

HELP COMES AT LAST**Minority Contractors Rescue Health Clinic**

BY THOMAS WRIGHT

For more than 12 months, the diligent members of Peoples Party II have been attempting to open a free health clinic for ghetto area residents.

For more than 12 months, they have had setback after setback as the forces of governmental policy and citizen non-participation left the dream of a clinic just that—a figment of the imagination of a few young men.

Last week, help came to the local arm of the Black Panther Party and because of the direction that help has come from, many observers have contended themselves to "wait and watch".

More than 35 minority contractors, after listening to party information minister Charles Freeman outline why the free health clinic is needed and what the commitment of the party is to the community, pledged building materials, advisors, and tradesmen to help members

of the party renovate a Fifth Ward building.

SAWYER BYNUM, ESTIMATOR-coordinator for the minority Contractors Consortium related to FTimes that members of the party requested an audience before the general body of his association to explain the workings of such a clinic.

"They told the members and there was almost unanimous approval of the clinic idea," Bynum indicated. "And when the list was passed, we got more than enough materials and other help to get the building in order."

The clinic was the dream of Carl Bernard Hampton, slain leader of the often "highly harassed" party. Hampton was gunned down by police fire July 26, 1970.

Since the death of Hampton, the members of Peoples Party struggled with a building on the corner of Dowling and Tuam, attempting to get the building in order so it would pass city inspection.

At first, the youths had the help of a group of whites who were interested in health care for the people living around Dowling. After several police arrests of these whites as either "prostitutes" or "loiterers", the whites all but abandoned the project. *(The Party)*

THE PARTY MEMBERS BEGAN placing partitions inside the building, but that effort was brought to a halt when the party headquarters and clinic was shot up several months ago. Immediately after the shooting, Constable Walter Rankin served an eviction notice on the party, ordering them from the proposed home of the Carl B. Hampton Free Health Clinic.

Party Chairman James Aaron told this reporter two weeks ago that the party had found a building in the Fifth Ward that needed little renovation and their plans of housing the clinic there.

Bynum says almost everything is ready for the

beginning of construction.

"I've got the plans in my hands. John Chase, the Black architect, drew up the plans so we could get our building permit and now all that remains is telling each contractor and subcontractor what is needed."

MEMBERS OF THE PARTY are, needless to say, satisfied at the quick action taken by the Black contractors organization.

"It just goes to show that when you have a plan that is worthy and of benefit to the people, it doesn't matter if you're a militant or a capitalist—its for the people and we're all people," was the sentiment of one Black contractor sub.

According to the party, there is still a need for volunteer services from doctors and nurses "and anyone who is knowledgeable of clinic operations."

In addition to giving immunizations shots, dental and doctor care, the party intends to become a fighter of the dreaded sickle cell anemia, a disease that

is contracted by Black people.

"The party is for the people. That is the only reason we exist. The clinic is theirs just like our Dowling Street headquarters. I just hope we'll finally get it open and that we get the volunteers because this is something that is badly needed in our community," related Freeman.

ANOTHER UNIQUE SERVICE of the party is the "free pest control" project which allows those ghetto residents the chance to have their dwellings exterminated, free of charge. Freeman says the party is running low on supplies for the pest program and anyone wanting to donate pesticides can call or come by the office.

"It's heartening to see people like the party and the contractors get together," stated Operation Breadbasket's Pluria Marshall. "It shows that there is a lot of hope for our community when these diverse groups forget political ideology think of their m' Blackness."