

Chairman PERKINS. Congressman Dellenback, did you have something else?

Mr. DELLENBACK. No, sir.

Chairman PERKINS. I thank you very much. We appreciate your coming. You have made a good witness. Everybody appreciates your appearance here today.

Go ahead, Dr. Perlmutter.

Dr. PERLMUTTER. I think you were asking why the Job Corps is not better known than it is.

Chairman PERKINS. That is the question.

Dean PERLMUTTER. There are the intrinsic reasons that the subject of the Job Corps is a lot less romantic to the public than comparable programs. We have an obvious affection for children. We have feelings of anxiety. I think there are even hostility and guilt feelings with it where the adolescent group is involved, especially from other ethnic and racial groups. We have a strong tendency as to the common statement you will hear in almost any part of the country when people talk about a youngster who is misbehaving that what he needs is, you know, a good thrashing or a good talking to and he ought to go on the straight and narrow right after that. There isn't very much sympathy generally for this kind of adolescent misbehavior as most people look at it as misbehavior. I don't think it is misbehavior at all. These are behavior patterns for which very sound reasons exist which have to be understood and they are no more unreasonable than somebody behaving because he is suffering from a high fever and does certain things that seem strange. So intrinsically there are a whole set of reasons bound up with this population group.

Secondly, there are a number of external things that make this unappealing. For one thing, it is a very hard job. It means that educators have to have the humility to say that we have not succeeded. This casts aspersions on the American school system. It is not easy for me to come over here as I have today and face the fact in public that we have millions of adults—11 million is the figure the Commissioner of Education cited—who read below the level of fourth grade. This to me is a much more significant matter than a dropout because supposing you are in school for 8 years and you end up reading at the fourth-grade level. You are a dropout then, too, even though you have been there. The point is the result, so that educators themselves and the people who support the educational community have very mixed feelings. If you come out in favor of the Job Corps you are really saying, "Well, we have not done it right." I think this was in the background of some of our discussion about vocational education. I think this is in the background of some of the career proposals, people saying "Well, we really can do it, but you did not give us a chance." Then some of us have to make the decision and we don't have a particular ax to grind that, well, we don't want to make this decision because quite frankly we don't think we can do it but we hesitate to say that. You are talking to a colleague here. You have enough to do with vocational education with just that upper lower class, you know, that in-between group that isn't quite middle class, and you have not done that successfully, in fact, the slum youngster, the kid in the West Virginia hills, so that the educational community itself does not jump with enthusiasm, does not have the vibrance of sending a Peace Corps group to Africa.