

I cited this case 3 years ago to illustrate the need for a new type of program, a program tailored to the circumstances of thousands of Charlie Hamlins throughout rural America. The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 authorized such a program under title III(A):

Charlie Hamlin got his EO loan in May 1965. It enabled him to buy six head of beef cattle—and to clear eight acres of land, put on fertilizer, seed for permanent pasture, and build fences to control grazing.

This was precisely what he needed to get a toe hold on the economic ladder. That toe hold has since made it possible for Farmers Home Administration to give him a regular farm operating loan to buy more cattle.

Mr. Hamlin now has 16 head of livestock and 18 acres of good quality pasture. The total family income this year, including earnings off a farm work, is expected to be \$3,000—not very much, it is true, but triple what it used to be.

In less than three years Charlie Hamlin's net worth has been doubled. He is slowly making progress.

I cite this case today to illustrate how the economic opportunity program is opening doors for low-income people all over America. Just this one phase of the act has already proved itself in terms of "opportunity" for more than 40,000 families and individuals in rural America.

It illustrates what Robert Browning wrote a century ago:

Oh the little more, and how much it is.
And the little less, and what worlds away.

The little more that the war on poverty offers our low-income people makes a world of difference in their lives, their futures and their contributions to society.

My testimony has three major purposes.

First, I am here to support as strongly as possible your efforts to intensify and make more effective the Nation's war on poverty. To that end, I recommend urgently the extension of the Economic Opportunity Act as strengthened on the basis of our 3 years' experience with it.

Second, I wish to offer some suggestions on filling the gaps in existing operations in the war on poverty and to support strongly the amendments proposed by the administration.

Third, I want to sketch for you briefly some of the many effective ways in which the USDA is working with OEO and other agencies, public and private, in this war.

I am sure that everyone in this room would agree that there is no valid excuse for continued widespread poverty in the midst of mankind's greatest abundance. Nor is there any morally acceptable rationale to justify continued widespread lack of opportunity in an economy that is the most productive in history.

Poverty and lack of opportunity are two sides of the same coin. They must be fought and vanquished together—largely with the same weapons. There is no point in developing job opportunities unless we also train people to fill them. There is little point in providing loans for the poor unless growing economic opportunity makes it possible to repay them.

In the past few years the Congress has enacted many far-reaching laws and created imaginative new programs and services to ease the pressures of poverty and expand economic opportunity.

I count it a real privilege to have a part in carrying out these pro-