

biases in a common concern for the needs of D.C. children and youth. They also received considerable support from Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey and from the Presidential Advisor for National Capital Area Affairs, Mr. Charles A. Horsky.

However, one cannot ignore the fact that the initial catalyst was the availability of new sources of income for innovative anti-poverty programs. While the overall record for creative innovation in the District of Columbia is far from good, the pattern for cooperation has been established and provides a model for other communities. This year, 1967, the planning in D.C. began much earlier, has included many more than the original thirteen agencies, and has been formalized by the D.C. Commissioners in an Inter-Agency Committee. This Committee is composed of the representatives of all local agencies and groups involved in direct service to D.C. residents of Washington's neighborhoods. This promises to have far-reaching efforts on patterns of communication within this federal city and alone would justify the OEO approach to funding special innovative anti-poverty programs.

COMMUNICATION BY AND WITH THE POOR

A lesson which emerged with startling clarity at last October's evaluative conference, and has been confirmed in the months since, is that there is no real dichotomy of interests or inability to communicate between low-income youth and the rest of society. The 600 twelve to twenty-five year-olds who represented neighborhood youth at the Conference sessions communicated clearly and productively with the 600 social workers, teachers, recreation workers, volunteers and local and federal administrators who symbolize the more affluent world. The result of the setting up of machinery for communication between the neighborhoods and agencies has been the remarkable accomplishment of the *planning and funding* of programs for twenty different neighborhoods in D.C.

The success of this continuing dialogue serves to confirm the findings of Dr. Hyman Lewis' excellent studies of Washington's urban poor, *Cross-Tell*; and to demolish outmoded concepts of a radically different "culture of poverty" whose members are locked into a tight world from which they are unable to touch or be touched by the rest of society. Where we are dealing with common human concerns—jobs, housing, recreation, schools, welfare, etc.—poor people and the affluent world can communicate very well indeed. The great need now is to continue to use local and federal anti-poverty programs to provide channels of mobility between the low and middle income groups. By providing alternatives, we obviate the need for demonstrations, riots, crime—acts which are the ultimate protest of a frustrated and desperate people.

OEO programs such as the Job Corps, Neighborhood Youth Corps, Legal Services, Upward Bound, Community Advisory Councils, and a host of others such as the last summer's planning effort of Washington, D.C. have narrowed the gap between the poor and the rest of society. Removing these programs to established federal agencies at this particular time would inevitable result in decreased communication. The reason for this is that in the old-time agencies programs are fitted into agency molds and become services for the people rather than services *with* the people. More than any other program or service provided by the government, the poverty programs demand and, in fact, cannot really succeed without the direct participation and involvement of those who these programs are to benefit.

DEMOCRACY AND INVOLVEMENT

Basic to our system of government is the concept of participatory democracy—that individual citizens have the right and the ability to take part in finding solutions to their own problems. Perhaps the deepest tragedy of the "self-perpetuating cycle of poverty" and the one with the most serious consequences for our form of government has been the hopeless acceptance of their inevitable fate by the more than 30 millions of Americans who live below and outside of our economic structure. The emphasis which the OEO has placed on involving these people as participants in local programs through representatives on policy-making and advisory boards has provided a living lesson in democracy. I have personally witnessed the startling metamorphosis of young persons and adults after several weeks or months of membership on boards or committees where they are listened to with respect and acceptance. Young "dropouts", kids who have been "busted"