INTERVIEW I

DATE: October 7, 1981

INTERVIEWEE: FREDERICK O'REILLY HAYES

INTERVIEWER: MICHAEL L. GILLETTE

PLACE: Mr. Hayes' Office, Lexington, MA

G: I want to ask you how you first became involved with the War on Poverty task force operation.

H: That is a long and complicated story. I had been an assistant commissioner of the Urban Renewal Administration since the summer of 1961. My boss, Urban Renewal Commissioner William Slayton, and I had been interested in efforts to expand what might be called the social dimensions of renewal through supporting services to help the families, individuals and businesses located in or displaced by projects. In New Haven, Mayor Dick Lee and renewal chief Ed Logue had brought in Mike Sviridoff to start an effort of this kind under the Ford Foundation Gray Areas program.

In the course of looking into the matter, I met Sandy [Sanford] Kravitz and his colleagues, including Executive Director Dave Hackett, at the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency. I went to Chicago at PCJD's invitation to attend a meeting with a northside citizen group that was a PCJD grantee. A vivid memory from that meeting was the report by a black seamstress who headed the group. The group had visited and been very favorably impressed with the community school program in Flint, Michigan. They were very concerned about the education of their children and frustrated in their efforts to talk to Chicago school officials. The seamstress said, at our meeting: "I just have the

feeling that it's so sensible that if I could just sit down and talk man-to-man"--no feminist, she--with Mr. [Superintendent of Schools Benjamin] Willis, we could all work this out."

Another relationship also contributed to my involvement. Bill Cannon, then the assistant director of legislative reference in the Bureau of the Budget, was an old friend and neighbor. President Kennedy in April 1963 had asked the Council of Economic Advisors for a report on what ought to be done about poverty. [I heard Roger Wilkins say on the radio yesterday that Kennedy's request came out of his having read Michael Harrington's *The Other America*.] At any rate, Bill Cannon was on the receiving end for the report that came back from the CEA. The report was a laundry list of possible direct measures to increase the incomes of the poor. Cannon felt that this was not exactly what the President had in mind and asked me for ideas on what might be done. I suggested that he should get Bobby Kennedy [who chaired the PCJD] and Dave Hackett involved--which he did. I was not party to the discussions between Cannon and Hackett and his team, although Cannon and I continued to talk.

I think that Cannon, Hackett and I shared the basic idea that poverty was something more than not having enough money and that we should be thinking about how the government could help poor people build up their capabilities and confidence to the point where more of them, particularly those from the racial and ethnic groups that had historically been at the bottom of the economic totem pole, could work their way out of poverty. Hackett and I, and probably Cannon as well, also believed that this kind of a job could only be done on a community-by-community basis, following the experience of Ford's Gray Areas Program and of PCJD.

I had come to know Dick Boone in 1961 when he was with the Ford Foundation and asked me to chair a panel to review a proposal by the City of Los Angeles for a super computer information system. Now, Dick, whom I had not seen since 1961, reappeared as a PCJD [?] consultant assigned to work on the development of an antipoverty program proposal. He asked me to participate and I agreed to do so.

Dick and I began to meet in November 1963. I heard the news of Kennedy's assassination when I was on my way to a meeting with Dick in one of the old, since demolished, Jackson Place buildings where he had his office. Work on the poverty program was soon taking a major proportion of my time.

I worked from that time until the submission of the Economic Opportunity Act in what Hackett aptly called "the guerrilla war on poverty." My assignment was to co-chair with Sandy Kravitz the planning group on urban programs. The guerrilla war began before the designation of [Sargent] Shriver and the appointment of the President's Task Force on the War on Poverty. Even after Shriver's appointment, we still functioned separately, never quite recognized as full-fledged members of the team but with enough contact so that I attended one or perhaps two meetings with Shriver during the period.

The problem, as I understood it, was Shriver's hostility toward Hackett or, at least, toward Hackett's involvement in *his* program. Boone's impression was that Sarge was also very skeptical about community action and far more interested in VISTA [Volunteers in Service to America], as a counterpart to the Peace Corps, and in the Job Corps.

I was never formally detailed by my agency to work on the poverty program. I

had initially been asked to participate as an individual and agreed to do so after clearing it with my immediate superior, Urban Renewal Commissioner Slayton. Slayton did not, however, clear it with his boss, HHFA [Housing and Home Finance Agency] Administrator Bob Weaver, with whom his relations were tense. Hackett and Boone once asked: "If we asked Bob Weaver to assign someone to work with us, would it be you?" My answer was that it was very unlikely and, for that reason, Hackett elected not to ask, keeping my involvement informal. I think that I told Bob Weaver at some point that I was doing some work on the poverty program but, otherwise, I never brought him into the loop.

I participated, still as a guerrilla, in the drafting of the Economic Opportunity Act. Boone called one day to ask me to come over to a meeting at Justice where we spent the day working over the draft of Title II with a most peculiar group including Norbert Schlei [later Assistant Attorney General], Hugh Calkins, a prominent Cleveland lawyer and friend of Adam Yarmolinsky, Dick Boone and Bill Cannon.

I didn't come in from the guerrilla war until Jack Conway was picked in April or May 1964 to become the head of community action. Jack had been Bob Weaver's deputy at HHFA and we knew and liked each other. Within a month of the time Jack had been selected, he told Dick Boone and me that he wanted us to be his principal aides in organizing for the program and in running it once the legislation had been enacted and funds appropriated.

It was a very hectic period, balancing what should have been a fulltime job on the poverty program against the fulltime job for which I was being paid as an assistant urban

renewal commissioner and family responsibilities that had increased with a new baby in May.

