

INTERVIEWEE: JULE M. SUGARMAN

INTERVIEWER: STEPHEN GOODELL

March 14, 1969

G: This is an interview with Mr. Jule M. Sugarman, presently the Acting Chief of the Children's Bureau of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Today's date is Friday, March 14, 1969.

Mr. Sugarman, I have some very brief background information on you which I shall state for the tape, and then I'd like to ask you if you could fill in where I've left off.

You were at one time with the United States Civil Service Commission; you were with the Bureau of the Budget; you were with the United States Bureau of Prisons within the Department of Justice; and, I think, as late as 1963-1964 you were with the Bureau of InterAmerican Affairs in the United States' Department of State. It's my understanding that you joined with the Office of Economic Opportunity at the time of its creation, if not prior to that during the task force stage, in 1964. And in 1965 you became the associate director of Head Start as well as the Deputy Associate Director of the Community Action Program. At that time you were working with Dr. Julius B. Richmond, who was the Director of Head Start.

S: That's correct, I am by training and background a political scientist and public administrator, and as you see from the list of assignments I have done a fair amount of traveling among federal agencies. I began to become involved with OEO during the task force days when the program was first being created.

G: This was from February to April or February to March?

S: Actually, more on into the ~~summer~~ after Congress had passed the law and it was clear that there was going to be an agency and budgets were being assembled and charts were being drawn. I got involved because of a connection with Richard Boone, who was one of the authors of the Economic Opportunity Act, who I had worked with during my Bureau of Prisons days when he had been a Police Captain in Cook County, Illinois. We had known each other itinerately over a period of time. Mr. David Hackett who had been the Executive Director of the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency had put us in touch around several matters and I had done a number of chores for the two of them in various efforts to draft new legislation and new programs.

So in the summer of '64 Dick called to ask if I would be willing to help them do some administrative organizational work in connection with setting up the Community Action Program and I did that. At first it was an hour or two a week and then it became every night. Finally my boss said, "Well, you're not doing much during the day, so why don't you go over there full time?"

G: Was this when you were with the InterAmerican?

S: This was when I was with the State Department, right.

So I did a good deal of the actual work of setting up the organization of the Community Action Program. Then when Dick Boone became the Associate Director of that program he asked me to be his Deputy. In the first few months of the program I worked really across the board in the whole area of policy and program development. I worked on a rather wide variety of projects.

G: Excuse me, would that have been with people like Mr. Fred O.R. Hayes

-Mr. Causman?

S: Yes. Fred Hayes was at that time the other Associate Director of the Community Action program on the operational side. We were in effect developing policies and guidelines, and he was carrying out those policies and setting up guidelines and making grants to communities--things of that nature.

G: I wanted to concentrate in this interview on Head Start Program, but as long as you were with Community Action I wonder if you would like to discuss some of the details of your understanding of Community Action and the early problems that it itself encountered before the inclusion of the Head Start program.

S: It's interesting because at the time they really didn't seem like problems, but more like real opportunities to do some innovative and admittedly difficult things. I'm fairly confident that when the Economic Opportunity Act was drafted, no one foresaw all the developments that would occur in the conceptualization of the program. The maximum feasible participation question, of course, was the most significant of these in many ways, I think. I'm convinced that Adam Yarmolinsky was essentially right in saying there was no agreement as to what those words meant at the time. So there was a great deal that developed in a very few months, as to the meaning of those words, as we tried to actually put the program into effect. We were pretty thinly spread in terms of staff, and particularly thinly spread in terms of staff that had experience with many of these programs because they simply had not existed before.

G: Excuse me, did people who were with the Committee on Juvenile Delinquency come to OEO at that time other than--

S: Yes, there was a very significant number of them. I suppose Sandy Kravitz, Dr. Sanford Kravitz, and Dr. Bill Lawrence and a whole group of other people came from the President's Committee.

G: How about from the Ford Foundation and their gray areas?

S: Yes, there were people involved from that group, too, although not to my memory as many. One of the peculiar twists of history here is that I wrote the Executive Order that set up the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency years ago when I was in the Bureau of Prisons and was working with Dave Hackett who set that up. Then I really was not involved in its activities at all during most of its life, but came back into contact with all these people later on.

G: Was this committee--Hackett's Committee or the Attorney General's Committee--what were its origins? Did it have university, scholastic background in terms of its inception, its theory, and so on?

S: I think not. Of course no one ever knows the complete story of how things began, but I can tell you what parts of it I know.

Just shortly after Robert Kennedy was appointed as Attorney General he appointed Dave Hackett, who had been his college roommate--

G: An Olympic hockey player?

S: Right--to look into problems of juvenile delinquency. As first parts of that effort, Dave came to the Bureau of Prisons, talked to the Director of the Bureau and eventually wound up talking to me and a couple of other people from the Bureau at some length. At that time he was, I think it would be fair to say, he knew nothing about juvenile delinquency and he was quite candid in admitting it. But he had the kind of mind and the kind of interest that caused him to probe people rather deeply and to sort of draw out their ideas. He

apparently talked to quite a few people around town and then eventually came back and said to me, "It seems to me we've got three major agencies here that ought to be working together on the juvenile delinquency effort: One Justice, one HEW and the other Labor. Would you do something to put together an organization which could do this?"

So we did draw up a draft of what such an organization might be and we figured out how it could be financed without actually having to go to the Congress for the initial appropriation, and wrote a draft of the Executive Order which the President eventually issued. At that time I don't think that there was very much detailed involvement with university people. I think it was mostly with governmental people. But shortly after the program came into being, university people began to appear on the scene. And I think it's fair to say that they're the ones who actually gave it shape and character in terms of a program. All we had was an organizational framework when we began.

G: The reason I asked that was because from recent readings that I've been doing, particularly in Mr. Moynihan's latest work, he sketches the origins or the genesis of Community Action back to the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency.

S: Oh I think that's quite clear, that many of the basic concepts did grow out of the President's Committee. And certainly many of the first Community Action Agencies had had their origin in a prior JD project.

G: What were the kinds of programs the committee sponsored?

S: They had a wide range but their favorite I think was the comprehensive neighborhood approach to working on juvenile delinquency which was

almost indistinguishable from the comprehensive neighborhood approach to working on poverty--the feeling being that the origins of juvenile delinquency and the origins of poverty are awfully close together. So as you probably know, the JD program ran into a pretty heavy barrage of criticism in the Congress eventually because it couldn't clearly be identified as being a juvenile delinquency program. Particularly among those who were not too happy with the Community Action concept, it became quite a target.

G: Was Edith Green one of those early critics?

S: Yes, she was.

G: Mobilization for Youth was one of the juvenile delinquency--

S: That's right, and ABCD, which is now the Boston Community Action Agency, was also started in those days.

G: Was the New Haven--

S: Yes, CPI--no, I guess CPI was probably a Ford Foundation project, although CPI of course had the reputation of getting money anywhere--of being the most successful money-getting agency in the country--so they may have had JD money too.

G: So I take it then in 1964 when you became a part of OEO's on-going program that you were very well acquainted with the idea of Community Action?

S: No, I can't really say that because as I mentioned a few minutes ago after the program had once been set up I drew away from it and was engaged in the Bureau of the Prisons work and later at the State Department. So I was not by any means an expert on Community Action when--

G: I'd like to ask you, back as early as--when was it 1961 or 1962 that

the Juvenile Committee was set up?

S: That would have been in '61.

G: '61. As early as that as I understand the history of--the concern for poverty, it seems to me the original concern for the problem of juvenile delinquency, with the subsequent studies and evaluations and investigations into this particular problem broadened into a larger concern because of the findings, the relationship between juvenile delinquency and the much broader problem of poverty--

S: I think that's the case. As I said a moment ago, it seems to me that the causes and the beginnings of juvenile delinquency are pretty deeply rooted in poverty for many kinds of juvenile delinquents, certainly not for all kinds. But at least in the inner city areas it does seem there's a common root of circumstances that causes both conditions.

G: Again, turning to Moynihan's book, he points to the Cloward and Ohlen thesis of Community Action, particularly the Mobilization for Youth Experience. Moynihan's point is, I think, even as late as 1964 there really was no precise conception of what Community Action could or should be. Was there this confusion of intent?

S: I think it very clearly in my mind at least at that time was not well defined. We knew basically that it had something to do with people making decisions about their own future. But when you started to translate that into the dynamics of how those decisions get made and the mechanisms by which they get made there was simply no very good precedent or very good experience to do it, so you had to experiment. Then of course the experiment was very substantially affected by, I think, by a group of individuals under the leadership

of Bill Haddad who was then the Inspector General of OEO. There was a very deep and enduring struggle between the Community Action Program and the Inspector General's Corps which had a substantial impact on the eventual evolution of the Community Action policy. In a way it was a little hard to tell who was more Community Action oriented at that time. The Community Action people were deeply concerned by the problem of spending money. Yet it was proving almost impossible to get programs organized and to get communities organized in time to do that. That's one of the things that undoubtedly contributed to the success of Head Start--was the inability to spend money on the other programs in the early stages. They simply weren't ready. Head Start wasn't afflicted by that same problem.

G: What was the nature of that division of interest between the Office of Inspection and Community Action?

S: The nature of it was the Haddad group had very strong convictions about the importance of involving the poor in decisions and very strong convictions about the problems of racial balance and racial representation. Since the Community Action staff had not really defined the precise conditions which would meet the test of representation, you were left with an open field for battle as to whether you need 31% or 37%. In fact of course it's pretty hard to develop a single set of definitions that would cover all communities.

