

programs, can be only of limited value. Relocation is only the last stage of a process initiated many years before—a process that begins with planning. If the interests of the poor are to be protected adequately, they must be protected at this point. Usually, they are not. One reason is that, at least in the past, the programs have been concerned more with factors of economics and logistics than with social welfare.

Thus decisions on the location of highways have been made by determining the shortest distance between two given points and by calculating the relative cost of acquiring properties that happen to be in the way. Urban renewal, while professing to be aimed at revitalizing cities, has viewed its functions largely in economic, rather than human terms. The program has been more concerned with producing greater tax yields from city land than with determining ways in which the quality of life for all city dwellers could be improved. Although "citizens participation" long has been a requirement in the urban renewal program, the views and interests of the families who reside in areas that need renewal rarely have been decisive factors in determining the course of the program. On the contrary, in many programs, planning decisions are made of which the poor, whose lives are to be disrupted, either are ignorant or only vaguely aware. These decisions come fully to the surface only years later in the form of bulldozers and dislocation. By that time it often is too late to change the course of the program. In short, the key decisions often have been imposed on the poor, on the basis of factors that do not include their social welfare and largely without consulting them or seeking their views.

To some extent, these deficiencies are being corrected. The Federal Highway Administration now considers environmental factors as well as logistics in planning and carrying out highway construction. The Department of Housing and Urban Development is placing greater emphasis on residential reuse of urban renewal land and is stressing rehabilitation rather than clearance. Further, both agencies have instituted procedures to assure that the families to be displaced are consulted, or at least advised of the pending clearance well before the fact. In addition, title IX of the bill before the committee would establish as a policy to guide Federal agencies in their land acquisition activities that human considerations, including the economic and social effects, should be taken into account in determining the boundaries of a public improvement project. More, however, needs to be done.

First, we urge the committee to provide in the bill for prior consultation with the people affected as a uniform requirement for all relevant Federal or federally assisted programs. Thus, before any such program involving displacement could be carried out, it would have to be demonstrated that the families and businessmen in the area, or their designated representatives have been consulted in advance of decisions on planning, and that they have been given maximum opportunity to participate in making key decisions such as those related to the location and the nature of the public improvement and its timing.

Second, to assure against mere paper compliance with this requirement, the legislation should provide that if, despite the protests of the people affected, the decision is made to acquire the properties, this decision must be justified by a showing that all factors have been con-