INTERVIEW I

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INTERVIEWEE: ANTHONY PARTRIDGE

INTERVIEWER: Michael L. Gillette

PLACE: Mr. Partridge's office, Washington, D.C.

Tape 1 of 1

G: Let's start. I want to ask you to begin by tracing the origin of your involvement with War on Poverty.

P: Okay. I went with OEO [Office of Economic Opportunity] in I believe October of 1964, which was almost immediately after they had an appropriation. That is, I had been dealing about employment before they got the appropriation, and went very soon after the first appropriation. I had decided that I wanted to be involved the day the President made his War on Poverty speech. I just went home and told my wife I wanted to do that. As it turned out, Steve Pollak was the task force lawyer and I knew Steve from private practice, so I put the application in through him. I was hired as the assistant general counsel for the Community Action Program. I had interviewed Don Baker at some point before the appropriation went through. So it was all pretty well settled, as I recall, and we were just waiting for the appropriation for me to make the move.

G: How did you find the OEO administration when you moved over there? What was it like?

P: Oh, it was chaos, marvelous chaos. We were in the New Colonial Hotel up on 15th Street, and there were files in bathrooms. It was just getting staffed up and it was utterly chaotic, as one would expect.

G: Was the administrative structure also chaotic?

P: I'm not sure I know what that means.

G: Well, the chain of command, for example. Division of responsibilities.

P: Not terribly I don't think. I think everybody talked to everybody. There were few enough people around so that it didn't seem to me that that was a problem. I don't know . . .

G: Was it chaotic more from the standpoint of housekeeping and--?

P: Oh, housekeeping and everybody--you know, an immense amount of work has to be done when you're starting up a program. It is chaotic in those terms, and in some ways very productive. If I went out of my office to go to the men's room, I would get stopped ten times along the way and be asked for legal advice on something. I remember how staggering it was, how many things I had on my desk by the end of a couple of days. And it suddenly became clear that the only legal advice anybody was going to get was what I could deliver off the top of the head. There was simply absolutely no time to research anything. And you know, I was, at that point, the only lawyer for the Community Action Program and we were trying to get a grant program.

In that sense things were chaotic. A lot of hasty decisions were being made. Jack Wofford, whom you may know, had collected a bunch of grant conditions from other agencies around the government; he'd done that before I got there. He was a lawyer, but not in the general counsel's office. They dumped them on my desk and said, "We need a

set of grant conditions for our first grants," and I did a cut-and-paste job one night. Those were the grant conditions that survived substantially unchanged for several years.

G: Was that the Community Action Guide?

P: No, no. These were the set of standard conditions that got attached to each grant document. The guide was a much longer project in the development. But you know, [there was] very fast, top-of-the-head decision-making on a great many issues. I've forgotten when we put the first grants out. Was it November?

G: I think almost immediately after the election.

Tell me about the Community Action Guide.

P: It was written largely by David Grossman. I can't remember precisely the timing of it. It may have been around in draft when I got there. Jim Siena and I did legal review and contributed to it.

G: Was it basically a handbook for setting up a Community Action program?

P: It was partly that, but it was more a set of regulations, I would say, written in non-*Federal Register* style of--there was some of each. We always viewed it as remarkable because Grossman had anticipated a lot of questions. It lasted very well; as questions came up, it answered a lot of them. Part of it was setting up a program, but a lot of it was budgetary and matching requirements, things of that nature.

G: Let me ask you to describe the general counsel's office, how it was structured. Don Baker was the--

P: Don Baker was the general counsel; Steve Pollak was the deputy. Steve had hoped to be the general counsel. That was a disappointment, but . . . I was the assistant general counsel for the Community Action Program. The first assistant counsel for Job Corps

was Stanley Zimmerman. The first assistant general counsel for VISTA [Volunteers in Service to America] was Mark Ball, I believe. Then we had a lawyer named Dick Werksman who did procurement and personnel type stuff. More procurement than personnel, as I recall. I've forgotten whether he carried an assistant general counsel title. He may have. That remained the fundamental structure as long as I was there.

G: A number of the people involved, at least you and Baker, had experience on the Hill.

