

We are dedicated, unalterably to this concept of community action and do categorically oppose attempts to destroy community action by the piece-meal parceling out of these action programs to other agencies. The fight can most effectively be waged under the umbrella of community action.

We in Kentucky feel that many of the very frustrating restrictions Congress has placed upon the Agency should be loosened. Localities must be given more freedom in deciding their priorities, to pick community action representatives; and to give OEO more coordinating powers; especially at the state level.

Quoting from the Courier-Journal Editorial Page of July 23, 1967, I believe I may ably reflect the consensus of feeling across the Commonwealth: "... It (War on Poverty) should be continued. Many of its innovations are just beginning to show results; many of its experiments are beginning to be accepted and win local community financing. The saving sparks of imagination and compassion it has introduced into our glum and stagnant attitudes on relief and welfare are well worth what it has cost and what it still might cost."

This endorsement was without qualification or equivocation.

Since the inception of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, Kentucky has moved ahead rapidly to mobilize its resources by enlisting the support of its people to fight the War on Poverty.

The State of Kentucky is organized into 30 units, 27 multi-county agencies and three single county agencies. (Map attached) Each of these agencies has a Board of Directors of approximately 25 members—at least 750 citizens from all walks of life in Kentucky who are voluntary serving in the War on Poverty in their communities. These people are giving their time, talent, and energy to implement the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964—an act which called for the total mobilization of the human and financial resources of our nation to eliminate poverty in the United States. In Kentucky we have mobilized the human resources and created a strong foundation from which to launch an all-out attack on the causes and conditions of poverty in our State.

Twenty-five of our CAP Agencies have been funded, have hired their staffs, surveyed the needs of the communities, and developed workable programs and sent them to Washington. Over 30 action programs have been funded and are in operation in the State; many, many others have had to be rejected because of lack of money. In the face of cutbacks in funds, OEO-CAPS have been very innovative in using local resources, volunteers, etcetera, to keep the program going. Much momentum has been engendered, but this interest and enthusiasm cannot be sustained indefinitely especially among the ranks of the poor. Our troops are in the field—but not even the bravest, most willing army in the world can fight a war long without ammunition. Congress must give these Kentucky communities and others like them throughout the nation the money they need. They cannot win a war with BB guns. *It is a time of testing in the Congress of the United States.* There are those *summer soldiers* who are prepared to haul down the banners, fold the tents, and abandon the field of battle. We must not let these voices prevail, lest we leave our one in five poverty-stricken people abandoned on the battlefield of a war which was never really fought.

Community Action Programs are truly democracy in action. Let's keep them that way OEO-CAP, through the innovative Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, gave more opportunity for the development of local initiative and opportunity for self-help than any other single act in the history of Congress.

The Act gives money, *Federal money*, to local communities to spend as *they see fit* for programs specifically designed by them (the Community Action Agency) which develop human resources and affect or eliminate poverty. It is not a welfare or give-away program. It is an investment program which will pay big dividends, it is the American peoples' adventure in opportunity.

This Act is based on the sound theory that when we have all the people—the rich, the just "well-to-do" and the poor—working together, they can eliminate the causes of poverty in their community. but, of course, the people thus banded together *must* have the ammunition—money—to do the job, and this is where Congress has been woefully lacking in its appropriations.

Not to provide the necessary money to bring to fruition this truly noble experiment is in effect to admit a lack of faith in our democratic system and the people themselves. We cannot afford to continue the false economy of wasting people in order to save money. Yes, wasting people, human beings made in the image of God Almighty, and thereby due the dignity of that image.