

The Anti-Defamation League is the educational arm of B'nai B'rith which was founded in 1843 and is America's oldest and largest Jewish service organization. Its program is rooted in the religious teachings of Judaism; man is a creature of God and all men are equal before Him; the dignity of the individual is God-given and must not be violated—teachings which are shared by all the great religions in America and which undergird the constitutional guarantees of freedom and equality.

On March 16, 1964, President Johnson in a special message to Congress charted a new course for our nation when he called for a "national war on poverty" and committed the country and its resources to an all-out effort to build an America in which every individual would have the opportunity to share in the abundance of our society and the chance to develop to his fullest potential. At its first annual meeting after the President's historic message, the National Commission of the Anti-Defamation League, recognizing that poverty was the foe of freedom and equality of opportunity, the twin goals to which the League has been dedicated since its birth, gave its endorsement to the war on poverty. This year we reaffirmed our support for the anti-poverty program as a major aspect of the fight for equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination.

It is not our purpose in this brief statement to document the case for continuing and expanding the war on poverty. The need to do so is beyond question. Even those who would make major changes in the present program acknowledge their commitment to the effort to eradicate the cancer of poverty from the American scene.

Although we have only made a bare beginning in the war on poverty, the successes and advances have already been many and substantial. The Second Annual Report of the Office of Economic Opportunity which the President transmitted to the Congress on June 22 tells the dramatic story of how the anti-poverty program has made it possible for many of America's poor and disadvantaged for the first time to break out of the cycle of poverty.

A new vocabulary and new concepts—Headstart, Upward Bound, Vista, Job Corps—unheard of before OEO came into existence not quite three years ago, are now commonplace in the American lexicon. But they are more than mere words and ideas. They have given new meaning to the lives of millions of Americans and opened new vistas for the less fortunate among us.

These programs are the offspring of the creative imagination and proven leadership of the Office of Economic Opportunity. This, therefore, is no time to dismember or weaken either the program or the OEO as some of its critics would do. Rather, it is a time to strengthen OEO as the central agency for coordinating and directing the war on poverty, and to give it adequate funds so it can be even better equipped to do battle with the deep rooted problems of poverty.

On March 14 when the President sent his message to Congress recommending a \$2.06 billion appropriation for the Office of Economic Opportunity for this fiscal year—a 25 percent increase over the prior year—ADL expressed its fervent hope that Congress would respond to that plea. Today we renew the hope that the Congress will do its share as a full partner in the war on poverty by providing the needed authority and wherewithal to enable the Office of Economic Opportunity to continue the job that must be done. As the President so eloquently stated in transmitting the OEO's Second Annual Report to the Congress, "A light has been turned on. We must keep it aglow."

We respectfully request that this statement be included in the printed record of the hearings.

Sincerely yours,

DORE SCHARY,
National Chairman.

STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC WELFARE ASSOCIATION

The American Public Welfare Association is the national organization which represents the field of public welfare. Our membership consists primarily of state and local public welfare agencies and of individuals working in or having an interest in public welfare programs. While these programs place a major emphasis on the provisions of assistance and services to persons in financial need, the elimination of the causes of poverty and dependency is a basic and continuing objective of our Association. We therefore regard the Office of Economic Opportunity and its various programs as a most valuable and welcome