still remain functional.

However, it will require that both management and resident willingly and mutually agree to alter their current relationship of dependency.

The promised new beginning for the residents and management becomes that oncoming event provided by their God. They merely participate with God in the making of this history, and in the development of the promised future. God, in this sense, has already become; however, they are in the process of becoming so that God's promise to them is that they must look forward to becoming with great expectation. The residents of Boatrock, although they may fall short on understanding classical theological concepts, may biologically and psychologically already have this knowledge. It may be an unconscious understanding, nonetheless, the information is perhaps in each of them. It is relevant, however, that the residents of Boatrock and management be guided by those intuitive notions that demand fairness and justice. Intuition, juxtaposed with reason, can perhaps open a new level of consciousness in their relationship; and thereby bring about liberty, justice and independence to each of them.

First, the residents must explore their depth feelings about God and how God relates to their history. If the future is going to have meaning for them, then, surely they must explore their history so that they can gain a perspective on the present and the future. Lack of knowledge is dangerous to any people's future. Historically, in a previous chapter, we reported public housing's beginning and its purpose. We are now communicating what the hope is for the present and the future of the residents. But in order for the residents to gain liberation from the past, basic knowledge is imperative. History
connects them with some basic roots: (1) about their past, (2) with a resource—the church, and (3) with the Divine intervenor—God.

Secondly, many residents already have ties with the black church experience, so it is fitting that they claim ownership of that heritage. Part of that religious heritage dates back to Africa. Further, that heritage has nurtured and sustained many of the public housing residents of Boatrock. In black religion, according to James H. Cone:

Faith in the God of justice and the human struggle to implement it belong together and cannot be separated without both of them losing their authenticity.11

Thus, for Boatrock residents, faith becomes the catalyst for the hope of the future. It must be an embodiment of the black religious experience. Past history dictates to all black persons that they must juxtapose faith in and with their struggle in order to become authenticated.

Cone says:

The faith of African-Americans is deeply embedded in our African and slave past. It has sustained our identity amid unetched circumstances, extending our spiritual and political vision far beyond the alternatives provided by the whites who enslaved us.12

Boatrock can be proud of its ability to persevere in spite of abject conditions; however, they must also continue to be mindful of their slave past and those who perpetrated that slavery.

More importantly, Boatrock residents must be mindful of their current condition in America, particularly since there is so much

12 Ibid.
emphasis upon the development of military weaponry; where personal disputes are settled with handguns (as reported in a previous chapter); where children and women are sexually abused and harassed; where educational systems oftentimes misinform, and are frequently closed to many minorities; where public housing residents are denied equal access to "the pursuit of happiness," "liberty and justice"; where "racism," "sexism" and "classism" are still an integral part of the American way.

But in spite of the above conditions, hope is still a viable option for Boatrock. The conditions have not changed, but the opportunities are more plentiful and accessible, Boatrock residents presently have far better opportunities to overcome these conditions than they have had in the past. It is through the power of God, however, that they have been enabled to persevere their crisis circumstances thus far.

Cone states that:

Our spirituality and the theology derived from it are unique when compared with the religion of Euro-American churches and their ideology. 13

He continues:

We have developed a spirituality that plants our feet firmly on this earth, because the God of our faith demands that we bear witness to the humanity of all by refusing to adapt ourselves to the exploitation that the few inflict on the many. We have hammered out a black theology that has helped black churches to recover the authenticity of their faith so that they will not go woolgathering in a nebulous kingdom on high and forget their practical responsibility to live obediently in this world, liberating the poor from the misery of poverty. 14

In concurrence with Cone, some black churches have strayed and sought to

13 Ibid.
14 Ibid.
"woolgather" in that "nebulous kingdom" on high and on earth by forgetting their "practical responsibility." Yet in spite of this, hope is still a viable option—hope that allows the church, management and Boatrock's residents to explore alternatives to abject poverty, to racism, to welfare systems, and to oppression. This theological hope can ultimately lead the residents of Boatrock toward liberation from these conditions.

Finally, those of us who oversee and provide guidance to governmental structures must raise more critical questions of ourselves and assist the residents in doing the same. James Cone raises significant questions when he asks:

How can we sing 'Glory Hallelujah' when our people's blood is flowing in the streets and prisons of this nation? What do we really have to 'Hallelujah' about?  

To which the writer replies: Life, opportunity, probabilities and a chance to change our lives if we dare to. These are great expectations—hope for the present and future. Cone also raises another question:

What do we blacks have to shout about when our families are being broken and crushed by political, social and economic forces so complex that most of us do not know what to do to resist them?  

An appropriate reply, once again, is that we have unlimited possibilities. Limitations can become unlimited if one dares to take risks. One must look beyond the limitation itself and focus on the cause of the limitation; after which, one has to explore as many options as possible that will open new vistas of many new probabilities. But one should in no way accept limitation as being final.

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15 Ibid., p. 197.
16 Ibid.
To illustrate: had Henry Ford (1863-1947) accepted the limits expressed by others, that his idea of developing a small automobile motor for middle level people could not be achieved, we probably would not be driving Tempos, Escorts, and Thunderbirds today. If Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790) had listened to the "prophets of doom" we probably would not be enjoying electricity. In practically every instance of outstanding achievement, someone has defied the boundaries of limitation to produce greater products for the service of humankind. This is not to say that one will not be faced with moments of impediment; rather, it is to encourage one to reach beyond conventional boundaries for enlightenment. One has to do some depth quality thinking before one can experience unlimited possibilities.

The residents of Boatrock must raise a critical question, "What am I to do?" This human question cannot be separated from "what God has done or is doing" to set the captives free. However, the residents of Boatrock might be encouraged to raise more critical questions for its community. "How can we do better than we are doing?" "What can we do to make our lives more meaningful?" In this instance, residents of Boatrock ought to be concerned about how they can improve their own lifestyle rather than rely upon a governmental system. They might be allowed the opportunity to help themselves; and the "caregiving" community might act as a resource when assisting the residents in finding solutions to their problems.
Milton Steinberg contends that one must "redeem one's own soul." On the other hand, Martin Luther King, Jr. states:

It has been fashionable for Christians to abdicate much of their responsibility to the will and power of God . . . . the real weakness of the idea that God will do everything is its false conception of both God and man . . . . God becomes the sovereign power over all things and men are identified as helpless and depraved.

It is obvious that both King and Steinberg believe that humans have some responsibility for the maintenance of their lives; that God and humanity share responsibility in a participatory process.

An interesting paradox, however, is that Steinberg's religious heritage teaches him to "inquire, debate, and make up his own mind." Christians, according to King, " . . . abdicate much of their responsibility to . . . God." The residents of Boatrock, however, have access to perhaps many choices. It is up to them to choose the solution that is relevant to their future. A theology of hope is one of many options available to them.

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18 Martin Luther King, Jr., I Have a Dream (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1968), p. 48.
CHAPTER IV

SOCIAL SYSTEMS: ORDER, CONTINUITY AND TRIVIALITY

A. Introduction

In the previous chapter the theological ramifications for ministry in the Boatrock community focused on God as the central figure in the making of human history. However, this chapter will examine the socialization process and how it influences and impacts one's behavior within a community enclave. Most community enclaves have social systems that usually govern its behavior and the manner in which the community responds to its neighbors and the society at large. There are specific guidelines and rules established by the people to govern behavioral patterns of the total society. Moreover, in "sophisticated/educated communities" these rules and guidelines are accepted as the norm for the conduct of the community. However, in a public housing community enclave, in this instance the Boatrock community, this is not the case. Many residents of Boatrock and other public housing communities have not been privy to a sophisticated education, nor have they been accepted as total equals in the society. These persons are considered as "wards" of the society, recipients of welfare and public subsistence.

