

Corps immediately to the Office of Education as vocational schools are presently operated.

How do you feel it will affect the programs we now have underway assuming that the Congress went along with the suggestions and threw away the experience we presently have?

Dr. FLEMMING. Mr. Chairman, I am very happy to respond to that question and elaborate somewhat on the testimony I have just presented.

As I am sure you appreciate, I have a very very high regard for the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. I have a very high regard for the Secretary of that agency, whom I have long thought of as this Nation's No. 1 educational statesman.

I have a high regard for the career staff that have given the best years of their lives to the Department of HEW. But I recognize as I am sure you do and as the members of this committee do, since I was Secretary, Congress has assumed new responsibilities to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

The old responsibilities plus the new responsibilities place a very heavy burden on the Secretary. It is clear to me that the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare could not give his undivided attention to the war against poverty as can the Administrator of the Office of Economic Opportunity.

If an official under the Secretary of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, such as an assistant secretary, should be assigned such responsibility, he would not have the same opportunity to keep the program moving as does the head of an independent agency.

I noted with interest that Congressman Quie in introducing into the Congressional Record of June 8, 1967, an explanation of the bill which he and some of his colleagues have introduced, he said this:

No independent agency can hope to coordinate effectively the many federal activities designed to help the poor.

I would like to say I believe that an independent agency can do this job in an effective manner, if the President of the United States makes clear that the head of that agency is his representative in a particular area.

As you know, I had the privilege of serving for 4 years as the Director of the Office of Defense Mobilization. It was an independent agency. In order to carry out the duties of the Office, one had to work with the heads of a good many Cabinet departments.

President Eisenhower made it clear from the beginning that the incumbent of that Office was his representative in that particular area and he continued to make it clear as various issues would arise.

Consequently, I found that I could work with the heads of the Cabinet departments in an effort to coordinate activities in that particular area.

I recognize that I was probably helped somewhat by the fact that although it was an independent agency the Congress in establishing it provided that it was to be in the Executive Office of the President, and this committee might want to consider such a possibility as far as the Office of Economic Opportunity is concerned if you want to underline the fact that the head of this Office is functioning very closely to the President.