

STATEMENT OF JOHN BURKHART, PRESIDENT OF THE COLLEGE LIFE INSURANCE CO. OF AMERICA, APPEARING ON BEHALF OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF THE UNITED STATES; ACCOMPANIED BY RICHARD L. BREault, MANAGER OF THE NATIONAL CHAMBER'S COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT GROUP

Mr. BURKHART. Thank you.

I have with me, Mr. Richard L. Breault, who is the manager of our national chamber's community and regional resource development group, who is working very closely in this area and who does have a great deal of information that deals with what we are talking about.

For the past three years, the chamber of commerce has been involved in a study of poverty. The major portion of the study, an intensive inquiry into the nature and causes of poverty, has been the responsibility of the task force on economic growth and opportunity. The task force is composed of more than 100 chief executives of the country's largest corporations. It is chaired by Mr. Erwin D. Canham, editor in chief of the Christian Science Monitor.

More than 35 background papers have been commissioned by the task force from authorities on various aspects of poverty. The task force has been advised by at least 150 experts serving on 10 panels. Six field trips have been made to representative parts of the country to get first-hand information. And the task force, through its own staff, has researched the subject.

Three reports on poverty have so far been published. The first, entitled "The Concept of Poverty," attempts to define poverty more clearly, assesses the dimensions of the poverty problem in the United States, and develops general guidelines for public and private policies and programs to alleviate poverty.

The second report, entitled "Poverty: The Sick, Disabled, and Aged," analyzes the relationships between the problem of poverty and conditions of sickness, disability, and old age. It puts forward 28 recommendations aimed at mitigating the economic and social impact of these circumstances and at improving the quality of life for people who are poor because of these reasons.

The third report is entitled "The Disadvantaged Poor: Education and Employment." It analyzes the difficulties faced by those whose contributions to society are minimized because of discrimination, insufficient education, inadequate employment opportunities, or some combination of the three. It makes 28 recommendations aimed at alleviating poverty caused by these factors.

Two reports, one on individual and family security, and one on rural and regional poverty, are now in preparation.

The reports published to date have been praised by responsible public and private individuals of all political persuasions and have been favorably reviewed in leading publications.

OTHER CHAMBER ACTIVITIES

The national chamber's concern for finding solutions to poverty has not been limited to a study of the problem of poverty. Additionally, the national chamber commissioned a study of the actual operation of