Thus, social systems in this project will focus on the differences espoused in dependence versus independence, voluntary and involuntary community enclaves and how these differences are impacted
by order, continuity and triviality; also, attention will be given to
the difference between private and public community enclaves. The
biblical and republican traditions' influence upon these communities
will be examined as well. Robert Bellah et al. and Peter Berger's
interpretive understandings of private and public community conscious-
ness will be used as resources to address these issues in this project.

B. Dependence Versus Independence

In the American society the foundational beliefs of the nation
are ensconced in the Christian tradition; where the monetary system
espouses "In God We Trust"; where the republican tradition advocates
individual freedom and the free enterprise system; all of which impact
the lifestyle of the individual and his/her community enclaves. How-
ever, America's emphasis on the middle classes tends to isolate the
poor from participation in the so-called "American dream": ownership
of a home, automobile(s), free access to the "free enterprise" system
and basic independence. How is this done? It perpetuates itself
through social welfare systems that foster paternalism, where poor
and oppressed peoples are required to gain fulfillment of their social,
ecconomic, psychological and political needs from the welfare system and
the supporters thereof--the generosity of the public tax dollars.
Thus, how does one gain access to relative socioeconomic independence
from this dependency syndrome?

First, one has to understand that the idea of independence
carries with it a notion of responsibility. To suggest to a person who
has low self-esteem that he/she can instantly become economically
independent is irresponsible. Therefore, Boatrock residents must
understand what the responsibilities are for gaining economic independence, and must also be taught what the consequences are for being economically irresponsible.

Secondly, each resident must understand the socialization process of America. Peter L. Berger states that the process has three imperatives: order, continuity and triviality. In many community enclaves there is order. America functions by and is an embodiment of a system of order. Each system within the American system has order. Even in the public housing community there is order that requires each resident to adhere to the rules and guidelines which govern the authorities' and the residents' behavior. Moreover, the residents have also fashioned their own system of order as well. No one can violate social order without having negative or positive consequences fall upon them. The same principle applies to those who have independence. Although they are free to make decisions that are relevant and important to their lives, they are still governed by the order of the society. If one should violate this norm, one is then ostracized from the independent community enclave or is identified as a "trouble maker." Hence, in every community and with every race or nationality, order supercedes and imposes itself upon the individual, the community and society.

Continuity, on the other hand, is the continuation of order. It passes on the rules, guidelines, laws and norms of society to the newly born. The history, language and value system is passed on to the new generation so that there can be continuity in the society.

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2 Ibid.
The Boatrock community is no exception to the rule. Each community attempts to socialize its young into the system that it has accepted as being of value. In many instances, however, there is opposition by the young as to the merit of these value systems. Nonetheless, these systems are superimposed upon the young's psyche.

This is not to say, as stated previously, that these systems are not without problems because they do impose communal structures upon the individual, who may or may not desire to be independent of these systems. Thus, the individual, perhaps, looks to and for triviality as a release from such impositional systems. Order and continuity are fine up to a point, but at other times one needs relief from such superimposition. Whether it is sleep, a movie or dancing, one has to have relief from such restrictive structures. In this instance, for Boatrock, the male may indulge in extramarital relations and alcohol; the young may pursue self-actualization and expression of his/her sexuality; the mother may enjoy extramarital relations, alcohol and/or total involvement with community social clubs. It does not matter what the social status of the community is, it must have triviality (time for play) in order to sustain itself through excessive order and continuity.

In summation, independence requires that one be responsible when determining that one desires freedom from the dependency syndrome; that one commits oneself to be a responsible individual; and that one understands the ramifications of the acceptance of responsibility. These ramifications include understanding the socialization process

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3Ibid.
which includes order, continuity and triviality. Independence without these three imperatives as integral components of the individual desiring social freedom will ultimately fail to achieve his or her goal of self-determination.

C. Voluntary and Involuntary Community

In the previous discussion, we emphasized the importance of understanding one's responsibility to self and how being a responsible person contributes to fulfilling the expectations of society. In this section, however, we are examining how that independence overlaps into what has been defined by the writer as being a voluntary community. These are individuals who have some semblance of power over their own existence and the community in which they have chosen to live. In many instances, these individuals are educated to a large extent or they have acquired at least a high school education. On the other hand, the involuntary community persons, according to the writer's understanding, are those individuals who have accepted public assistance as their means of subsistence. They are usually supported by some form of public assistance, for example, public housing, welfare, food stamps and/or medicare/medicaid and others.

Is there a difference between voluntary and involuntary community? Perhaps voluntary persons can make free choices without constraints and interference from outside forces, of course, within reason and boundary of the law. But involuntary persons usually forfeit their right to free choice once they accept public assistance and become "wards" of the society.
Sociologically, the free choice process encourages opportunities for the volunteer community to participate in a social life of order.\(^4\) This, of course, is not the case for involuntary status persons. For them, free choice does not exist. A life of order for these involuntary persons is farfetched from their circumstances. Herein lies the difference between voluntary and involuntaryism: The latter denies the person possible options while the former leaves options in tact so that he/she can still gain independence and a voluntary status.

Another illustration of the difference between involuntaryism and voluntary is depicted in Chapter II, wherein a family observed the involuntary death of their mother. This circumstance was not the will of the family nor was it the free choice of the family. But in the heat of passion, the father killed his wife, thereby creating for the children the loss of a loved one; which created an involuntary circumstance. On the other hand, the action of George, the intern, and Mary, the Tenant Association president, was a voluntary response. They were not obligated to minister to the needs of this family. However, they chose to do so and demonstrated their option to exercise the power of free choice.

The consequence for the children was involuntary dependency upon an aunt who really had no means by and through which she could provide for their needs. Thus, the children became dependent upon others for their subsistence. The implication here is that involuntaryism usually occurs out of circumstances beyond the control of a person.

\(^4\)Ibid.
and circumvents options. Adults, however, can examine and exercise use of their many options; whereas, children remain dependent until such time as they can exercise use of independence and voluntaryism which is usually the consequence of the socialization process. Nevertheless, all persons who have expectations of independence, free will and choice must first be socialized in an orderly fashion and must be willing to maintain continuity of society's order.

D. Private and Public Community: The Biblical and Republican Traditions

In the previous dialogue, we mentioned that middle class persons of America are educated or at least have a high school education. These persons usually are the compilation of America's private communities: Robert Bellah et al. call them "biblical and republican traditions" which are the traditions established by John Winthrop (1588-1649) and Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826). Bellah says:

Winthrop's focus was on the establishment of an ethical community and moral freedom with particular emphasis upon the 'covenant between God and man'--which is liberty to do that which is good, just and honest. According to Winthrop's belief, one was to defend liberty with one's very own life, if necessary. Further, if a person of authority violated this mandate of liberty, he/she must be resisted.