But what it ended up was the Community Action representatives would agree to one set of conditions only to have Inspection overturn them. Then there would be a battle back and forth while numbers --it was quite a numbers game that was played between the two staffs and many times with the Community in the middle, or at least sitting

on the sidelines waiting for it to be fought out within OEO.

G: I gather during this period the three-legged stool, concept enunciated by Jack Conway--

S: Right. That was it, but even there the proportional balance wasn't firmly established, and certainly wasn't commonly accepted by all the members of the staff. As they probably know, OEO has, I think, attracted more bright and more individualistically thinking people than almost any federal program that I've ever seen. But the result of that was nobody was willing to accept the authority of anybody else to make a decision. Every issue had to be fought out time and time again.

G: In other words, the organizational chart was meaningless?

S: I wouldn't go so far as to say it was meaningless, but I would say that the hierarchical principals did not prevail as they usually do.

G: Was this the result of the commitment on the part of these individualistic people that you refer to, or do you think to some extent it might have been also because of the way Shriver operated?

S: Let's say that the way he operated supported the individualism. He was no respecter of organizational lines and he had no hesitation to intervene at any level of the operation to talk to anybody he wanted to. In the end I became convinced that that was a pretty good way to operate, although I must say that I was sort of appalled by it in the early days. But it did get things done.

G: Who was the Deputy Director at that time, of OEO?

S: Well, let's see. Conway was the first deputy director after he left the Community Action directorship.

- G: Was there a period where there was no--
- S: Where there was none, that's right--in the first stages of the program there was no deputy director of OEO.
- G: I was wondering how you would respond to the judgment that had Yarmolinsky been allowed to stay with the program by the Congress and those who opposed him. do you think that OEO at the beginning would have encountered the kinds of problems that it did, or do you think that Yarmolinsky could have put the firm hand--
- S: I never really had a chance to work with Adam. His wife worked for Head Start, and so I knew him through that. But I just don't know enough about his operating style to make a judgment on him. He's a very brilliant person, a person who has the reputation of irritating a lot of people in his style of operation, but I just don't know how he would have been in an organization like OEO.
- G: What I was getting at, did OEO suffer during this period, perhaps with so much flux and so much change that didn't have a strong Deputy Director? Shriver had so many other things to attend to that he couldn't really spend the time with internal problems and things of that sort?
- S: I guess it suffered, but if I had to make an overall judgment, I'd say I would probably do it the same way again, that it was worth the chaos and the frustration to see what actually got done. I used to say to people in those days that in my government experience, that perhaps ten to twenty percent of what you do resulted in something productively happening, whereas in the early days of OEO 80 to 90 percent of what you did resulted in something productive happening. Then as the program aged that figure quickly went down, and today I

think it's probably down to the 10-20 percent level in OEO.

It's sad to say, but we just seem to be unable to be both organized and creative at the same time. Nobody's been able to bridge that gap satisfactorily.

G: Are you suggesting that after the more innovative period of OEO, when it got down to the bureaucratic day-to-day administrative tasks it lost that kind of innovative function?

S: Yes, at least in a substantial degree. I think it's probably still a cut above other agencies in terms of its capacity to innovate and be creative and certainly a significant cut above other agencies in terms of the convictions of its staff and their doggedness in trying to achieve what they are trying to achieve. But it's not the early days of OEO by any means.

G: One more question on Community Action before I turn to Head Start specifically, Community Action--I guess it's referring to this period--has been called a sort of a schizophrenic outfit. There were people, as you have implied, with differing ideas as to what it should be and that there were the apocalyptic revolutionaries as opposed to the more traditional kind of people who saw it simply as local coordination of programs, and this sort of thing. Would you concur on that or could you elaborate?

S: I think there was a wide variety and range of thinking among people. And I think because it was not solidly organized there were often conflicting opinions and conflicting judgments being made within the agency. The word "chaos" has been applied to this situation --and I suppose in a sense there was chaos--but there was also motion, and that's the thing I think you always have to put in balance and

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perspective with that chaos. There were hundreds and thousands and probably even millions of people who within one year were involved in the Poverty Program in one way or another.

G: Ted Berry was brought in in February 1965--

S: I believe that's right, yes.

G: What was the purpose of this?

S: This was at the time, or really several months after Jack Conway had become the Deputy Director, and Ted was filling the director of the Community Action role.

G: I wonder if now we can turn to Head Start and perhaps you could just discuss it's origins, how it got to be a part of the Poverty Program and so forth?

S: All right. Let's see, in the fall of 1964 there was a small group of people who were brought to Washington to look at the question of what might be done to develop programs for young children. It was in some senses a sort of an abortive effort. They prepared a piece of paper which didn't get a great deal of attention in the Agency. But I suppose it had enough of an impact that Mr. Shriver soon began to talk to a number of other people about the possibilities of a major effort in this area. And although I've never heard this directly from Sarge, I take it that he was greatly influenced by Mary Bunting, the former President of Radcliffe College, and by a number of people with whom he had been working in the mental retardation area.

So late in the fall of '64--I guess actually in early December or maybe November--Mr. Shriver called Dick Boone and asked him to put into gear an effort to make a serious study of what we might do.

He suggested that Dick talk to Dr. Robert Cooke who was and still is the Chief of Pediatrics at the Johns Hopkins Medical School and Hospital and who had been very active in the mental retardation field. He also was the Shriver's personal pediatrician, so there was a good deal of family and business and interest relationship there.

Dick, I recall, was sent out to Pittsburgh to catch Dr. Cooke between planes, and they had a very brief conversation around the idea of forming some sort of committee. Then Dick got involved in other efforts and he asked me to take on this responsibility. So I met in Baltimore with Dr. Cooke and with Dr. Edward Davens who is the Deputy Director of Health in the State of Maryland. Simply sitting around the table we put together a list of people who might be invited to participate in such a committee. We deliberately tried to make it an inter-disciplinary effort and I suppose that had a very profound effect on the kind of program Head Start eventually became. We, I don't know whether it was consciously or unconsciously, did not include a great number of educators. In fact, I guess there were only one or two people who could be called out-and-out educators. There was a heavy representation of psychologists and medical people. We put this list together, and as I recall Mr. Shriver approved it pretty much as was.

G: Is this what became the Steering Committee?

S: This is what became originally the Steering Committee and then renamed later on the Planning Committee for Head Start. And I think there were about 12 people on that committee. During the month of January and early February we met two to three times a week, both

in Washington and in New York, and hammered out a piece of paper which eventually became the Cooke Report. That report said in effect there is a need for a program for pre-school children; it can be mounted; the effort should begin with this summer, but that should be viewed only as the first step toward longer full-year programs and perhaps to longer range programs in terms of entering into the school years as well. It said that that program ought to be comprehensive in its nature in involving educational services, medical services, social services, nutritional services, and that parents ought to be significantly involved in the program.

Well, we made this report to Mr. Shriver. We suggested to him that if we really worked at it we could probably get maybe 300 programs going that summer, and we might involve as many as a 100,000 children. He was pleased with it, apparently immediately went to the President with the report and the signals were given to go ahead. As a little sidelight here, after we had written the report Mr. Shriver said to me, "Now what will this cost?"

Of course, we hadn't figured the cost at all, and I said, "Well, I'll look into it and let you know."

He said, "Fine, you have an hour!" So another fellow and I sat down over lunch, and we figured out what Head Start was going to cost in the summer.

G: What was the projection?

S: We estimated it would average \$180 per child. As it turned out that first summer, it averaged a \$186 per child so we weren't too far off base.

But we were very much off base in terms of the size of the program.

We had to decide, of course, how we were going to let people know how this program existed. There was in OEO at that time a very dynamic public affairs director names Holmes Brown. Holmes said, "Well, I think Shriver ought to write a letter to every school superintendent and every health director and every welfare director in the country." At that time I don't think he had any idea of how many people that was, and I suppose in total it was close to 50,000. Well the letter-writing firms collapsed under the strain, and while I think we probably wrote to every school superintendent, I don't think we reached all the health and welfare offices.

At any rate, one of Holmes' other brainstorm was the notion of putting a little 3 x 5 card in that people could send back for further information. And--

G: That's similar to the Job Corps.

S: Yes, it was. That's right.

So, we sent the letters out. In the meantime Mrs. Johnson had decided that she would sponsor a tea at the White House to announce the program. We sort of got fouled-up because that tea was scheduled, as I recall it, for the middle of the week and earlier in the week, Dr. Richmond, who by that time had been picked as the director of the program, and I had gone to a conference in Atlantic City where the Educational Writers Association was holding their annual conference.

The idea was that we'd give them a background briefing so that when the tea was held they could write about it. However they took the position that if we were talking for the record that was one thing and if we weren't, they weren't interested in hearing from us.

So after a hasty conference with the White House press office, it was decided that we would announce the program in Atlantic City. In that sense we sort of scooped the White House.

But the tea went very well. It was attended by a very large representation of prominent women in America, a number of governors' wives, a number of leading ladies in business and the entertainment world, and it just went beautifully.

Well, we had sent out these cards and the first few days of course there were just a trickle of them coming back. Then all of a sudden we were hit with a deluge of cards coming back saying "Please send me further information." The thing that I recall most vividly about that was one morning when our general services officer, Emidio Tini, brought in a mail bag full of cards and dumped it on the table. Senior staff meetings were very informal in those days and there we were, sitting pawing through these things, and reading off the names of communities from which they were coming. Then finally one fellow said, "You know, there are places here that even Estes Kefauver never visited!" That was really a symbolic remark because the interest was coming from places that most of us had never heard of. Well, to make the long story short, instead of 300 communities, we had that summer over 3,300 communities involved in the program and instead of a 100,000 children we had 560,000 children.

