

had for at least two decades been groping with the poverty problem with rather poor results.

If anti-poverty funds were to be transferred into the machinery of the orthodox welfare system, it would be more difficult than ever to determine the successes and failures of the war on poverty. For whatever criticism one may have of the OEO, it cannot be said it doesn't have an open door for public examination, whether by Congress or the newspapers or the interested public.

Part of the problem of the OEO results from the high visibility the OEO, itself, has given such problems as it has had. To turn anti-poverty funds back to the big departments might very well lessen the visibility of the poor. It would also ensure that we'd know less than we do not about the cost-effectiveness of the war on poverty.

This might well ease the frustrations of some Congressmen and of that portion of the public which would prefer not to be reminded that poverty exists, but it certainly would not ease the frustrations of the poor themselves. We cannot pursue a policy of "out of sight, out of mind."

Many of the economic opportunity programs are controversial, most particularly the community action programs. Much of the controversy arises from the fact that these programs are bringing people together, in communities across the country, who have never talked to each other before, people who in many cases have never even been aware of each other's existence. This bringing together of community elements results in a catalytic action which inevitably produces some conflict and some turmoil, but the alternative to meeting at the neighborhood center is to meet in the neighborhood street where the action is more likely to be explosive than catalytic.

The double value of the CAP program is that, on the one hand, it allows for a level of experimentation which would be awkward, perhaps impossible, for established departments, and, on the other hand, it requires community involvement. It gives people a means of participation in the control of their own destinies through the historically established machinery for social change. To eliminate either aspects of the CAP program would be a serious matter. The established departments are unlikely experimenters and if people are not directly involved (despite whatever discomfort this may occasionally cause the politicians), their reactions will be manifest in more violent and non-traditional ways. It is better to have people petitioning through established channels than to have them throwing rocks at City Hall.

Any long-range solution must continue to recognize the fact that there are two kinds of poverty to be attacked. There is the poverty of resources which we all recognize. And there is a poverty of culture which develops out of generations of neglect, of being beaten down and denied, not just things, but access to the knowledge of how to change things, how to make an impact on one's environment, how to challenge the system, how to exercise an influence on the common course of communal affairs.

Denied knowledge like this, people become overwhelmed by their own powerlessness and this gives rise to hopelessness, despair and apathy. As an ancient Greek philosopher once said, "the greatest crime against a man is not to deny him but to make him not even care."

It was specifically to combat this poverty of culture that the community action programs were developed by OEO. Some of you may be familiar with Project ENABLE conducted by the National Urban League in cooperation with the Family Service Society and the Child Study Association and funded by the OEO. It was a great success. Perhaps its greatest achievement was in developing means and demonstrating ways to reach people afflicted by a poverty of culture.

ENABLE dealt with groups of parents in 59 cities, parents who didn't understand the system, who didn't know how to petition in their own behalf or in behalf of their children, who before the advent of ENABLE were demoralized in the face of authority and incapable of pressing their own best interests with officialdom—incapable of speaking up at City Hall, or at the local welfare department or before the board of education.

ENABLE demonstrated how a community of parents can be mobilized when given an opportunity to exercise a real influence on matters affecting the welfare of their children. ENABLE explored many of the possibilities for traditional social welfare agencies to take effective action at the grass roots. It would be a disaster if such lessons were lost. Such experiences denied those who need them.

I hope that other agencies will study the ENABLE record and pick up on it and that, under no circumstances, will the Federal Government renege on its