Bellah states that Jefferson espoused equality. Although he did not believe that all human beings were equal in every respect, he

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6Ibid.
believed in their fundamental political equality. Thus, he "vigorously opposed slavery in principle."\(^7\) Hence, for Jefferson, political equality could not be effective in a society where the "citizens actually participate."\(^8\) It is in this context that reference is made to the private community. These individual citizens, although they live in a private community, participate in the public sector, performing some purposeful civic duty. In fact, the Housing Authority of Fulton County is governed by private citizens in the form of a Board of Directors. These individuals are selected and appointed by elected county officials. This concept of participation, therefore, continues to be an integral part of the American society's governmental and communal structured process.

Sociologically, private community persons have resigned themselves to adhere to order, continuity, and the biblical and republican traditions; whereas, public community persons (residents of Boatrock public housing) have been viewed by private community persons as placing more emphasis on triviality. This is not to say that the residents do not have their own social system of order and continuity; rather to imply that the private sector perceived them as engaging more frequently in triviality. Perhaps they are seeking relief from excessive order and continuity. The consequence for excessive trivial pursuits is that one risks the loss of perspective and control over one's quest for socioeconomic independence. Private community persons place more emphasis on order and continuity, thereby occasionally engaging in

\(^7\)Ibid.  
\(^8\)Ibid.
trivial pursuits. These individuals, therefore, maintain control over their life's destiny and occasionally oversee the life destiny of those in public communities. As indicated earlier, private community persons usually perform some civic duties that empower them to create policy and procedure which ultimately governs and controls the lifestyle of persons relying upon the public authorities for subsistence.

The "private sphere," according to Berger, has the option of taking a slice of reality and fashioning it into his/her world. On the other hand, "public wards" do not have this luxury. They are relegated to dependency upon the public institutionalized systems. The purpose for reiterating this point is to make it clear to potential pastoral persons that they must understand the variances within the socialization process. In theory and practice, these systems control the nature and destiny of humankind. Whether one is upper, middle or underclass, these systems are structured to maintain order and continuity. One's educational background and sophistication determine how well one uses these systems.

Thus, the Boatrock resident, the Board of Directors of the Housing Authority of Fulton County, the pastoral care person and the Family Service Center Director must each have an understanding of his/her role within these systems. In a society such as America, where change is constantly occurring, where industrialization is becoming extinct, where informational systems are seizing power, it is incumbent that the aforementioned entities prepare themselves for inevitable shifts.

Berger, Facing Up to Modernity, p. xiv.

Ibid., pp. 10-11.
in public housing's purpose. Paternalistic approaches are no longer viable in public housing. This new age society demands that we educate the uneducated; that we prepare the unprepared with new job skills; that we allow self-motivated people to be creative in the job market place. Sure we must maintain order and continuity so as to maintain balance, but we must not stifle individual creativity. Residents of public housing, particularly Boatrock, have individuals who are creative but they need assistance in developing skills for using that creativity. This community will not experience its full potential of independence, voluntaryism and privatism until those responsible civic persons provide educational assistance to the residents.

Editor Lawrence S. Wrightsman, Jr. indicates that:

In a democratic society there are tendencies within a highly complex social structure that lead to conformity, to submission, to authority, and to overobedience. Stanley Milgram has also indicated that "obedience and acceptance of authority are requirements of an organized existence." The inference by Berger that order, continuity and triviality are necessary imperatives for an organized lifestyle also indicates that an organized existence requires obedience and acceptance of authority. When one attempts to "break out" of the established norm, one is immediately ostracized or excommunicated from the "democratic society." For example, residents who cooperate with the system are preferentially

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12Ibid.

treated and identified as "good tenants." On the other hand, "trouble makers" who attempt to bring about change within the system are penalized either through eviction or some other form of harassment. Was this the moral principle that John Winthrop had in mind in his espousal of God's liberty? Did Jefferson's ideological equality theory espouse such injustice?

E. Summary

The significance of understanding the social systems empowers one with the ability to function within the framework of society. Many residents of Boatrock lack this skill. In order for them to become knowledgeable about how to use these social systems, they must be educated by those who are already sophisticated in utilizing the system. If the residents are to gain independence, opportunities ensconced in voluntaryism, and the advantages of privatism, then they must commit themselves to the task of seeking assistance from those whom they identify as "significant others." Further, if they are to gain understanding of the socialization process, which places great emphasis on order, continuity and triviality, they must discipline themselves to reprioritize or redirect their indulgence in trivial pursuits. They must become educated, sophisticated in the use of the system, and committed to changing their current "I can't do it" mind-set. In Chapter V, the writer offers a model of ministry that attempts to assist the residents of Boatrock in achieving their goal of socioeconomic independence.
CHAPTER V

BASIC PASTORAL CARE MODEL FOR BOATROCK'S FAMILY SERVICE CENTER: CHAPLAINCY

A. Introduction

The chaplaincy, as a state-supported entity, has precedence already in the American society: it is a part of the prisons' services, in civilian service institutions and the military systems. Thus, it is no diversion to suggest such a program for Boatrock's public housing residents. A chaplaincy program utilized in this context refers to an untraditional setting, which is located in a public housing setting rather than the traditional prison, college, civic and military settings. The chaplain's usual responsibilities of providing prayer at public functions, worship, etc. will be expanded to include crisis counseling, crisis coping mechanisms and caring support systems for the residents of Boatrock. For example, the family crisis incident reported in Chapter II regarding the murder of the mother of that family was one type of crisis situation that the chaplain will be called upon for pastoral care service.

Hence, the chaplaincy model will focus on the pastoral care dimension of ministry for Boatrock. Through the use of pastoral care, the chaplain can assist the residents of Boatrock in working through their frustration with society's order and continuity. So the need to establish socioeconomic order in a lifestyle that is presumed to have
disorder perhaps can improve the residents' lifestyle. Caring, however, must be the norm in this process. Inasmuch as pastoral care is designed to care for people in crisis, then caring should be the main impetus of the chaplain's crisis assistance program. The procedure can be done in the form of being present or shepherding. In some instances, the residents just need someone present to listen to them as they work or talk through their crisis. On other occasions, the chaplain may have to act as shepherd during the moment of crisis and this requires that the chaplain have experience in the art of pastoring. Truly an art that little has been written about; nonetheless it is a basic ingredient of the caring process.

There are several benefits to be gained from such a chaplaincy model of ministry. Many institutions and persons can profit from this chaplaincy model of ministry, i.e., residents, local seminaries, church and state. For example:

1. It can provide the residents with assistance in their decision making relative to crisis circumstances, thereby giving them the opportunity to make choices for themselves. The chaplain would act as a facilitator by simply guiding the residents through the decision making process rather than making the decision for them;

2. It can provide on-site pastoral care services to those residents who have experienced a sudden crisis such as death, illness, domestic violence and child abuse;

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3. The church would potentially gain experienced pastoral care persons as a result of this model because of the potential for a pastoral care internship program;³

4. The local seminaries would gain additional access to an internship site for placement of their pastoral care interns who could be supervised by the on-site chaplain;⁴

5. Finally, the state (Housing Authority of Fulton County) could possibly and eventually have residents who are functionally productive and independent.

