

senior citizen housing. However, I would point out to this committee that despite these excellent demonstration projects, all of the senior citizen housing produced by Housing and Urban Development since 1960 represents only enough housing to house the net increase in the senior citizen population for a month and a half. In other words, the net increase in the total number of senior citizens in 1½ months—approximately 45,000—could be handled by the total number of units of senior citizen housing built under all Federal programs. The Farmers Home Administration has built some very excellent and very low cost senior citizen housing (\$40 to \$55 a month). We cannot praise this program too highly, however, only a few hundred units have been built or are under construction—about enough to house the rural senior citizen population net increase for a day. The number of units built by Farmers Home Administration and the Department of Housing and Urban Development for senior citizens is hardly a drop in the bucket.

Farmers Union supports the group health facilities bill. Farmers Union has helped to organize many community health clinics and hospitals, especially in the Dakotas and in Oklahoma. These were organized on a cooperative basis. We feel that an even more important piece of legislation is the nursing homes construction bill introduced by Senator Harrison Williams of New Jersey, which calls for 100-percent loans for nonprofit groups to establish nursing homes. These facilities are desperately needed in rural America if any appreciable number of older people are to benefit from the medicare program. The medicare program provides almost 100 percent assurance that these loans can be paid. At the present time the 90-percent loans available under Federal programs have largely been taken up by profit motivated groups. Churches and hospitals have been hard pressed to come up with the 10 percent in order to produce enough nursing homes to meet the needs of medicare. Since the best are the nonprofit nursing homes, sponsored by churches and other charitable groups, and since medicare almost assures repayment of such loans, we urge low interest, 100-percent loans for nonprofit groups to construct nursing homes.

The National Farmers Union looks to the Banking and Currency Committee and its Subcommittee on Housing to be the people's champion in keeping the interest rates low for housing for low- and middle-income people. Loans to the average and below average income family must be kept at a reasonable level. As Congressman Wright Patman said to our national convention recently, "There are many ways to fight inflation besides loading it on the backs of the low-income people in the form of higher interest rates." These are loans which people must have if they are going to have a decent life free from poverty and blight, regardless of where they live.

We ask for parity of treatment for rural America, for the farmer, and for the city dweller, to raise the quality of life in every American community.

Mr. BARRETT. It would be remiss on my part if I did not say to you what I have said to everybody else. I should tell you that we do want you two gentlemen to feel at home here and feel completely relaxed and any way you desire to proceed here we will go along with.

Dr. CARSTENSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. BARRETT. If you are prepared now, you may start right now. Whatever you desire.

**STATEMENT OF WALTER A. HASTY, JR., ASSISTANT LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR, AND DR. BLUE CARSTENSON, DIRECTOR, SENIOR MEMBER DIVISION, NATIONAL FARMERS UNION**

Mr. HASTY. Mr. Chairman, I am Walter Hasty, assistant director of the National Farmers Union Legislative Division. I would like to make several points if I might.

First of all, as you know, Mr. Chairman, Farmers Union is an organization, though made up of family farm members, has a great concern for all the people of our Nation and particularly our city brothers, because it wasn't long ago that many of our city brothers