

I think it was before the Senate subcommittee where you said the Senate has assigned the responsibility for agricultural rural development within the Federal Establishment to the Secretary of Agriculture with a view toward better coordination and elimination of duplication.

It would seem to me the logical and efficient way to have a rural development program is to put it under the jurisdiction of the Department of Agriculture with the authority, legal authority and the obligation imposed by Congress that they move in this area to meet the needs of the very poor.

For one thing, we certainly don't want to be setting up farmers to produce commodities of which we already have a surplus. We want to be sure there is a coordination of overall commodity needs and long-term commodity needs for some future type of operation we are setting up here.

Do you have any comment on this?

Secretary FREEMAN: These programs both from the standpoint of what the Federal Government has to offer and the departments that are administering the various ones and the local organizations don't lend themselves certainly at the outset to any simple, easy, or standard organizational pattern.

As you well know, there are infinite varieties placed on the tradition and history of the various localities around the country. As such, I have not felt that we ought to try to force any kind of particular administrative organizational arrangement on local communities.

Therefore, the fact that there is some duplication on occasion and some overlapping is not necessarily bad as it has tended to stimulate a lot more attention and participation, a lot more resources and a lot more action where action is needed.

I think these things are going to work themselves out and on a pragmatic basis after a while. The one thing I have concluded is the most important is multicounty planning.

I think one of the reasons why there is need for so much planning is because localities and local groups tend to come in and ask for things they should not be asking for because they have not had enough assistance and help and professional guidance and they don't have a balanced plan or program.

The net result is they will come in with a little piece of a program restricted to too small a geographical area. By the time it gets to Washington, and there is behind it a community and maybe a Governor and then a Congressman and perhaps a Senator, there are not very many people down here that want to say no. I don't believe that is good.

On the other hand, if there had been logical multicounty careful forward planning with a balanced program and plan where the pieces do fit together then when decisions are made with regard to the kind of programs to be installed, they would then receive a much more effective reception.

What I am really saying here is that we are learning what kind of programs we ought to have. Fundamentally, we make two approaches: One is economic opportunity in the sense of developing resources, providing jobs, attracting industry, building a community base.

That is one part of it, so there will be jobs, opportunities, and services. Closely related to that but in a sense at least in the initial stages, a special kind of problem is that of the poor and the very poor.