P: Yes.

G: Was that typical of the general counsel's staff?

P: No. No. And my Hill experience wasn't really Hill experience in that the subcommittee I worked for had a long-term research project and I wasn't involved in the legislative mill. No, I don't think--Pollak had never had Hill experience I don't think. I think Pollak had been in private practice until he went with the task force, [I] could be wrong about that. Werksman had come from HEW [Health, Education and Welfare]. Ball came from private practice.

G: Was the general counsel's office designed to give legal advice to [Sargent] Shriver? What in essence did the office do?

P: Well, we did view ourselves as Shriver's lawyers, which occasionally created conflict with the program people who brought us problems. We would insist on raising issues with Shriver, some issues that--it always used to be a funny fight that always amused me, because you never run into it in private practice. You'd comment on something, and people would say, "That's not a legal question," which is to say you have no jurisdiction to think about it. But we didn't; we felt free to go to Shriver with any issue we thought was important to him. But, in fact, in most of the day-to-day operations you're giving

advice not to Shriver but to program people. On the Community Action side, Shriver personally signed all the grants for, well, at least through the 1965 fiscal year. I can't remember when he delegated it. But for a long time he signed all the grants, and he signed them at meetings, not in the privacy of his office but in meetings in which Community Action staff presented the grant to him and made a little oral presentation about what the program was, what the structure was of the local organization and what the components of its program were, and things of that nature. I generally attended those meetings. I think I always warned people if I was going to be critical of a grant. I'm not sure I was that good about it--

G: Was there give and take in these sessions?

P: --but there was give and take, yes. And Shriver would ask questions about things and would object to certain characteristics of some of them and occasionally reject one.

G: Were there any standard differences, say between general counsel's office and Community Action in these sessions, basic differences that would come up on a number of grants, say a difference in outlook?

P: I don't recall any. Well, there was one running fight I had which involved the demonstration grants. You know, there was a separate office in the Community Action Program that handled demonstration grants. Their grants always came up without any evaluation components. I used to fight that unsuccessfully from time to time. The demonstration money was being used to fund people's pet projects outside the normal course, and it seemed to me for the most part it was being done in a way that the--it still seems to me that the projects had no potential for really demonstrating an idea that might then be picked up elsewhere. There was no documentation of what they did. There was

no evaluation of their success. So we used to have that fight from time to time. Shriver talked my way but signed their way.

G: Did the other OEO divisions take a stand in these meetings? For example, Office of Inspection? Were they involved in these sessions where grants would be approved or signed?

P: Oh, I think so. I think Ed May was there.

G: And [William] Haddad before him.

P: That's right, Haddad was before him. Yes, I think so. Yes, I remember. And Haddad tended to be somewhat radical, though, about what representation of the poor meant, things like that.

G: Did political considerations enter into these decisions? For example, if you had a project in a powerful representative's district, would that be cranked into the equation when Shriver determined whether or not to approve the project?

P: I'm sure it was. Shriver was never very candid about those things with most of the staff I think. He probably was with Baker more. Baker was, after all, to a substantial extent a political adviser. People would occasionally get word that Shriver wanted a certain grant on his desk by such and such a date. I assumed that that was because he was responding to some kind of political need. I just was almost never involved in those discussions. But I don't think anybody doubted that we were going to make the Chicago grant, in spite of the fact that a lot of people around the agency didn't like the Chicago grant.

G: Mayor [Richard] Daley's influence.

P: Yes. Yes.

G: Likewise were there other grants that were denied because particular senators, congressmen, mayors or governors didn't want them in their area?

P: Of course the governor had a veto. And in the early days, putting aside the CDGM [Child Development Group of Mississippi] ruse of funding it through a university, that veto was absolute. I would assume that generally worked itself out by people telling the Community Action agencies they had to do their homework back home. We made some grants that were vetoed. I don't think we ever deliberately made grants for the sake of throwing them in the governor's face. We may have done that occasionally. And we certainly had some cases in which we thought a veto was possible and didn't know and decided to put it up there.

