

4. *Failure to avoid delays due to "redtape" imposed by National Government intervention in the community renewal process.*—Some persons involved in urban renewal projects have expressed the view that results could have been achieved much more quickly if the National Government were not involved in the process. By way of example, the New York Times of March 13, 1966 reported that, in order to sell brownstone houses in the West Side Urban Renewal Area in New York City, it was necessary not only to supply 30 copies to the Division of Housing and Community Renewal of New York State and 30 copies to the Housing and Redevelopment Board of New York City but also to supply 30 copies to the Federal Housing Administration and 30 copies to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The buyers have been waiting for over a year since making their cash deposits and apparently will have to wait some months more.

Dr. Anderson points out that "The process is taking a very long time. An average-size urban renewal project can easily run 10 to 12 years from the start of planning to the completion of the new construction." Ironically, the President's message does not ascribe the excessive delays to National Government intervention but to a "public dilemma" of "involving urban residents in redeveloping their own areas, hence lengthening the time and increasing the cost of the job." Despite this apparent criticism of local involvement, the message, a few sentences later, calls for a program that will "mobilize local leadership and private initiative, so that local citizens will determine the shape of their new city freed from the constraints that have handicapped their past efforts and inflated their costs." On the same page, the message also poses a "public dilemma" of "preserving the autonomy of local agencies, thus crippling our efforts to attack regional problems on a regional basis."

The feature of the proposed act apparently designed to cope with the problem of Federal redtape and delays in section 7, entitled "Office of the Federal Coordinator." This section provides that "There shall be established for each locality having an approved comprehensive city demonstration program an office to be known as the Office of the Federal Coordinator headed by a Director who shall be designated by the Secretary."

Section 7 states that "The Director shall perform such functions as the Secretary shall from time to time prescribe with respect to helping achieve the maximum effective coordination of Federal grant-in-aid programs undertaken in connection with comprehensive city demonstration programs." But the next sentence states 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 other than the Department of Housing and Urban Development." This latter provision points up the fact that the director would be a coordinator without any real power to compel the coordination of any Federal function or activity. Obviously, redtape, conflict, and confusion would be compounded by creating still another Federal office in each locality having an approved comprehensive city demonstration program. Imposing still another level in the Federal hierarchy spotlights the fact that the demonstration cities program adds up to a superstructure upon a superstructure. The anomaly of superimposing a special program on top of existing programs is indicated in the portion of section 2, "Findings and Declaration of Purpose," which states:

"It is further the purpose of this act to provide the additional financial aid needed to enable cities to participate more effectively in existing Federal assistance programs."

In other words, to assist cities to be assisted.

Although the Director of the Office of the Federal Coordinator in each such locality would not have the power to compel coordination of Federal activities, he undoubtedly could exercise considerable influence over the local agencies involved. The Federal hand looms large at every stage. Section 5(a) calls for the Secretary to pay 90 percent of the costs of planning and developing comprehensive city demonstration programs; and section 6(b) calls for the Secretary to pay 80 percent of the costs of administering comprehensive city demonstration programs; and section 6(c) authorizes the Secretary to make grants of not to exceed 80 percent of the aggregate amount of non-Federal contributions otherwise required to be made to all projects or activities assisted by Federal grant-in-aid programs undertaken in connection with demonstration programs. The latter item would create the further anomaly of having the Federal Government contribute 80 percent of the non-Federal contribution. Section 9(b) calls