

Each individual State department of education has cooperated with local educational institutions in channeling Federal and State money, combined with local money, into specific training programs and our overall public school system, making possible the largest, most effective educational system the world has ever known. Vocational education is a division of this overall system.

A growing concern in recent years has emphasized a need to provide additional training opportunities for those unfortunate people who either never had the opportunity to acquire a decent wage-earning skill, or lacked the proper motivation and interest to do so, or both. I am referring, of course, to the so-called disadvantaged or poverty-stricken. The U.S. Government, through legislative action, could provide an opportunity and incentive to these people by utilizing existing machinery, the same machinery so instrumental in building this Nation, the educational system.

The basic structure of Federal, State, and local agencies cooperating and working together toward a common goal is a workable one.

Consider the task at hand: that of training our unemployed and underemployed youth to earn a living and to perform jobs essential to our society. For such an important undertaking as this, is it not logical to assign the responsibility to a tried and tested system that has proven its worth over many generations? This same system is currently involved in developing new techniques in order to stay abreast of the present and future demand for more and better education.

It is necessary that we evaluate our cherished tradition and determine whether or not we should experiment and make changes in our approach to the problems at hand. We must never change just for the sake of changing; rather, we change to improve.

Caution must be exercised in order to avoid the abandonment of a traditional approach that works. If the experimental method proves to be lacking in effectiveness, we revert back to the traditional method but with a different approach. In essence, I am suggesting that the responsibility of training our unemployed youth be placed in the hands of the U.S. Office of Education and subsequently State and local educational agencies.

PART II—VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN OHIO

As an example of what can and has been done under this system, I would point briefly to the overall vocational education program in Ohio and more specifically to the manpower development and training program, conducted by the State of Ohio, under the Director of Health, Education, and Welfare, U.S. Office of Education.

Current programs and planning in Ohio would have a total of 57 area vocational education centers located outside of our large cities. In addition to this, we anticipate the addition of 15 vocational high schools within our cities and an expansion of certain areas of vocational education into each of the comprehensive high schools in the large cities. This is an indication of the leadership and progressive thinking present in our State. Similar conditions exist in all other States.

The effective utilization and results of the Manpower Development and Training Act is a specific example of what can be accomplished through the traditional structure of Federal, State, and local cooperation and responsibilities. Individual importance and esteem must prevail in the planning and operation of all "people projects."