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CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS IN THE EVALUATION OF  
GOVERNMENTAL PROGRAMS

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Over the past decade social programs have annually claimed an increasing percentage of the total Federal budget. Health, education, manpower, and income security programs totalled about \$110 billion in fiscal year 1973, representing about 45 cents of every Federal budget dollar. For the first time ever, the budget of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare was larger in absolute dollars than that of the Department of Defense. Comparing the \$110 billion budgeted in fiscal year 1973 with the \$66 billion spent in fiscal year 1969, the Federal Government's increased emphasis on social programs can be easily seen.

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The Nation is faced with many problems today in the social betterment field which should concern every citizen. The Federal Government is trying to solve these problems through programs administered by a number of agencies. The

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job of carrying out social programs effectively and with a minimum of waste calls for the foresight, efforts, and skills of everyone interested in the success of our system of government.

The General Accounting Office attempts to aid in the solution of national problems through its evaluation of Federal operations. These encompass the planning, implementation, and results of agency programs. GAO's reports provide information to the Congress for decision-making and give the President and all levels of management in the executive branch important feedback on program effectiveness and efficiency.

Assessing the effectiveness of a Federal program is by no means a clear-cut task, particularly in the areas of social action. With rising Federal costs coming under increasing scrutiny, the need for dependable program evaluation is greater than ever.

A definition of program evaluation generally agreed upon asks this question: "Is the program achieving the objectives sought by Congress and the executive branch and is it achieving it at the lowest practicable cost?"

Arriving at a satisfactory answer presents difficulties since the approach taken can influence the outcome

tremendously. Whether the assessment is based on a political test or that of a more objective researcher, the results are difficult to pin down. In the social area few observers approach the task with neither purely political nor non-political biases.

Whether it is good, bad or indifferent, program evaluation is going on all the time. The challenge is to provide decision-makers with the best analysis possible within the current state of the art.

Evaluation of on-going programs is at the heart of planning, programming and budgeting (PPBS)--if one wants to use evaluation to help select new or forward programs which are most likely to produce a cost-effective result. GAO's ability to make such projections, however, depends heavily on its assessment of ongoing programs.

This is one of the reasons why the GAO stresses the need for adequate audit and evaluation as an integral part of program administration. It is the agency to which the Congress turns principally for information on program results--and properly so. Increasingly Congress is providing specifically for such evaluations.

The Bureau of Social Research estimated that expenditures for such evaluation in fiscal year 1971 were in the range of

\$400 million-\$1.1 billion, depending upon how evaluation is defined. This is in addition to agency evaluations performed in-house, by Congressional committees, the Congressional Research Service, and the GAO.

In the GAO, we are concerned increasingly with program evaluation or, as some prefer, with auditing of program results. This category of work now represents about 35 percent of the work of our professional staff of 3,350.

The Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970 pushed us further in this direction by specifying that we conduct studies of the costs and benefits of Federal programs, either on our own initiative, or at the request of a committee of the Congress. The responsibility has been implicit all along but in recent years we have been emphasizing program evaluation more and more.

In the process we are learning more and more how to make them more effective. This includes several factors, such as:

- Experience, learning by doing.
- Building an interdisciplinary staff. Twenty percent of our professional staff is now drawn from disciplines other than accounting--economics, statistics, industrial management, systems analysts, engineering, etc. And, I should emphasize some of our best analysts have come from accounting backgrounds.
- Using extensively consultants in various fields, and by contracting out to a limited degree.

- The reorganization of GAO last April on programmatic and functional lines. One of these divisions, for example, is the Manpower and Welfare Division which concerns itself with social programs.
- Through training programs such as NAPA Seminars on program evaluation in specific areas--last year: there were three in Education, Health, Welfare. Three more are set for this year, including law enforcement and environmental protection.
- Finally, systematic efforts to take advantage of ongoing or completed work by such organizations as the Urban Institute, the Brookings Institution and others.

#### PROBLEMS IN EVALUATION

Formidable problems confront the GAO and others evaluating social programs. Two of these seem to occur no matter what program is being reviewed. The first problem is the lack of clearly and specifically stated program goals and objectives. In many programs neither the legislative process nor the subsequent administrative process developed goals and objectives of necessary clarity. If intended accomplishments are not stated there is nothing against which to measure program outcomes.

The second problem is the lack of useable program performance data. This is not entirely the fault of the legislative or administrative process. In social programs there are few standards for measuring performance. Planners and managers of programs attacking social ills do not have an

over-abundance of information on how to achieve results most effectively.

