

3774 ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ACT AMENDMENTS OF 1967

These revolutionary concepts are directed at submerged classes who constitute about 20% of our nation, over 30 million souls. Numerically, under our democratic system, they ought to be able to exert enormous power. In truth, despite the revolution in their expectations, their influence has been negligible.

The many causes of this impotence are rooted sometimes in diverse and conflicting aims; in our heritage of deep suspicion of strong central government as against States' rights; or our preference for individual as against common effort; or the imbalance in our state and federal legislative bodies in favor of rural as against urban areas.

As a result, the poor are caught up and held to their lot by a complacent, prosperous overwhelming majority enjoying the goods and services of the most affluent society of all times.

This leads us, then, to revolutionary evolution in response to rising expectations, both in the War on Poverty and in race relations. Inevitably, one small part of this is uncoordinated violence in scattered communities. To some Negro teenagers, even the Black Muslims seem conservative. To many of them the Economic Opportunity Act and the Civil Rights bill are meaningless. Some would move toward partition rather than equal rights.

But for the largest number neither violence nor partition are the means and goals. Instead, they choose the following:

1. *Social mobility*—moving up and out of lower class life. The physical movement away from the port of entry slum is one measure of social mobility.

The availability of jobs and of training opportunities to qualify for them is essential. A major concern for us, then, is a rational approach to the development of entry-level jobs, for sub and non-professionals, in all the service occupations in industry and commerce and, finally through a major component of public works.

2. *Political and Social Action*—participation of citizens, including the disadvantaged, in efforts to change the society and its institutions.

Perhaps the largest thrust of the War on Poverty is in these areas. It is a means for people to enter the mainstream of society. It is a tool for reducing detachment and alienation of poor people. Psychologically, it is a part of their attaining a new sense of self worth as a part of a healthy, democratic community.

It is expressed in a variety of forms in the War on Poverty, and this goes back 80 years for those of us in Settlements. It includes organizing local residents for self-help, through Kitchen Clubs, Block Clubs and Councils of Organizations. It includes training of local residents for positions of leadership and responsibility as volunteers, in direct service and on policy-making bodies. It includes the development of ad hoc organizations to identify and then attack local social problems—alone and with allies. It includes the establishment of new coalitions for pressure for institutional change.

If this revolutionary evolution is to succeed, we must lend our full help. In doing this, of course, we cannot afford to be apologetic about our own values and services.

IN CONCLUSION

We reaffirm our continuing support for an effective Economic Opportunity Act and, with the revisions suggested above, urge the early approval by this Congress of the Economic Opportunity Amendments of 1967.

NEW YORK STATE COLLEGE OF HOME ECONOMICS,

CORNELL UNIVERSITY,

Ithaca, N.Y., August 9, 1967.

Congressman CARL PERKINS,
House Office Building, Washington, D.C.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN PERKINS: As a behavioral scientist specializing in problems of child development, I am writing to express my concern for the future of children to be enrolled in Head Start programs and the now developing Follow Through programs in our nation. I have been involved in these programs from their very beginning as a member of the Planning Committee for Project Head Start and of the President's Task Force on Early Childhood, which, as you know, laid out the scientific guidelines for the future of these programs. My concern springs from press reports that the administration of these programs may be transferred entirely to the Office of Education. From my point of view, the issue