At some early point I enlisted the services of Dave Grossman who ran the Community Renewal Program in URA [Urban Redevelopment Authority?] Dave would later head the management and policy arm in CAP [Community Action Programs]. Sometime in the summer, I acquired a first-rate unpaid assistant in Jack Wofford [Senator Harris Wofford's younger brother], a Rhodes Scholar and a recent graduate of the Harvard Law School. Jack worked entirely on poverty program issues. He was involved in a great many different matters but his most important contribution was his dazzling performance in finding talented people, an effort he continued at OEO after the program was launched. He was responsible for the recruitment, among others, of Peter Goldmark [now president of the Rockefeller Foundation] and Vernon Jordan [former head of the Urban League, now a Washington attorney and presidential confidant]. Jack deserves most of the credit for the stellar quality of the staff of the Community Action Program.

We knew from experience with other grant-in-aid programs that, typically, it took localities an appalling amount of time to plan, organize and start operations under a new program. We were also concerned with the quality of the programs likely to be proposed. The only apparent answer to these problems was to persuade at least larger communities to start work at the earliest possible date on the planning, organization and program design and development needed for the program. We reached a decision in the Urban Renewal Administration that the Community Renewal Program [which I administered] for the planning, scheduling and programming of renewal efforts was broadly enough

defined to embrace antipoverty components.

I arranged meetings with a number of big city mayors [including, among others, Dick Daly in Chicago, John Collins in Boston, Dick Lee in New Haven, Jerry Cavanagh in Detroit, and the mayor of Pittsburgh] offering to approve CRP financing for antipoverty planning. We actually made grants to Detroit and, I believe, Pittsburgh and, perhaps, got some of the others to do some preparatory work on the program.

G: Let me ask you to back up just a little bit. Did you gain an impression of the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency before you got into task force activities, while you were working initially with Boone?

H: Well, I had a general impression, yes.

G: How did that program seem to work?

H: I really didn't know very much about the program. I had a very general understanding of its dimensions and purposes and a limited exposure to a few of its projects. It was a planning, research and demonstration program with only a handful of projects. At the end of 1963, it was still a relatively new program and I doubt that there was enough evidence to support any solid judgment on the worth of the program. My impression, perhaps based largely on the massive Haryou-ACT and Mobilization for Youth study reports, was that much of the effort up to that time had gone into planning and that other grantee program operations were still quite limited. I knew that PCJD was involved in some, probably only a few, of the Ford Foundation Gray Areas program and that like Ford, NIMH [National Institute of Mental Health?] and OMAT [Office of Manpower and Automatic Training?] in the Department of Labor, they were interested in experimental

or pilot community antipoverty projects.

G: Did the juvenile delinquency programs tend to generate conflict rather than a concert of interest on the local level?

H: The Chicago project meeting I mentioned earlier focused on differences between the project group and the schools but the group clearly wanted to work out problems with the superintendent rather than fight with him. This is conflict of sorts but only at the pin prick level. I was vaguely aware that Mobilization for Youth was a controversial project in some respects but this was a dispute largely among the professionals and experts. But, with these minor exceptions, I was not aware of any serious conflicts in any of the PCJD projects.

G: In your discussions of Community Action during the task force stage, was there any particular juvenile delinquency program that you looked to as a model?

H: No. At least I didn't.

G: Did the others allude to one in particular that they hoped that this would emulate?

H: The project that drew the most attention was, of course, Mobilization for Youth because of its comprehensive scope. But Mobilization was probably too ambitious, too focused on one target group and, in a sense, too academic to be a model for community action. I never heard anyone suggest that it should be. If there was a model for community action, it came from the Ford Foundation Gray Areas program, not from PCJD.

G: You've mentioned a meeting on the drafting of the legislation. Did you participate in any of the earlier sessions, not designed so much to turn out legislation, but more to just discuss what should be done about poverty and considering various solutions?

H: Yes. All of those discussions took place, however, in meetings of the community action planning group or with people involved in that effort. Any discussion on how to help people become self-supporting turns to the same topics: education and training to enhance employability, better information on and connections to the job market, improved motivation, and the easing of obstacles to employment, such as racial discrimination. We added to this only the idea that traditional approaches had not been very effective largely because they had failed to elicit from the students and clients the necessary commitment and level of participation. We believed that CAP would face the same problem without a more participative approach than the traditional teacher-pupil and social worker-client models.

You should remember that we proposed to leave program choices to the communities and, hence, were not trying to design a model package of antipoverty program components. Much of our discussion focused less on poverty than on more mundane problems, such as how a new antipoverty program could obtain the cooperation of the public schools, the public and private welfare agencies, and other important local actors.

G: You mentioned that Dick Boone felt that Sargent Shriver was at first skittish about the Community Action concept. Did you yourself have any evidence of this?

H: After we were in operation, there was no question that he was skittish about Community Action. Sarge was an enthusiastic supporter of the national emphasis programs under Community Action, especially Head Start. He was himself heavily involved in the creation of the Legal Services program. These programs were all designed in

Washington with very specific provisions on standards, eligibility and program coverage to be met by all grantees. In the basic Community Action program, by contrast, the grantees designed and chose the programs and the way in which they operated. There were real uncertainties about the likely quality of the programs selected and the competence with which they would be managed. This made Shriver very uneasy.

G: Can you cite any examples that demonstrate this fact?

H: One was Sarge's insistence on reviewing and personally signing every community action grant. I told him at a very early stage that the volume of grant applications would soon be so large that he would not have time to do anything else. My advice fell on deaf ears. On the last day of the fiscal year, he met with us all day until midnight, reviewing and signing applications and chewing me out for not getting them processed earlier. Head Start grants, on the other hand, were processed by signature machine.