Last year, I wrote the Congress and the Office of Management and Budget suggesting that improvements in evaluation could be brought about in part by developing legislation that is specific. Too often the Congress requests periodic reports from agencies without determining whether the reports will contain the information it needs. Prime responsibility for making the evaluations rests of course with the agencies administering the programs, but we believe that Congress should and could specify the kinds of information and tests which will enable these agencies, the GAO, and the Congress to better assess how well programs are working and whether alternatives may offer greater promise. 27

A good example is the evaluation of education programs. As with other social programs, education legislation contains little in the way of specific program objectives. Compounding this problem is the tendency of managers and administrators to state program objectives in extremely fuzzy terms or in terms of the number of students enrolled or grants made, rather than expected grade level gains. Also little is known at present about what indices really show achievement in education.

Educational evaluation has been hampered also by the resistance of the education profession (teachers, principals, and superintendents) to the whole idea of evaluation. Part of this resistance can be attributed to the negative image of evaluation. Rather than viewing the evaluation as an instrument to help people do a better job, many in the profession feel it entails finding out who is not performing well and should be dismissed. Another problem is the lack of uniformity of local recordkeeping and the inadequacy of the data base at all levels of program operation.

Current reviews in two education programs, Follow Through and Upward Bound, point up these problems.

#### FOLLOW THROUGH

Follow Through is a comprehensive education program for disadvantaged children in kindergarten through the third grade who were previously enrolled in Headstart. Congress created Follow Through in December 1967 because early Headstart evaluations showed that the gains made by Headstart graduates soon dissipated if not reinforced in the primary grades. Follow Through, which is administered by the U.S.

Office of Education, makes grants to local educational agencies to provide to eligible children and their families education, health care, nutrition, social, and referral services. Direct parent participation in the conduct of local programs and community involvement are program requirements.

Follow Through is more than just a service program, however. It is also an experimental program in which 22 new educational approaches to teaching disadvantaged children are being evaluated nationwide. The purpose of this research is to disseminate information to school administrators on successful teaching methods for children from low-income families. The research findings will also be used to formulate future Federal education policy in the primary grades.

To evaluate the program, we examined pupil achievement, the effectiveness of the delivery of services offered by the program, the extent of parent and community involvement in the program, coordination with Headstart, compliance with eligibility and other requirements, and program administration. We also analyzed the program's research effort, which today is its main emphasis even though the congressional intent for the program is to reinforce the gains of Headstart



children. Our purpose for this review was to report to Congress on the program's achievement or lack of it and to recommend needed improvements.

We used a case-study method to do the review. We went to nine projects in nine States to determine how these projects performed in the areas evaluated. We reviewed small, medium, and large projects; urban and rural projects; and projects that represent a cross-section of the experimental educational approaches to teaching disadvantaged children.

One general problem we faced and continue to face is that educational measurement experts differ widely on the methods and tests to use in assessing pupil achievement and the impact testing problems frequently have on test results. Questions such as can we expect children from low socio-economic families to score the same on achievement tests as children from middle socio-economic families, or how much do test conditions affect test results are not likely to be answered uniformly by people knowledgeable about educational measurement. Because of this lack of uniformity of what is proper or correct, answers to the questions must be assumed. However, studies based on assumptions are wide open for criticism, forcing program managers to decide for themselves whether the results require program changes or a new study.

## UPWARD BOUND

The Office of Education's Upward Bound program is designed to generate the skills and motivation necessary for success in post secondary education among young people from low-income backgrounds and inadequate secondary school preparation. Upward Bound is designed to repair a student's faulty secondary school preparation by means of remedial instruction, altered curriculum, tutoring, cultural exposure and encouragement so that the goal of Upward Bound--admission and success in post secondary education--can be achieved. The program has grown from 17 projects and \$2.4 million in fiscal year 1965 to 378 projects and \$33.6 million in fiscal year 1973.

The program focuses on tenth and eleventh grade students and consists of two separate but interrelated components: (1) a summer component, usually 6 to 8 weeks of intensive academic and personal development through a residential program at a college or university, and (2) an academic year component usually involving Saturday classes or tutorial/counseling sessions or cultural enrichment activities.

In determining the effectiveness of the Upward Bound program the Office of Education has utilized the criteria of college enrollment of Upward Bound graduates. On this basis

over 70% of all Upward Bound graduates enroll in college--an apparent success. Individual projects, however, do not followup on students once they leave the project to determine their success in achieving a post secondary education.

