

3710 ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ACT AMENDMENTS OF 1967

Force consisting entirely of city officials and over which the Mayor presided. When that failed to get a program underway, and after considerable pressure by labor and civil rights leaders as well as ADA, the Mayor abandoned that structure and came up with the present Philadelphia AntiPoverty Action Committee (PAAC). PAAC has involved a larger segment of the community than did the Mayor's Task Force but the program and the jobs available are still closely controlled by the Mayor's appointee to that body. As a result, the way in which the poor have been intimidated and made dependent on the generosity of those in control of the jobs is most regrettable.

In spite of these criticisms of the administration of the Philadelphia program, I would repeat that most of the Antipoverty money that has come to Philadelphia has been used in successful programs run by the Opportunities Industrialization Center, the Board of Education and the Archdiocese. While we desire better leadership and a different orientation for the program, we support very strongly the need for its continuation.

We know that we in Philadelphia must accept part of the blame for not having a more successful War on Poverty in our city. We are disappointed, however, that Congress is not appropriating nearly enough money to launch a program of the magnitude needed by the situation. It is particularly frustrating to us to see Congress failing to pass rent supplements, defeating the rat control bill and cutting the teacher core and model cities programs while hurling charges back and forth about who is more responsible for the riots.

Responsibility for the riots and the causes of the riots are speculative at best and should not be debated for political purpose. We believe firmly, however, that poverty conditions breed frustration which can lead to a riot situation. Congress must realize that those with a stake in their society cannot be turned into an ugly mob that will destroy that society.

We urge this committee and Congress to give top priority to an effective War on Poverty in order to meet the needs of the impoverished of this nation and help create the conditions where all citizens can share in its vast wealth and opportunity.

Thank you.

JULY 29, 1967.

Representative CARL PERKINS,
Chairman, House Committee on Education and Labor,
Rayburn Building, Washington, D.C.:

Let there be no mistake about my position in regard to the national antipoverty program. I support the program and all it has done to bring hope to many, including thousands in my own city. Any suggestion or interpretation of remarks attributed to me which suggest I am opposed to antipoverty program are wrong.

I seek no scapegoats and no easy answers for the rioting which took place in our city and those who do are misguided. We are all to blame for not moving far enough, fast enough. The problems of poverty, race relations, and decay in our cities have been permitted to fester far too long. It should be obvious to all that agitation, no matter how gross, will not move the residents of a well-to-do neighborhood or community to riot. The seeds of violence flourish only in ground made fertile by national neglect.

It is my position that antipoverty programs have been helpful to my city and that these programs need to be greatly expanded. For example when we established a teacher aid program in Newark we had 3,500 applications in the first week for the 350 available jobs. Our new careers program which opened last week had 600 applications for the 250 approved job openings in the first 3 days and we could triple our 2,500 member Neighborhood Youth Corps and still fall tragically short of fulfilling the real needs of this community. Furthermore I believe it is wise to have responsibility for the antipoverty program centered in a single agency in Washington rather than scattered among many agencies. It is imperative that you understand that the investigation of our local CAP agency was requested jointly by my office and the CAP agency itself in order to limit various charges and criticisms to specific individuals and avoid indictment of the agency and the programs as a whole. The desire of my office and the CAP agency itself is to insure that no one uses the antipoverty program in a manner which will discredit or destroy the program. To further clarify my position let me indicate to you what I said at the conclusion of rioting in Newark: "... understanding is what is necessary at this time, not increased anger or bitterness and reactions which may impede progress. We must bear