Relocation of People and Businesses Displaced by Government

At present, as described in chapter IV, the financial aid and services available to people and businesses displaced by public projects vary greatly depending on the program causing the displacement and the level of government with primary responsibility for the program. The recommendations of the Commission provide another illustration of methods to attain coordinated and equitable approaches to problems arising from actions by all levels of government.

1. UNIFORMITY OF FEDERAL AND STATE RELOCATION ADVISORY ASSISTANCE AND PAYMENTS

The Commission recommends that the Congress establish and executive agencies implement a uniform policy of relocation payments and advisory assistance for persons and businesses displaced by grant-in-aid or direct Federal programs and that States similarly establish and implement a uniform policy.[26]

The most dramatic instances of the effects of inconsistencies in relocation assistance provisions occur in urban areas where different Federal programs displace neighboring properties. Relocation payments may range all the way from total actual moving expenses for a business owner who is displaced by a federally aided renewal project, to no payment at all for a homeowner whose property is taken by the General Services Administration for an office building. Similar variations exist with respect to advisory assistance given to displacees. These deficiencies are most serious in urban areas where property takings most frequently displace those in need of assistance—low income and underprivileged groups, the elderly, and the marginal small businessmen. The social and economic side effects of displacement bring such federally aided programs as housing, public assistance, employment security, and Small Business Administration assistance into play. These other programs would be better able to serve displaced persons and businesses if the programs causing displacement followed consistent relocation policies.

A uniform policy of relocation payments should take account of the various types of expenses incurred by those displaced. For families and individuals these include the cost of moving household and personal effects, miscellaneous expenses such as utilities connection and disconnection, and advance payments of rent. For businesses that can move to a new location and continue to function as before, relocation costs involve the interruption of business operations, looking for a new location, moving, and settling in the new location. Those that are forced to close down—mainly small retail or service businesses that depend on a neighborhood trade—suffer loss of the "going concern value" of their business and may incur the cost of temporary unemployment and retraining—the cost of developing a new livelihood.

Advisory assistance is essential to help displacees meet the costs of displacement—tangible and intangible. Such assistance is particularly needed by the poor, minority groups, the elderly, and the small businessmen who are most disrupted by a forced move. To help own-

[26] See "Uniform Relocation Assistance," ACIR *1966 State Legislative Program* (Washington, D.C.: October 1965), pp. 263–274.