

Mr. BENNETT. Well, I do think that the lack of education contributes to unemployment, but for the present wage earners, it may not be able to correlate it to school dropouts, because at some point in time, particularly the Navajo Reservation, when the people who are in the wage-earning age group now did not have schools to attend, so there is—it is directly related to lack of education but the lack of education may be based upon other factors than just school dropouts.

Mr. REID. Thank you, Mr. Commissioner.

Could I ask you, Mr. Secretary, to give us a brief résumé of this for the record? I would like one personally, if I may, and any figures that you might have that particularly relate the OEO programs to the problem and to the need, and to the other programs that you mentioned that are going to be introduced.

I think it would be helpful to see the whole thrust of what the Government is trying to do in this area, and wherever you can, where effective steps have been taken. I happen to be a believer in the anti-poverty program, but I have long felt that much needs to be done to clarify both results and pinpoint areas where improvement could be made, and I think some successes in this area as well as perspective on the problem will be very useful.

(The information follows:)

OEO PROGRAMS ON INDIAN RESERVATIONS

Indian unemployment (and underemployment) is estimated to be approximately 40 percent of the labor force. A number of factors serve to contribute to this high percentage. The average number of school grades completed by the Indian labor force is estimated to be 8.4 as compared with 10.6 for the U.S. labor force. Although we do not have data to show the correlation between educational deficiencies and unemployment, it is undoubtedly a significant contributing factor. The educational requirements for jobs is steadily increasing. In addition, Indian populations are more often than not located in extremely rural areas, that lack employment opportunities.

Problems of motivation further contribute to Indian unemployment. Programs are needed that provide intensive and extensive counseling for the whole family. The wife as well as the breadwinner must become convinced that full-time participation in the world of work is a satisfying experience that will contribute to family solidarity and social betterment.

A great many Indians lack salable vocational skills. Most public and private schools that offer programs of vocational training require a tenth grade or better education. Programs in basic education are needed to enable the unemployed to meet these minimum educational levels.

There have been a variety of OEO programs that have provided benefits to Indian people in preparation for employment. Head Start programs, which provided pre-school experience for 7,500 Indian children in fiscal year 1967, offers a step toward a long range solution of Indian education problems. OEO programs have also contributed to the enrichment of elementary and secondary education for Indian children. The Rough Rock School project on the Navajo Reservation is one example. A number of the 300 VISTA assigned to reservations have assisted in school programs. They have also conducted adult education programs on reservations.

There have been several vocational training components approved in Indian Community Action programs. The home builders training program at the Red Lake Indian Reservation, which trained 30 Indian men all of whom subsequently found employment, has already been mentioned in the testimony. OEO plans to extend this training in the construction of 500 additional Indian homes in fiscal year 1968. We have been unable to obtain from OEO figures on actual Indian participation in various Community Action vocational training programs.

Two additional OEO programs contribute to increasing employability of Indian people. The Neighborhood Youth Corps, administered by the Department