

Mr. BARRETT. Mr. Secretary, it is our understanding that there is one aspect of the new proposed demonstration city legislation which seems to be bothering some people. The current concern seems to be that the 60 or 70 cities which would become eligible for supplemental grants would also step up their demand for existing Federal aid grant programs; for example, the urban renewal grant program. And if this is so, it is argued that this could mean an increased drain on the existing authorization for present Federal grant programs, and consequently, less available funds for all of the other cities and towns of the Nation which are not in the first eligible group of participating cities under the demonstration program. I do not think this a real concern. But I would very much like to have you assure the subcommittee members on this point.

Secretary WEAVER. Mr. Chairman, we have considered this point, recognizing that it might well arise. And both I and the administration are committed to the policy—carrying out this program will not in any wise or any way decrease the amount of urban renewal funds which any city, whether it is in the program or not in the program, would have had if there had not been any program. The answer is a definite no. This will not take away any funds that would otherwise have gone to a city which may not participate in the demonstration. We are not robbing Peter to pay Paul in this program.

Mr. BARRETT. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. Mr. Widnall?

Mr. WIDNALL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

In the section dealing with the Federal coordinator, it says that "nothing in this section shall be construed to vest in the Secretary any authority to exercise or delegate any function or duty vested by law in any Department or agency of the Federal Government." Does that mean the Federal coordinator will have no authority over the disbursement of other programs even if they tie in with the demonstration project?

Secretary WEAVER. It does. It means that the Federal coordinator will first coordinate the programs in the Department of Housing and Urban Development, which we have the authority to do through the regional office. It means essentially that he will work very closely with the localities' coordinator, or the local agency carrying out the demonstration program in order to facilitate that individual's or that agency's reaching into all of the existing programs and helping them make contact with the Federal agencies which administer these programs. However, the decision governing the use of those programs will remain in the agencies to which Congress has given appropriations and authority to carry out those programs. This will be a coordinating function in the sense of the coordinator using his good offices—using his knowledge, and the facts that he has and the contacts that he has at the regional and at the Federal level to sort of lubricate the process, as it were.

Mr. WIDNALL. The President's message said:

Once authorized, the supplemental fund would be made available in a common account. They would be drawn at the discretion of the community to support the program. They would be certified by the Federal coordinator.

It seems to me that leaves no discretion to the local officials at all.

It also appears that the Federal coordinator will have complete control of disbursement of funds, at least of supplemental funds, for all