Sarge correctly recognized or at least suspected from the very beginning that Community Action would involve far more politically sensitive matters. What he didn't understand was that, except for some of the demonstration grants (in which I was not involved), the particular programs proposed and approved rarely posed such issues. The one continuing issue in the review sessions came from the objections raised by the Inspector General [Bill Haddad] on the basis of the allegedly inadequate representation of the poor on applicant governing boards.

G: Let me ask you about this meeting you described earlier? I gather that was largely a drafting . . .

H: The one in Justice?

G: Yes.

H: What do you want to know about it?

G: Well, can you recall the decisions that were made there?

H: We started with a draft of Title II, perhaps written by Norbert Schlei or someone else in Justice. I believe that the draft included the maximum feasible participation requirement which would suggest that Dick Boone had had a hand in its preparation. I do not recall any discussion of participation but the requirement would not, at that point, be seen as potentially controversial. I remember the discussion of only two significant issues.

One was whether private nonprofit organizations as well as public agencies should be eligible for grants. This issue had arisen in the meetings of the community action planning group because of the concern expressed by some that some local governments in the south might decide not to participate in the program. In that event, authority to make grants to nonprofits would provide an alternative means of initiating the program in those jurisdictions. The provision was included. The concern about program participation in the south proved groundless but the nonprofit option was widely used in all parts of the country. The nonprofit structure offered freedom from civil service requirements and the onerous red tape of government. It provided a neutral site and a highly flexible, easily created organization that could be tailored to reflect sponsorship by several governmental units [city, counties, school boards] and participation by the poor.

The second issue was the proportion of the funding that would be available for research, pilot and demonstration projects. The group accepted my proposal to allow up

to 15% of the money to be used for such projects. This was a relatively large share and I proposed it on the basis of a general conviction that we had tended throughout government to underfund knowledge-building and knowledge-dissemination.

You may know that Dick Boone and I had initially proposed that we start, not with an operating program, but with a very large research and demonstration program. The proposal was rejected by Ted Sorenson who said to forget about the notion of a $100 million demonstration program and to start instead with a full scale program.

G: Was your desire for planning and experimentation based on the experimental nature of the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency?

H: No, it was not. There were two reasons. First, the program would demand an extraordinary combination of imagination, responsiveness, political skill, and managerial ability from its local sponsors. We knew from experience with urban renewal and other programs that we could expect, at most, only a handful of communities to create antipoverty agencies with these capabilities. A program open to eligible organizations in every American community was likely to result in many uninnovative and uninspiring or incompetently managed programs and few stellar performances. This approach would make sense only if its likely results were clearly recognized in advance and if it were seen as a developmental and educational effort that might over, say, a half-dozen years create a more widespread and perceptive understanding of poverty and what might be done about it.

The second reason was our very limited knowledge of the effectiveness of various antipoverty programs. One can produce some fairly solid conclusions on the factors

contributing to the reduction of poverty, the absorption of millions of poor immigrants, and the growth of national wealth over the past 100, or 150 or 200 years. But we knew next to nothing about the most effective means of getting people out of poverty in the short run. Paul Ylvisaker described our problem as the need to discover that act of social jujitsu that would make it possible to do in one generation what had taken two or three generations before. There was no certainty that we would learn much from a large pilot and demonstration program but the chances were better than for a full scale program.

G: Was the Peace Corps used at all as a precedent for the Community Action Program, the fact that volunteers abroad had encouraged community organization and involvement?

H: Not directly. A number of those involved in CAP had participated in or were familiar with the self-help community development projects pioneered by Accion and the Peace Corps, among others, in small and rural communities in developing countries. I had learned only the year before in an Institute of Public Administration project in Venezuela the importance those active in these efforts placed on the distinction between *fomento municipal* or government-managed development and *desarolla de la comunidad*, the self-help projects organized and managed by community residents. The approach had limited direct applicability in the United States but it provided another set of examples supporting the argument that the disadvantaged had to be heavily involved in any effort to improve their situations.

G: Do you have any insights regarding the attitudes of the established cabinet departments toward Community Action? HEW [Health, Education, and Welfare], Labor Department?

H: Establishing OEO [Office of Economic Opportunity] as an independent agency in the

Executive Office of the President was clearly a Presidential decision, proposed by White House staff and the Bureau of the Budget. It certainly did not have the support of either HEW or Labor. Most of the friction, both before and after the enactment of the Economic Opportunity Act, came from Secretary of Labor Willard Wirtz.

G: Do you recall any specifics?

H: An agreement was reached during the task force period that the proposed Neighborhood Youth Corps should be administered by the Department of Labor. Wirtz wanted Labor to be designated in statutory language. Shriver argued successfully that the statutory authority should be vested in the Director of OEO and delegated by him to the Secretary of Labor. This gave OEO some oversight authority over the NYC [Neighborhood Youth Corps] but, in fact, the program was run quite independently. There was continuing tension between Wirtz and Shriver but staff level relations between CAP and Labor were excellent and highly cooperative.

G: Aside from the fact that the Attorney General had members of his staff working on the Community Action Program and its predecessor, the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency, did Robert Kennedy have any active role in the planning of the Community Action Program?

H: Dick Boone knows more about it than I do. My impression is that Kennedy played an important role in getting the idea of a community-based component accepted but that, otherwise, his involvement was limited, especially after Shriver was appointed.

G: There is some suggestion that Robert Kennedy talked to Shriver and influenced him in favor of the Community Action Program.

H: I wouldn't be surprised if he did.

G: Do you recall anything along this line?

H: I know there were conversations between Kennedy and Shriver that winter but I have forgotten anything I might have been told about them. There was at least some continuing Kennedy involvement or we wouldn't have been drafting the bill in Schlei's office.

G: Of course, that could be explained simply because that's where you got your draftsman, from the lawyers in the Justice Department.

