

and are having in the Congress and certainly the Economic Opportunity Act is a good way to make a start—perhaps it is a good compromise in some of the problems in providing some Federal aid to public schools, aid which is sorely needed.

I would like to speak briefly to those provisions of titles I and II of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (H.R. 10440), which specifically affect children and young people. The American Parents Committee is particularly interested in the youth programs of title I and the community action programs of title II. President Johnson has wisely keyed his war on poverty to these two titles which relate to education and job opportunities for deprived youth and the development of community action programs.

TITLE I. YOUTH PROGRAMS

Three specific programs are proposed for youth, age 16 to 21. The first of these, the Job Corps, would consist of conservation camps and residential training centers. Like the Youth Employment Act of 1963, which the American Parents Committee believed was a constructive step to aid unemployed youth, the Job Corps provided for in the act would provide job opportunities that will at the same time improve the educational level and skills of the young men to be enrolled in the Job Corps. It differs from the Youth Employment Act in that half of the youth enrolled would be assigned to camps and facilities for work on conservation projects but with emphasis on basic education. The other half enrolled would be assigned to residential training centers, the major emphasis being on vocational training and educational improvement to prepare for permanent employment. The education program in the conservation camps will be designed to meet the needs of the young men who are not ready for vocational training because of their lack of basic education. Reading, writing, arithmetic, and speech will be taught. We urge emphasis on the education program which is basic to training youth for useful, productive work. It is also a much larger program. We approve of this because we felt the Youth Employment Act was much too modest in scope.

We presented testimony to the House Committee on Education and Labor in 1961 and again in 1963 on youth employment and expressed our concern about the problem then, which threatened to become worse unless prompt and effective action was taken. It is worse and if left to itself the problem will multiply. It is estimated that there are almost 1 million young people in this country today who are in need of training and guidance. If the current trends continue, in 5 years we will have almost one and a half million unemployed youth—without adequate education or training, without jobs, and without a future. In our judgment there is no justification for further delay.

We approve in principle the proposed work-training and work-study programs of title I. We know work experience is important to the development of youth regardless of whether financial returns are needed. We realize that youth gains self-reliance and often self-support along with skills through even a part-time job. We also recognize that the lack of opportunity to work constitutes a major problem of our society. Programs similar to those proposed in parts B and C