But for the most part, at least in the early days, if a governor didn't want it, I think he was in the power position. Later on we got--I can't remember, was it [George] Wallace's veto of a grant to Birmingham, the Birmingham CAP or something? There was a very untimely veto of a grant in Alabama or Mississippi that came along while our renewal legislation was pending in the House, and one day later the committee had given us the opportunity to override a governor's veto on this. I think Adam Clayton Powell reacted to this thing and put it in. So later on the power position had changed some.

G: So Shriver could veto a governor's veto?

P: Yes.

G: Did you often have a situation where a member of Congress or a senator would be in favor of a project while the governor from the state would be opposed to it?

P: I wouldn't have been aware of it.

G: Did you yourself do any--?

P: That is, you know, people like Fred Hayes and Bill Bozman probably would have been aware of it. That kind of pressure didn't come to me, and I didn't often--I must have--I mean I'm sure I heard these discussions sometimes, but it wasn't a matter of concern.

G: Were you yourself involved in explaining aspects of the program or particular grants to members of Congress or senators if they raised questions?

P: I'm sure I occasionally drafted a letter. I never went up to the Hill to talk with people or [things of] that nature. [Note: Partridge wrote in September 2007, "I did sometimes talk with people on the Hill about legislative matters, so I think this is misleading as it stands."]

G: Do you think that the Congress understood community action?

P: I don't think anybody understood community action. (Laughter) I don't think we understood it.

G: Really?

P: It was very fuzzy.

G: I want to ask you to elaborate on that, too.

P: Well, it was never really defined, it seems to me. It was an undefined term. You know, we got into the program a fair number of bright and bushy-tailed young people as grant analysts. And they got very little direction I think on what kinds of things they were supposed to approve and not approve. I think community action meant a lot of different things to a lot of different people. It's just a terribly vague concept. Apart from the representation of the poor on the boards, which was done in a lot of different ways depending on what could be achieved locally in part, there wasn't much of a common understanding I don't think of what we were trying to do.

G: Did you observe much difference of opinion among say Shriver, [Jack] Conway, Fred Hayes, people like that, with regard to community action, what it meant, what it was supposed to do?

P: It's hard to classify them. I really found most of these discussions tremendously fuzzy. We used to have arguments in the early days about whether representation of the poor could be done by non-poor, like whether a minister on a Community Action board could be a representative of the poor. I don't remember who took which side. (Laughter) I'm sure Haddad took the side that he couldn't.

G: There was no consensus then with regard to what representation meant, or maximum feasible participation, is that right?

P: Yes, I don't think there was any consensus.

G: What about the question of whether Community Action programs should work through the structure of local government rather than in competition with it or bypassing it? Was there agreement here in the OEO office?

P: Well, there was certainly a strong drive to set them up as independent. I think that depended a little on what the politics of the particular municipality were. But you know, there was a lot of rhetoric about the power structure and about setting something up that would not be dominated by the power structure.

G: Was this particularly related to the South, do you think?

P: No. No, I don't think so. I think [there] was a much broader perception that on the whole the poor didn't get their deserts out of northern city government either. On the other hand, I think we were probably much more likely to accept a degree of city domination in New York, for instance, than in a lot of other [places], let's say in Newark, New Jersey,

or Chester, Pennsylvania, which was viewed as a stronghold of repression I think at that time. So I think people had somewhat differing reactions. I suspect that our regional directors, when we got them, were more attuned to dealing with the establishment than the people in headquarters who were responsible for the original grant making.

G: Did the people in OEO then see a measure of conflict between the poor, the Community Action organization on a local level, and the local government as being a positive thing?

P: Oh, I think so. I think so.

G: Really? Were you aware of the political implications that this sort of conflict could result in?

P: Some people certainly were. Yes. I think on the whole, yes.

G: Now, there was a range of Community Action projects. Some were very independent of local government, some were perhaps almost creatures of, or captives of, local power structures, and others were somewhat . . . Looking back, what was your notion of the best Community Action programs, if you had to just profile what the elements of a successful Community Action program would be?

P: I can't do that. You know, I rarely saw these things in the field. I occasionally went out on a field trip, but my perspective was a narrow one in that sense.

G: Well, how would you even define a successful Community Action program?