H: The Justice Department does not ordinarily draft bills for other departments, even for the White House, and no one with any experience in the legislative drafting and clearance process would be very likely to ask them. During my time in Budget, Justice was typically slower than any other agency in responding to requests for recommendations on pending legislation and was often immobilized by differences in opinion among its divisions.

G: What was the Bureau of the Budget's attitude toward Community Action during the planning stage?

H: Bill Cannon was generally supportive as was John Forer, the examiner for this area. But I believe that there was some significant skepticism elsewhere in Budget. I know very little about it. Cannon knows the whole history and [Assistant Director] Bill Capron knows much of it. It might be worthwhile to also talk to [Budget Director] Charlie Schultze.

G: Do you think that the Budget Bureau may have advanced the community action concept

simply because it did provide sort of an umbrella solution, that local groups could plug in their own programs to suit their particular situation?

H: I doubt. Local discretion in program choice was part of the community action proposal from the very beginning and never arose as an issue. Budget staff did eventually emphasize the potential of the local umbrella agencies for coordinating various poverty-related programs but this was after the program was operational. Bill Cannon [as well as John Forer] could tell you more.

G: I haven't talked to him yet.

H: Cannon will be a better source. I was not long out of the Budget Bureau but I was not in it either.

G: To what extent did the White House participate in the planning of the Community Action Program or was aware of the Community Action Program?

H: The White House didn't participate in the planning but they approved the recommendation for a community action title and decided, contrary to the recommendation, that it should be initiated as a full scale program rather than a demonstration project program. Both Kennedy and Johnson exercised an unusual degree of presidential initiative in launching the War on Poverty. But once the process of developing a program and drafting legislation is underway, White House involvement tends to be limited until what [Presidential Assistant] Lee White called "the nut-cutting" stage, making the final calls largely on issues where there were conflicting agency positions.

G: Do you think that the White House understood Community Action? Maybe I should say

do you think Lyndon Johnson understood the Community Action Program at the time it was submitted to Congress?

H: I don't know how much the President knew of the details of the program. I suspect that your real question is whether Johnson expected the contention, turmoil, protests and disorder that arose from the Community Action Program. Of course, he didn't but neither did I nor anyone else to my knowledge. The President undoubtedly viewed the program in terms of his own experience, notably with the National Youth Administration, which was not entirely different from mine in URA. We both dealt with basically well-behaved grantees, in some of which poor management would be a problem. There would be objections and occasional political problems in some local situations but certainly no widespread raucous protests and demonstrations. Even with the maximum feasible participation requirement and local program discretion, there was no reason to expect that community action would be very different.

G: In these discussions of Community Action, did your group base Community Action on the notion that the poor did not have sufficient control over their own affairs and social programs that were being offered them?

H: The answer is yes but I believe there were significant differences among us in our perceptions of the extent and importance of the problem. Most of us saw the primary problem as the way in which the professionals in the school systems and social service agencies tended to deal with the poor. David Seeley, an assistant to [Commissioner of Education] Frank Keppel, thought most of us naive about big city public schools and were in for a rude surprise if we thought they could be easily influenced just with money.

The schools constituted a closed system, defensive about outside criticisms and ideas, and imbued with a self-conscious professionalism.

We were not talking about any radical shift of authority to the poor. Both the schools and social services needed to improve what business would call customer relations by doing a better job of listening to, responding to, and communicating with their clients, pupils and parents; the Chicago seamstress in the PUD project had a real problem and deserved to be treated seriously by the school system. In addition, there was a strong case for a more participative pedagogy, the core of the changes advocated for years by progressive educators, and its equivalent in social services for poor children and adults where traditional modalities had been least successful.

G: Was Community Action viewed as a vehicle for bypassing these local governmental institutions?

H: No. There was no way in which the school system could be by-passed and, at best, limited prospects for doing so with respect to most social services. We were skeptical about the effectiveness of direct funding for the school systems. If, however, we provided funding to community action umbrella agencies for public school programs for poor children, the umbrella agencies, as rational and prudent purchasers of services from the schools, might be able to obtain better results and greater accountability.

We did want local umbrella agencies set up independently rather than as an arm of a department of welfare or social services. But, otherwise, we did not propose or assume that community action would bypass local government or the mayors. In fact, I know of no CAA that was organized without the sponsorship and participation of local

elected officials although there may possibly be a few exceptions in rural areas.

G: Really?

H: Yes.

G: Did you see it working under the aegis of local government?

H: Conway, Boone and I all assumed that would be the case. Before the program was funded, I met with over a dozen mayors and Conway probably saw as many more in an effort to induce them to begin work on program planning and organization. In addition, Conway and I met with the Governors of Georgia, North Carolina and Vermont to discuss plans for programs in rural areas.

G: You were talking to mayors about Community Action here?

H: Yes. Many of them.

G: Did you regard the South as an exception here, as a situation where Community Action might necessarily bypass the local governmental structure?

H: That was the justification for making provision in the bill for grants to private nonprofit organizations. That was not an argument that I had raised.

G: Do you recall who advanced this particular aspect?

H: It may have Dick Boone or, if not, someone from the PCJD staff. It occurs to me as an afterthought that it may have come directly or indirectly from Hackett and Bobby Kennedy. Problems related to civil rights had led in 1961 or 1962 to *sub rosa*, never publicized White House instructions, in which the AG was involved, to departments and agencies with discretionary grant programs [such as Urban Renewal] to stop processing applications from Mississippi and to stonewall any inquiries about their status.

G: You talked about the maximum feasible participation phrase earlier. I just want to ask what it meant to you at the time.

H: I regarded the requirement as a general statement of intent and a broad guideline that might be satisfied in a variety of different ways. I certainty never expected that it would prove necessary to spell out in very specific and concrete terms what would be required for compliance, or that its meaning and application would be contested. To us, it was a statement indicating simply that the program should function *with* the poor, not on them.

