

Since its founding by Jane Addams in 1915, the League has been deeply concerned with the conditions under which people live and work, and with the development of human potential. It is not only women, however, who are aware that a whole community is impoverished when a large number of its members fail, because of lack of opportunity, to achieve their fullest potential. No American can remain untouched by the menacing consequences of poverty, the spread of slums, the decay of social services and the human waste which leads to violence, crime, and chaos.

The 1960's saw the long-overdue beginning of a coordinated national effort to rehabilitate America's urban and rural poor. The Executive and Legislative branches of our national government are to be commended. However, it has not been without its trials and trauma. To use the words of the President in his March 14, 1967 Message on Urban and Rural Poverty, "Few undertakings in our time have generated as much hope, produced as many immediate and beneficial results, or excited as much controversy as the anti-poverty program. . . ."

As a professionally interested observer, and then evaluator, of one community's participation in this "war on poverty", I have personally seen and experienced the hope, the beneficial results, and the controversy which characterized the first stage of this national undertaking. Last June, exactly one year ago, I was called from my work as a suburban educator to set up a program which would allow the public and private agencies administering anti-poverty programs to evaluate their efforts *with* those people they were trying to reach, the under privileged youth of Washington, D.C. The result was last October's Conference on Planning for Washington's Children and Youth, the full report of which was published under the title, "The Day After Summer" and is appended hereto.

Washington, D.C. is not a typical city. However, there are several fundamental and unusual implications of last summer's Washington, D.C. experience which are applicable to communities throughout the nation and which are directly related to the total concept of the "war" which we are fighting. This is the war to raise human hopes and aspirations, to bring a large group of excluded Americans into the mainstream of an affluent society, to change society's "burdens" into producers and contributors; in short, to promote the fullest measure of human potential. Some of the provisions which have allowed the Office of Economic Opportunity to promote this struggle for self-realization of the underprivileged are today under attack and could be greatly affected by the proposed amendments to the Economic Opportunity Act. I would like, therefore, to address myself to the desirability of retaining these provisions.

INCENTIVES TO COOPERATIVE EFFORTS

The availability of OEO funds for special programs for youth led to one of the first efforts in Washington to coordinate programs among a wide variety of public and private agencies. As any day's City Life Section of the Washington Post illustrates, there has been repetition, overlapping and enormous gaps in essential services to citizens. Even more than most cities, Washington has been plagued by what one critic called "non-self government" which has produced a monumental failure on the part of the service-providing civic agencies to act cooperatively or even knowledgeably in relation to one another.

However, as a result of OEO funding, last summer saw the beginning of machinery which would allow for communication and exchange of information between agency heads, their staffs, and citizen representatives in the development and implementing of local poverty programs.

The thirteen members of the Summer Planning Committee under which last summer's youth programs were planned and operated, included representatives from religious and voluntary groups such as the Archbishop's Committee on Community Relations. The Council of Churches, the Health and Welfare Council and the Urban Service Corps. Local D.C. government agencies included the Departments of Welfare, Recreation, and Public Schools and the Office of Program Coordination of the D.C. Government which, incidentally, took a leadership role in the Committee. Poverty program representatives came from the Metropolitan Citizens Advisory Council and the United Planning Organization, which provided staff and funds and office space from its budget. While differences in basic orientation and customary practice between these groups made for prolonged and sometimes acrimonious discussion, they learn to control individual