P: Well, I think there were a lot of differences about that in the agency.

G: Really?

P: Sure. Some people were likely to think more programmatically; what kind of compensatory education programs or job training programs has it established, while others were inclined to regard success as increasing the political power of the poor I

think. I think we ran the gamut of opinions in the agency from those whose emphasis was on community organization to those whose emphasis was on what kind of services you delivered.

G: Was there much White House pressure or involvement in Community Action?

P: Only when I--again, it's the kind of thing of which I'm quite likely to have been unaware, because Shriver was really quite discreet. If he did something because the President personally told him to, he wouldn't tell the staff that's why he was doing it. Again, he may have told Baker, he may have told Gillis Long, but the circle who knew that would be very small I think. There was pressure from Humphrey to mount summer jobs programs for one. That was something he was very interested in. And there was also a funny incident when there was some pressure from Humphrey's office to fund a program which involved sending some kids from the Los Angeles slums to Camp Roberts, California for several weeks of what I guess was supposed to be a vacation experience, I don't know. Somebody remarked that at Camp Roberts it's 110 degrees in the shade only there isn't any. (Laughter) Everybody thought it was a terrible idea, and some guy on Humphrey's staff, whose name I don't remember, essentially put it together by telling each actor that the others had agreed, which was false. But ultimately it got so far along that we had to do it. It was quite a remarkable performance.

G: Did the White House seem to have abnormal interest in Texas projects?

P: Not to my knowledge.

G: Really?

P: But as I say, I'm not at all sure that my knowledge is adequate for that.

G: Was there much conflict between the Community Action programs and the Ford Foundation programs, which had preceded them?

P: No, I don't think so. I mean, we ended up funding most of the things that had been Gray Cities programs. There was, among the radical elements, some criticism of Mike Sviridoff for running too establishment a program in New Haven. But I don't have any sense that there was any conflict. I think people accepted the fact, the Ford programs pretty much as the model in broad terms, and we picked them up. I have no sense of that at all.

G: My impression is that there were a number of efforts to replace or remove Ted Berry as head of Community Action.

P: That was my impression. Yes, one of them became quite public.

G: How was he able to resist these?

P: I don't know. I mean, after all, only the President could remove him, since he had a presidential appointment. I have a vague recollection of one point at which it became public, or at which it was reported publicly that Sarge wanted to be rid of him. I guess it was plausible. We all found him weak.

G: Weak in what sense?

P: On the whole not very decisive and not much of a leader. I remember one of the things that was very strange when we had these grant-signing meetings. If Ted was there he would read the description of the program to Sarge, it was as if he . . . There was no informality to it; it all seemed very rigid, as if he couldn't handle the situation. On the other hand, you know, he was a very decent person in a public sense, and every so often

he would get his back up at something, some behavior he regarded as unfair to somebody, and he'd stand up for it quite well.

G: Really?

P: Yes. If he thought somebody was being treated unfairly, he would stand up. A very decent guy.

G: How capable were the people under him?

P: Well, I guess the next two levels were Dick Boone on the policy side and Fred Hayes on the operations side. I have a less favorable opinion of Fred Hayes than most I think. I thought Fred didn't give his staff much guidance, and this was a staff that needed guidance in a new program and Fred tended to talk in riddles. So I was not one of his fans, but he had many; many people whom I respect admired him tremendously. Just underneath Fred, Bill Bozman I guess was his deputy. He's in town, by the way; I can probably find that phone number for you if you want it. I think [he was] a skillful guy. I thought he didn't demand enough of his subordinates, but still a skillful leader.

G: And Boone?

P: And David Grossman was very skillful I think on the policy, you know, CAP Guide. David did a lot of the mechanical stuff, wrote the CAP Guide, developed reporting forms and things like that. Very bright, sensible guy, perhaps the brightest around.
Boone came across as very sharp, but I don't have the impression that his side of the operation ever produced much. So I don't quite know what to say about him.

G: Did there seem to be a consensus of how Community Action should operate among Boone and Hayes and Ted Berry?

P: Yes, I'm not aware of any dispute. My impression is the relationships were good across those lines.

G: Let me ask you about the church-state issue in funding Community Action, especially Head Start type programs.