G: Did the task force discuss the implications of having the poor participate in this decision-making process?

H: Task Force?

G: The Community Action--

H: The subject undoubtedly came up but I cannot recollect any meetings on the matter. The phrase "decision-making" puts a rather more pretentious and formal cast on participation than the comments made in our discussions.

G: Did the task force discuss Saul Alinsky's views on community organization?

H: We talked about Alinsky but I think you are asking if we were thinking of community action as an Alinsky type organization. We were not. Alinsky's own subsequent derisive comments on community action show how far fetched that would have been.

G: Was there a discernable difference among the various viewpoints of different people on the task force? Did Boone feel differently than Hackett feel differently than you? Was there any give and take or any line drawn on some of these issue within that community action group?

H: It was not an environment in which you would expect to find hard line, right wing conservatives but I would guess that our general views ranged across a good part of the remainder of the ideological spectrum. But, if such differences did, in fact, exist, they were never articulated in our meetings and I cannot recall any strong differences among us in terms of program recommendations. Everyone understood that our job was to develop a program that would be acceptable to the President and the Congress and that would prove viable and effective when implemented in many different communities.

G: Pat Moynihan in his book dealing with the subject [*Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding*] asserts that after the legislation was submitted to Congress that the original task force members went back to their departments and that there was essentially a more forceful community action group of advocates who presided over a radicalization of the Community Action Program and structured the implementation of the planning of the program in such a way that it distorted the original intent of the planners.

H: Yes, I know. Those well-intentioned people like Fred Hayes. Moynihan has been among the most insightful observers of the social and urban problems of our time but, in this case, the misunderstanding is his. As I remember, he built his case on a critique of the views of Lloyd Ohlin and the authors of Mobilization for Youth. There is no point in commenting on the merits of that critique since, contrary to Moynihan's assumption, the Ohlin-MFY position had, for all practical purposes, no influence on the administration of CAP. As to the specific point raised by your question, there was very little change in the basic cadre working on CAP between the submission of the legislation and the beginning of operations.

The statutory requirement for maximum feasible participation, the only radical aspect of community action, was not intended to be so. Those of us involved in the drafting of the legislation can be criticized for our blindness to its potential for controversy and trouble but neither the White House nor the Congress were any more prescient. We were inclined to regard the appointment of poor people or their representatives to program governing bodies or advisory committees as a more symbolic than substantive form of participation and were taken by surprise when representation emerged as a furiously contested issue. We were much too slow in recognizing the need for CEO guidelines setting the proportion of governing body seats to be allocated to the poor.

The implementation of the participation requirement raised a storm of protests from the mayors but OEO administrative policies and practices, contrary to general belief, were consistently conservative. OEO, throughout its history, assumed that the CAAs would and should be organized under the aegis of local government. There was not a single case in which OEO rejected a government-sponsored applicant in favor of a competing private group. Moreover, there was not a single instance in which OEO supported demands by representatives of the poverty areas for a controlling voice in the CAAs.

OEO funds for over 1500 local community action umbrella agencies covered perhaps 10,000-15,000 individual projects and programs. I would doubt that any projects or programs of a clearly revolutionary or politically radical character survived OEO review. The only even arguably radical projects approved by CAP arose from a handful

of controversial research and demonstration grants to organizations other than CAAs.

The excesses of community action arose in the communities, not in Washington. They were not planned, induced, encouraged, favored, or supported by OEO but there was little that OEO could do to prevent them.

The statutory maximum feasible participation requirement provided a basis for contention and controversy that might, otherwise, not have arisen. Its repercussions might have been more effectively managed and controlled had OEO officials been more deft and insightful. But what was in the statute and what OEO did or didn't do had far less bearing on the character of the community action program than the turbulent social milieu in which it was carried out.

The Community Action Program was, in a real sense, hijacked by the civil rights movement. Community action arrived when the movement, fortified by its victories in the south, was shifting its focus to the cities of the north, midwest and west that had been the destinations of the great postwar black migration, and was, at the same time, becoming broader less unified and more heterogeneous. More radical leaders found constituencies in the urban ghettoes for outspoken rhetoric and aggressive tactics that would have been dangerous in the south.

The Community Action Program was not the only forum in which the heightened sense of grievance and the rebellious mood of the black and, to a lesser extent, the Hispanic population found expression. Nor was the struggle for racial equality the only cause of social unrest. In a single year, 1968, there were also numerous demonstrations against the Vietnam War, riots in most large American cities after the assassination of

Martin Luther King, student takeovers of university buildings, the confrontation of police and demonstrators at the Chicago Democratic Party convention, and student demonstrations in Paris. This gives some credence to the prediction made nearly 20 years earlier by Cornell sociologist Alan Williams that there would be a period of significant social unrest when the first cohorts from the postwar baby boom began to reach maturity in the late sixties.

It seems to me rather obvious that no community-based antipoverty program could function in the environment of 1965 in the same way as it might have five or ten years earlier. The assumption that it could, the implicit basis of much of the criticism of community action, is patently absurd.

We spent much of the first year of OEO dealing with problems we had not anticipated, most arising from the maximum feasible participation requirement. That requirement provided, for example, a basis for Shriver's support or toleration of the practice by Haddad and his inspectors of questioning both the adequacy of the numbers of the poor on governing boards and the extent to which those selected were actually poor.