After talking with OE officials and project directors, however, we determined that this criteria is not an adequate measure of program effectiveness since many influences outside of Upward Bound can affect a student's success in completing post secondary education. The OE officials agreed with us that the proper criteria for most accurately measuring the program's effectiveness is the ability of the individual Upward Bound projects to provide students from the proper target group with the necessary academic background for them to succeed.

#### SOCIAL SERVICES

Our evaluation of the impact of social services on recipients of aid to families with dependent children is designed to provide Congress with information on the effect of a current program.

Congress first authorized Federal cost-sharing for the Social Services program in 1956. HEW, however, has been unable to tell Congress what the impact of the program

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has been on welfare recipients. The lack of data on program accomplishments led the Senate Appropriations Committee to observe in 1972 that

--the use of this source of Federal financing is out of any reasonable control: HEW cannot even describe to us with any precision what \$2 billion of taxpayers money is being used for.

The purpose of our review was to provide Congress with such information. We attempted to answer two basic questions:

--was congressional intent achieved, that is, did social services help welfare recipients achieve self-support or reduce dependency? and

--was it realistic to expect that intent could be achieved given the present nature of most social services?

Neither the Congress nor HEW, however, developed criteria by which to measure the success of the program. Could we say that the program was a success if 4 percent of recipients who achieved self-support or reduced dependency did so because of social services? Should the number be 20 percent? No one could say.

We viewed our role, therefore, as a provider of information on the impact of the program. We believed that by using such information the Congress, HEW and the public can decide whether the results are worth the estimated expenditure of \$2.5 billion in fiscal year 1973 for social services.

Since the impact of the program had not been measured previously we had to design an approach to generate data so an assessment could be made.

In Baltimore, Denver, Louisville, New Orleans, and Oakland we selected two samples of AFDC cases:

--one from the universe of all cases closed--that is taken off welfare--during the past year, and

--one from the universe of all open cases--those receiving welfare during the past year.

For those people who got off welfare we determined why and whether social services helped them to get off. For those people still on welfare we determined whether they had a reduction in their grant, if so why, and whether services contributed to that reduction. We did this through analysis of case records and by interviewing caseworkers and recipients. Briefly, we have determined that:

Social services have helped many AFDC recipients to overcome and cope with specific day-to-day problems (i.e. lack of clothing or food, and need for medical care) which helped to strengthen their family life and to increase their confidence in themselves. These benefits are worthwhile and essential if recipients are to better adjust to their environment and sustain or improve their present level of life by obtaining their physical and social needs. Over

the long run these benefits--which usually result from maintenance-type services--are necessary if the individual is to eventually reach a point where he can benefit from developmental services.

Most welfare officials whom we interviewed at the Federal, State, and local level stressed that the primary purpose of social service is to achieve those goals which can be provided by maintenance-type services. While they recognized the importance of having social services assist individuals to achieve self-support, they did not believe services could be a major factor in helping recipients to enter the labor force.

Our work indicated that services had only a minor impact on directly helping recipients to develop and utilize the skills necessary to achieve reduced dependency or self-support.

- Most services are not of the type that can directly enable recipients to achieve self-support or reduced dependency.
- Some recipients, with a potential to get off welfare, received services not designed to help them realize that potential.
- The degree of developmental services received was not sufficient to enable recipients to fully develop their potential--most developmental services involved counseling or referrals.

Moreover, certain barriers, such as high unemployment rates or lack of public service jobs, tend to minimize the effect that services can have on helping recipients to achieve reduced dependency or self-support.

Other questions in the welfare program that we believe should be subjected to evaluation, be it by GAO or others, are:

- whether welfare payments are large enough to relieve poverty,
- can work be substituted for welfare to relieve poverty, and
- can incentives be improved to get off welfare.

#### HEALTH ACTIVITIES

Probably no other issue before the Congress today has received as much emphasis as the area of health. It is an emotional, as well as a political, issue; an issue which affects everyone regardless of age, economic status, or present condition of health. Federal health outlays for fiscal year 1973 were about \$25 billion--more than double what they were 5 years ago.

Health-related programs and activities are carried out by several Federal departments and agencies, but principally by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Within this Department, we have examined several health-related activities.

Study of Health Facilities  
Construction Costs

A comprehensive study of the cost of constructing health facilities and delivering health care in the United States was made in response to section 204 of the Comprehensive Health Manpower Training Act of 1971. The act required GAO to study the feasibility of reducing the cost of constructing health facilities constructed with assistance provided under the Public Health Service Act, particularly with respect to innovative techniques, new materials, and the possible waiver of unnecessarily costly Federal standards.

