SCOBIE PARK FOR KIDS, NOT CRIME

On a Friday morning in March, ACORN member Sellamena Coleman reported to the ACORN office that the rape of a neighbor's daughter had occured in Scobie Park in Roxbury, the city with the highest rape statistics in the Boston area. Fed up with the little attention their neighborhood was receiving from safety authorities and press, ACORN members of the MDCC (Maywood to Dudley Concerned Citizens) decided to act.

Rapid communication that morning among members led to the calling of an emergency meeting in Scobie Park the next day.

Saturday morning, member Peggy Jackson canvassed the surrounding neighborhood for support, and roused enough angrv residents to bring total attendance of the meeting to about 50 people.

The group decided that the issue was the lack of recognition by officials whose job it is to protect the residents. The park was too dark, the people complained, police patrols infrequent, and when rapes go unreported in the press, how can the community deal with a problem they don't know the extent of?

The group called for a police representative to whom they could voice their concerns.

"We pretty much demanded their presence," said ACORN member Peggy Jackson." We threatened that if they didn't come, we would go to the police station."

Shortly after, a policeman arrived at the park to hear the group's demands. He was encircled by neighbors who sang, prayed, and voiced their concerns.

A follow-up meeting was held the next Wednesday to which officials, including Commissioner of Parks and Recreation Bob McCoy, Police Deputy Ltn. Bill Celester, and Mike Smith from Public Facilities, came . They made

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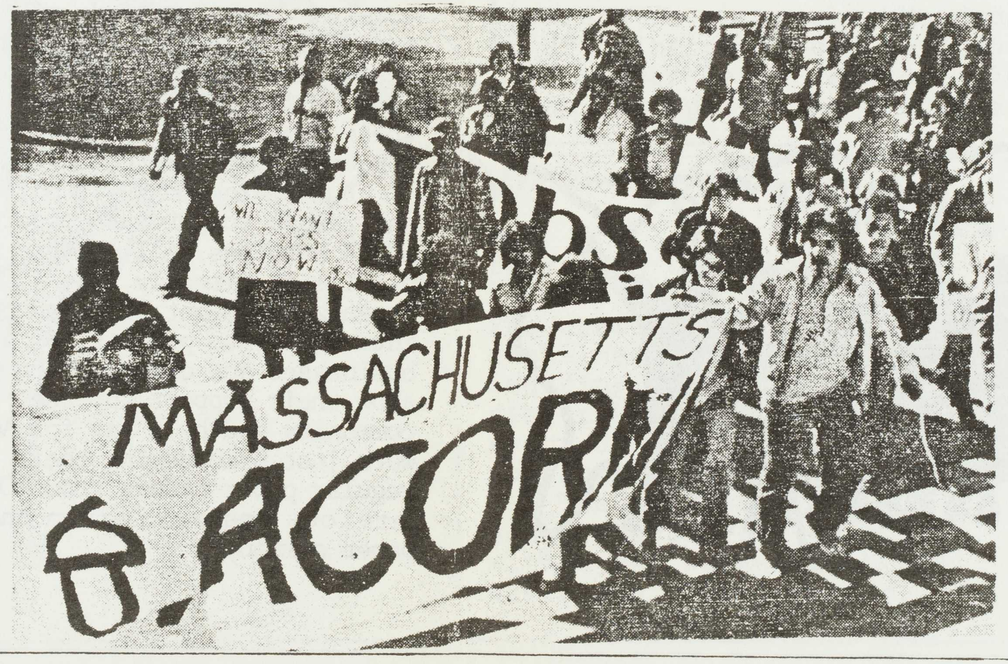

ACTION AGAINST RAPE

by Marilyn Billy

There are many abandoned houses in our neighborhood, which are not only an eyesore, but encourage crime. One of ACORN's goals is to have these houses boarded up to prevent crime, and then rehabilitated to improve the availability of affordable housing for the lower and moderate income families of our community.

One of these houses, a recent subject addressed by the television media and the governer, was also the scene of two crimes which were not mentioned by the media. A woman was mugged, pulled into the house and sexually assaulted. Within three weeks, another woman had to suffer the same ordeal.

Members of the community were outraged; we decided we would try to get the house boarded up. We begun by requesting representatives from the NDEA (Neighborhood Development and Employment Agency), Boston Edison, and the police department to meet with us. No one from any of these departments showed any interest, so we came up with an action plan.

Since no one would visit us, we decided to visit them.

The next evening, three carloads of ACORN members visited an NDEA official at his home with signs reddy to demonstrate. Two members went to his door, and spoke with the official. He knew exactly who they represented and tried to brush them off by saying to call tomorrow but they then summoned the rest of the members. He was not very happy with the idea of so many people at his door, so he agreed to

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