

three Economic Opportunity Act programs—the Job Corps, the Neighborhood Youth Corps, and Project Headstart. This study, entitled “Youth and the War on Poverty,” was recently released and I will refer to it in more detail shortly.

The chamber has also held meetings for local chamber executives to discuss the present and potential involvement of local chambers and businessmen in community action programs aimed at a variety of problems, including poverty.

The national chamber has added staff whose full-time responsibility is to develop programs for business participation in the elimination of poverty.

Further, we have added resources to our traditional interest and concern for the improvement of elementary, secondary, and higher education and, particularly, for vocational education, both the institutional and on-the-job variety.

Through another of its activities—the total community development program—the national chamber is urging businessmen in every community to concern and involve themselves with the broad range of problems—social, economic, political, and cultural—facing most cities and towns, including the problems of low-income people.

The national chamber has also taken recommendations of its independent task force on economic growth and opportunity, evaluated many of them through appropriate committees, and approved a number of them for action and implementation.

I would like to offer the committee a list of recommendations in the first three reports of the task force that have become integral parts of national chamber policy. These are now serving as focal points for the development of action programs.

NATIONAL CHAMBER POVERTY LEGISLATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The national chamber has called for continuation, expansion, and improvement of Economic Opportunity Act programs that our analyses have shown to be successful, and it has offered constructive criticism of programs that it believes are not operating in the best possible manner.

The chamber has adopted, as policy, a number of specific recommendations affecting OEO programs. These recommendations are based in part on the study to which I just referred, namely, Youth and the War on Poverty.

At the outset, the report notes that one of the main obstacles to making any evaluation of the war on poverty programs is the lack of meaningful data from the Office of Economic Opportunity. You will recall, for instance, that OEO itself had to hire the Lou Harris polling firm to “find” the first 60,000 Job Corps enrollees who, for statistical purposes, were lost.

The public receives an abundance of statistics from OEO. However, they are of a general nature and really shed very little light on the poverty program. For example, OEO tells us that the war on poverty has “touched 3 million poor people”.

But what does “touched” mean? How many unemployed people have been given training that led to permanent jobs? How many deprived children have been given a head start in education that can