

3700 ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ACT AMENDMENTS OF 1967

This balance would change somewhat as economic conditions affected the variable-need cases, and as the number of persons over age 65 increases. But the general effect would seem to favor some relative increase in the responsible role of state-local governments.

Under the hypothetical allocation, income payments for chronic-need cases could be handled within the federal mechanics for administration of social security. It is not a question of incorporating these into the social security system or of intermingling funds. It is simply a matter of utilizing the office resources, record-keeping equipment, check-writing machines, etc. HEW's Bureau of Family Services which is responsible for the administration of the several public assistance grants could actually be combined with the Social Security Administration and continue its reduced responsibilities as a unit therein, keeping its records, payroll and accounts separate from the social security accounts. Need could be initially established by either a public or private welfare agency or even by the local field offices of the Social Security Administration which now verify eligibility for the insurance program benefits. On referral from any such accredited source, assistance payments would be started. The relatively few changes of status occurring in chronic-need cases could be reported by the recipient or case work service agencies, as in fact is done now.

The OEO type programs, involving cooperative action between state-local governments, voluntary agencies or enterprise participants, are the ones where day-to-day, person-to-person, program-to-program relationships require active work of service personnel. These are also the programs most apt to vary with changing community and economic circumstances. The responsibility for them needs to be kept close to the level of actual operation and in the locale of those to be served by the programs.

Using the voluntary sector as a service arm to the public welfare structure would not only make constructive use of nonprofit, independent bodies in our society, but would revitalize them. Furthermore, it would limit the public sector's responsibilities to the essentials of structuring.

CONCLUSION

Certainly the management aspects of the OEO programs, and coordination—both interagency in the national government and in federal-state relationships—can be helped by some of the provisions in H.R. 8311. It is good, also, to see in the bill a greater resort to capacities of the states and the private sectors, especially as this may later lead to reduced central government planning and financing.

The suggestions made here for transfers within the federal structure, and for potential reorganization of responsible roles between segments of the public and private sectors, are offered as additions to the total dialogue on how the resources of the nation might most appropriately and effectively be applied to problems of preventing and alleviating poverty.

The NAM believes that both the enterprise and non-profit components of the private sector will and should be relied upon to take a continually increasing part in the socio-economic problems the nation needs to solve. In practical terms the ultimate objective of OEO programs is to put OEO out of business. The practical result of full commitment of the business and voluntary sectors to solving these problems could be, if not to put the national government out of the business of dealing with poverty, at least to put it on the sidelines—or guidelines; and to let the activist framework for welfare and economic opportunity be shaped by state-local governments and the private sectors.

WASHINGTON, D.C. OFFICE,
ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE OF B'NAI B'RITH,
Washington, D.C., July 14, 1967.

HON. CARL D. PERKINS,
Chairman, House Education and Labor Committee,
Rayburn Office Building, Washington, D.C.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN PERKINS: The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith welcomes the opportunity to submit this statement in support of the war on poverty and to join with the many religious, educational, civic, labor and other organizations who are united in their determination to help conquer and bring an end to poverty in the United States.