B. Presenting the Model

A chaplaincy model of ministry for Boatrock’s public housing residents seems to be a viable option for coping with community and family crisis. This model has not been attempted before; it is new in concept for Boatrock public housing. The rationale for establishing such a program has to do with the fact that chaplains are provided for other public service institutions and should therefore not be in conflict of interest in the Boatrock public housing setting. A chaplain usually provides a variety of services in terms of support systems, counseling, the provision of a coping mechanism, teaching, worship leader, etc. The Family Service Center of Boatrock provides for the chaplain a facility out of which he or she can perform and provide those services.

³This source is included for the purpose of illustrating how the program can benefit outside benefactors, who might consider providing human and financial resources to the project.

⁴Ibid.
This model requires that a properly trained and ordained minister be on-site who will be remunerated by the Family Service Center for her/his pastoral care service. This is unprecedented in public housing authorities. Nonetheless, the need for pastoral care services is a basic reality in Boatrock's community. The residents do not have the financial wherewithal to afford private professional counseling.

The rationale for suggesting that the chaplain be paid for her/his service has to do with the daily crises circumstances at Boatrock: black on black crime, family disputes, child abuse, drugs and alcoholism. A chaplain cannot adequately address a crisis oriented community and maintain full-time employment elsewhere. The act of pastoring requires vigilant attention for a "normal" church community; thus, Boatrock, being a crisis-oriented community, will therefore require even more attention. Based on the financial limitation of the residents, it is recommended that the Family Service Center, in conjunction with the church and state, provide a chaplain whose presence could assist the residents in gaining relief from their crisis orientation.

Ministry of presence could serve several purposes:

1. The resident would have someone to refer to when faced with a crisis;

2. The authority would have a professional's assistance in maintaining order and continuity; and

3. The community would have a spiritual director.

The chaplain, however, as stated earlier, must understand the social, economic, political and human dynamics that exist between the residents and management. An essential item of the chaplain's preparation is of necessity a thorough knowledge about public housing, its residents and
1. Types of Ministry

The following information delineates Boatrock's Family Service Center's chaplaincy as it presently functions in the community.

Ministry of Presence

As a component part of this chaplaincy model, occasionally the chaplain will need to simply be present in the resident's moment of crisis. As stated earlier, frequently persons need someone to listen to them as they talk through or work out their crisis. The chaplain's presence is a viable option to the resident as opposed to having no support system during his or her crisis. Social and pastoral care support systems are not new in concept nor practice; they date back to our African slave heritage, according to Wimberly. In the nineteenth century, the black church became the slaves' independent institution. Many support systems were developed (the extended family, peers, the social networks, the church fellowship and the rituals and ceremonies of the visible and invisible church) to assist the slave in his or her crisis circumstance. Thus, sustaining became a function of pastoral care and was a corporate function of the community.

This project attempts to establish a support system at Boatrock that addresses contemporary needs. The residents of this community need to know that there are systems in place and available for them.

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5 Wimberly, Pastoral Care in the Black Church, p. 24.
6 Ibid.
7 Ibid.
8 Ibid.
available support systems. The chaplain cannot adequately participate in this program without this knowledge; nor can he or she be supportive of the resident or management without special skills in the area of human relationships. The chaplain's behavior under these conditions will occasionally require that he or she remain present but quiet, basically assessing the situation for the purpose of gaining enlightenment as to how to best approach the circumstance. Careful analysis of the problem can eliminate the possibility of the development of a bigger problem.

In a previous chapter, a family crisis was discussed, wherein the student intern was met with a set of dynamics which tested his skills as a helper. He returned to his office and attempted to analyze what was going on that he did not understand. In this instance, George determined that his presence was not sufficient, but it might have been because there is a possibility that his presence might not have had the negative impact that he perceived it to have. For instance:

1. It could have been that the family member was so devastated by the enormity of the crisis that she found it impossible to respond at that time;

2. The chaplain's timing could have been inappropriate; and

3. The family member perhaps had not had time to adjust to the loss of her sister. Thus, it is understandable that her initial reaction was no physical or verbal response.

The critical point in this case has to do with the intern's consciousness in that he did not force himself to move in closely and not be able to handle his own discomfort. He retreated and then returned with an additional support system—a mother who could relate to the
family member's circumstance as an indigenous helper. Such a community person can do wonders in circumstances such as depicted, particularly a female peer. The intern used not only caution in this crisis but also intuition. In analyzing the situation he determined that he needed reinforcement. As he pondered this idea, in walked the Tenant Association president, a female who had children of her own. She recognized that George was in a crisis himself and thus offered her assistance where upon he accepted. The peer ministered to the family member's need and identified for the intern what those needs were. His presence, however, reinforced the Tenant Association president. This was the critical point in the case without which it could have garnered the opposite result. George could have "ego-tripped" and decided that he would force his will upon the family, or not accept the assistance of Mary. Nevertheless, he used good judgement by allowing the natural instincts to flow along with the aid of his previous professional training. (George had been trained as a family counselor while pursuing the Master of Divinity degree.)

This case was reported here in order to establish the relevance and importance of the chaplain's presence and this chaplaincy program. The more critical question regarding this case has to do with what if the internship had not been in place? What would have happened to this family? Who would have supported them in their hour of grief? How would they have survived such a traumatic experience? The private community enclave has access to professional counseling services and the occurrence of such a circumstance in its community would not have been quite as devastating because it has built-in support systems.
(pastoral counselors, psychiatrists, and social work counselors). But, a public community enclave is at the mercy of public service organizations who are usually miles away and cannot adequately respond to an on-site emergency. Thus, ministry of presence as a component part of the chaplaincy program is invaluable to the Boatrock resident as he or she attempts to cope with life's unexpected crisis.

Shepherding

Ministering through one's presence overlaps into the act of shepherding. John Killinger says that the shepherd must:

"Feed my lambs." 'Tend my sheep.' 'Feed my sheep.' It was the pastoral charge given by one who only a few days before had said, 'the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.' How does any pastor ever wrest free from the charge? It is always there, night and day, riveting, dogging, accusing, inspiring.

What an awesome task for a chaplain, nonetheless Killinger's statement delineates the duties and responsibilities for a chaplain. Killinger continues:

And it is why we must always wrestle with the pastoral task of feeding the sheep, or herding them in toward center, where there is warmth and security of leading them beside still waters and bringing them safely into the presence of the Good Shepherd himself. The task is never done. Our imagination and energies are rarely up to it. But we must keep trying, keep looking for ways to do it.

The care and interest of the people of Boatrock are primary. The chaplain's focus must be one of care and interest for the welfare of the residents. He or she must attempt to bring the residents back

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10 Ibid.
toward the center, so that they can experience warmth and security. This is the task of the shepherd-chaplain. The chaplain's leadership is analogous to the function of the shepherd of the flock as defined in scripture, wherein the shepherd protects the flock at the risk of his or her life (John 10:15, RSV). In some instances, the shepherd may have to carry "the smaller lambs in his or her bosom, or under the arm, or in the folds of the cloak" (Isaiah 40:11, RSV). Thus, the chaplain for Boatrock becomes the chief "shepherd" caring for the community's people--the people of God. He or she must occasionally carry the smaller children of the community, leading them toward center--God.