The requirement for the study was added while the act was under consideration by the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare because of concern over the high cost of constructing health facilities. Subsequent to passage of the act, the Committee expressed particular interest in having the study concentrate on patient-care facilities, primarily hospitals, and consider the costs of operating hospitals in addition to initial construction costs. Interest was also expressed in having GAO identify and evaluate ways in which the demand for facilities could be reduced or eliminated.

To comply with the act, we made a broad-scale study which included considering not only the factors having a



direct bearing on the "bricks and mortar" aspects of construction but also many other factors having a bearing on health facility costs. We identified, through an intensive state-of-the-art review, significant innovations which should be considered whenever construction of a new hospital facility is proposed. The innovations pertained to planning, design, construction, and operation of health-care facilities and were directed toward advantages and disadvantages in construction, considering the impact the innovations would have on initial construction costs and on operating costs over the life of the facility.

Questionnaires were sent to over 300 leading authorities in the health and construction field asking them to identify innovations and to comment on their experience with the innovations. Visits were made to over 60 hospitals to obtain cost and operating data. Computerized life-cycle cost models were used to quantify the benefits or disadvantages of each of the significant innovations identified. These models were used to determine the savings, in terms of initial construction costs and operating costs, if health facilities were constructed incorporating the innovations.

The effect that certain innovations would have on initial construction and operating costs was demonstrated in a

recently built hospital which was selected as a case-study example. The demonstration required the redesign of certain parts of the preselected case-study hospital to incorporate the innovative features considered and to recognize the impact such items have on costs. The demonstration showed that (1) initial construction costs of the redesigned facility would have been as much as 8.6 percent, or about \$1.5 million, lower than those of the facility that was built and (2) life-cycle costs of as much as \$10.3 million could have been saved by incorporating the improvement innovations into the redesigned hospital.

In addition, the study included an evaluation of the various means by which institutional requirements for space could be met without constructing new facilities, expanding facilities, or renovating facilities.

Consideration was given to whether health care was being provided in the appropriate type of facility, whether health insurance incentives should be changed, and whether preventive maintenance programs would result in less inpatient care. Consideration was also given to (1) the impact that sharing of facilities could have on costs, (2) providing specialized care only on a regional basis, (3) utilizing areawide planning, and (4) requiring certificates of need before constructing a facility.

The reception of the report, which was issued on November 20, 1972, by the public and private sector has been exceptional. An article in the February 1973 Journal of the American Hospital Association cited the report as one of the most comprehensive and critical reviews of this country's health system.

Review of Sanitation Conditions  
in the Food Manufacturing Industry

The Food and Drug Administration is required by law to provide assurance that food products shipped across State borders--which includes most of the food purchased by the American people--are processed under sanitary conditions and are safe, pure, and wholesome. We made a review to determine whether the Administration was able to provide this assurance.

We had obtained indications from the Administration's reports on its inspections of food plants that sanitary conditions in the food-manufacturing industry were worsening. In addition, because the Administration selected plants to be inspected primarily on the basis of the inspection history of plants, its inspections often were limited to the same plants, and it did not know the magnitude, nationwide, of insanitary conditions in food-manufacturing

plants. Our underlying review objectives were (1) to show the dimensions of insanitary conditions in the food-manufacturing industry and (2) to suggest ways to improve the Administration's management of the Federal program.

Our evaluation required the efforts of a multidisciplinary review team. Heavy inputs of time and talent were received from GAO's statistical sampling and systems analysis groups, from five GAO regional offices, and from GAO's onsite audit team at the Food and Drug Administration headquarters. In addition, the Administration's Chief Food Inspectors provided invaluable expertise on many of the technical aspects of food sanitation.

In conjunction with the Administration, we established criteria to classify the sanitary conditions of plants on the basis of or potential for product adulteration. To assess the conditions, the Administration inspectors accompanied by GAO personnel made physical inspections of 97 food manufacturing and processing plants selected at random from about 4,550 such plants in 21 States. This sample permitted us to make statistically valid projections with a 95-percent level of confidence. On the basis of the sample, we estimated that 1,800, or about 40 percent, of the 4,550 plants

were operating under insanitary conditions, including 1,000, or about 24 percent, operating under serious insanitary conditions.

Our assessment of sanitary conditions of the food-manufacturing industry included the results of our evaluation of the Administration's inventory of food establishments, Federal and State inspection resources (including matters on coverage, agreements, plans, adequacy, and improvement efforts), followup actions, and the use of consumer complaint information.

