

under the open space program. The FHA recently in our county agreed to keep us advised of low-rent projects approved within our jurisdiction so that our community development department can be prepared to take by the hand people living in substandard housing to guide them into new projects. Until now we would learn of such projects only by reading about them in the newspapers.

Unfortunately, many departments are not cooperating as well. Many are not utilizing the A-80 and A-85 procedures to the extent which could maximize their efficiency. The proposed legislation, we feel, will contribute greatly to the progress underway, individually and between agencies, to coordinate better and make more effective our Federal grant-in-aid programs.

Grants-in-aid have played and will continue to play a crucial role in serving the national interest. They have helped facilitate change—change in perspective and priorities, in thinking, and in action to combat major social and economic problems. They have promoted innovation and breakthrough in getting to the roots of those problems, although too many programs today are still merely hacking away at the branches. But the Federal aid program needs more than a considerable shaking up if it is to make any more than a dent in the accelerating problems which threaten to overwhelm all local governments in the 1970's.

Federal aid programs must be designed and administered to provide greater flexibility and discretion at the local level and they must be administered in such a way to avoid the chaotic effect which present grant-in-aid programs have on budgeting procedures. The Federal agencies at present do not sign contracts in conformity with their fiscal year, our fiscal year, or anyone else's fiscal year.

We feel that Congress, through the proposed legislation, can effectively guide and improve the impact of our present Federal aid programs. Some of the proposed changes are indeed simple in concept but they will go far to enhance the future of creative federalism.

Title II, for instance, improves administration of grants-in-aid to the States, and title III, permits Federal departments and agencies to provide special and technical services to State and local governments. It seems to us axiomatic that the Governor of a State should have access to information relating to the purpose and amounts of Federal aid coming into his State. It has always seemed to us that excessive redtape is created when a State is required to deposit Federal money in a separate bank account.

Counties, too, are often victims of continuing obsolescent administrative practices. Not all are as fortunate as my county of Prince Georges. Often counties do not possess the talent and the financial resources to modernize. Specialized and technical services developed through the use of Federal tax dollars should be made available to local governments so that they may benefit from this expertise. We find it within the desirable goals of intergovernmental relations that local government should be allowed to contract for special and technical services with Federal agencies who developed the requisite know-how and abilities.

Because of their areawide and regional character, counties are often the unit of government best equipped to carry the ball with such regional programs as air, water, waste control, area traffic and road