P: Yes.

G: Were you involved at all in the resolution of this or setting some guidelines?

P: Yes. Yes. When the first set of grants was about to go out in November, Baker didn't want to fund any of the church components. He said he wasn't ready yet. I mean, it wasn't that he wasn't going to [fund them]. And Shriver was furious when he discovered that, and by God, he wasn't going to issue a set of grants that had had all the church-run components systematically taken out. We had one crazy all-nighter in the general counsel's office in which about a half a dozen of us wrote the legal opinion to justify the grants we were about to make. (Laughter)

G: And these were church-related projects or church-supported?

P: Yes. Well, a lot of preschool projects in church basements is I suppose the most characteristic early project. It's probably the most characteristic church-related project through the whole program. The churches had the space to take a bunch of kids and give them a special program. The other issue, which was a tougher issue, was funding remedial programs in regular parochial schools, which we did a good deal, putting a compensatory program into a regular parochial school--much harder to justify legally I think.

G: What criteria did you use in doing that?

P: In which?

G: The latter.

P: I don't remember at this point. And we did fund them. We required obviously that this be--to the extent that we [could]--in addition to the normal instruction. I don't think there were any other particular restrictions on that.

G: Did it have to be a non-religious curriculum that you were [funding]?

P: What they normally were, were extra reading teachers to deal especially with the kids. I don't think we had any restrictions on what books they used in doing it. So if the books were religiously oriented I don't think we stopped that. I may be wrong. I don't recall. I think we basically ended up taking the position that if it was a compensatory activity, it could be funded. I think that's still of very doubtful legality although I haven't followed the law on that recently.

In the things like preschool where the church was setting up a separate program for poor kids, there we insisted that the admission not have a religious test. And I think on the whole that was probably pretty effective. As you know, in the Catholic schools you're very heavily involved now in the education of non-Catholic black kids, and I think that was true in a lot of the preschool programs in the early cities. They were not bringing their own congregation in particularly.

G: Another issue of course somewhat related was the issue of family planning.

P: Yes.

G: Did you have difficulty resolving this in terms of the Community Action programs?

P: Yes. Siena, as I said, did most of the work on the guidelines for that. Shriver had pretty much made the commitment while the legislation was going through that we would fund family planning programs. I don't know. Clearly at that stage of the game we would not

fund abortions. I rather suspect that in those days we didn't--I don't know what we did for teenage kids, what we did in terms of parental consent. There was an early set of guidelines on those. But it was clear from the beginning [we would fund them], as indeed, the church-state issue had come up in the legislation, which is why Shriver was mad when Baker wasn't ready, because he thought that the politics of that had all been dealt with. And the family planning issue had come up during the legislative process, so it was clear from the beginning that we were going to do it. The question was what restrictions.

G: Did the Attorney General's Office get involved at all in the Community Action Program after the legislation was approved?

P: The only--well, we did refer criminal behavior to the Justice Department, of course, so that kind of problem occurred and we did have . . . And they did all our litigation. To that extent of course they're involved. But the only other thing I remember, and I got it secondhand--I'm sure Baker told you about this one. During the times of the riots particularly, Shriver's civil liberties sense was not strong. There would be a headline that some Community Action Program director had been arrested for something or other, and Shriver would call up a regional director and he'd say, "I want him fired tomorrow." And Baker kept telling him, "You can't do that." And there was a point at which Baker found himself in a meeting that he thought Sarge had set up in which this issue was discussed with Ramsey Clark there, while Ramsey took the same side Baker did on that. That pretty well laid it to rest. But Shriver, you know, he really wanted to reach down, because the political heat was so great, of course, if a Community Action Program director got arrested in a riot situation.

G: This seems to have been a major criticism of OEO, that they couldn't fire people--or it was difficult for OEO to fire people--who were at least perceived to be detrimental to the program.