Soon after OEO was funded, Adam Clayton Powell, then chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee passed on to Shriver objections from dissident groups in Cleveland and Chester, PA on the umbrella agencies being organized by city governments. Shriver made it clear that he wanted to avoid a battle with Powell and that I should try to work out a compromise between the contending parties in each case. But, even absent that instruction, MFP made it difficult to dismiss out of hand the objections

of organizations with some claim to represent the poor. By meeting with the objectors and pressing the mayors to negotiate with them, I undoubtedly gave the dissidents a legitimacy they hadn't had and, perhaps, didn't deserve.

The objector in Chester, PA was Stanley Branch, a black man in his thirties who had organized and was the director of the Chester Committee for Freedom Now. Branch's position was that his committee should be the CAP grantee for Chester. I met with Branch and with Mayor [James H.] Gorbey. It was a painful and difficult process but, ultimately, under pressure from us, the mayor worked out an arrangement with Branch. The CAA was organized by the city but, I believe, Branch was made executive director. Even as I was about to meet with Branch and Gorbey to wrap up their agreement, I received a call from another member of Branch's group who told me that he knew of the meeting and just called to tell me of the formation of the New Committee for Freedom Now.

G: Coupling Branch then, in other words.

H: Yes, that was his message. The other case was in Cleveland where two, perhaps three, white ministers in the Hough area objected to the formation of the CAA under the mayor's auspices. Again, this required meetings and discussions with all parties. We ultimately agreed upon a CAA sponsored by the city, the school board and the county with provision for representation of the poor. The ministers made their point but were never really involved in the negotiations. The various elected officials were, however, as difficult and contentious a group as any I have encountered. On the other hand, the key professional, the city welfare chief and eventually CAA director who was black, was top

notch.

In the course of the Chester situation, I received an unscheduled visit one day from a gentleman who offered to help work out a solution to the problem. He was Milton Shapp, president of Jerrold Electronics and later governor of Pennsylvania. I told Shapp that I had no objection to his trying. I never learned exactly what he did but I assume it helped.

G: Did you reach an accommodation there?

H: Yes, we did. I had never anticipated that we would face a situation in which we would be obliged to deal seriously with an organization competing with and antagonistic to local government. I might not have done so absent Shriver's instructions but I think it was probably important that I did. It was also important that we were able to achieve the accommodation. I was pleased and relieved that we never reached the point in Chester or elsewhere where there was a solid case for considering the rejection of the application of a government-sponsored CAA in favor of a competing group.

G: Do you think that Conway, when he came, which I believe was after the legislation was submitted, had different ideas or more radical ideas about community action?

H: No, definitely not. Jack Conway was a liberal, even something of an idealist but he was very practical and politically realistic. He saw the community action program as depending upon the cooperation of all of the different entities involved. He repeatedly used the analogy of the three-legged stool although the rest of us tended to become confused in identifying the specific legs.

G: Local government being one?

H: Yes, local government was definitely one of the legs of the Conway stool. Jack's basic notion of consensus and participation was realized in the many CAAs organized on the basis of an agreement negotiated by the city government the school system, representatives of poverty neighborhoods, sometimes one or more county governments, and, often, private social service agencies. I called them treaty organizations, for obvious reasons.

Jack saw the Community Action Program as a means of bringing the attention of the public in communities all over the country to the problems of poverty, problems that most people, in Jack's opinion, were only barely aware even existed. He said: "If they give us three years with this program, we'll put a rivet on the conscience of this country they'll never take off."

G: Did Community Action provide a mechanism for local community groups to solve their own problems?

H: It provided a structure for them to solve some of them. Do you mean problems of poverty or problems of organization?

G: Well, both.

H: The basic idea of a new community agency not associated with existing poverty-related programs was to provide a new, broader, more comprehensive, less program-bound perspective of the poverty problem. I think that objective was achieved, albeit in varying degrees, in many communities. One unusual but interesting example is the analysis of the incidence of poverty still published annually by the Cleveland CAA.

Community action grants in the first year of the program totaled about $250

million. Subsequent appropriations were never large enough to permit the program to expand much above the annual rates of activity achieved at the end of the first year. As a result, the program in the typical community remained a rather large pilot or demonstration program, never commanding the resources needed to have a major impact on the extent of poverty. Even those who argue that the program should not have been expanded should agree that, whatever the program's potential for significantly reducing poverty, it could not be realized without much more money.

G: Should there have been more national emphasis programs, do you think?

H: I think we covered most of the areas for which national emphasis programs were both feasible and appropriate. Multiservice centers and neighborhood information and referral centers are among the few that might have been added. It is doubtful, as a matter of practical politics, that OEO could have initiated national emphasis programs involving job training or K-12 schooling without delegating program responsibility to Labor or HEW, respectively.

Local program discretion demanded a great deal of both knowledge and imagination from the communities. We might have done better if we had, instead, offered a menu of various model programs, much like the national emphasis programs, from which the communities would choose. Under such an arrangement, the communities might have been required to spend, say, 75% of their grants on such model programs, with the balance of 25% available for programs of their own devising. What would be lost, of course, is some of the capacity to adapt programs to the particular problems and opportunities of the locality.

G: During the period between the submission of the legislation and the actual passage and setting up of OEO, did Dave Hackett become disillusioned with the course that Community Action took?

H: I did not have that impression. My understanding was that Hackett was not involved in the program because Shriver did not want him involved. I do not know the basis of Shriver's attitude in terms of the prior history of the relations between the two or between Shriver and Bobby Kennedy.

G: Would he like to have been, do you think?

H: Ex post, my feeling is that he did want to be involved. At the time, I didn't believe that it was very important to him.

G: Was there any resistance to the expansion of the program?

H: What do you mean?

G: Well, you mentioned earlier that Community Action people largely saw this as a small or more experimental program?

H: There was never any discussion of that.

G: Really?

H: Sorenson and the White House made the decision and that was that. So far as I know, none of the community action group were even consulted.

G: You didn't see this as a pitfall or a hazard?