The shepherd in the context of the Israelites' experience tended the sheep because they were chief possessions and supplied "most of the wants of the pastoral people and was a measure of their wealth and prosperity." The sheep also "furnished their owners with clothing, milk, butter, cheese, meat and a medium of exchange." Thus, the value of these sheep to the owners necessitated their being caring shepherds. This analogy does not imply that the residents of Boatrock are sheep; rather, it is an indication that the residents are economically viable to management in that they are the source of management's income. Consequently, those who serve must be empathetic toward those whom they serve; the chaplain, management and servant-residents

12 Ibid., p. 486.
13 Ibid.
must have high sensitivity in the caring process. Thomas C. Oden says:

Sensitivity forewarns one of oncoming dangers, possible catastrophies and future shifts and changes in the societal environment . . . the flock are led to spring water and safe vegetation; the shepherd knows the parish territory, its dangers, its green meadows, its steep precipices, its reasons and possibilities. The shepherd anticipates the flock's needs in advance and is willing to deal with each one individually.¹⁴

Oden is suggesting that the shepherd be more than just sensitive to the needs of the sheep, but that the shepherd be also cognizant of and in tune with the will of nature; "oncoming dangers and shifts in the environment." Sensitivity can benefit the people of Boatrock for coping with sudden or unexpected crisis circumstances. The chaplain, as shepherd, can provide the resident opportunities to control his or her spiritual, intellectual and emotional life. The role of the chaplain, in this instance, is one of guiding and sustaining the resident through the crisis circumstance.

Shepherding done as a component part of the Boatrock chaplaincy program can develop the chaplain's professional skills while doing ministry in the context of a crisis. Thus, the value of the program is two-fold: (1) it provides a support system for the residents and (2) it provides the chaplain with the opportunity to develop his or her professional pastoral care skills. In short, the chaplain's sensitivity level expands as well.

2. Personnel

A chaplaincy program will not work unless it is properly staffed. The Boatrock Family Service Center attempts to meet this need. Further, Thomas C. Oden, Pastoral Theology (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1983), p. 52.
the state (Housing Authority of Fulton County) must also be involved so that the program provides "quality service" to the recipients who need the assistance. Inasmuch as the Boatrock Family Center began prior to the chaplaincy program, it had an established program which provided family counseling, referral services, and day care service so the chaplaincy component is an addition to services already being provided. Thus, the chaplain must work in the context of a multiple staff.

Personnel includes a director, who is the chief of staff; an assistant director; teachers; teacher aides; a cook, who prepares meals for the children of the day care and resident assistants. Each of these persons provides support to one another. Thus, the chaplain becomes a benefactor of these established systems. Presently, there are two Master of Social Work interns from Atlanta University and one pastoral care intern from the Interdenominational Theological Center. The team effort approach is the norm by which each of these individuals functions. They provide support to the residents and one another.

The director has a Doctor of Philosophy degree and the assistant director has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Education. Their service to this community has been invaluable. The pay is inadequate but their service continues to be superior. They have made a difference in the residents' lifestyle within six months: families and individual residents now have access to on-site counselors, pastoral care interns and social workers. Management has also been influenced by these professionals and are now attempting to relate to the residents in a more positive manner. The director's relationship with the chaplain intern has been one of "compassion," "patience" and "honesty." The staff has
gone beyond the call of duty while assisting in the development of this chaplaincy model of ministry.

3. Resources

The Atlanta metropolitan area provides many physical and human resources, such as: mental health clinics, children and family service centers, medical clinics, social workers and psychiatrists. This project also has access to the resources of Fulton County's chaplain's department. For instance, when the father of the murdered wife was arrested, the pastoral care intern sought the chaplain's assistance in ministering to the needs of the father. The state, through its department of Human Services, provides luncheon meals to the children of the Day Care Center and disabled elderly persons. Other resources are provided by the Christian Council of Metropolitan Atlanta, Discovery Learning, Atlanta University's School of Social Work, Georgia State's School of Social Work and The Interdenominational Theological Center. Each of these institutions has given its support to this program either through internships or research:

a. Christian Council of Metropolitan Atlanta brings to this project vast human service resources through its chaplain interns, who are assigned to various secular entities for the purpose of broadening their ministerial experience;

b. The Interdenominational Theological Center provides pastoral care student interns, some of which are channeled through the Christian Council. These students currently provide the chaplaincy services so desperately needed at Boatrock. Boatrock's Family Service Center is one of those sites;
c. Discovery Learning provides service to the children of the community through an after school assistance program in reading, writing, arithmetic and computer operations;

d. Atlanta University School of Social Work provides two student interns who assist the residents in family counseling, crisis counseling, referral services and research; and

e. Georgia State University School of Social Work also provides student interns and research.

4. Facilities

The Boatrock Family Service Center is located in an apartment which was assigned to the community by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This facility provides an office space for the director and the chaplain, wherein counseling services are provided to the residents. The Day Care component is located in the Community Center. Its structure can accommodate 35 children maximum. This facility is also used by the Discovery Learning Program. Although these facilities adequately provide space, there is no additional space for expansion should the program desire to expand its service. Thus, the down side of the facility is that it can only provide space for minimal service at this time and could possibly need additional space in the future.

5. Evaluation

The center has developed an evaluation process that it uses semi-annually (see Appendix II) wherein residents participate in the completion of a form and the staff thereafter engages in a critical
analysis of the contents of the form. This process is necessary so that the staff can gain a perspective on whether or not all specific components are useful or considered by the resident to be adequate. Structurally, the staff convenes each Monday for the purpose of discussing each intern's case load. It is at this time that recommendations are made as to whether or not the resident should be referred to a professional counselor.

C. Summary

The basic pastoral care model is a chaplaincy program in the context of a multiple professional staff designed to assist the residents with their crisis circumstances. It was determined that a ministry of presence and shepherding are relevant types of ministries in fulfilling the residents' need for assistance during these crises. Information was provided for the chaplain in terms of delineating the necessary requirement for doing this ministry.

Every precaution has been taken to assure the chaplain a support system that provides for him or her a coping mechanism while assisting the residents. For example, the chaplain has access to the state's Department of Human Services, the Christian Council's Chaplain Interns, Atlanta University and Georgia State's Schools of Social Work, and the Interdenominational Theological Center's Pastoral Care Student Interns. Each of these entities provides the chaplain with significant resources for doing pastoral care ministry at Boatrock.
Dare to be you! Trust that God made you complete with everything that you will ever need within you, and on the outside too, to find the best way in this life.

-- Susan L. Taylor  
Editor of Essence Magazine

Susan Taylor's statement identifies God as the center source of all things. The theological assumption or presuppositions of this study also places God at the center of all earthly activity. It is from this theological perspective that this project has set forth a chaplaincy model of ministry as a means of meeting the needs identified by the Boatrock community. Although social systems were included in this project as being viable and valuable to the model and its implementors, it by no means lessens the relevance of the theological perspectives on life. God, therefore, is the center of all activity.

The objective of this dissertation has been to develop a chaplaincy model of ministry that utilizes pastoral care as an impetus for assisting the residents of the Boatrock community public housing project in gaining control over their crisis-oriented lifestyle. Thus, the theological and social systems' approach to the crisis problem were important poles in the developing process of this chaplaincy model of ministry. The purpose of this project was to set forth a model of
ministry that takes under consideration the caring needs of an isolated community of human beings.

