

My work has been absolutely limited to one small rural community. Whereas I think I can give you views on the OEO as a large part—

Chairman PERKINS. You do have poverty in that community there?

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Yes, sir, we do.

Chairman PERKINS. Go ahead.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. If I may, I want to give an orientation of some of the conditions in this sort of community and the way they respond to a Community Action program. Will that be all right?

Chairman PERKINS. Yes, go ahead.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. You know very well, sir, that the people of our area have very severe problems. You know very well how they came about. The particular community worked in, I think, has suffered in the same way that many that you know have suffered.

We have far from any sort of urban center. The people have a most remarkable degree of isolation. In fact one of the real problems in rural poverty which is what we know in parts of the Appalachia area, is that there is not a clearly visible alternative to poverty, to the people who are affected.

In the cities I think you have a very clear situation, for example, in New York, 96th Street, you stand on 96th Street and look one way, you have the problems of Harlem; look the other way and you have the very clear alternative to Park Avenue.

This creates a desire for change.

Chairman PERKINS. From your analysis, give us your view as to whether you feel we have done enough in the area of rural poverty?

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. No, sir; I don't. I can say that in the beginning. There are thousands of communities all across Appalachia very isolated which are not receiving attention.

I know in my own county there are probably 300 or 400 rural communities which suffer from isolation and poverty. Yet, I think, at the present time there are only about 18 or 19 of these communities serviced.

Now this is Capitol County of West Virginia and where part of the brunt of the focus of the poverty work has been. Where I have worked frankly, sir, there still remains in the community a one-room school with 24 students, seven grades, and one teacher.

I would say that approximately 70 percent of the people in the community where I work are on some form of welfare and there are probably only four or five houses out of the 60 that have plumbing of any sort.

There is one newspaper each day that comes into that community. There are only 30 or 40 cars that pass by that community, and none of them stop. It is a community with really tremendous isolation, tremendous sadness, and with tremendous lack of job potential.

I worked there for 2 years. I can say that after that 2 years most of the basic problems remain. I think this would lead me and many others to be discouraged but I do not think that this is the route that we can take.

The one thing I have learned from working in the war on poverty, especially in a rural area where you do not have the instinct for change, in the rural poverty area you do not have a sense of what life could be like.