P: But it should have been. You really don't want the director of a federal agency reading a newspaper headline that says somebody has been arrested and sending out an order that he should be fired tomorrow. Now, what happened, the relationships were somewhat tense because these grantees had some independence of us, after all. You know, the grantee's board might say, "We don't want to get rid of this guy, no matter what kind of pressure you put on us." And on the whole, once the programs were going, the likelihood that we would simply refuse to fund the Community Action agency in a city of any size was pretty slim. So, it wasn't as if we had the absolute power even at refunding time to say--we weren't about to say to Philadelphia, "If you don't behave this way we won't renew your grant." So if Philadelphia had a director whom we thought was--whether it's having been arrested or just being incompetent or whatever, it was not wholly within our power [to remove him]. And we didn't have as much clout as an outsider might think, because it was unthinkable that Philadelphia shouldn't have a poverty program. Philadelphia does not come to mind for any particular reason, I might say. I don't recall that we ever had a problem there.

G: How extensive was waste or fraud in the Community Action Program?

P: Well, waste is an unanswerable question. There are those who would argue that all preschool programs were waste, I suppose. I don't think much fraud was detected. How much existed? Probably a fair amount of petty stuff. I don't think anybody was running off with large amounts of money.

G: Were financial irregularities discussed in these general meetings? For instance, would Office of Inspection bring up an investigation regarding a project and would this be discussed?

P: Yes. I think more often that came out of audit reports.

G: Is that right?

P: Yes. And there were a lot of irregularities, but that doesn't necessarily mean they were fraud or even waste. There was a lot of bad record-keeping in the early days and inability to account adequately for funds sometimes, and sometimes spending things on things that were not fraudulent but that didn't for some reason meet our guidelines. Having too many rich kids in your program for instance, which was a problem with a lot of Head Start programs in the early days, serving the wrong piece of the population because it turned out the middle class people liked preschool, too. And that, of course, was a terrible problem because most of these grantees were wholly dependent on us. You can't take money back from them. You can't say, "Repay us for the ten thousand dollars you misspent educating middle class people," because there wasn't anything to repay us with. And I don't think anybody ever did figure out how to close out an audit in that crazy place. It's not like dealing with commercial contractors where they can pay you back something out of their own money if you accuse them of overspending on a cost reimbursable contract or misspending. Most of our grantees didn't have any of their own money. We had kind of a funny problem. I mean, you'd go out and do an audit and you'd say they misspent ten thousand dollars, and then you didn't know what to do with it when you had it. As a serious matter, you could only deal prospectively in terms of trying to improve their performance for the future.

G: Do you think the absence of a deputy director for a good period a while hurt the operation of OEO?

P: No. I don't think the presence of a deputy director ever did it much good.

G: Really?

P: Yes. I never felt the deputies played a very strong role until maybe [Wesley] Hjornevik of the [Donald] Rumsfeld regime.

G: Shriver was also still head of Peace Corps and I just wonder if there was any vacuum at the top as a result of [that]?

P: When Conway left? Conway was there through the first fiscal year anyway, and then I don't remember how long the gap was between--what was it, Conway was followed by Boutin, is that right?

G: Bernie Boutin.

P: But I never thought Boutin played any kind of an active role. I don't think he had Shriver's confidence at all. I don't think we ever had a strong deputy when Shriver was there. There were people who would disagree with me about [Bertrand] Harding; there are people who regard Harding as a strong deputy, but I don't.

G: Do you think that Shriver had less and less latitude in how to run the program as time went on? Did the White House tend to put more and more restrictions and pressures on the program?

P: Well again, I was not made specifically aware of White House pressures for the most part. Obviously one has less latitude as the political difficulties become harder. If you're fighting off attacks on the agency all the time, you have to step a little cautiously.

G: Why wasn't the vagueness concerning community participation, residents' participation, maximum feasible participation clarified?

P: Shriver thrived on a certain amount of vagueness I think. It adds to your flexibility to keep things a little bit vague. I don't think there was a strong urge to have a clearly articulated policy on those things that were announced.

G: Do you recall the controversy over the Child Development Group in Mississippi? Let me ask you to recount as much as you can about that.