Theologically, the Boatrock community believes it is an integral part of the kingdom of God; an assumption, perhaps, but nevertheless the community leaders believe that God is in control of its residents' lives. This belief reflects in the residents' language about God: "God will make a way, I know he will," "God is good, child," "God will straighten everything out, you'll see." These are just a few of the residents' idiomatic expressions about God. These presuppositions and expressions perhaps empower the residents with the will to live through their crisis-oriented lifestyle.

Inasmuch as this project focuses on a chaplaincy model of ministry through the framework of pastoral care, it becomes necessary that Christ (the center of the Christian faith) also be the role model of this caring process. Christ establishes a model of ministry centered in love and He utilized divine love as the source for all of His teachings and healings. This project, although it attempts to fulfill a crisis intervention need of an interdenominational community and for a multiplicity of religious groups, the chaplain can still apply those loving and caring principles as utilized by Christ in the performance of His ministry to those who needed assistance.

This chaplaincy model, as stated earlier, is presently functioning in the form of internships. It is hoped that the state will financially assist by providing a permanent chaplain for Boatrock. According to the residents, they have experienced successful assistance with their crises from the chaplain interns and are now convinced that
the service is needed in the community. The residents are therefore supporting the Boatrock Family Service Center with their time and occasionally provide funds to assist other residents who might be experiencing crisis circumstances.

The chaplain intern usually makes a list available to those persons desiring assistance. Each person requesting counseling is given a specific date and time. Those persons desiring participation in special lectures, classes or workshops must also place their names upon the list, which is usually placed on the Boatrock Family Service Center's bulletin board and the Community Center's board as well. The residents are advised that commitment is essential to this participatory process. If the residents desire change in their lives, then they must commit themselves to assuming some responsibility for bringing about that change. At no time are staff persons encouraged to assume full responsibility for the fulfillment of the residents' needs.

Many programs are selected for the purpose of enriching the residents' social, religious and educational experience. The resident, however, determines his or her basic need; the chaplain does not make that decision for him or her. But on the other hand, the chaplain does attempt to give guidance to each resident who comes to him or her for assistance. The difficulty lies in the fact that trust has been a serious problem for the residents. Herein lies the critical problem for the chaplain. How does he or she build the level of trust for the resident so that the caring service can be provided? This has been the down side of the program. Much time has been expended in re-building trust between the resident, management and care-givers.
In Chapter II, Foundational Information, the discourse related the trauma of a family whose children had witnessed the murder of their mother by the father. George, the chaplain intern, in his effort to identify the needs of the family, made a pastoral call to be with them in their crisis. On the other hand, the sister was so devastated by the unexpected circumstance (death of her sister) that she could not talk about it.

In Chapter III, Theological Mandate for Ministry in Boatrock Public Housing, the attempt was to focus on God as an active force in the history of the people, and as such, God provides many opportunities to people who seek understanding of their religious and social experiences. More specifically, however, the writer indicated that Boatrock residents have a future that will provide them with unlimited possibilities and opportunities to alter their crisis-oriented lifestyle: this was referred to as a theology of hope for Boatrock.

Chapter IV, Social Systems, attempted to focus on systems that might assist the residents in understanding how to "dare to be" themselves within the framework of society's socialization process. Order, continuity and triviality were imperatives espoused by Berger, believed to be relevant in the socialization process and were juxtaposed with Bellah et al. interpretations of the biblical and republican traditions as having influenced the American society, whether or not one is educated, affluent, rich or poor, religious or non-religious. Their relevance can be seen in every strata of the American society. In education, politics, economics, social structures and religious institutions, order and continuity are visible theories that impact the lifestyle of all community enclaves.
What would existence be like without order? And what would life be like without continuity and occasional triviality? Could a society survive an existence ensconced in disorder and discontinuity? Each person lives under and consents to its (society's) religious, moral and social structures. This is known as order. These individuals then pass on the morals, religious and moral values to the children. This is identified as continuity. On the other hand, triviality is where individuals decide that they need a break from so much order and continuity and thus engage in activities less orderly, e.g., social clubs, bridge clubs, football, basketball, and baseball games attendance, etc. Many persons have a need to engage in some form of trivial pursuit in order to maintain balance in their personhood. Boatrock is no exception to this rule.

In Chapter V, Basic Pastoral Care Model, the attempt was to structure a pastoral care support system that will assist the residents in coping with a crisis-oriented lifestyle. The residents are inundated with systematic control structures, annual re-application processes, unannounced inspections, revalidation of the family's financial status and recertification of familial composition. Although the residents understand (at the time of application for public housing) that they must be recertified yearly, nonetheless, it does not lessen the degradation that goes along with the process. Public housing residents must adhere to these rules and guidelines or they are immediately evicted from the premises. There are very few support systems designed for coping with such humiliation; therefore, this chaplaincy model of ministry was structured to provide a pastoral care support...
system for the residents of Boatrock so that they can function within the social systems of order, continuity and triviality in a stress-free manner.
APPENDIX I
QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is designed for the purpose of establishing what the needs are in your community. If you desire to list needs that are not on this form or would like to express your concerns, please feel free to do so.

Thank you for your cooperation.  

Harold E. Moore, Sr.

1. Which of the following influences your sense of values and beliefs?
   a. Your church
      b. Your family
      c. Significant others
      d. The American religious tradition
      e. The African-American religious tradition

2. Can the church assist you in relieving those stress factors that impact your public housing lifestyle?
   Yes    No

3. Are you currently receiving pastoral care from a church or secular organization?
   Yes    No If yes, please state the name of the church or organization.

4. If your answer is "No" to the above, would you be willing to participate in and support a pastoral care center that is designed to assist you in limiting daily stress?
   Yes    No

5. Do you believe that your current lifestyle can be improved?
   Yes    No

6. Would a Family Service Center assist you in gaining control over your daily life?
   Yes    No
7. If yes, which of the following would you be willing to support?

- [ ] Day Care
- [ ] Social Services
- [ ] Pastoral Care
- [ ] Educational Tutorial Program
- [ ] Food and Clothing Bank
- [ ] All of the above
- [ ] Other, please list ____________________

8. Would you be willing to participate in and give time toward the development of this Family Service Center?

Yes ______ No ______

9. If day care services were provided, would you be interested in participating in an on-the-job training program?

Yes ______ No ______

10. If yes, would you be willing to donate your time a few hours per week in assisting the director with the children?

Yes ______ No ______

11. Would you support a community worship service?

Yes ______ No ______

12. Are you presently a member of a church?

Yes ______ No ______ If yes, would you please list the denomination? ____________________

13. Would you support a chaplaincy program for the community?

Yes ______ No ______

Thank you for your cooperation.

Harold E. Moore, Sr.
APPENDIX II
EVALUATION OF THE FAMILY SERVICE CENTER
for
December 31, 1985

1. Do you utilize the Family Service Center resources?
   Yes _____ No _____ If yes, which compartment?
   Please list. ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

2. Were you satisfied with the service rendered?
   Yes _____ No _____ If no, please express your concerns.
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

3. Have you or your family members had need for pastoral care?
   Yes _____ No _____ If yes, did the service alleviate your crisis?
   Yes _____ No _____

4. Were the staff persons courteous?
   Yes _____ No _____ If no, please express your concerns.
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

5. Has the social service division been helpful to you and your family members?
   Yes _____ No _____ If no, please express your concerns.
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

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6. Have you attended the community worship service?
   Yes ______ No ______ If yes, would you like this service to continue? Yes ______ No ______ If no, would you please express your concerns?