In the light of the insanitary conditions shown to exist in the food-manufacturing industry, we suggested in a report dated April 18, 1972, that the Congress (1) consider the adequacy of the Food and Drug Administration's inspectional coverage of food plants with the resources available under its current appropriations and (2) consider amending the law to provide for civil penalties when sanitation standards are violated. Subsequently, the Congress approved the reprogramming of \$8 million for the Administration to hire additional inspectors, especially in the critical food inspection area.

A Subcommittee of the House Committee on Appropriations used this report extensively during the Food and Drug Administration's appropriation hearings on April 18 and 19, 1972.

## EDUCATION AND MANPOWER PROGRAMS

Education and manpower programs, like health activities, are also carried out by several Federal departments and agencies and have commanded increasing amounts of Federal funding. Direct Federal support of education has increased from \$7.8 billion in fiscal year 1971 to \$9.4 billion in fiscal year 1973, with the Office of Education (\$5.2 billion in 1973) and the Veterans Administration (\$2.2 billion in 1973) being the principal administering agencies.

Funding of manpower programs has grown from about \$3 billion in fiscal year 1971 to more than \$5 billion in fiscal year 1973, most of which is administered by the Departments of Labor (\$3.4 billion) and Health, Education, and Welfare (\$1.0 billion).

Many problems beg solutions in these two areas. A major issue in the educational field has been accountability--what are we really getting for the vast amounts of money we are spending on education? There are similar basic questions relating to manpower training. In both areas, our work is directed to evaluating the effectiveness of existing programs in achieving their stated objectives and the efficiency of their administration and operation.

## Assessment of Nationwide Teacher Supply and Demand Conditions

In recent years record numbers of prospective elementary and secondary school teachers have graduated from colleges and universities, and reports have indicated that many school districts are experiencing a surplus of applicants for teaching positions. Although officials of the various government and private organizations involved in teacher training and occupational forecasting agree that the Nation faces a problem of a surplus of teachers, they recognize that there are shortages of teachers in specialized subject fields and in certain geographic areas.

We reviewed teacher supply-and-demand conditions in the United States to determine the magnitude and causes of any imbalances and the efforts of the Federal Government to correct imbalances. The Government spends millions of dollars annually for teacher-training programs and other programs which influence teacher supply. Little information is available, however, to indicate the impact of many of these programs on the teaching profession job market.

To gather data on teacher supply and demand, we developed and then sent questionnaires to all 50 State departments of education and to a statistically selected sample of approximately 275 teacher colleges and universities and 500 school

districts throughout the Nation. We obtained advice on the types of questions to ask by consulting the Office of Education's National Center for Educational Statistics and private organizations, such as the National Education Association; the Council of Chief State School Officers; and the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education.

The questionnaires were designed to elicit information that would indicate what subject fields and geographic areas were oversupplied or undersupplied with teachers, what caused the imbalances, and what could be done to solve or alleviate the problem. The questionnaires were also designed so that responses received could be computer processed and summarized in a number of different ways, such as by geographic areas or by localities served by the school districts and teacher colleges. Our sample selection and size permits us to make statistically valid projections with a 90-percent level of confidence.

We received a 90-percent return on our questionnaires. We interviewed officials of State departments of education, teacher colleges and universities, and school districts in four States to expand on their replies. We also talked with a number of teachers to obtain their comments on various issues bearing on the supply-and-demand situation.



Our planned report on the results of the review will provide information that should be useful to the Congress in its deliberations on legislation governing programs that contribute to the supply of teachers.

Review of the Implementation of the  
Emergency School Assistance Program

Another review in the education area, although not strictly an evaluation of the effectiveness of an education program, was made at the request of the Chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity. He requested that we review and report on the implementation of the Emergency School Assistance Program administered by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The Chairman wanted to know how effectively the initial \$75 million appropriated for the program was being spent before the Congress finalized proposed legislation authorizing an additional \$1.5 billion for the program. The program provides grants to school districts to defray the costs of meeting special problems arising from the desegregation of elementary and secondary schools.

Before making the review we discussed our planned approach with staff members of the Committee and reached agreement on the nature and scope of the review so that our reporting would be responsive to the Committee's interest. This approach

greatly facilitated the planning and execution of the review which involved our Washington staff and the staffs of five of our regional offices.

