

Salina city officials, with the full support of the business community, decided to schedule the bond elections for the city's share (\$1.1 million) of a joint county-city governmental center and a new police administration building and for a new public library (\$670,000). City officials had been encouraged by what they had heard from urban renewal representatives who attended the mid-January meeting. Urban renewal representatives were in Salina for a day-long series of meetings within 3 days after receiving a request from the city for a conference on the possibilities of urban renewal assistance. This was the first concrete evidence of compliance on the part of a Federal agency with the promise by OEA to do everything possible to assist the city in its recovery endeavors.

In a statement issued in late January, the Schilling Development Council said that its basic policy would be the use of the soon-to-be-closed base for industrial sites and related endeavors. In the council's opinion the creation of jobs and payrolls was most imperative. A local forecast of impacts that would result from the closing was loss of 32 percent of income, 25 percent of population, and some 3,900 vacant dwelling units—predictions that proved to be quite accurate. In the same announcement, the council reported that it would not rule out the other uses that had been suggested or that might be developed in the months ahead. In the group meetings during the mid-January conferences with Washington officials it had been pointed out that large areas, and particularly those in the residential, recreation, and community portions of the cantonment area, were best suited for educational and related uses. The award-winning new base hospital, and its related facilities, was most certainly best suited for medically associated uses. The council pointed out that education and medical development was in every sense an industry. They would create jobs and payrolls that would be equally important to those created by industrial and commercial organizations.

Much of the council office time was devoted to the development of detailed inventories of buildings, utilities and related facilities and in the preparation of maps of the base for use in the evolution of a master land-use plan. Until the inventory was completed, the majority of the local leaders did not fully realize the size of the facility, the numbers of buildings and structures, and the complexity of the installation. In cooperation with the chamber of commerce, a single page brochure announcing the availability of properties and listing thumbnail descriptions of the airbase buildings was prepared in great quantities and a mailing program was instigated through various committees of the chamber of commerce. The urgency of getting this information promiscuously scattered over the country was certainly overemphasized and the time and monies involved did little, if any, generating of industrial interest.

The council recognized the need for well-defined channels of communication between themselves and the public and appointed spokesmen to cooperate with the newspaper and the radio and television stations. The council also selected members to accept invitations to speak before the service clubs, association groups and similar organizations to keep the citizens aware of the activities of the development council.

By the end of January the base's military population had shrunk from approximately 5,000 to 4,200 men. The B-47 jet bombers were gradually disappearing from Salina's skies and the first of the Atlas