

Secretary WIRTZ. I will be glad to complete the record with any proposal which is available before the record closes.¹

Senator JAVITS. I will do my best to give you notice.

One of the things we have been considering very seriously in the hearings on cities of the Government Operations Committee is some underlying replacement for the basic welfare idea and one of those concepts which has been underlying the replacement would be for the Government to act as an employer of last resort.

Do you, as a Secretary of Labor, have any views upon that subject—that is, the need to deal with the hard core unemployed and the need to put them into some form of useful community enterprise by making the Federal Government an employer of last resort?

Secretary WIRTZ. Yes, I do have a view; and it would be that, as this situation has worked out in its complete form, it may include something of that kind.

I think we are presently at a point where all of our available resources and all of our available personnel are to be put rather toward the development of the private employment very frequently as a result, as an end result, training programs which might be quite long and which might sometimes go on indefinitely, but not by design. With the economy working the way it is now, with as many potential private employment possibilities as there are, with as much to be done as needs to be done to complete the training of individuals for those, I think our emphasis should at this point be on that, rather than on the public employer of last resort point. But I am sure, Senator Javits, that eventually we will come to a recognition that there are about, as nearly as I can tell, a half of 1 percent of the people in the potential workforce who won't make it and eventually will get there. It is in terms of priorities. And I think these other things ought to come first.

Senator JAVITS. You do not care much for what we call the negative income tax, basic family payment, or what? Would you care to comment on that?

Secretary WIRTZ. Yes, I would.

Senator JAVITS. What is your position on it?

Secretary WIRTZ. I am in the minority as far as that view or the view of that group is concerned. I don't think it advances our present purpose in this country to be talking about a negative income tax. My logic tells me that there is nothing wrong with that proposition, but my practical good sense, or what passes for it, suggests to me that pushing along that line, at this point, probably slows up our progress in some of these other directions; and so I should like to see that item put down lower on the agenda, because I think it gets in the way, as far as the public is concerned, of doing some of these other things that we ought to do first.

Senator JAVITS. Let me recapitulate because my time is up. You are for government being the last resort in training?

Secretary WIRTZ. Yes, sir; and that's an important distinction.

Senator JAVITS. That you are all for?

Secretary WIRTZ. For the time being. Eventually it ought to be private, but for the time being.

¹ At time of publication of the hearings, no further information was available.