We did a lot of what I thought were very worthwhile and exciting things in getting the program off the ground. First of all we wanted to be sure that the program would get into areas of the United States that were really poor, places where federal programs never seem to

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get started. So we convened a meeting of a group of young people here in Washington, who were management interns in the various federal agencies. We said, "If you'll give up your weekends for the next six weeks, we'll pay your way to go out to the 300 poorest counties in the United States and help them write an application." We had, oh, I guess close to 125 kids who did that anywhere from 2 to 6 weeks. As a result 225 of the 300 poorest counties were actually in the program that summer.

Now this effort was greatly aided and abetted by a committee of Congressional wives who got together from both sides of the aisle, I might say, and who put together their resources of knowing people around the country and kept on the phone until they found somebody who was willing to talk about Head Start. Once they had that name then we'd send one or two of these young people off to sit down with them. They literally wrote the applications for most of these communities, and literally helped them to set up their centers even though they knew very little about it themselves.

In this period, a very crucial policy question arose--I say crucial because it involved the question of whether we should limit the program to communities with good resources where we could be assured the kids would get a quality experience, or whether we should go as fast and as far as we could and go into places where there really was very great scarcity of resources. We opted to do the latter, but we opted to do it with the understanding that we'd go through with training and technical assistance and consultation and everything we could to bring the quality up. In this sense we departed rather dramatically from the previous government grant programs, which for the most part are conceived of as quality experimentations,

trying to develop new services in a quality fashion. As a result of that decision, we got a wide mix in the variety of programs and we created an enormous range of back-up services. You see that chart over there on the wall, the colored one. It gives you a sort of graphic representation of what was developed.

First of all, in the training area around about March somebody said to us, "Well okay, you're going to have all these kids. We know there aren't enough teachers who've had experience in early childhood. How are you going to train them?" And so we had a staff meeting and we got the idea, "Well, we'll get the universities to train them." This was, understand you now, late March, and we sent out a telegram that same day to some 200 universities saying, "Please come talk to us about a training program." Strangely enough they did! In the end, more than 200 colleges offered a 6-day orientation program and I think as I recall something like 44,000 people actually went through a 6-day training program before the end of June. So it was a pretty phenomenal operation.

Then somebody said, "Well, training's fine but what you really need is people on the scene to help out in the technical assistance way." So we put two people on the telephone who knew the early childhood experts in the country and we said, "Call them up and invite them to a meeting in Washington on Saturday." We had a lovely snow storm that day, but nevertheless about 150 of America's most dedicated women, the early childhood experts, came accompanied by maybe 5 or 10 men. We formed a technical assistance corps, and they just gave up everything else they were doing to work on this project. That corps now, I guess, in total exceeds over 2,000 people who work

as part-time consultants to the program and I think it's been a terribly valuable part of the effort.

Those were the early days. Let's see, late in the spring or early in the summer, Holmes Brown decided that we ought to have some symbolic occasion for the opening of Head Start, and he persuaded American Airlines to buy 2,000 flags which we promptly distributed around the country for a great Head Start Flag Day. A very funny incident occurred in connection with this. One of the flags was to go to a program in Newport, Rhode Island, and for some reason or other it didn't get there. Well, they had their ceremony all set up and the Mayor was coming and the Navy band was coming and so the wife of the director called a completely frantic state saying, "I've got to have a flag. Somebody's going to have to tell me what it looks like and I'll sew one tonight." So the modern Betsy Ross produced her Head Start flag and they had a great ceremony.

I think that covers the early activities there.

G: I have a few questions which you've raised.

S: Sure.

G: Going back to the Steering Committee, or what became the Planning Committee, I'd like to ask what was the assessment of the needs. Were there no programs, were there no state or private programs? Was it simply there was a void here that had to be filled?

S: There were some experimental programs around the country to which one could look, some funded by the Children's Bureau, some by the National Institute of Mental Health, and some by private resources. There, of course, had been kindergarten programs in the United States, but only at that time in 50% of the communities. But there was no

massive source of funds like Head Start, and certainly no organized coherent program like Head Start. It was everybody to his own method in those days.

G: Correct me if I'm wrong, but it's my understanding that there was something in the nature of 6 million children of the poor who had to be reached. Is this--

S: Well, the general figures I like to use are that there are in every age category about 4 million children in the United States of whom about 1 million are poor. So six million would take you through the first six years of life.

G: I see. Well, Head Start at that time wouldn't go beyond six-year-olds.

S: That's right, but it didn't go, for the most part, below four year olds either. So in the early days, the first days, we were talking in terms of a program for 1 or 2 million children. In the fall of '65 the House Appropriation's Committee asked us for a report on how many children needed Head Start down through age 3. If I recall correctly we estimated around 2.2 million. Nowadays the talk of course is increasingly of going to even younger ages with some sort of program that has the same objectives as Head Start. So that figure gets larger and larger.

G: Do you have any idea as to why this kind of a program wasn't included by the task force in the original legislation?

S: I've never been very clear about that. Of course, out of this question comes a neat little political question. The Republicans and the Democrats have always argued as to who invented Head Start. Mr. Quie and Mr. Goodell, in particular, were very active during the debates on legislation in trying to include the pre-school section in it.

It was resisted I think chiefly, from what people tell me, because they just didn't want to tie themselves down to specific programs. They wanted that broad community action framework under which you could clearly do an early childhood program, but they didn't want it earmarked and cut apart into little pieces. Of course, the first thing that happened after Head Start began was that it was earmarked and cut into a separate piece.

G: That was in '66?

S: That's right, although that earmarking disappeared in '67 as a legislative matter, but continues to this day as an administrative matter.

G: Again going back to this conception of the program, what were the objectives specifically? You said, it was a multi-goal; it would be nutritional; it would be educational; it would be an exposure.

S: Broadly stated it was to try to intervene at a point in life of the child in ways which would keep deficits from developing in that child and which would therefore make it possible for him to achieve his maximum potential in latter life.

It was only in part a school readiness program, but really I preferred the term, a life readiness program.

G: It wasn't simply a kindergarten program.

S: No it wasn't. Quite explicitly, the effort was made to convince people that it was not a kindergarten program as such. Now the other thing that should be very clear is that Head Start never developed and to this day does not have a single model of what you do with young children. There are all sorts of curriculums, styles. There are all sorts of programs and approaches that have been approved

in Head Start. I think that is essential to the future because we simply still don't know exactly what the best methods and programs are.

G: I was going to ask you when you called in those 120 or 130 childhood experts, how do you get that many people in one room without vast disagreement as to what you do?

S: I think we didn't give them much chance to talk!

G: In other words, you permit the flexibility, in fact you encourage it?

S: We encourage it, that's right. If you read the Head Start policy manual you'll see on the opening page a statement to the effect that these are the general rules, but if you've got a better way tell us about it and we'll be glad to talk to you about it.

G: In line with this questioning, was there substantial written documentation or evidence that clearly pointed to this kind of a need? You weren't operating in a vacuum, obviously.

S: No, I think that the research in this area was just reaching its peak at that point, and there was a great deal of evidence, particularly again growing out of the mental retardation studies to the effect that the retardation--it was formally called mental retardation --but the deficits began to develop quite early in life. Therefore, intervention was necessary.

G: Was there a correlation or a cause of correlation found at that time between poverty and these deficits that you speak of?

S: Yes, certainly not a one-to-one correlation, but in proportionate terms, yes.

G: You had said that under the Title II Community Action you could clearly put the Head Start program--is this the reason Head Start

became a part of Community Action, or was it simply--let me interject for a moment with a comment and then you can reply to that. It's partially my understanding that one of the success methods of Community Action was the so-called building block approach and one of the first blocks of that building block technique was the Head Start program in order to weld the Community Action agencies. Is this the case?

S: Yes, it developed that way. Now there are, I think, quite a number of interpretations of what the purposes of Head Start were. There were a group of people within OEO who believed and still believe to this day that it was fundamentally contrary to the Community Action concept because it offered what they termed a "package approach." In contrast to that my own view was that offered a neat balance between individual decision making and some assurance of a quality standard that would result in a good program. It is true that many, probably most communities, particularly the smaller ones, began their Community Action effort with Head Start, and that it served as a vehicle on which they could build later on. The tragedy of it of course, was by the time they were ready to build there wasn't any money. So many of them never went beyond that Head Start stage.

G: You mean no--

S: No new money for other parts of the Community Action Program. As you know the initial legislation contained no mention of Head Start. It wasn't until the '66 amendments the language was introduced in the bill which defined the Head Start program. It was later amended in '67 to put in parent participation, which had always been a policy,

which was then written into statute.

G: I guess the evolution of Community Action also has been to emphasize more and more the national emphasis program or this packaged deal.

