

Nearly 5,000 residents of a Pittsburgh ghetto neighborhood belong to a neighborhood credit union established by the residents with the help of VISTA volunteers.

In Texas 11,000 seasonal workers have been interviewed by VISTA volunteers and involved in war on poverty programs. More than 5,000 of them have now undergone TB examinations administered by VISTA and some 600 children received medical attention in clinics to which they were referred by VISTA volunteers.

On the Navajo Reservation, VISTA volunteers have TB tested more than 6,000 children, operated preschools for more than 400 and have more than 200 adults enrolled in literacy programs.

These are but a few examples. The accomplishments are impressive in human terms for they represent real and tangible benefits for individuals and communities locked in poverty.

Again, I feel strongly that this demonstrable effectiveness of the volunteer worker, coupled with the great number of Americans who are willing—are even anxious—to serve the poor of this Nation as VISTA volunteers, represents the arithmetic of hope for the entire war on poverty.

When it became obvious a few months ago that America's demand to serve in this effort was far greater than our ability to consent to service, the VISTA Citizens Corps was born. As in most cases in OEO, the idea came, not from Washington, but from grassroot organizations where our volunteers were working. There are now over 20,000 part-time volunteers working side by side with regular VISTA volunteers and VISTA associates. We expect to have 100,000—at a cost to the Federal Government of approximately \$1 per volunteer—by the end of fiscal 1968. These will be Americans who are the new dollar-a-year men and women. The contribution which they can and will make to the volunteer program is enormous. But this substantive contribution to the VISTA program is only one facet of the overall value of this program to the war on poverty.

The role of the Citizens Corps in highlighting the conditions of poverty in the community, of directly involving thousands in the goals of the war on poverty, and of tapping the resources of the entire community for this war cannot, I believe, be overstated.

And that is what VISTA is all about.

VISTA's role is to channel the imagination of the private citizen into effective and carefully coordinated efforts to help the Nation's poorest citizens find their way out of poverty. VISTA's job is to help individuals and communities identify and define the priority of their needs, find effective and forceful means of expressing those needs and evolve creative, communitywide programs to solve the problems.

VISTA brings a new dimension to community service—a dimension which goes far beyond the Alinsky philosophy of organizing the poor against the community. We strive for the mobilization of the human resources of the entire community into a coordinated effort to solve the most important single problem. It is VISTA's practice to evolve community interest in projects identified by the community and then through a gradual program of involvement to gain first community support, then community direction and finally community responsibility for the program so that VISTA may ultimately withdraw entirely and allocate its limited resources in other areas of need.