

It is unrealistic to assume that industrial development can be forced in areas that do not have resource and locational advantages. Efforts to develop industry in such areas are likely to be both expensive and frustrating.

There are always exceptions to any generalization—but we would suggest that, in the consideration of the problem of rural poverty, as a general rule efforts to establish industry where the unemployed are will be considerably less successful than efforts to facilitate the movement of unemployed people to areas where industry is growing.

The conclusions in this and the preceding section are by no means unique. For example, Dr. Vernon W. Ruttan, Head of the Department of Agricultural Economics at the University of Minnesota, in a paper, "Agricultural Policy in an Affluent Society," presented at the last annual meeting of the American Farm Economic Association, said: "A first step in a realistic effort to deal with rural poverty as it is now emerging is to recognize that it is no longer possible to make a significant aggregate impact on rural poverty by programs designed primarily (a) to increase agricultural production or (b) to increase nonfarm employment in rural areas."

TO ENHANCE JOB OPPORTUNITY

The approach to the problem of rural poverty is necessarily one of trying to open the door of opportunity for unemployed and partially employed rural people by helping them to obtain employment in other occupational pursuits—hopefully and preferably in nearby towns and cities, or, where this is not feasible, in more distant places.

It appears to us that the major effective approach to this problem is to provide underemployed rural residents with education, retraining, and counseling. Any lasting solution involves making the poor self-supporting—rather than public-supported.

Education, in-school and post-school, is the most effective means of improving individual capability to fit into a modern economy. The problem involves more than providing educational opportunity, since individuals must have sufficient initiative and motivation to take advantage of such opportunity.

Education is, of course, a relatively slow process and offers the greatest promise for young people. However, adults who have limited future expectations in their current situation should be encouraged to qualify for gainful employment in occupations for which employment is available.

The Federal-State Employment Services have undertaken, in a limited way, to seek out and counsel individuals for whom MDTA (Manpower Development & Training Act) training would open new opportunity. This is the most important public service this agency can perform.

Despite the reduced numbers of workers employed by farmers, farmers in many areas are experiencing difficulty in finding permanent skilled farm workers, particularly dairy workers and workers capable of operating and maintaining farm machinery. MDTA training programs can provide the basis for employment of additional farm workers with such skills.

Every effort should be made by counseling and other means to encourage people to move where the job opportunities are. The fact that employers in many areas have had difficulty in filling jobs and have undertaken extensive recruitment and training programs has been well publicized. The problems of home owners in finding craftsmen for dwelling and household appliance maintenance are well known. The President of the Ford Motor Company said recently that there is a nationwide shortage of 50,000 automobile mechanics. The 1967 Manpower Report lists widespread shortages of machinists, machine operators, tool makers, aircraft electricians, welders, engineers, draftsmen and health service workers.

UTILIZING STATE AND LOCAL RESOURCES

It seems to us that a major criticism of the Economic Opportunity Act is that its provisions have tended to by-pass state governments and, to a lesser extent, local governments. It has therefore failed to enlist the resources, interest and capacities of such units of government.

In October 1966, the House Committee on Government Operations published a study of the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations entitled "Metropolitan America—Challenge to Federalism," from which (page 9) the following is excerpted: [*Italic ours.*]