S: Again, I think there's a diversity of approach here. By-and-large the officials Community Action line was to de-emphasize national emphasis programs, to encourage the growth of free money as opposed to earmarked money and at least in the case of substantial numbers of OEO personnel, Community Action personnel, to sort of discourage communities from using Head Start. Although it was probably the most popular of the poverty programs among the public and the Congress as well, it was at least for a period of time the least popular of the programs among the OEO staff. This was simply I think as a result of the fact that it had taken such a great proportion of the money, that it had been earmarked by the Congress, and that it simply seemed antithetical in nature to a Community Action Program. That viewpoint moderated and shifted as time went along, but there was a very rough period of relationships for awhile between Head Start and the Rest of the Community Action staff. It's still the case today that as far as jobs within OEO go, Head Start is low man on the totem pole. An individual who comes in as a new employee, will be assigned to Head Start as a break-in period, but he really isn't considered to have made it until he has advanced to a Community Action analyst.

G: I wasn't aware of that. You did mention briefly the problem of the antagonism, if it can be put that way, that people within Community Action might have had towards Head Start simply because of the amount of money that it was getting. Was there a conscious rationale on the

part of OEO people to limit the scope of Head Start in order--particularly CAP people.

S: Yes, I think so. And not only CAP people but I think the feeling was very strong in the research, policy, plans, and evaluation division--Bob Levine's division--to do that same thing.

G: Was that Kershaw?

S: Well I think it ~~was~~ really after Kirshaw had left. Levine was much more interested in Manpower programs, and in other kinds of programs. So as you probably know after its spectacular growth to the 324 million dollar level--no, 352 million dollar level--in '67, it has steadily declined since then.

G: Why was that?

S: Because of pressures from the other parts of Community Action Program.

G: You can clear me up on this, there was earmarking in 1966; there was discussion of earmarking in '67, but there was no actual earmarking.

S: No earmarking by the Congress, but then the Agency administratively earmarked.

G: Oh, I see. Could you elaborate a little more fully on the nature of the White House support for Head Start? You mentioned the Rose Garden tea.

S: Essentially it consisted of that first tea given by Mrs. Johnson, the Rose Garden tea which was at the end of the first summer of Head Start, and a number of visits to Head Start centers by Mrs. Johnson --plus the glowing words the President said from time to time about how well pleased he was with the program. Then let's see, I guess the other White House event was the showing of the "Pancho" film which was based on the experience of the young Mexican-American boy

who had been enrolled in the first summer of Head Start. By another ironic twist of fate, the editor of the paper who ran that story originally is now the Public Relations Director of HEW--just come on board.

The President was apparently very interested in the program and followed it with some attention when we began to talk about the offshoots of Head Start, namely Follow-Through and the Parent and

Child centers which extend the program down to a younger age. He was quite supportive of it, even though the budget was tight those years. We got what we asked for, essentially, in moving those programs.

G: What was the reason for that difficulty?

S: The general financial situation.

G: Was that a part of the Viet Nam cutbacks?

S: I don't know to what specific factor you can attribute those cutbacks. Certainly Viet Nam was a part of the picture. But the whole picture in the last three years, budgetarily, has been one of very tight strictures.

G: I'd like now to turn to one of the early problems of Head Start, and that's the infamous or notorious CDGM Affair, of which you were a part. Perhaps you'd just like to comment briefly on it. I have some specific questions, but if you'd like to say for the record your own view.

S: Let's go a little bit into the history of it. In the spring of '65, very shortly after Head Start was announced, a psychologist by the name of Dr. Tom Levin arrived on our doorstep to talk about Head Start. He identified himself as having worked in Mississippi the prior summer with the Emergency Medical Committee--that is not

quite the correct title, but something like that. He wanted to hear what Head Start was all about, and he was very fascinated by it. He went away and came back a few days later and said "Gee, there's a group of us that'd really like to get this thing started in Mississippi, but we're pretty sure that school systems will do nothing about it. But we really don't have any resources with which to get started. I'd be willing to give up my practice and go to work on it for the summer but I need money to survive on."

By that time it was very clear that school systems in fact were not going to do very much about it in Mississippi. So we arranged to put Dr. Levin in touch with the AFL-CIO, and in some way they provided funds to get him off the ground. The next thing we knew there was an application on our desk for a program for 3,000 children, which we funded and--

G: This was the CDGM.

S: This was the Child Development Group of Mississippi. Now the actual applicant was Mary Holmes Junior College, which was a small Negro college owned by the Presbyterian Board of Missions. The program opened--perhaps even before it opened, it became apparent the registration was going to dramatically exceed that 3,000 so they came back in for a supplemental grant and I think that we probably funded somewhere between 5 and 6,000 children in that first summer. They organized, from scratch, programs for 5 or 6,000 kids that summer. They brought a lot of students into the area from out of state, college students. They got a lot of people who were interested in the problems of civil rights and the problems of Negro opportunities to come to Mississippi for the summer.

It wasn't very long after the program was funded before we began to get some inquiries by the state's senators and congressmen. Soon the inquiries became much more pointed and we began to get accusations by Senator Stennis, in particular, that things were awry in the CDGM program and that money was being misused, it was being used for civil rights purposes rather than for the Head Start program. We sent investigators to CDGM and at the same time the Senate Appropriations Committee sent one of its staff investigators to look into the program. He came back with a rather sensational report of things that were wrong. Our own investigators were not quite as sure about this, but they were sure that there were some rather serious problems, including some involving the director.

G: Excuse me, if I can interrupt for a moment. The investigators that you sent, were they from the Office of inspection and were they Haddad's?

S: Yes. I think the lead man on that was probably Jack Gonzales, although it may have been somebody else. At any rate, we had enough problems raised from the two reports that we felt some change in the operation was necessitated. One of the exacerbating issues here was the fact that they had chosen for their headquarters a small abandoned college which was also the focal point for civil rights activities in Mississippi.

G: Mount Beulah.

S: Mt. Beulah. And accusation was made that we were in fact subsidizing Mt. Beulah to Mary Holmes Junior College, which was several--oh, I guess it was almost 200 miles away. Even though the program had only one week to run--maybe two weeks--it was decided that headquarters would have to be moved.

At any rate, our Assistant General Counsel, Jim Heller, was sent there to deliver this message. He delivered it and was met with terrific resistance and after what must have been almost a night long of discussion he became convinced that it was ludicrous to insist that the program move. Accordingly, we reversed ourselves and left the program there. And they completed the summer program.

G: Was that decision simply because it only had two weeks more to go?

S: Right. But in the meantime the people in CDGM had begun to think about a full year Head Start program and filed an application for approximately 6,000 children for the full year program which would have begun in the fall of '65 through '66. We were directed not to proceed with funding that application until the questions which arose out of the summer '65 program could be resolved. And we sent a number of auditors into the program. Those auditors found evidences of irregularities which in total never exceeded more than 1 percent of the total cost of the program.

G: Did they not have their own auditors?

S: Yes, they had their own auditors, an established international firm of CPA's, but despite this there were problems. There were also problems that we were concerned about into what seemed to be a movement toward black separatism and toward discrimination of hiring, and the almost total lack of the involvement of white children in the program.

G: You say an almost total lack--were there any white children?

S: Yes, there were. In the Gulfport area there were a few white children enrolled in the CDGM program.

G: What about in the staff, were there any white staff members?

S: Yes, there were a good many whites in the staff, but there was some indication that ~~there~~ was beginning to be a resistance to involving whites in the staff.

Well, we went through a protracted period of negotiations. We sort of hammered away at it point by point. Eventually I was sent to Mississippi to negotiate the final points and we arrived at an agreement which involved them putting up, I thin, approximately \$30,000 as a bond as against any eventual disallowances of money. I discussed the agreement with Mr. Shriver by phone from Mississippi and thought we had a complete understanding addsaid so, returned to Washington and found we didn't have a complete understanding. So what seemed to have been an agreement to fund, was not an agreement to fund and we then went through another series.

G: Excuse me, was this a misunderstanding between you and Shriver?

S: I suppose so, I suppose so. It really boiled down to the fact, at least my feeling, the fact that he added conditions after the agreement had been reached.

G: Excuse me again, but had the funds been spent for purposes other than for Head Start?

S: In the end, I think less than \$5,000, which was maybe one-hundredth of a percent of the total grant was really disallowed.

G: What was it spent on, do you know?

S: Mostly on the use of automobiles for purposes that you couldn't clearly identify with the program. However, there always has been and probably always will be a great many expenditures that were in an area of doubt as to whether they had been properly used.

At any rate, some 5 or 6 months after the program closed in the

summer of '65, it was again funded, to run I think until September of '66. A number of conditions were imposed, including the importation of a good deal of management assistance from external sources. We literally worked days and nights, through the night, trying to recruit staff for them so that they would have greater management capability.

G: Were these the additional requirements that Shriver--

S: Yes, right. And I must say, I forgot to mention before, that late in the summer of '65, the Director, Dr. Levin, had been displaced-- not by us but by his own staff--

G: For racial reasons?

S: I think not, because the replacement was a white man too. Now there were personal situations there, and just an accumulation of antagonisms that I think led to his dismissal. He was replaced by a young graduate student who had been working and studying in Mississippi for about a year, a young man by the name of John Mudd, who remained with the program for about 2-2½ years. John, I think, was at the time 24 years old, had absolutely no experience in management of an organization or a business, or anything of this size, and yet I think did an astounding job over those 2 ½ years. Mr. Shriver and I often disagreed as to whether it was an astounding job or not.

The minute we refunded CDCM, we were of course attacked by Senator--

G: Stennis?

S: Primarily, Senator Stennis, although Senator Eastland occasionally would join in the foray, but the brunt of it was carried by Senator Stennis. The House Appropriations Committee investigator

returned to the scene and our inspectors returned to the scene, and we went through a long series of battles.