7. Do you currently utilize the Day Care Center?
   Yes ______ No ______ If yes, are you pleased with the quality of service? Yes ______ No ______ If no, please express your concerns.

8. Have these services improved the quality of your community and family life?
   Yes ______ No ______ If no, please express your concerns.

9. Has the chaplaincy program been helpful to you and your family members?
   Yes ______ No ______ If no, please express your concerns.

10. Has the Family Service Center been beneficial to you and the community in alleviating the stressful lifestyle previously experienced?
    Yes ______ No ______ If no, please express your concerns.
APPENDIX III
Federal Budget

GRAMM-RUDMAN TO CUT 4,500 UNITS FROM 1986 HUD, FmHA ASSISTED HOUSING PROGRAMS

Fiscal 1986 HUD assisted housing program levels will be reduced by 2,435 units as a result of the 4.3 percent across-the-board cut mandated by the Gramm-Rudman budget balancing law, according to Administration officials.

The Office of Management and Budget and the Congressional Budget Office estimate the $9.8 billion appropriated for the fiscal 1986 HUD assisted housing program will be cut by $422 million in budget authority and $408,000 in first-year outlays under Gramm-Rudman.

The $3.124 billion in budget authority for the community development block grant program would be reduced to $2.990 billion, producing outlay savings of $27 million, and the urban development action grant program would be from $330 million to $316 million in budget authority, cutting outlays by $710,000.

Overall, total HUD spending in fiscal 1986 will be cut by $32 million. "There is not much of an outlay cut," one HUD official commented.

The reductions, contained in a CBO/OMB report published in the January 15 Federal Register, also cut approximately 2,000 rural housing units, and reduce FHA loan volume by less than $3 million.

In addition, the Gramm-Rudman process for the first time would impose a ceiling on Veterans Administration-guaranteed mortgage activity. A Mortgage Bankers Association of America spokesman said the cap could effectively shut down the VA program this summer.

The General Accounting Office issued its report January 21 making several changes in the CBO and OMB estimates, though most housing and development programs weren't affected. The GAO did revise the figures for the Section 312 rehabilitation loan program, excluding unobligated funds from the sequestration order. (See p. 718 for a table of the CBO/OMB sequestration estimates.)

Gramm-Rudman Procedure

Under Gramm-Rudman, percentage cuts in program funding authority are based on the ratio of outlays associated with controllable budget authority to the outlay reduction needed to meet the deficit target. Cuts are divided evenly between defense and domestic programs. For example, if $5 billion in defense cuts are needed and there are $100 billion in outlays associated with budget authority that can be cut, budget authority for each program would be reduced by 5 percent.

In fiscal 1986, the law restricted the total cut to $11.7 billion. However, much deeper cuts — perhaps $60 billion — will be required if Gramm-Rudman is imposed in 1987. (For background, see Current Developments, Vol. 13, p. 642.)

CBO director Rudolph Penner told the Senate Budget Committee on January 22 that Gramm-Rudman could trigger a 25 percent cut in domestic program levels in 1987.

The 1986 reductions will be officially proposed in a February 1 Presidential order and will take effect on March 1 unless Congress enacts spending cuts bringing the estimated $220 billion federal deficit in line with the $171.5 billion target set in the Gramm-Rudman law.

HUD Programs

As HDR went to press, it was not known how individual assisted housing program levels, public housing modernization, or amendment funds would be affected by the Gramm-Rudman cuts. HUD is in the process of developing a table outlining specific cuts that will be sent to congressional appropriations committees by February 1, according to one HUD official.

In general, the official said, the 4.3 percent reduction will simply be applied to each program's appropriated level after excluding prior year carryovers. The only HUD program accounts exempted from the sequestration are funds to pay off outstanding public housing debt, FHA claims, and Section 108 loan guarantee claims, carryover funds, and unobligated balances.

Specific cuts listed in the OMB/CBO report include:

- Rental rehabilitation and housing development grants: The $150 million appropriated for these two programs would be cut by $6.450 million.
- Section 202: Funding would be reduced from $631 million to $604 million, which, according to preliminary HUD estimates, would amount to a cut of about 500 units.
- Housing credit programs: FHA volume would be cut from $80 billion to $57.4 billion, and the limit on Government National Mortgage Association securities would be reduced from $68.3 billion to $65.4 billion. HUD officials don't expect the reductions to affect the number of mortgages insured by FHA in fiscal 1986.
- Public housing operating subsidies: A $52 million cut, to $1.159 billion, isn't expected to prevent HUD from funding 100 percent of FHA allocations under the performance funding system, because of carryover funding from 1985.
- Section 312 rehabilitation loans: The $85 million expected to be available through loan repayments and other income would be reduced by $3.7 million. OMB and CBO had also applied the 4.3 percent cut to $19.7 million in unobligated funds, but the GAO said such funds are exempt from sequestration.

VA Obligations Capped

A potentially major impact of the Gramm-Rudman process is the imposition of an $11.5 billion ceiling on fiscal 1986 VA guaranteed loan volume. Because there is no statutory ceiling on the VA program, CBO and OMB developed estimates of fiscal 1986 program activity, which averaged out to $11.9 billion. The budget offices then calculated a $515.4 million reduction, which would effectively cap loan volume at $11.5 billion.

A Mortgage Bankers Association of America spokesman said the cap would effectively shut down the VA mortgage insurance program this summer. "It's simple. We're against this," the spokesman said. "We think its wrong for Congress and the Administration to shut down the VA loan program.

 Asked about the VA cuts, one CBO analyst said the budget office simply estimated program activity, and implement-
The Office of Management and Budget has released only $3.7 billion in fiscal 1986 HUD assisted housing funds, just over a third of the $9.9 billion appropriated by Congress. The Administration plans to request a rescission of $5.7 billion in housing funds, which includes $4.8 billion in new authority and $854 million in recaptures.

The Administration has also provided only $2.4 billion in CDBG funds, planning to defer $500 million until fiscal 1987. This is substantially less than the $3.5 billion appropriated in fiscal 1986.

Enough urban development action grant funds will be released to cover the current large cities metro round, estimated to require $87.5 million. However, as of last week HUD said it would defer until next year the remaining $223 million in the UDAG program budget. (For background on the Administration’s proposal, see Current Report, Vol. 13, p. 644.)

"Where the (Administration) policy before was one of mutual cooperation, now it is 'go it alone if you can,'" said Gonzalez.

Legislative Outlook

A legislative alternative to the sharp budget cuts does not appear likely, according to House and Senate sources.

Gonzalez said it is "an open question" at this point as to whether Congress will accept the rescission and deferral requests or retain the Gramm-Rudman legislation. The Senate was unable to agree on a housing authorization bill last year, and "I don't know about this year," Sampson told the mayors.

Housing legislation could be pursued this year in either the fiscal 1986 budget reconciliation bill (H.R. 3128)—though that seems unlikely—or an FHA extender, which must be considered before current FHA program authority expires on March 17. Housing provisions that were being considered for inclusion in either legislative vehicle are the revision of the UDAG selection system, an increase in the cap on FHA adjustable-rate mortgages from 10 percent of prior-year volume to 40 percent, and a reauthorization of the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act.