H: We certainly understood what the decision was likely to mean in terms of program quality. With every community in the country given, in effect, a grant entitlement, we were clearly going to see a good many programs of indifferent quality and questionable

impact as well as a large number of applicants of limited competence. We could insist on some changes in some proposed programs but it would not be politically realistic to expect to be able to deny funding to more than a few applicants, if any at all.

The problem is well illustrated by the very first application we took to Shriver for review. This was a $10,000 planning grant application from Albemarle County, North Carolina. Shriver, in his own inimitable way, worried that application around for over half an hour.

G: How so? Can you describe it?

H: The applicant was a county-wide organization chaired by a member of the Dear family which owned a chain of newspapers. There were no program specifics since this was an application for the funding needed to develop a program. To make sure we all understood the value of money, Shriver started by asking if any of us had ever been able to put together as much as ten thousand dollars. This was followed by an exchange between Shriver and Dave Grossman that went something like this:

SHRIVER: "How do you know this group is going to do a good job?"

GROSSMAN: "We don't know that they're going to do a good job."

SHRIVER: "They don't even have an executive director and you still want me to give them money?"

GROSSMA.N: 'Sarge, there's no way they're going to hire an executive director until you give them the money to pay him.'

SHRIVER: What makes you think that they'll hire a competent director and that he will do a good job?'

GROSSMAN: "In a rural county like Albemarle, the chances are probably no better than 10 out of 100 that they will find a director with very much directly relevant knowledge or experience, or that they will develop a program of more than mediocre quality."

SHRIVER: "Then, what do you do?"

GROSSMAN: "Like grant administrators in dozens of other programs, we try to see what the devil we can do to straighten things out or to help them. But there are limits to what can be done. We may, if we're lucky, see as many as 25% of our applicants develop solid and, sometimes, outstanding programs. Another half of the programs are likely to be unexciting but acceptable. The worst 25% will probably have programs that neither one of us is going to want to look at afterwards. This is just the reality of local grant programs. There isn't enough talent and managerial ability to do much better. We will not have the staff to offer all the technical assistance needed and much of the assistance we do provide will prove to be ineffective."

Grossman put it bluntly but accurately. He was describing a real world situation familiar not just to Federal staff in domestic grant-in-aid programs but also to the staff of both American and international agencies providing grants and loans for projects in developing countries. But, it was very hard for Shriver to accept the idea that there was no way in which everything was going to be done right. He finally did sign the grant.

G: That's fascinating. The Community Action group, did it have a formal name or a recognized name?

H: What do you mean? the task force?

G: Before the--

H: Before the enactment of the legislation. The President's Task Force had working groups on each of the major programs included in the bill. Ours was not called community action but I don't recall what, if anything, we were called. Dick Boone may remember.

G: Okay.

H: Have you seen him?

G: Not yet. I'm planning to. Was Boone the acknowledged head of your group, your subgroup?

H: Yes, that was certainly the case until Conway was picked in the spring of 1964 to head community action. Dick saw to it that the various planning groups were organized and was the primary link between the guerrilla warriors and Shriver and the President's Task Force. Boone had no yen for the limelight, rather enjoyed operating behind the scenes, avoided articulating his own role in any very specific terms and gave few direct instructions to the group. His arrangement for me to co-chair the urban program group was a typical Boone tactic, intended to couple Sandy Kravitz's extensive program knowledge with what he thought was my superior managerial and political sense.

G: Now, did Conway then take over when he was designated and Boone worked under Conway?

H: Yes. As I mentioned earlier, Jack made it clear almost from the beginning that he wanted Dick and me to work with him. Conway said he had a long debate with himself but only on which function Dick should serve and which I should serve. He decided that Dick

should be responsible for research and demonstrations and that I should manage operations. I was a little surprised. Neither of the two positions I had held in URA had anything to do with urban renewal program operations. I was then running the open space and planning grant programs and, earlier, I had been responsible for policy planning, research and demonstration projects. But, after both reflection and experience, it seems quite clear to me that Conway was right. I had gone to URA because of my interest in urban problems but my experience there, as Conway knew, had increasingly turned me toward problems of management and organization. On the other hand, Dick had decided advantages for the research and demonstration job because of his long involvement in poverty-related problems and his wide acquaintanceship among the most insightful people in the field.

G: So he put you in charge of operations, is that right?

H: Right.

G: And Boone in planning.

H: Yes. Planning and research and demonstration projects.

G: Was the legislation, the language in Title II, intentionally kept vague and broad, do you think, to avoid spelling out exactly how these programs would work?

H: No, it was not. The language was broad and general because the choice of programs was to be left to the local sponsors, subject to OEO approval. However, in the administration testimony and the supporting materials submitted to the Congressional committees, there were dozens of illustrative examples of the kind of programs that might be proposed in the communities.

G: Did you also feel that it might have a better chance of passing the Congress if the language were more vague?

H: No. It never occurred to me.

G: Someone, one of the people involved in the program at this point, made the statement that if Congress understands what Community Action really is, it will never pass.

H: I noticed that. Was that in that . . .

G: How general was this attitude at the time, would you say?

H: I cannot recall any comment to that effect. It may be, however, that something of the kind might be found from a review of news stories and the Congressional Record for 1964. Conservatives in the Congress regarded the entire War on Poverty as an inherently suspect liberal initiative but I did not then have the impression that many believed it to be a really radical proposal.

The conservatives seemed less passionately concerned with the characteristics of the program than with the idea of Adam Yarmolinsky becoming deputy director of OEO. This seemingly came primarily from Adam's service as staff director and chief author of what Congressman Mendel Rivers [D, S.C.] called the gee zell [Gesell] report on desegregation of military base facilities.

