

Development and Training Act. A million and a half to 2 million people who have really had life brought back to them in a realistic sense in this period.

I would like to match those statistics along with some other meaningful figures. It is just statistics, but it is true and significant that we have cut in half—by we, I mean this country and this economy, this Congress, this administration, these programs—have cut in half in the last 3 years, the hard core unemployment situation, we have cut by 57 percent. Three years ago in May there were 1,084,000 people who had been out of work 5 years or more. Three years ago it was 1,084,000. Today it is 464,000. It has been more than cut in half.

That is not the most important thing that has gone on. When I think of the Economic Opportunity Act and the Office of Economic Opportunity and the Redevelopment Program we are talking about, I think of it in terms of a reflection of the basic things going on in this country today.

So we don't measure what we do any longer by what we did before. We measure it by our potential. This is what is making things difficult in the measurement. We are also undergoing at the urging and insistence of American youth and through the Office of Economic Opportunity, a complete stern reevaluation of the relationship of individuals to institutions. We don't accept institutions today unless they serve the individual.

Chairman PERKINS. Are you endorsing the Office of Economic Opportunity as presently constituted?

Secretary WIRTZ. I think they have done more—and by “they,” I mean we, the Congress, the administration, the people through that Office—to insist upon a reevaluation of all the institutions in this whole area—Federal, State, and local. They have done more to make new attempts at direct service of the individual rather than just the institution than any other group or through any other experiment in history that I can think about. They have shaken us up, Mr. Chairman, the whole bunch of us, the whole country. They have said people are poor not because anybody in this country wants poverty, but because it happens because the poor people aren't represented, haven't been represented. And we are going to see that there is something done about it. They have put a hair shirt on all of us, the other agencies of government, and on the country. They have told us the truth about poverty, and it hurts. Now it helps. They have shaken us up.

Chairman PERKINS. The Office is in the process of concentrating on the disadvantaged areas throughout the country, the people who really need assistance. Would it be a mistake to shift it somewhere else?

Secretary WIRTZ. I mention that in my testimony, and I simply summarize my view here. I think it would be a terrible mistake at this point, just a terrible mistake. I know the argument that some of these programs are now at a point that we should shift them someplace else. I am in a pretty good position to say to you, Mr. Chairman, that it takes more than 3 years to upset the inertial forces that characterized some of the established departments of Government, including the Department of Labor.

Three years is not enough to serve as a basis for any assumption that the established departments are now going to do right what they didn't