G: If I might interrupt again--I'm sorry to do this--but would you care to speculate on the nature of Senator Stennis' and/or Eastland and John Bell Williams' criticisms on this? Was it simply a political affair from their point of view?

S: I think it had its origins in the fact that many of the people who were involved in setting up the program had been members of the Freedom Democratic Party, and that in the Senator's mind this was simply an extension of the efforts of the Freedom Democratic Party. This he did not feel was appropriate. Specifically he didn't feel the use of federal funds was appropriate to do this. This has been his public position and I assume that that was his basic position to why he was so desperately opposed. At various times he has also alleged that there were people who had even more serious problems and there were somewhat abortive attempts to identify people on the staff with the Communist Party, none of which ever really came to any serious charge. But he just believed in his heart, I think, that this was a bad thing for Mississippi, so he opposed it with all the vigor and prestige and strength that he had. Of course, by virtue of his membership of OEO's Appropriation Committee, he had a very good forum to do this.

G: I was wondering what was the nature of the pressure that was put on Shriver at this time about CDCM?

S: It was about this time there began to develop two sets of pressures which were in contrary directions because during this second grant we had a repetition of allegations of the same kinds of problems.

Eventually we shut the program down because of the extent of the allegations and the charges of mismanagement and misuse of funds.

G: On the basis of what you had found?

S: On the basis of what our own inspectors had identified as probable problems. And around that developed what really became a debacle in terms of conflict between the people who would ordinarily be considered the friends of OEO but who in this instance were rather bitter about OEO.

G: Would that be the Citizens Crusade people?

S: That was the core group, very heavily--a heavy number of church groups were involved, and other groups with liberal orientations and some very responsible people who just believed that OEO had caved in to pressure in this situation. Part of the issue here was that when we reached the decision that we could not continue with CDGM we were reluctant to see a program disappear from Mississippi altogether, so we actively supported the formation of another group called Mississippi Action for Progress, which would develop programs to replace CDGM.

G: At that time I think there was a dialogue between Hodding Carter and--I've forgotten the author of the New Republic article but--there were charges that the MAP group--

S: Andy Kupkind, I guess it was.

G: --had been conceived in the White House by Harry McPherson.

S: Yes. There were charges to that effect. I never thought that was true, but I really frankly don't know exactly how MAP came into being. I do know that we had received word that there were a group of people, of whom Hodding Carter and Aaron Henry were two, that

would be willing to talk about sponsoring a large program in Mississippi. Of course, both Hodding Carter and Aaron Henry were people who'd done progressive things in the State and who had a certain reputation. So when we made the decision, when we were almost sure that this was what was going to happen, we, Barry and I and I guess some other people were sent to meet this group from Mississippi and to discuss with them the formation of a new organization. And we did. They submitted an application and an application which was written in considerable degree by members of our own staff. We announced that we were cutting off CDGM and we were going to fund them.

That's when all hell broke loose. It was a very bitter battle which probably reached its emotional climax in an ad which appeared in the New York Times headed "Say It Isn't So, Sarge" which deeply upset Mr. Shriver. I'd never really seen him as moved and as angry as he was. It was a terrible reflection on his personal integrity. It was one of those situations in which quite well meaning people on both sides of the argument completely lost, in my judgment, perspective, and were so engaged in fighting with one another that they couldn't stand together against what was really a common enemy.

G: I can't imagine that there was any unanimity of feeling within OEO about this whole affair.

S: Oh, there wasn't at all.

G: I recall Shriver's reply to that New York Time's advertisement. He specified that all the advice that he had gotten from the Office of Inspection, General Counsel, Community Action, Head Start, and so on --all had advised him to cut off CDGM.

S: Right. That is factually correct, but there were a vast number of OEO

employees who were not themselves involved, who took a very dim view of OEO's action, and felt very bitter about what they believed was a cave-in to not only senatorial pressure but White House pressure. I have never seen or heard anything that really documented pressure from the White House. It is possible that it existed, but in the ultimate resolution of things I do believe there was a call from the White House that was influential in leading us to refund CDGM.

People lined up, chose sides on this one, but meanwhile a process of negotiation began. I again was sort of in the middle between Mr. Shriver on the one hand and the CDGM board on the other hand. A couple of visits to Mississippi, a couple of visits to Washington by the CDGM board and just shortly before Christmas we finally hammered out another agreement with another set of conditions, and an agreement which is still the subject of disagreement as to what I agreed to between myself and the CDGM board.

G: There is a continuing--

S: Oh yes, this is --let's see--this is in '66, December of '66.

I recall it because the night that these negotiations were held I was suppose to be in Los Angeles for a Head Start party, given by the Head Start Center out there, and I kept watching the clock with one eye and trying to negotiate with the other eye. Mr. Shriver had gone home and said, "Call me when you reach some degree of agreement."

Well, this time the agreements involved getting the National Board of Missions of the Presbyterian Church to guarantee against any disallowances, getting the Board of Missions to agree to pay the salary of what would really be a management overseer to try to strengthen the management of the program. But the nub of the problem

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and the one that led to dissension between me and CDGM was what was to happen with respect to MAP. We, after all, as a federal agency had said to MAP, "Here you are; you can have a program in all these counties for this number of kids," which was roughly equivalent to what CDGM had had before. Now we were saying, "Well, we're going to put CDGM back in business but not as large as it used to be, and only in certain counties." The question was where do we take territory away from MAP and give it to CDGM? The MAP Board I think quite properly said, "Look fellows, we got into this business because you said there was a need for a program and now you are saying to us get out!" And we said, "Well we're not really saying get out; we're saying you can keep the same size of program but let's narrow the jurisdictions to those areas which you are actually engaged in program already."

We hammered out a plan MAP that was in agreement with on all but five counties, and in those five counties there continued to be disagreement.

G: Couldn't the two groups work together?

S: No, this was tried, and with intermediaries there were discussions back and forth, and there was a narrowing of differences, but there were still five counties that were in disagreement.

At this point I went to Mississippi again to--well let's see, I guess I'm confused here. At this point, I said to the CDGM board--and this was that night in December--I would personally undertake to discuss with the MAP Board whether an agreement could be reached on those five counties and I would encourage them to accept the proposal, which was essentially to have them both operate in those counties, but in different parts of the counties.

I went to Mississippi and I was unsuccessful in persuading the MAP Board to do that for reasons which I think, you know, were valid reasons from the perspective of the MAP organization. On that basis and because of our prior commitments from MAP we decided to honor their priority of right there, and not to fund CDGM in those five counties.

I think to this day the people from CDGM believe that I did not honor a promise to give them those counties, a promise which I felt I hadn't made, but they felt I did. So, you know, it was one of the misunderstandings that characterized the whole process.

At any rate they did get funded. They went back into operation and in those five counties a new group sprang up called the Friends of the Children of Mississippi which was financially supported by the Field Foundation in small degree, but which essentially operated the old CDGM centers on a voluntary basis. That group operated for well over a year on a voluntary basis, during which another series of negotiations took place between FCM and the Field Foundation on one side and the OEO regional office--which had now assumed jurisdiction of the program--and MAP, to see if some sort of agreement couldn't be reached between them. In the meantime, MAP had had a change in leadership on the part of its executive director and eventually a series of agreements were hammered out and FCM and MAP are now aligned together in a single program.

CDGM has now dissolved as an organization and been replaced by a series of county organizations which contract directly with Mary Holmes Junior College, which has become much more of a factor in the operation than it was in the past. So, the net results of

all of this, I think you have to add up the fact that Mississippi now has the largest Head Start program in the country. There are some 30,000 children in Head Start in Mississippi in the full year programs, which is--well let's see, 30 out of 220,000, roughly one seventh out of all the kids in the country in full year Head Start in Mississippi. And that's roughly 50 percent of all the children that are in the first grade in Mississippi. So it's a very big factor in the Mississippi programs for children, and it's a very big factor in the economy of Mississippi. The thing that made this possible was the authority that the Director of OEO has to allot 20 percent of his funds on a discretionary basis. And whereas Mississippi would be entitled to something like \$ million dollars in accordance with the allotment formula, in fact OEO is now putting something closer to 35 million dollars into Mississippi. This is something that we were never really successful in convincing people of, and that is that they were getting not only their fair share, but far more than their fair share. It was always believed that there was another million dollars somewhere.

However, through all of this we've remained good friends with the people in Mississippi. I have visited there several times and particularly enjoy meeting with all their people at the national conferences of Head Start. The woman who was counsel of their board, Marian Wright, now Marian Edelman, and I have become good personal friends. We both think rather highly of one another, I think. The picture in Mississippi has changed, I think appreciably over the years. There is now far more interest in programs in the State and the State is actually doing some programs that are looking promising.

G: How about in the school educational system?

S: Some little impact, not very much yet, but I think the stage is being set. The school superintendent who was elected about a year ago is very moderate in his views of Head Start and he and I and a group of other leaders in the Mississippi establishment put together an early childhood council in Mississippi which has members of the State Legislature on it, and public officials, and Head Start directors from a number of programs down there. So that the net impact I think has been pretty useful and pretty good.

G: Although it did leave in many people's mouths a very bitter taste?

S: Yes it did; yes it did.

G: Were there any other similar situations, perhaps not of this magnitude, but in the same general problem area, in Head Start?

S: Nothing that became a national issue. There was a great deal of trouble in Louisiana which involved conflicts between Louisiana public officials and competing community action groups and our regional office in Austin. I was never really personally involved in those, but I knew there was a great deal of difficulty.