Gonzalez and Sampson told the mayors that any hope for congressional action depends on their support. "If you, as mayors, are not ready to fight, we can't do a thing on the congressional level," Gonzalez said. He chastised cities that say they cannot antagonize the Administration or HUD for fear that it would jeopardize their chances of receiving grants.

Sampson urged mayors to "face the tough music of meeting spending targets" by prioritizing programs and apportioning federal funds accordingly.

$500 Million CDBG Deferral

The $500 million funding deferral in the community development block grant program may be overturned, the mayors were told.

There is some merit to overturning the deferral, since the surprise request came at a time when many communities had already begun their fiscal years, Sampson said. However, he and Gonzalez warned, city officials should not plan budgets that anticipate the return of the $500 million.

While contending "it is impossible for any community or state to adjust to such a cut halfway into a fiscal year," Gonzalez said overturning the deferral is "an uphill battle." A number of mayors denounced HUD for the $500 million deferral and for the Administration's "lack of candor" in explaining its motives for spending reductions.

"You have no priority in public housing," said Omaha Mayor Michael Boyle, in response to a statement by Ken-
neth J. Beirne, HUD general deputy assistant secretary for policy development and research, that despite budget cuts, public housing is a priority for the department. "You are dismantling the program," Boyle said.

John F. McNamara, mayor of Rockville, Ill., said a national policy for programs to help lower-income persons was needed. "There is absolutely no commitment in this Administration to minorities and poor whites," he said.

Section 8 Rents

MEMO PUTS CAP ON CONTRACT RENT ADJUSTMENTS TO COVER OPERATING COSTS

A January 14 HUD memo authorizes field offices to approve Section 8 new construction and substantial rehabilitation rent adjustments that will result in contract rents higher than the rents at comparable assisted projects, if the comparable unassisted rents are inadequate to cover reasonable operating costs.

However, the final memo, in a significant change from an October draft, prohibits adjustments that would result in contract rents higher than 120 percent of the sum of the rent of comparable unassisted units and the initial difference by which the Section 8 contract rent exceeded the rent of comparable assisted units. (For background on the draft memo, see Current Developments, Vol. 13, p. 423.)

The department is imposing the 120 percent limit in order to prevent strains on program subsidies to cover rent increases, according to program staff.

Generally, Section 8 rents are set at the lesser of the rent resulting from the application of the annual adjustment factor or the sum of the current rent on comparable unassisted units plus the initial difference. However, if the latter figure is less than the amount needed to operate the project, a higher rent, up to the 120 percent limit, may be approved.

Specifically, the rent must be the lowest of the following: the rent resulting from the annual adjustment factor; the rent needed to cover debt service, owner distributions, and reasonable operating costs; or 120 percent of the comparable unit rent plus initial difference. Where higher rents are needed to cover expenses, field offices should also consider whether a special adjustment or areawide adjustment is needed.

For purposes of rent adjustment calculations, the allowable owner distribution (except for projects owned by non-profits) will be 5 percent for elderly projects and 10 percent for family projects, though these limits won't affect a profit-motivated owner's right to distribute all surplus cash. For non-profits, a 2 percent operating contingency allowance will be used in place of the owner distribution.

Field Office Initiative

Once the rent adjustment process has been started, HUD field offices may take the initiative in approving rents above the comparable unassisted unit rents, or they may wait for owners to request the higher rents.

The memo says that field offices should consider taking the initiative when the general rule -- "would reduce rents to a level that would threaten the financial viability of the project...i.e., rents less than needed to cover debt service and operating expenses of comparable projects." The memo applies to all new construction and substantial rehabilitation projects, including state agency and Farmers Home Administration Section 515 projects under Section 8, for which rules require the use of annual adjustment factors to adjust project rents. The policy also applies to property disposition resale where the annual adjustment factors are used to calculate contract rents.

Material Difference

The memo also includes new guidance on Section 8 program requirements to prohibit adjustments from producing contract rents that are materially different from the rents on comparable unassisted units.

The memo says a material difference exists if the adjusted Section 8 rent would exceed 120 percent times the sum of the comparable unassisted rent and the initial difference, or if the adjusted Section 8 rent would exceed the comparable unassisted rent by more than the initial difference and the adjusted rent would exceed the amount needed to operate comparable projects.

Field offices are instructed to check for material difference by first checking to see if a project is producing any extra cash flow. If the adjusted rents would provide more cash than needed to operate the project, then a market rent analysis would be required to see if rents exceeded comparable project rents by more than the initial difference.

For projects subject to the original Section 8 rules and not required to submit annual financial statements, market rent analyses should be performed at least every two years, and rents should be set at the lesser of the AAF rent or the comparable rent plus initial difference. Higher rents can be approved only if the owner submits financial statements showing an increase is justified by the operating costs on comparable projects.

Market analysis can be conducted less frequently for projects subject to the original rules if the owner submits financial data that appear reasonable and indicate that the Section 8 rent potential from the AAF rent would not exceed the amount needed to operate the project.

Field Processing

The memo also authorizes field offices to process adjustments for projects under the original Section 8 program rules, even if an owner does not request one, and to make the new rents effective on the housing assistance payments (HAP) contract anniversary date. HUD offices are instructed to start processing in time to notify the owner of the revised rents 30 days before the HAP anniversary date.

Section 8 projects under the original rules include new construction projects with agreements to enter into housing assistance payments contracts (AHAPs) signed before November 5, 1979; substantial rehabilitation projects with AHAPs signed before February 20, 1980, and state agency projects with AHAPs signed before February 23, 1980. Owners of FmHA Section 515 and Section 8 property disposition resale projects are also not required to request annual adjustments.

Owners with projects under the revised rules are required to submit annual requests for rent adjustments. HUD offices are authorized to keep contract rents at their current levels if the owner fails to request an adjustment by the HAP anniversary date. Field offices have complained that some owners do not request adjustments until several months after the HAP anniversary date.

If an owner submits a request less than 60 days before the HAP anniversary date, HUD offices are instructed to make increases effective by the first day of the month which falls 30 to 60 days after the first date the owner's request was received (30 days if no market analysis was performed and 60 days if an analysis was performed).

Rent reductions are effective on the first day of the first month starting 60 days after the date of the field office's decision letter. The 60-day lag is intended to give the owner time to adjust the project's operating budget. (Rents may not be reduced below the original Section 8 contract rents.)
BIBLIOGRAPHY


King, Martin Luther, Jr. *I Have a Dream*. New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1968.


EPILOGUE

On March 25, 1987, the Fulton County Board of Commissioners appropriated $75,000 for the continuation of the Boatrock Family Service Center and its Chaplaincy and Social Services departments. This appropriation is a "vote of confidence" of the commissioners in the merits of the chaplaincy program in the Boatrock community.

The Board of Commissioners, in this act, demonstrated awareness of the community's need, and did something tangible and generous for a community in socioeconomic crisis. By this action, the professional "caregivers" are empowered to update the socioeconomic needs within the Boatrock public housing community.

The appropriation announced above was aided to fruition by the special services of the following people: Mrs. Rosa Franklin, president of the Boatrock Tenant Association; Mrs. Rose Johnson, assistant to Commissioner A. Reginald Eaves; Ms. Cleta Winslow, assistant to Commissioner Chuck Williams; and Ms. Debra Poole, administrative assistant of Special Appropriations of Fulton County.