We reviewed the implementation of the program in two phases. The first phase involved a review of the Department's grant approval procedures, and the second phase involved a review of the activities of school districts in implementing the program.

In our report on the first phase, dated March 5, 1971, we expressed the belief that in many cases school districts had not submitted with their applications, nor had the Department obtained, sufficient information to enable proper determinations that the grants had been made in accordance with program regulations or that the grants had been in line with the purpose of the program. Most of the applications did not contain comprehensive statements of the problems faced in achieving and maintaining desegregated school systems, nor did they contain adequate descriptions of the proposed activities designed to meet such problems comprehensively and effectively. Particularly, there was little information in the Department's regional files about how the proposed activities would meet the special needs of the children incident to the elimination of racial segregation and discrimination in the schools.

In our report on the second phase, dated September 29, 1971, we pointed out that (1) in many cases school districts were not complying with the Department's regulations and the assurances given in their applications, (2) in some districts project activities might not be implemented or would be only partially implemented during the grant period, leaving unsolved the problems of desegregation, and (3) some project activities appeared to be directed more toward aiding education in general rather than toward solving problems arising from desegregation.

We were told that our report findings, conclusions, and recommendations were of considerable assistance to the Senate Select Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity and the House General Subcommittee on Education in their formulation of proposed new legislation for the program. The Emergency School Act bill that was finally enacted contains strong safeguards and administrative guidelines to insure proper administration of the program. Also as a result of our review, the Department has taken steps to strengthen its administration of the program.

Evaluation of the  
Public Employment Program

On July 12, 1971, the President signed the Emergency Employment Act authorizing appropriations of \$2.25 billion over a 2-year period to provide grants for public service jobs

for unemployed and underemployed persons throughout the Nation. The act also was directed toward meeting the public service needs of States, counties, and cities.

On July 28, 1971, less than a month after the act was signed, the Chairman, Subcommittee on Employment, Manpower, and Poverty, Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, requested GAO to conduct an ongoing review and evaluation of the program undertaken by the Department of Labor to implement the act.

Since funds were to be allocated to States, counties, cities and Indian tribes, we decided that each of our 10 regional offices involved in the review should be responsible for at least two different units of government. We reviewed program activities of 7 States, 17 counties, 11 cities, and 12 Indian tribes in 3 States.

The request for an ongoing review and evaluation meant that we would be just a step behind the Department as it implemented the program. Because it would not be possible to initially review the program in its entirety, we developed plans to review and report to the Subcommittee on various phases of activity as the program evolved.

Our first step was to review the Department's procedures for allocating funds among the 650 or so cities, counties,

States, and Indian organizations designated as program agents. This work was started in September 1971, and a report on this phase was issued in December of that year. Subsequently, we reported to the Subcommittee on the preparation and approval of plans to implement the program, the delays in hiring program participants, the selection and enrollment of participants, the types of jobs offered to unemployed persons, and the impact of grants to Indian tribes.

We also have work in process on (1) the operation of the program in rural and ghetto areas, (2) public service benefits from jobs under the program, and (3) placement of participants in permanent jobs. Our overall observations and conclusions concerning the program's operation and the proposed changes which could make it more effective will be provided to the Chairman in a summary report.

Both the Emergency Employment Act and the Manpower Development and Training Act will expire on June 30, 1973. The expiration of these two major pieces of manpower legislation guarantees that new manpower legislation will be a major issue in the current session of the Congress. Through reviews and reports such as the type made at the Chairman's request, we are able to provide assistance to the Congress in its deliberations on such new legislation.

## CONCLUSION

As you can see from these examples, the assessment of a program's effectiveness is a difficult task.

Our concepts and our methods of accounting for the results of social programs are primitive at best. We need to develop methods of accounting that not only will clearly show what we invest in these programs but what is accomplished in relation to what was sought.

We need accounting techniques to measure the differences in social conditions. We need to know what happens to people affected by certain programs as compared to people who are not affected.

No one doubts the practical difficulties of assessing the cost and benefits of social programs and of evaluating the impact of these programs in many situations.

Those people, at all levels of government, responsible for program formulation and evaluation system design must work at solving these problems to provide program managers with information they can use to evaluate success and determine whether approaches or funding levels need to be revised.

We in the GAO are continuing to work on new evaluation methods and techniques to improve our ability to assess

educational effectiveness and enable us to continue to deliver meaningful information to the Congress.

In the final analysis, the hard choices will be political choices, but political leaders and the public need increased awareness of the arguments pro and con of the choices that must be made. Those who want to do right should at least be equipped with good information.