

3010 ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ACT AMENDMENTS OF 1967

erty fighting—the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. This was bold legislation, drawing upon the experience of past successes and failures, along with the best knowledge available then as to the Federal Government's responsibility in this area.

I. SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING THE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ACT

A. In establishing this act, the Congress declared that the Nation needed a fresh and vigorous effort to fight poverty in the other America. Old ways of doing business simply hadn't worked to our satisfaction and, in making community action programs the central force in this new national commitment, the Congress established the vital role of the Federal Government as one of helping people to help themselves. The community action concept rejected old forms of public paternalism.

By offering local communities and community groups the opportunity and responsibility to play vital roles in a war against poverty, the Federal Government established an important precedent.

In offering the poor the right and responsibility of a first-class partnership in local programs it reaffirmed and gave new life to the concept of self-help with Federal support. This commitment to local community action was and still is vital to developing a sensible war against poverty.

Any congressional dismantling of OEO by the outright transfer of programs would be a disservice to the poor of this Nation at a time when the war on poverty, even with the limited resources extended thus far, is beginning to win significant victories.

The Citizens' Crusade Against Poverty supports the Office of Economic Opportunity as the central antipoverty agency of the Federal Government, with particular emphasis on the community action program.

B. Our national security is dependent as much upon the well-being of our people as it is upon the strength of our foreign commitments and our exploration in space.

The question of national priorities must be raised now. Are we, as a nation, committed to a war against poverty? Are we willing to forgo just a few of our luxuries in order to marshal resources necessary to wage this war?

As of now, the answers to these questions are not heartening.

In 1966, Americans spent four times as much on tobacco (\$8.4 billion) as the administration is requesting for OEO this year;

More was spent on TV commercials in 1966 (\$2.75 billion) than in all OEO antipoverty efforts;

In the development of military hardware, we spent \$1.5 billion to build two B-70 aircraft, \$500 million for parts and drawings of the Skybolt missile, \$400 million for studies and drawings of the Dynasoar missile, \$170 million for parts and drawings of the Advent missile. This amounts to a total of \$2.570 billion on weaponry which, because of obsolescence or defectiveness, never got off the ground;

The combined community action efforts of New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Detroit, the District of Columbia, Atlanta, Boston, St. Louis, and Houston in fiscal 1966 was actually \$30 million less than the cost of developing and launching one Saturn rocket.