

Mr. HUGHES. I have two comments, Mr. Edwards.

First, as Secretary Boyd indicated, we are, at Presidential direction, making a kind of an across-the-board effort to reduce application processing time wherever we can and particularly in some of these agencies that are dealing with the complex problems that we are talking about. That effort has been successful.

I can furnish some evidence of that success for the record, if you would like. Whether it meets your specific problem or not is speculative. But we are certainly aware of the general problem, and something is being done and progress is being made with or without the transfer. But there is an ultimate fact here that is rather important, and that is the fact that these are very complex matters.

Urban planning is a complex process, and time is part of that process. Notwithstanding these complexities, we are managing to spend a fair amount of money; that is, grants are being made with relatively reasonable time limits and disbursements are taking place.

I think it would be unfair to look to the Department of Transportation as really working toward a 10-day schedule on some of these things or for that matter, perhaps, a 10-month schedule.

Mr. EDWARDS. I think the problem is, as one of you gentlemen said earlier, the cities' plan, and yet the cities learn to their great dismay early in the game that generally whatever they plan is not acceptable.

So in the final analysis, it turns out to be the Federal Government's plan.

Mr. BOYD. If I may say, sir, one of the problems gets back to what Sam is talking about on urban planning. It is a very complex business and, unfortunately, there appears to be a shortage of people in this country who have the training to do urban planning. There is a lot of it being done, but we are desperately shorthanded in this area. Part of the problem from some of the things I have seen in my own Department is that we get applications from people who haven't even read the regulations to find the criteria they have to comply with. These come directly from the statutes. It is not really a matter of saying this is going to be the Federal Government's plan, except in the sense that Congress has enacted laws which set forth various criteria and we implement them through regulations.

Mr. EDWARDS. It is the implementation with which I am concerned.

Mr. WOOD. I would have two observations to make to put into perspective the relationships between the cities and the States and the Federal Government right now.

One of the things that astonished me when I came on board a little over 2 years ago was—it was only 29 months ago—that HUD's predecessor agency had a short time before found itself in the position in which the demand from the cities for urban renewal funds was less than the available appropriation at that time. Yet, at this time, we sit with well over \$1.5 billion backlog in urban renewal, with the sum even larger than that in our community facilities programs and with a general situation in which even though we have requested an increase in our budget of about 50 percent against clear community demand we are behind.

So the load has come up, and I think we all have to recognize that the last 2 years has been the coming of age in public and political recognition of the needs of our communities. We are in that transition period.