G: What did you find, let's say in your first year, in operating Head Start in terms of nutritional deficiencies, health problems, mental retardation and things of these sorts? Was the problem critical?

S: In our first year we had a not very good system for collecting information. It wasn't really until the end of the second year that we began to get any systematic accumulation of data, and not very much on nutrition as a part of that. Although I think there were a number of individual studies done, we didn't collect it on a nation wide basis.

G: Head Start did provide a lunch program?

S: Yes, yes, that was a mandatory feature of the program. And in many places it was not just a lunch but a breakfast and lunch, or some places even a breakfast, lunch and supper type of program. We did begin to accumulate data on kids. It showed appalling conditions in the dental field, many problems of general health which were not unlike what you would find in a normal population except that they hadn't been treated. They would, you know, continue to exist and nothing was being done about them, and there was, I think, some very significant work being done in treating those problems.

G: The reason I asked is because the recent emphasis and interest, both in Congress and on the part of the public, is the problem of nutrition in America. I was wondering if this--I know on the Job Corps, and I have seen some statistical evaluations of Head Start children, that the need did seem critical.

S: But I'll say that I find the evidence on the nutrition question very puzzling at this point in time. There are, of course, some studies coming out of the Health Service now that indicates substantial problems. But there are studies coming out of our own work here in the children's bureau that don't show that. In fact, I think the issue just isn't resolved. I think if you're talking about a strictly scientific point of view, the case has yet to be made. If you're talking about a social policy question, I think there's no question that kids ought to have a decent amount of food to eat. If you're willing to settle for that as the rationale, then you've got no problem. But the evidence that we have through our children and youth projects--which serve primarily big city ghetto areas,

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although there are some rural ones--is that the correlation is not with poverty specifically but with the birth weight. And kids who have problems are largely kids who had problems--who were born at lower than average birth weights.

G: Due to nutritional deficiencies on the part of the mother?

S: That's not sure, that's not for sure. There is considerable evidence that poor nutrition during the pregnancy period can have a very serious effect.

G: It's been said that Head Start was one of the prime moving forces in giving impetus to the Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Do you have any knowledge of this?

S: Well I don't think it can accurately be said that it gave birth to Title I because Title I came along in '65--actually was enacted while Head Start was just forming. I do think it is correct to say, though, that it has significantly influenced the way in which Title I programs eventually came to operate. For example, the heavy involvement of aides in Head Start was an example that was picked up and used by many of the school systems. The increasing concentration of Title I funds on the elementary years, the primary years, and sometimes on pre-school, is a reflection of experience, I think, that came out of Head Start.

There has been some movement, although I think not enough in Title I, to make programs more comprehensive in introduction of more health and outreach services.

And finally the requirement--not requirement, but strong advice issued by Commissioner Howe last year calling for the formation of advisory committees involving parents, I think, grew directly out

of the Head Start experience. That also had a very significant impact in the social and rehabilitation service, the welfare programs. As you may know we now have in statute a requirement for parent participation in our day care programs, and also for the use of non-professionals and volunteers. Both of those, Wilbur Cohen has told me, came directly from his observation of the Head Start experience.

G: I wonder if you'd like to comment on the--it isn't so much a controversy--but the differences between the Wolff Report and the Bronfenbrenner reply to that. I think this was in 1966.

S: I really have to refresh my memory on exactly what--I know what the general theme of the Wolff was. Actually there were several themes. One was a finding that between the time of entry into Head Start and the time of leaving Head Start there was progression. The second was that for most children who left Head Start they slipped back after they had left Head Start. Now there is a third theme that has never been much noticed by the public, and that is that those children who left Head Start and went into a good teaching situation continued to grow.

G: I think Bronfenbrenner pointed that out.

S: That's right. And in fact that's what led to the Follow-Through Program. That report, negative though it was in some ways, had a very positive effect in terms of persuading the President that we should move ahead with a Follow-Through Program, so it had a very nice outcome. An interesting sidelight on that report, Dr. Wolff had been invited to present a paper in Miami which had nothing to do with Head Start and by accident he took his notes on this Head Start

evaluation and found himself faced with the need to make a speech and all he had was the Head Start evaluation. So he made the speech, even though he had not at that time completed the report nor had he filed it with OEO. So it was picked up immediately in the press, given wide play and we were defending something that we had never seen nor had anybody evaluated.

Later reports essentially, I think, have been consistent with the Wolff thesis, that there's something [that] goes wrong after you've been out of Head Start. But as yet nobody knows whether that's because Head Start was poor or because something was wrong after you left Head Start.

G: I think Shriver in the Milwaukee speech when he outlined the 6-point project "Keep moving", laid the blame on the educational system and I think made the point that Head Start kids who went into slum schools, they just couldn't provide what the kids needed in the way of education, the attention and so forth, so it was a challenge to the school system to get on the ball.

S: And it was, that speech had a lot of impact, even if it was written in half an hour.

G: Who wrote it?

S: A man by the name of John Henry Martin, who was a former superintendent of schools in Mount Vernon, New York, and who was for a brief period of time Mr. Shriver's educational adviser.

G: I talked to other people in OEO and one of the recurring themes is that one of the needs of OEO is to create institutional change and they inevitably get down to the school systems. Is the problem that bad?

Are the school systems simply that inadequate?

S: I think there's a very serious problem that is probably at its worst in the ghetto areas of the big cities. No question that the output is poor. It's not so clear what the reasons for that are or what the solutions to that are. There is, in many school systems, a tremendous rigidity of approach and I personally am still very concerned about the school systems. Now I would say that some of the best Head Start programs that I know of have been operated by school systems. It seems to depend far less on whether it's a school system than on the particular individuals that you happen to find in that system. If you get, you know, a good leader he can do amazing things even in the framework of a school system. I am not opposed to having Head Start programs in school systems. I'm opposed to giving school systems a monopoly on the program.

G: I think we'll probably get into that when I ask you about the Dominic Amendment. I'll quote an OEO official I talked to fairly recently-- and I'm waiting for your reply. He said that in some cases Head Start programs were useless and he cited an example of a relative of his who is involved in one. He said what it really boiled down to is sort of a baby sitting program. This doesn't characterize all of Head Start, I'm sure.

S: I'm sure that among the 2,000 or so Head Start programs that there are examples of that. All I can really say is that's not what is called for in the program guidelines nor is it what we tolerate when we find out about it.

G: I guess this is by way of getting at the need for better training and familiarizing people with the needs of children.

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S: But you have to understand that since it's inception Head Start has spent just about 10 percent of all of its money for training and technical assistance, and that's about as high a proportion of investment of training funds of any government program that I know of. In fact, we've sort of strained the training resources which exist just to produce that much training. I'd love to see us do more, and I think we will do more as training resources increase.

G: I think this [the tape] is going to run out in a couple of seconds, so why don't we just go to another tape.

S: I want to take a break. Do you want a coke or something?

G: That sounds good.

INTERVIEWEE: JULE M. SUGARMAN

INTERVIEWER: STEPHEN GOODELL

March 14, 1969

G: Mr. Sugarman, you were quoted in the OEO history by Bennett Shiff, who interviewed you last summer, as saying that the greatest flaw in the Head Start program was that the constituent parts of the program did not mesh in a supportive fashion. I'm not quite sure I understood what you meant by that.

S: You will recall that we have several elements in the Head Start program, the daily activities, the nutritional, the health, the social services and the parent activities. My observation in visiting Head Start programs and reading evaluations is that, while all of those elements are present in most programs, there is very little interaction between them. For example, the doctor seldom gets into the classroom; the teacher does little in the way of health education in the classroom; the social worker or the neighborhood outreach worker, the nonprofessional aide, may never talk to the teacher about what they are finding in the home and the teacher may never tell the worker what problems are going on in school. So I think there's a great deal of effort that needs to be made to make sure that it's not just a series of an aggregation of services but an integration of services.

G: This was the case, I guess in June of '68, that's when he interviewed you. Is it still the case now?

S: I can't say that I've taken any systematic look at it in the last year, but I suspect it's not much different.

- G: You also said at that time that parental involvement could have been improved.
- S: Right. Actually I think one of the problems here is that parental involvement means a number of different things, but most people tend to think of it as only one thing. Some people think of it only as parent education; other people think of it only as employment for parents; other people think of it only as parents being involved in making decisions about the program. The fact of the matter is that, from our point of view, parent participation is all of those things plus a very continuing and on-going relationship between the child and the parent in terms of his development. I think it's that last feature that is most often neglected. Not enough is being done to actually help parents to equip themselves to be good child developers. Actually, I sort of suspect the future of early childhood programs lies more heavily in the area of helping parents to do the job than it does in the formation of new programs themselves.
- G: What is the effect on a child--I'm not sure this has been concluded one way or the other--but what is the effect on a child of going to a Head Start class, say for the summer or even year around and seeing more than what he would see at home, then going back home to the ghetto slum or to the rats and so on? Is it a traumatic experience for the child? Are there these dislocating factors?
- S: I'm not really sure about that. I suspect that children sort of tend to compartmentalize experiences. I think it would be one thing if he were going from a home that was in bad shape and spending a large portion of his day in another home that was in very good shape. But a child development center or a nursery school is not

really the same thing, and he probably views it as something special. I think there are some real concerns about kids who get a decent meal and who are really quite guilt-ridden over the fact they are and their brother and sister at home may not be. Almost everywhere you go you'll hear stories of kids who try to sneak food away from the center to take it home and share. Most centers, I hope, take not only tolerant view of that but a very sympathetic view of that. One of the things that I hope we can do somehow as public support for nutritional programs is to use the Head Start Centers as a base for a family nutritional program, not just for the child that happens to be in that center.

