

Mr. QUIE. You recognize there is a danger?

Dr. FLEMMING. I certainly do. I wonder if I could suggest at this particular point in my judgment the staff might be helped by making contact with appropriate church leaders in these communities, particularly church leaders who have been staying close to this whole economic opportunity program. They might be able to give them helpful, factual information.

Mr. DELLENBACK. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. GIBBONS. I would be glad to yield to Mr. Dellenback.

Mr. DELLENBACK. I apologize for not having been here when you first presented your testimony.

For the record I would like it to be said that the witness before us today, Dr. Flemming, is not only a citizen of Oregon but is a citizen of my district. I count him as one of my leading constituents, one for whom I have great respect. He, of course, is well known to many of us from his background as the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare. In our particular area he is known as the president of what we think is one of the leading universities of the Far West, and we think one of the leading universities of the Nation, the University of Oregon. It is a real pleasure to have you here, Dr. Flemming.

May I ask you a question along the lines Mr. Gibbons was asking. Forgetting the specific bills at the moment, against this picture of urgency that you testified to, are there major things that you think the events of the last week or two say to us about major changes that we ought to be making in connection with this war on poverty? It is imperative that we act swiftly, you say, but we don't want to act blindly and we don't want to act in a way that will perpetuate weaknesses and fail to remedy weaknesses. Are there any specific suggestions that you make to us as to significant changes in the approach that we have been adopting so far?

Dr. FLEMMING. Thank you, Congressman Dellenback.

My feeling is the events of the past few days undermine the importance of our making sure that we can capitalize to the maximum possible degree on the experiences that we have had during the past two and a half years. You have listened to a good deal of testimony from administrators who have been in the middle of this operation, and I am sure they have identified both strengths and weaknesses in the program and those are strengths and weaknesses that you are now in the process of evaluating.

I might say that I would respect very very highly the testimony of those who have been on the firing line. I do think the events of the past few days really make it all the more important for this agency that the Congress set up two and a half years ago to be given a green light in terms of moving forward with its existing programs, whatever the changes the Congress in its judgment thinks should be made after listening to all of the evidence.

I also think it is very important to receive from those who have been on the firing line, which you probably have already, their recommendations as to additional steps that might be taken growing out of their experience.

I personally do not think that it is wise for a person in my position who has not been in the middle of it to just simply come out with a new program or a new approach to the program. I have had the