

June 19, 1967

MRS. ROBERTS:


William J. Hopkins

2 SIGNATURES

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June 17, 1967

FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM Joe Califano



Attached is the Second Annual Report of OEO for Fiscal 1966 and a message transmitting that report to the Congress.

The Report has been cleared by Budget.

The message was drafted by OEO, revised by Harry Middleton and Jim Gaither and edited by me. It has been cleared by Budget.

I recommend that you sign the message transmitting the Report to the Congress.

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FOR RELEASE ON
DELIVERY TO THE
SENATE OR THE
HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 22, 1967

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

THE WHITE HOUSE

TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:

I am pleased to transmit the Second Annual Report of the Office of Economic Opportunity.

Poverty defies simple description. It is a cycle which begins with an infancy of deprivation, continues in a youth of hopelessness, extends to a jobless adulthood, and finally ends -- for those who survive -- in a bleak and despairing old age. At every stage, the conditions of life are poor housing, inadequate education and training, deficient health care, and often, gnawing hunger.

When we began our concentrated effort to eradicate poverty in America less than three years ago, we knew that no single program could accomplish so complicated a task. We knew that the campaign would have to be waged on many levels and in many ways.

We knew that a coordinated attack led by a single Office of Economic Opportunity would be necessary.

We knew that -- if the cycle was to be broken -- the keys would have to be opportunity and self-help.

We knew that the Federal Government could not undertake alone the programs which would offer opportunity and encourage self-help. Initiative would have to come from, and responsibility be shared by, the communities in which poverty festered.

The programs of the Office of Economic Opportunity are built upon these principles.

This report provides heartening evidence of the substantial progress this Nation is making on the entrenched patterns of poverty.

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In fiscal 1966:

- 733,000 young children from poor families were given a chance to make a decent beginning in life through the Head Start program.
- 528,000 jobs were made available by the Neighborhood Youth Corps, enabling disadvantaged youths to stay in school or prepare for meaningful employment.
- 57,430 young people, once lost and forgotten in our society, found new confidence and new skills with the Job Corps.
- More than 20,000 high school students from poor homes received the educational help they needed to go on to college through Upward Bound.

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- More than 335,000 adults began to overcome illiteracy with basic educational instruction.
- 3,592 VISTA Volunteers helped communities across the land undertake needed self-help projects.
- More than 1,000 lawyers provided legal services in 43 States, showing that the law can serve the poor as well as it serves the rest of society.

The list of statistics goes on. All point to the same basic fact. These programs are sturdy ladders in the deep well of poverty where millions of Americans have been trapped. And - - despite the crippling effects of a lifetime of deprivation -- many have been able to begin the long climb up. But the real story lies behind the statistics, in the individuals who have escaped from hopelessness and despair and are contributing to our society far more than they have received.

All Americans can take pride in the solid advances that have been made. As disease can be conquered, as space can be mastered, so too can poverty yield to our determined efforts to bring it to an end.

But our pride cannot obscure the job that remains to be done.

During the past two and a half years, these programs have reached some 8 million of America's poor. But some 24 million of our impoverished fellow citizens have not yet been reached.

The challenge that remains with us is to insure that all Americans share in the prosperity of our land.

A light has been turned on. We must keep it aglow.

LYNDON B. JOHNSON

THE WHITE HOUSE, June 22, 1967

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