

standard housing, and blighted areas. This is true to a relative extent in other Georgia cities. And our cities, regardless of size, need help, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, because, if you look into this matter, as we have done, you will find that the problem extends from one side of the Nation to the other, and it extends from our largest cities down to our smaller municipalities.

In January 1963, I had the privilege of appearing before the Senate Committee on Banking and Currency on behalf of Senate bill 1, the Area Redevelopment Act. And I think I was one of the people who did appear in support of this particular program. My purpose in my appearance was in the hope that the section relating to the rural-small urban areas, section B, might result in better job opportunities at the rural level and a consequent slowing down of the mass migration of our rural people, either to Georgia cities or regions outside the State. And I would like to submit, gentlemen, that a lot of the problems that you have in the northern cities and the western cities or cities all over the country are part of this problem that we have had. And you have shared those problems with us. And what we would like to do is keep these people at home.

At the time the Area Redevelopment Act was enacted into law, there were 76 Georgia counties who qualified because of the depressed area criteria. Much of the criteria was based upon loss of jobs and reduction in population.

Gentlemen, I would like to submit to you that we have since found out what we should have known all the time—that rural migration and reduction in employment is not related to depression—simply, it is the result of agricultural progress and is the deliberate intent of our large farmers and pine tree growers in Georgia. Not only has employment been reduced, tenant houses and small farm buildings have been destroyed to reduce taxes. Much of the acreage has been turned in as wild land for tax purposes.

All of this has tended to lower the county tax digest, thereby reducing the capability of the rural local governments to provide capital improvements, services, and education, thereby reducing the economic development of our rural areas.

It is my considered opinion that much of our well intended help for our rural areas in flying in the face of contrary intent on the part of many of our large landowners in Georgia.

I am not saying that agricultural help should be reduced. If it is in the national interest, I would favor additional help. However, our cities need an honest evaluation of their problems, also. And I would like to say—I will summarize this as fast as I can, Mr. Chairman—in Georgia, the city of Atlanta is not only attracting people from the rural areas in Georgia, but all over the entire Southeast. Atlanta, because of the excellent climate, race relations, and our sympathetic treatment of problems that are brought in by other areas, has caused many people from other sections of not only the State of Georgia, in the southern region, but all over the United States to come to Atlanta. And they are bringing problems with them. And if Atlanta is going to cope with the opportunity of upgrading the standard of living, the excellence of service within the city and within the metropolitan area, they are going to have to have help. Because if you will examine the fiscal reports of the city of Atlanta, and check the capabilities of their local