

present legislation, is responsible for carrying out a comprehensive program very similar to that proposed in H.R. 19682. As I read the proposed Opportunity Crusade Act of 1967 and compare it with H.R. 8311, the principal differences appear to be questions of organization and administration.

Many pros and cons can be developed in favor of the alternate organization arrangements. However, if I were a member of your Committee I would not wish in the limited time that appears available to endeavor to resolve such a difficult and complex issue. Moreover, I would hesitate a long time, regardless of the merit of any new administrative formulation, in taking action that would require the dismemberment of an existing agency and the transfer of its functions to other agencies. If this were done precipitously without a long lead time of study, careful scheduling of what is to happen with each function, preparatory work in the departments to which functions are transferred, and opportunity to explain the proposed changes to present employees of the OEO, and to state and local governments, the poverty effort of the Government could be severely disrupted and the goals in the poverty program thwarted. Thus my main suggestion is that our "national strategy against poverty" should avoid precipitous action, as that would inevitably impair the program during the immediate months ahead. The problems the program encounters are already staggering.

We in the School focus a great deal of our efforts upon problems of urbanization and on education, research, and advisory services to create adequate local, state, and federal administrative capability to cope with urban problems. Poverty is one of the major fields. We thus see the administrative aspects from the context of the local community. Administrative shortcomings of the states, on the one hand, and frequent shifts in programs and administration at the federal level, on the other, are bewildering and disruptive. Premature action in connection with this year's legislation could have very serious administrative consequences. I am not endeavoring to defend the administration of OEO, because I am in no position to speak for or against that, but only to suggest that no steps be taken by the Congress which will add further confusion to a most difficult and important field of national concern.

Three major administrative obstacles have stood in the way of initiating and carrying out the Economic Opportunity Act. First, is the lack of experience in the United States in carrying on functions of this kind. Inevitably, when a government undertakes a new and complex field of operations, its efforts will be beset by numerous administrative difficulties and inadequacies. In this case, the OEO suffered from the fact that the federal government had not previously faced its responsibility to guide the growth of urbanization and to help cope with problems of poverty and maladjustment accompanying rapid economic and social change. Over the years problems of local governments were assumed to be entirely state and local concerns, and as a result our federal agencies and personnel were, and still are for the most part, inexperienced and uninformed in respect to the enormous and changing problems of our cities.

A second obstacle is the antiquated character of most state governments, the slowness of state constitutional and administrative modernization, and the continuation by the states of systems of local government that for the most part were copied after 18th century rural England. In this connection two policy statements issued by the Committee for Economic Development—one on Modernizing Local Government and the second which has just been issued on Modernizing State Government—are most relevant to the deliberations of your Committee.

A third major obstacle to efficient administration of the poverty efforts of the government is the acute lack of administrative, professional, and technical personnel. The universities have not produced over the past twenty-five years persons prepared to deal with economic opportunity functions. In other cases when the federal government has faced a major challenge, as in agriculture, space exploration, public health, and defense, one of the first steps has been to create the essential educational and research underpinning. A major thrust in a new field cannot be made without enlisting the universities to prepare the personnel and to develop the knowledge and technologies to cope with the problem. The federal government has not worked with the universities to develop personnel to deal with poverty and other community development and urban service functions. Thus federal, state, and local agencies assigned functions in this complex field have had no reservoir of trained and experienced persons upon which to draw. Imaginative steps must be taken to overcome this difficulty, because the problem will face the country for years to come.