P: Well, I don't recall it very well. I was not involved in the first funding. As you know, it was done through a college to avoid the governor's veto. I've never known whether Shriver was asked whether that was okay. I mean, that was a reasonably radical thing to do, it seems to me. I don't know whether he was personally involved in that. I am fuzzy. I have a distinct recollection of two meetings I attended. One was in Memphis when we had stimulated the organization of Mississippi Action for Progress, and Jule Sugarman and I and maybe somebody else--[I'm] sure somebody else was with us, but I don't remember who--went down and met in a Memphis motel with Hodding Carter and Aaron Henry and talked about setting this alternative group up to whom we could make a grant for some of the Head Start money. Then I went with Jule to Atlanta once to a meeting at which we met with a lot of CDGM people and explained to them what we were going to do, which was cutting their grant way back. And I remember how impressed I was with Jule's handling of that meeting.

G: Really? How so?

P: Just in the . . . making it clear how much sympathy he had for their position, and how sympathetic he was to what they had been doing, and explaining what we regarded as the

necessity nevertheless of cutting back. In fact, I don't know what my own role was in either of those meetings.

G: Well, the *New Republic* charged that the White House had inspired the creation of this rival group, the MAP group.

P: I don't know whether that's true or not. I mean, it was clearly not a group that sprang up spontaneously. We inspired it. I mean the federal government inspired it. Whether the White House was involved, I don't know.

G: Did you yourself have any indication, though, of contacts say with Aaron Henry from the White House?

P: No. Not that I recall.

G: Were these other leaders, the Hodding Carters and the Aaron Henrys, reluctant to assume this alternate leadership role when the CDGM was already available?

P: Well, I think by the time of the meeting in Memphis they had already made that decision, so if there was reluctance it didn't come across. I would have thought that Aaron Henry might have been troubled.

G: He didn't seem that way to you though?

P: Not that I recall.

G: Do you think that the essence of the problem with the CDGM was more fiscal mismanagement or civil rights activity?

P: No, the essence was civil rights activity, of course. They were heartily disliked by the Mississippi establishment and people were out to get them. Now, they did find fiscal mismanagement, I don't doubt that. But I also don't doubt that at the heart of it was the civil rights activity.

G: Do you think then in retrospect if there hadn't been this civil rights activism that the fiscal mismanagement would not have been corrected?

P: Again, I don't have the impression that the fiscal mismanagement was big stuff. They found people driving program cars on private business, you know, a bunch of petty graft. This is at some distance, but I don't have the impression that huge amounts of money were being diverted from the program or anything like that. But you had some people motivated to try to tag them with the management problems.

G: But wasn't this, the fiscal mismanagement, really the basis for OEO's discontinuation of the funding, at least in terms of the reports?

P: As I recall, we didn't discontinue it, we cut back their scope and set up MAP side by side. Yes, but I take it the fiscal problems made it harder for us to take the heat.

G: Now, John Stennis opposed that project. Did he exert much influence either on the White House or on Shriver directly?

P: I don't know.

G: You don't have any evidence of his--?

P: No. I mean, I'm sure he tried.

G: Yes. Do you have any insights on the Citizens Crusade Against Poverty, or the Council of Churches, or any of the organized efforts in support of the CDGM?

P: Citizens Crusade was later, wasn't it?

G: Well, it was involved I think in 1966 in terms of--

P: Was it?

G: Yes. Dick Boone--

P: When did Dick Boone leave OEO?

G: 1965, is that right?

P: Was it that early?

G: I think so. Perhaps not. Perhaps it was a year later.

P: I wouldn't have guessed it was that early, but I tend to compress. The first year seems very long somehow. Okay. No, I don't recall.

G: There are indications that within OEO there was a division of whether or not to fund CDGM. Is this accurate?

P: What, initially or later?

G: Later, after the controversy arose.

P: Whether to fund them in full?

G: Right.

P: I would suppose there were people who wanted to keep going full steam ahead.

G: But you don't recall a major rift within OEO concerning--?

P: No, I don't think I was . . . No, I don't . . .

G: Okay.

P: Major rifts might not come across as really a sensible term to me in this context. Some people might have disagreed and ultimately the issue would get settled by the boss, and that doesn't make a major rift.

G: Was Humphrey involved at all in that conflict?

P: I don't know.

G: Let's see.

[End of Tape 1 of 1 and Interview I]

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