MOVIE – "IN ORDER TO CHANGE" (41 minutes/color)

SYNOPSIS

This movie chronicles a localized citizens' movement to combat air pollution. In Chicago, the "Citizens Against Pollution (CAP)" launched an assault against Commonwealth Edison in 1970. The purpose was to get a commitment from ComEd executives to create a specific timetable and plan to reduce sulfur dioxide and dust emissions from their Chicago power plants. The movement first gained the attention of Chicago and Illinois politicians, and then became a national media story. Despite resistance from aldermen, Mayor Daley, and Commonwealth Edison, stricter emissions codes were enacted and pollution was reduced.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Discuss what difficulties attempts at community organization might face in white middle-class America.

2. Identify the aspects mentioned in the film that foster public legitimacy for a citizen's movement during this period.

3. Explain the benefits of using a comprehensive strategy in regards to:

    a. . . . contacting government officials.

    b. . . . holding public demonstrations.

    c. . . . seeking media attention.

    d. . . . contacting ComEd directly.

    e. . . . attending a ComEd shareholder meeting.

4. Discuss the roles of the following groups and individuals regarding the battle between local residents and ComEd:

    a. . . . community organizers

    b. . . . the Chicago City Council

    c. . . . Mayor Richard Daley

    d. . . . the Illinois Commerce Commission

    e. . . . the church.

5. Evaluate the role of popular opinion and media attention in attempts to influence the actions of government and corporate officials.

6. Describe the legislative successes related to CAP.

7. Evaluate CAP's overall success in combating air pollution in Chicago.

8. Extrapolate the lessons of CAP versus ComEd to modern conflicts between citizens groups and corporations and/or government.

QUESTIONS:

1. What avenues were available for Chicagoans to address their concerns about air pollution?

2. What were the benefits and pitfalls of attempting to have large citizen representation at every Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) meeting?

3. What is the special importance of media attention in the efforts of a local community movement?

4. What were the specific demands of CAP concerning anti-pollution legislation?

5. What place can music play in galvanizing popular movements?

6. What are the pros and cons of using direct confrontation to address an issue?

7. What are the pros and cons of using compromise to address an issue?

8. What could CAP have done differently to achieve greater success?

9. Other than direct confrontation, what alternatives did residents of Chicago have to address recalcitrant city and corporate officials?

10. What are the instances in which the American system fails to provide sufficient legal avenues for citizens to address concerns?