

Mr. AYRES. Mr. Secretary, first I want to commend you and compliment you on the cooperation that you always show to Members of Congress regarding the Department of Labor problems which they have in their particular districts.

My question is, What is being done to get people trained to qualify for jobs so that general contractors throughout the country can abide by Federal regulations as to the ratio of Negroes to whites on the jobs?

I know that many Members of Congress are concerned about situations where the contractor was doing his very best to abide by the Federal regulations but construction was held up in the granting of funds because, due to the situation in the particular locality, it was impossible to get Negroes on the job. Is there some coordination between the jobs that are in short supply and what we are trying to do under your manpower and training and under the Job Corps and the Neighborhood Youth Corps to direct these enrollees into schools or operations whereby this shortage can be alleviated and these contractors can go forward?

Mr. WIRTZ. Yes, there is. Instead of answering in general terms it is probably more helpful to refer to specific things that are going on. The one to which we attach the largest significance at the moment—and I say “at the moment” because we are still looking for the complete answers to that question—the approach that seems to offer the best promise at the moment is one that involves the participation of the Workers Defense League. We have worked out with them and with the building trades unions a program, first in New York, now being extended to New York City and Westchester County, now being extended to Buffalo, to Cleveland, to a whole series of cities: Buffalo, Cleveland, Baltimore, Detroit, St. Louis, Atlanta, Chicago, and Portland.

This is a well worked out program which has the complete cooperation of minority groups and building trades, and which is designed to find those boys in the community who want to do this kind of work, and to make arrangements for their qualification for apprenticeship in these building trades programs. This approach also recognizes that in a good many cases there has to be a preliminary basis laid in terms of more general qualifications.

That program is now actively underway. There are a number of manpower development and training programs, in further answer to your question, which lie in the same area. I want to make it quite clear, because there has been a misunderstanding about it, that we are not proposing to move in on an MDTA basis and qualify a man for a skilled occupation in disregard of the very sound practices which have developed as far as the apprenticeship program is concerned. They talk about our diluting the trade. We are not doing that. We are developing programs, essentially with respect to some of those fairly broad general education programs. We are developing programs which qualify them to move into the apprenticeship program.

My answer to your question is that our awareness of the problem is along exactly the lines you have stated it. There are specific programs now devised to meet exactly that problem.

Mr. DENT. This poses a very serious question on that very same subject matter. Is this Neighborhood Youth Corps program in any