

ipate in what will be a Federal-State resource team effort with local government. We have the support of the executive branch in this effort. We are discussing it with the other Federal agencies, as the Secretary indicates in the testimony. We believe we can make it work. We know that we have to make it work or the program will not succeed.

Senator MUSKIE. Is it your guess that the criticism that the cities are not really allowed to exercise their initiative has resulted from rigidities built into established programs and leading to the Federal-State joint funding situation?

Mr. TAYLOR. I am surprised at that comment coming out of Connecticut, sir, knowing the state of planning at this time.

Senator MUSKIE. This was in the Hartford area.

Mr. TAYLOR. They have other problems up there. I do not believe that it is the result of program rigidity. I believe that it primarily results from the desire of some of the cities to move forward immediately with program impact, rather than responsive to what we believe is the major objective of this program, to take a hard look at basic causes and make sure that the projects fit into a strategy. There is that dichotomy locally.

But we recognize that the Federal programs will have to be flexible. We strongly support the consolidation efforts and the other elements in your proposed bill, because it will encourage flexibility, it will encourage the maximum local ability to use, as you described in your comments, the block grant approach to programs and problems. We think we have to move in that direction.

I do not believe that there has been the kind of rigidity of which they complained in Connecticut, but I also do not believe that there has been the kind of positive help, information, willingness to be flexible, backed by earmarking, that the program will need.

Senator MUSKIE. May I point to something else that may be involved and a problem that perhaps you might not even be aware of. I think there is a tendency—it is human nature more than anything else—on the part of some public officials to assume that the Government knows better and that the quality of efficiency in programing on the local level may be inadequate. As a result they may have a tendency to assert themselves a little more strongly because of this into the planning process or the policymaking process in a way that suggests to the American people that there is a Federal domination.

To what extent have you been able to observe this? Is that the effect?

Mr. TAYLOR. I agree with your comment that it is endemic to the system. It does exist. Wherever we see it, we try to knock it down. I am exerting as much strong administrative direction on the side of insisting that they recognize the local nature of the planning process as I possibly can. But communication from Washington down to the region to the man who is visiting the city is often less than perfect. We have tried and we will continue to try, Senator.

Senator MUSKIE. I think there is a vote.

Secretary WEAVER. We would be very happy for you to go to vote, sir.

Senator MUSKIE. We will take a brief recess.

(Recess.)

Senator MUSKIE. Mr. Taylor, did you have any additional statement to present to the committee?

Mr. TAYLOR. No.