

I confine myself to the enormous resources in the 4-H Clubs of the Department of Agriculture. Without the appropriation of a single extra nickel, we could involve every neighborhood in America with local committees, volunteer leaders, and expert professional supervision. Suppose we should organize hundreds of clubs in which the young men would study gardening and upholstery and the young women would study cooking, home-making, and interior decoration. Think of the homes we would ready directly, simply, and effectively. What prevents this kind of action? The failure of the imagination.

VII. WALKIE-TALKIE ADVISERS

At the moment we are engaged in the discussion of multi-purpose centers—a sort of network of area YMCA's with additional features. Government agents descend on communities to explain the programs. Community meetings are called to kindle expectations. Basic local research has been glaringly absent and the most knowledgeable people locally have not been consulted. Neighborhood pressure groups and mountains of persons of good will lay plans which probably will not be funded.

It is our current operation to think that if we open an office, get some furniture, and a staff we are in business to win the War on Poverty. What we need rather is a corps of walkie-talkie mobile persons of competence and training who can move among people where they are, discuss their needs, and guide the needy to the channels of help. The channels do exist now in ample supply.

VIII. FUTILITY OF COMMUNITY ACTION

This brings us to the validity of community action—the revitalization and reinvigoration of the local democratic community by the involvement of the people and the poor outside of the “establishment.”

Let me say that the 19th century romantic and humanitarian concepts embodied in the present legislation cannot be supported by a single finding of contemporary behavioral political science. Except for the opportunity which it has provided for a new species of political interloper and associated staff, community action for the most part has generated confusion, animosity, and heat but not light. Community action provides a ponderous and complicated net of professed public purpose and private political connivance. This federally-funded layer of local government, in my opinion, should be dissolved before it becomes a permanent and disruptive feature of local government.

IX. CONSERVATION OF STAFF

In summary may I say that it is my opinion that since 1964 we have been learning. We hence learned a lot about the needs of fellow citizens. We have dramatized poverty so that the war on it is household knowledge. With greatest pains we should identify the area of most rewarding concern and reconstruct the campaign. We should recognize the splendid service performed by the vast body of OEO personnel and make provisions to use them, their experience, and their skill in a program designed to meet the needs of 1970 and beyond.

X. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Let me recapitulate my suggestions:

- (1) Move the Office of Economic Opportunity out of the Executive Office of the President and relocate its major educational and training functions under an assistant secretary in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.
- (2) Establish the closest relations between the educational and training functions with job information and placement.
- (3) Incorporate Head Start and Day Care Centers into a federally-funded and permanent operation of the school system.
- (4) Make provision for a negative income tax or guaranteed annual income.
- (5) Maximize existing resources.
- (6) Establish mobile corps of Walkie-Talkies to move among the people where they are—rather than sitting in offices where they are not.
- (7) Preserve and conserve existing experienced and competent staff.
- (8) Dissolve the cumbersome layer of federally-funded local government.

On the basis of the experience which we now have, we are in a position to define a program and make it work.