G: As long as you bring up the Yarmolinsky incident, do you have any insight as to how and why the decision was made to sacrifice him in this way?

H: I think the decision was made very simply and callously. After the passage of the Economic Opportunity Act, most people believed the decision-makers had been wrong in assuming that they did not have the votes or couldn't get them without sacrificing

Yarmolinsky. On the moral issue, I can only say that, historically, White House decisions on such issues have tended to be more influenced by vote counts than by moral principles.

G: You did see it then as a White House decision?

H: Yes, I did. Do you think it was Shriver's decision?

G: Well, of course there's a lot of testimony on that in all respects.

H: I may have missed or forgotten some aspects of the situation but I had thought it was a White House decision. But, you've been looking at the matter and I haven't.

G: Do you think Yarmolinsky had been informally designated as the deputy director of OEO?

H: Yes.

G: Why do you say it?

H: Why do I think he had been designated?

G: Yes.

H: That was our understanding and he was serving in that capacity. Yarmolinsky's status as deputy director designate was essentially the same as Conway's status as community action director designate.

G: Okay. I don't know to what extent you were involved in the legislative aspects of the program, after it was submitted, getting the Congressional support.

H: Not at all.

G: Were you familiar with any of the issues that came before the Congress, such as the church and state issue that seemed to concern Hugh Carey so much?

H: I was familiar with it although I do not remember the argument in any detail. The basic issue was the making of program grants to church-related organizations, especially parochial schools; we resolved that in OEO's first few months. When I met with Hugh Carey sometime in 1965 or 1966, OEO's treatment of church-sponsored organizations was the principal issue he raised.

G: Mayor Daley testified in behalf of the program, and it seems apparent here from reading the hearings that Daley had a very different notion of how the Community Action Program would work than others who testified. He seemed to say in effect that he would control the program, that it wouldn't create problems for him in Chicago.

H: We wouldn't have described it as control but we certainly advocated and expected the launching of programs under mayoral auspices. But mayors like Jerry Cavanagh [Detroit], John Collins [Boston], Dick Lee [New Haven] and Bob Wagner [New York] would have talked about it more in terms of leadership than control. I do not remember that they *did* cut out planning. If I am wrong, you'll have to stimulate my memory.

G: Well, they de-emphasized a comprehensive planning stage of the program, I think.

H: That doesn't jibe with my recollection.

G: My impression is also that they tended to support piecemeal grants as well as a well-coordinated comprehensive approach as your group seemed to favor.

H: I don't remember that either. But there was nothing in the legislation, either as proposed or as enacted, that limited grants to comprehensive community programs. The national emphasis programs, such as Headstart and Legal Services, were, for all practical purposes, quite outside the comprehensive community programs.

G: Do you recall the issue of the governors' veto?

H: Yes.

G: Do you have any recollection of how it worked?

H: I remember living with it but not how it got into the legislation. It was not a major problem. We were required to submit grants to the governor which he or she could elect to veto within a specified time period. I believe that there were, in fact, a very few gubernatorial vetoes.

G: Do you recall the issue of family planning?

H: I doubt that anyone in OEO with even a peripheral involvement in the family planning issue will ever forget it. But this was after enactment of the legislation. I don't remember it being a legislative issue.

G: It was discussed in the hearings, but not a great deal.

H: Sometime early in 1965, Sarge began to ponder the family planning question. Some said that what he was really doing was talking and listening to Eunice. At any rate, it was a big question for a matter of weeks, finally resolved in favor of grants for family planning programs under various strictures and conditions. It had been seen as a difficult political question but, once the decision had been made, the issue seemed to all but vanish.

I believe that Shriver, as a prominent Roman Catholic and a Papal Knight, had some special problems in making the decision. During this period, he had been invited to attend Planned Parenthood's 50th anniversary dinner but ducked it, asking me [another Catholic!] to go in his stead.

G: Do you think that there was sufficient focus on the rural Community Action programs

during this period?

H: Unquestionably. During the task force days, there was a group working on community action in rural areas. The group was headed by a very able fellow [whose name escapes me] assigned by the Department of Agriculture. Jim Sundquist, then the deputy to Under Secretary Charlie Murphy was actively involved. Jack Conway worked with State of Georgia officials to help develop community action programs in each of the state's planning and development districts and I met with Governor [Philip H.] Huff of Vermont with much the same objective. We and others had preparatory meetings with North Carolina Governor Terry Sanders and George Esser, the director of the North Carolina Fund. We also had a fair amount of contact with people in Appalachia. In addition, we planned for special programs for reservation Indians and migrant workers.

The result was that there was, in fact, a very substantial and extensive community action program in rural areas usually organized on a county-wide basis, sometimes with multicounty jurisdiction. They experienced little of the turmoil associated with big city programs. I suspect that the rural CAAs achieved a broader degree of popular support in their areas than their urban counterparts and may, contrary to our expectations, have been more successful. Some significant number of them are still in business.

The program in the South, contrary to the fears of the pessimists, was very active. All of the southern states accepted OEO grants for state technical assistance offices even though we required integrated staffs. The state offices promoted the program and, so far as I know, there were no instances where a community rejected a community action program because of our requirements for the inclusion of blacks on CAA staffs and

governing boards. In Mississippi, despite the backing of the governor's office, the situation was often difficult and sometimes dangerous for our field representatives; this was not the case in the rest of the South.

G: Well, I think that covers the formation of the Community Action Program and the legislative fight in 1964. Is there anything we have left out of this stage?

H: I doubt that you left out anything significant on which I have much to say. I had no real involvement in the legislative process after the bill drafting session in Schlei's office. I did not testify or write testimony on the bill and had no meetings with Congressmen or Congressional staff. I did not play a significant role until after the passage of the Economic Opportunity Act and the organization of OEO.

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