

for the Secretary to make grants to cover the full cost of "relocation payments."

The placement of a Federal director in every demonstration city and the excessive amounts of Federal financial participation in every stage of this superprogram are certainly not conducive to the aim to "mobilize local leadership and private initiative" referred to in the President's message. And it is very obscure just what such a superprogram really would demonstrate.

5. *Failure to avoid preferential treatment.*—It is enough to note that this is a special program, participation in which would be determined by the unreviewable discretion of the Secretary. Less than 10 percent of the cities participating in present Federal programs would be allowed to participate in this superprogram. It would require a veritable Solomon to insure that subjective considerations did not enter into the choice of these select cities. This is especially true under a bill such as this where the criteria for selection laid down by the Congress would be vague, general, and highly subjective in nature.

In addition, it appears that certain sections and neighborhoods within a city will be preferred over other sections and neighborhoods within the same city. Thus, instead of shutting the door to preferential treatment, this superprogram will provide greatly expanded opportunities for it.

6. *Failure to avoid the bulldozer approach.*—The purported aim of the proposed act is to "rebuild America." This is a noble and lofty aim. However, urban renewal under Federal legislation has become associated in the public's mind with the bulldozer demolition approach by which much good is destroyed along with the bad. Will this proposed program be any more discriminatory in its approach? There is no sure-fire guarantee that it will.

As recently as March 20, 1966, a New York Times news story in regard to private urban renewal efforts in the Boerum Hill area of Brooklyn reflected this concern, as follows:

"In a sense the battle of Boerum Hill epitomizes in miniature the nationwide tug-of-war between two principal schools of urban-renewal thought.

"Ranged on one side are those * * * who envision renewal in the broad terms of clearance and complete rebuilding, even if it means sacrificing some sound old buildings.

"And on the other side are those, like Jane Jacobs, the author and caustic critic of many city planners, who see vitality even in slums and seek to renew by preserving existing sound structures and building around a community's heritage and people.

"We are highly suspicious of renewal," said Robert A. Snyder, a 33-year-old, Columbia-educated labor lawyer who is president of the Boerum Hill Association. The association is comprised of about 50 families that are dedicated to reclaiming the heritage of the area.

"We want to preserve, not to tear down. The buildings are sound structurally," said Mr. Snyder. * * *

The bill does pay lipservice to the fact that prior programs have not adequately protected historical and cultural features by the provision in section 4(c) (2) that the Secretary shall give maximum consideration to, among other things, whether "the program will enhance neighborhoods by applying a high standard of design and will, as appropriate, maintain distinctive natural, historical and cultural characteristics; * * *". The bill is perhaps deserving of a small "plus" in this regard, but this is far outweighed by the lack of "plusses" in regard to any other matter at issue.

THE PRIVATE ALTERNATIVE

Communities without Federal urban renewal aid are not abandoning their cities; they are "doing it themselves" through local public financing, or private enterprise. Although privately financed improvements usually require some increase in local public facilities, this public cost is a lower proportion of the total than is found when a public project tries to attract private investment. Some cities have had experience with both types of renewal. In a variety of cities across the country—Houston, Pittsburgh, and Rochester to name just a few—private enterprise redevelopment in business areas has been quicker than federally sponsored redevelopment. Local tax revenues have been increased sooner, and without imposing a burden on people in other communities.

Midtown Plaza, in Rochester, N.Y., has gained wide attention as an approach to commercial rehabilitation of a downtown area. It was planned by two competing department stores. After 30 years without a single new commercial