G: Has there been a very recent study on the improvements that have been made by children who have gone through Head Start and are now involved in the Follow-Through Program?

S: There's a whole series of studies that are underway. The most elaborate of these is a study that I believe will cover a seven year period through the Educational Testing Service. Unless we have seriously overestimated the potential, it's more likely to give us a sound picture than anything we've done so far. But there are new research reports that come out all the time.

G: What are the kinds of things that you hope for?

S: What are the kinds of things we hope for? Well, part of the problem is we don't really know. We don't really know in the sense of being able to say these are the measures of what we hope for. What we hope for, of course, is for kids who are living up to their maximum potential, who are able to fit into situations that they are going to run into in life and to do well and be happy and be healthy. But

how to quantify those things and how to measure them is very difficult.
We just don't know.

G: It seems to me it might get involved in certain problems of social adaptability. What is socially acceptable, for example, to the black community may not be socially acceptable to the white community and vice versa. Has this come up as a problem?

S: Yes, and of course even the IQ tests are accused of having all sorts of cultural biases. The real answer is in the measurement of performance but that's, again, a highly complicated thing that we don't have much experience in. I'd just as soon dispense with all IQ scores if I had some other measures to work with--and maybe we will. There's a lot of investment going into the development of performance measures and the development or assessment of motivation and the assessment of social effectiveness and so forth.

G: What I was getting at, would you say the objectives today are very similar to the objectives that you had in mind back in 1964?

S: Yes, I think they are except I think our concept of the family involvement and the value of the program for the family is much greater or deeper than it was in 1964. I think it's probably quite true that we were focused much more on the child and now we're much more focused on child and family together.

G: I'd like to turn now to the attempts by certain Congressmen--
Representatives and Senators--to transfer Head Start. I think this goes back to 1967 if I'm not mistaken and in 1968, the almost successful attempt on the part of Senator Dominick supported by Wayne Morse. Do you have any comment on that Dominick amendment?

S: It was in some ways a legislative fluke--a bill which I think was

introduced without any serious belief that it would pass, but which almost did pass. As far as the substance of the bill was concerned, it would have destroyed totally all that had been built up in Head Start. There's no question in my mind about that.

G: This would have transferred Head Start out of OEO. It would have given Head Start programs to the states with supervision or some form of control by the Office of Education, is that right?

S: It really went beyond that. It really physically put an end to the Head Start program, and instead provided a lump sum of money to the states which was to be used for early childhood purposes, with no standards, with no quality, with no legislative specification as to the nature of those programs.

G: With no regard for the prior experience?

S: That's correct, correct. However, when it did pass the Senate and became a serious threat, and when we got people to focus on the problem of the content of the bill, we found a) that nobody really had bothered to analyze it and understand it and b) that when they did, even those who were still in favor of a transfer were quite willing and receptive to altering the contents of the bill to maintain the Head Start program as it is. It was not the Head Start program that they were seeking to destroy. It wasn't even necessarily on the part of many sponsors an attempt to put it in the education world, but rather it was a slap at OEO. Of course, motivations varied here and I've never been sure exactly who stood where on that bill.

G: You mean in the Senate and the House.

S: In the Senate particularly. Of course, in the House it never really

got to a test because Chairman Perkins took a very strong position that prevented anything from happening.

G: Are you saying then that Dominick wasn't so much concerned with the fate of Head Start as he was in making a stab at OEO?

S: I think he was concerned with the fate of Head Start. I think he was supportive of the Head Start program. I think that his prime motivation was to remove the program from OEO where he had some doubts about how it would fare. Now he was aware that there had been a whittling away of the funds for Head Start by the OEO officials; and he knew that there had been tremendous pressure, which eventually succeeded in producing a supplemental appropriation for Head Start, which he viewed as replacing the funds that had originally been appropriated for Head Start and converted to other purposes.

G: Just giving OEO more money.

S: Right. So I believe that his prime motivation was protective or supportive at least of Head Start. And during the process of introducing that bill, it's my understanding at various points he was quite willing to have the program actually placed in some other part of HEW, that he was not specifically interested in placing it in the Office of Education, although it eventually came out that way in written form.

G: You were at OEO during the Congressional session of 1967 when Dominick, I think, made his first attempt. How did OEO respond to this? How were the ways you would have worked with Congress?

S: In '67 the point of concern about Head Start was much more the Opportunity Crusade Bill, which you may recall was Congressman Goodell's and Congressman Quie's attempt to recast the entire

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Poverty Program. Interestingly enough, I found that the Quie bill was a pretty good bill. It introduced some rather novel concepts--at least novel for that time--which I thought had a lot of merit. First of all, it preserved all the essential features of Head Start as far as program content went. Secondly, while it involved state agencies it specifically provided that those state agencies would not be the state Department of Education but a newly constituted state commission involving all the relevant public agencies and private agencies. Thirdly, while it required the state commissions to act on applications for assistance it left the final decision on assistance in the hands of the federal government and provided a very adequate bypass in those cases where the state was acting out of conformity with the purposes of the Act. So that I was sort of encouraged by the bill in terms of the future of Head Start. Obviously I preferred that it stay right where it was in OEO. But if we were going to have a bill, then that wasn't too bad a bill.

To my recollection the Dominick measure that year didn't get much attention.

G: It didn't pass, no.

S: Right, and I don't recall that we took it very seriously.

G: But '68 was another matter?

S: '68 was another matter, and we were all caught off base on that one because none of us had any sense that it would go as far as it did. In fact the White House Congressional people had told OEO the day before the vote it wouldn't get 20 votes. They were obviously very wrong.

G: Maybe they didn't know about Morse and the Oregon Job Corps affair.

- S: I think that's probably right. I don't know. I don't--again, really am not sure what Senator Morse's motivations were. He was obviously angry with OEO about the Job Corps, but again I think he was a little bit worried about what he thought might happen to Head Start in OEO.
- G: Was there any discussion within OEO as to the desirability of spinning off Head Start and certain other programs to old line agencies?
- S: Oh yes, a more or less continuous discussion of that matter.
- G: Would you like to put on the tape what we talked about earlier?
- S: Yes, this recalls to me very early--this would have been the fall of '65 when we were doing budget projections for a 5-year period. I proposed that we operate Head Start for two years, that we delegate it for another 2 years and that we spin it off completely in the fifth year.
- G: And the delegation, the spin off, would be to HEW and the Children's Bureau?
- S: At that time, yes, I had Children's Bureau in mind. But at the first level of review, it was decided that we would propose 3 years of direct operation and 2 years of delegation and then we'd think about spin off. To make a long story short, by the time the program went to the Budget Bureau it made no provision for either delegation or spin off, which was sort of an advanced warning of our arteriosclerosis in OEO's bureaucracy, I think.
- G: You say arteriosclerosis, is that implying that OEO simply was unable to let go of programs despite the fact they might have matured and could operate safely?
- S: That's the way I read it, yes. I think that's been reflected in other

programs as well. Actually, the issue arose again in the late fall of 1967 when I formally proposed to Mr. Shriver that we undertake to negotiate a delegation to HEW of the Head Start program. After considering the matter for two or three months, I was authorized by Mr. Shriver to proceed with negotiations for a delegation.

G: Was Dr. Richmond in concurrence with you?

S: At that time Dr. Richmond was ill. He had developed tuberculous and had essentially been out of the picture since the fall of 1965 so that for most purposes I was the effective head of the program. We had just barely begun negotiations when the roof fell in in the form of the out-and-out assault of OEO in the Congress. At this point Mr. Shriver, I think quite rightly, concluded that he couldn't afford to lose any weapon that might help him to maintain OEO. So discussions were dropped.

G: Is this to say that because Head Start was such a popular program --popular in Congress, popular in the White House, popular in the American public--that it simply was unwise politically to let it go?

S: Right.

G: Had there been any other discussion along these lines at OEO when you were there?

S: Yes, there were discussions throughout the entire period of the Johnson Administration and there were even discussions within the last 10 days of the Johnson Administration as to whether the President should take action. But as you know the President was very loathe to take any action that would prejudice the new Administration. So nothing was done.

G: Why do you think that OEO should spin off--or should have spun off

the Head Start program?

S: For a series of reasons. First of all I think that OEO should have tried to stay small, should have tried to encourage institutional change in HEW and other agencies by a careful spin-off and monitoring of programs. Actually, I probably have shifted my view a little bit in the sense that I now favor a much more active role for OEO during delegation than I had originally conceived. For example, it's my view that a good delegation would involve things like having OEO review of all policies, like having a portion of the funds reserved to OEO for monitoring and evaluation, and perhaps most importantly having OEO act as an ombudsman for any organizations or individuals who feel aggrieved by the operation of the program by some other agency. I think, you know, sitting over here in another agency now, I see the need and the desirability for some sort of outside influence which would counteract the inevitable pressures to conform to different considerations rather than some of those that are important to OEO.

G: Is the delegation arrangement a successful one, or has it been with OEO in your experience?

S: It depends on which program you talk about. I think that the classic example of a good delegation is the Follow-Through Program, which I think has worked very well. One of the reasons it worked well is that we hired in the Head Start Staff an individual who did nothing but work on liaison with the Office of Education. While he didn't necessarily make life-long friends, important things happened. There was a mutual respect between the two organizations, and I think important and valuable things came out of it.

G: It used to be said that the best way to kill a program is put it in an old line agency. In fact I think that statement was made by President Johnson. More recently I think the statement has been made that OEO has become itself an old line bureaucracy. Would you want to comment on that?

S: I think there are many signs that OEO is becoming bureaucratic, and I think that there are signs that Head Start is becoming bureaucratic. In fact at both the Atlanta and Houston national conferences of Head Start I spent a considerable amount of time discussing some of the things that I thought would have to be done to prevent it from becoming bureaucratic. I was sort of amused to find myself speaking the same lines that Shriver used to speak about Peace Corps, to the effect that nobody should stay in it for longer than X number of years. You know, it's a terribly arbitrary way to deal with the problem but maybe it's the only way to keep a freshness and a vitality in these programs.

G: Does the change in Administration and the concomitant change in departmental personnel at the top echelons have anything to do with the way a program might be run? I'm thinking that if OEO for example were to have spun off some of these programs, it's all very well and good to have a Wilbur Cohen who might be sympathetic to these programs, but with the prospects of a change in Administration perhaps the policy, the guidelines, and the way these programs operate might change.

S: Well there's always that possibility. Certainly none of us could be sure what kind of attitudes the new administration might have toward Head Start. I would have to say that on the basis of our

preliminary experience, I find just as much support for the concepts of Head Start on the part of the new officials of HEW as anything we got before. A few days after he arrived as Undersecretary-designate, Mr. Veneman had to meet with a group of parents from Providence, Rhode Island, who had come down to talk about Head Start and what was going to happen to it. Quite without any briefing from me--he may have talked to somebody else--but he simply went overboard on the question of parent participation and made it clear that he felt that parents had a right to be consulted in the disposition of the program and how it would be handled, and in fact did that when the advisory committee was established. There were four Head Start parents on that advisory committee.

G: I'm speaking as a nonprofessional but I have had some experience teaching and I'm very ambiguous in my own attitude as to parental involvement at the higher level. I'm not sure about at lower and elementary educational stages. But is this ever a problem, for example, the conflict between a parent or a community attitude and the so-called professionals?

S: Yes, it is a problem in many places. It's also a problem when there isn't any conflict. Because when there isn't any I suspect that we have a situation in which there's, for ~~one~~ reason or another, non-participation on the part of the parents. But conflict is not in itself bad. It's how you manage the conflict that's important. And if the conflict is managed in a way that lets people be treated with dignity and respect and consideration for the right to disagree and a process for resolving disagreements which doesn't tear the program apart, then I think it's healthy to have conflict. Now I

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would say that I suspect, pretty strongly suspect, that there's more potential for conflict among parents than there is for conflict between parents and staff. In other words there's just about as much range of opinion in any given group of parents as there is among any given group of teachers.

G: I was just thinking in relation to this, but on another scale, this issue of community control, which is going on right now and which probably will continue to go on.

S: And it has not been as dramatic in Head Start but there have been some interesting situations. The situation in New York has the potential for becoming in Head Start what it has been in the public schools. So far it has been under relatively good control. People have been able to work out their differences, but I'm not--

G: This has not yet become an issue with Head Start?

S: Oh, it's there. It's there. All I am saying is that so far in most places they've been able to work it out. But that's not to say that it couldn't become a very serious problem in Head Start. The question is whether people can bend enough in both directions to find a way in which they can work together.

G: Daniel Moynihan wrote in his latest book that Head Start had, and I'm going to quote him, "become so familiar and popular it's no longer particularly to be associated with Community Action or even with the War on Poverty." Would you agree with that?

S: I think there are an awful lot of people that don't make the linkage. Some of them--probably more of them know that it's a Poverty Program or maybe even an OEO program, and very few of them know it's a Community Action program except people who are directly involved in it. But I would guess if you would ask the average man in the

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street "is Head Start a Community Action program," he'd say "no."

G: What is the proportion of the sponsors of Head Start programs that are Community Action agencies?

S: In the full year programs, about 90 percent of Head Start funds go through Community Action agencies. In terms of the actual program operators, just about 1/3 are public schools, about 26 percent are Community Action agencies, and the remainder are private non-profits of one sort or another.

G: Was there any discussion early in the game as to who could get into the Head Start program? Was this simply to be for poverty kids?

S: No, as a matter of fact the initial guidelines provided for a 15 percent proportion of children who did not have to meet the economic criteria. The theory here was that we needed some mixture of kids in order to improve the quality of the programs. Under some criticism, not a lot, we reduced that figure to 10 percent. What's really happened is since the 10 percent tends to be used for kids who are just over the guidelines or who had some special condition that necessitates special care. So I don't think we've achieved the mix of economic and social backgrounds that we'd hoped to achieve with it.

If money were not a consideration, I'd definitely favor a much broader participation of non-poor children.

G: I think it was Richard Boone, I may be wrong, in a speech made at Arrowhead, California, on "What is Community Action" that the non-professionals saved Head Start at the beginning. Again I may be wrong that he said that, but do you have any idea what he might have meant?

S: I don't recall the speech. Certainly in places like Mississippi, the program simply could not have come into being without the use of non-professionals. Wherever you go throughout the country I think the non-professionals bring a different quality to the program than a program that's purely professionally run. Sometimes that can be had, but for the most part I think it brings a dimension of sensitivity and concern that's better than you have in a purely professionally run program.

G: Did you ever encounter any of the Church-State issues in the Head Start Program?

S: Yes, never serious ones. We had some rather clear-cut rules on what could and could not be done.

G: Was this developed by General Counsel?

S: Yes, and in the one or two instances of violations, we had no trouble in getting people to correct the violations once they understood the rule. There were a couple of court suits, neither of which to my knowledge ever came to trial. For one reason or another the issue became muted. But there may be suits in the future. The problem was not as severe in Head Start as it was in Title I in the Elementary and Secondary Act, generally.

G: I want to turn now to some rather general impressions that you might have. I guess I could begin by asking what was it that brought you to leave OEO?

S: I think there were two major reasons. Number one was a desire to create a viable alternative to the Office of Education so that when the decision came to move Head Start, people would not automatically assume that the only way you could go was in OEO. Number two, and

perhaps even more important was the belief that there was a potential in HEW, and specifically in the Children's Bureau to do a hell of a lot more things for children than you could do in Head Start, that there is a range of legislative authorizations and money over here that could be tapped. The Children's Bureau, as you may know, has a glorious history in its early years. It really was in the forefront of doing some important things, and I tend to believe that it could do that again if it really tried to.

G: In other words you would be most receptive to Head Start coming to HEW in the Children's Bureau.

S: I think it would be very useful to improving the fortunes of the Children's Bureau.

G: Do you have any general impressions about Shriver or OEO people, personnel, generally?

S: Let me say when I first came to OEO I was not an admirer of Mr. Shriver, that I found it rather difficult to communicate with him and in fact we didn't communicate very well for a long time. But as I worked with him over a period of time and watched him in operation, I became convinced that he was one of the real geniuses of America. I've never to this day seen anyone with the capacity to continually innovate, to continually push for development that he has. And I've never seen anyone who was any better at analyzing the potentials and the problems and situations--not always knowing what the answers were but at picking out the weak points in arguments. Gradually we learned how to work with one another, and while I never considered myself one of the Shriver crowd, we found that we respected one another, I think, pretty well and found that we were both interested in

accomplishing the same kinds of things and could work pretty comfortably together.

G: Did you ever feel that you were in disagreement as to the purpose of the mission of OEO as to whether or not it would be a program operating agency as opposed to an innovative agency?

S: I don't think so. Things got very complicated by the legislative situation. I didn't necessarily agree with all the things that--and all the strategms that were being used, but it's a matter of operating from one base of information while he was operating from other bases of information. It may very well be if I had known all the factors, all the information, that he had, I would have understood why things were happening. But I can't really fault him on this.

G: Would you comment on your own impressions of President Johnson's support of OEO generally or of Head Start specifically? I gather that you have met him.

S: Only in the sense of passing through a receiving line, never for any discussion. So I really don't have any knowledge outside of newspaper knowledge of how he felt and that I don't tend to put much credence in. I think it is true that he was bothered by OEO, that it created many problems that he had not anticipated and that they were problems that he really didn't know how to cope with. I do believe in the sincerity of his conviction that he wanted to do something about poverty. I think he was probably quite honestly disappointed that it couldn't be done without the conflict--or maybe never believed that it couldn't be done without the conflict that was generated.

G: While you were at OEO and your experiences there, on looking back on that, could you point to any watersheds or major changes in its

thrust or its direction?

S: The departure of Haddad and the replacement of Haddad by Edgar May as Inspector General completely altered the balance of power between the Inspection Division and the Community Action Division. Ed May was a very powerful Inspector General, but in a quite different direction. He did not consider himself to be the program operator. His inspectors concentrated on an entirely different sort of things. It eased the problem greatly of conflict within the organization. There was at one point in time a real threat to participation of the poor, that was mostly fought out in the newspapers, and the policy was sustained. At least I believe it was sustained. The Green Amendment probably marks a watershed although it's hard to tell. Certainly we did not have the decrease of as many Community Action agencies as we thought, but we did have a shifting in board structure that I think in the long run will have a very significant impact on the nature of the programs. I think there's no watershed point in OEO's move to bureaucracy, but a steady process that has gone on.

G: Is there anything you would like to add to this tape?

S: I think not. I think we've had a rather fulsome discussion here and I'll let the record stand.

G: Thank you very, very much.

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By Jule M. Sugarman

to the

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