

OEO HISTORY
CHAPTERS I THROUGH IV

AUGUST 30, 1968

First Rough Draft

OFFICE OF ECONOMIC
OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

August 30, 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR: Honorable Joseph A. Califano, Jr.
The White House

FROM: Mr. Robert Perrin *Robert Perrin*
Acting Deputy Director

SUBJECT: Departmental Histories Project -
Submission of First Draft

Transmitted herewith, in accordance with the directive governing its development, and a subsequent telephone conversation between Dr. Frank Evans of the U.S. Archives and Mr. Bennett Schiff, is a first draft of the history of the Office of Economic Opportunity.

Enclosure
OEO History (1st draft)
8-30-68

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JOE CALIFANO, JR.

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1-30-68
JOE CALIFANO (1st floor)
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RE: [Illegible text]

REPLY:

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FROM:

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TELEPHONE:

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OEO HISTORY

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Original

1st Rough Draft

Chapter One - Events Leading to the Task Force

"We propose," said one of the first of the storm of papers which enveloped the beginnings of the War on Poverty, "to take poverty seriously."

Which is not to say that there were no humorous incidents at a time when, one close observer recalled, "there were suddenly a lot of guys in funny shoes running around the corridors."

The authors of the memorandum to Sargent Shriver were Michael Harrington, the author, two years earlier, of The Other America, a book which was seminal in alerting the nation to the fact of poverty in its affluent midst; Paul Jacobs, a writer with special knowledge and interest in the poor, who had done evaluations of Peace Corps programs abroad; and Frank Mankiewicz, a key Peace Corps official, who was later to become press secretary to Sen. Robert F. Kennedy.

It was Harrington who Shriver called almost immediately after the President informed him, by telephone, that he was to head a Cabinet level task force to mount an "unconditional war against poverty."

Shriver, as the President was to point out fulsomely and explicitly at his swearing in, months afterward, was notably suited for the formidable job of directing the Office of Economic Opportunity.

"The need," the President said, "is obvious for leadership which represents America at our best. And for that leadership, in my judgment, I have selected the best equipped by personality, by training, by head and heart and heels I have selected the best personality in this country for that job."

In his letter of February 11, 1964, appointing Shriver as his Special Assistant in the program to eliminate poverty (the letter formalizing the Task Force) the President outlined some of his duties.

"As my representative," the President wrote, "you will direct the activities of all executive departments and agencies involved in the program against poverty. You will also be my representative in presenting to the Congress the Administration's views with respect to necessary legislation."

And, the President said, "since this campaign against poverty will be an important part of the work of the Cabinet, I am asking

you to attend its meetings."

"You will also undertake the coordination and integration of the federal program with the activities of state and local governments and of private persons, including the Foundations, private business and industry, labor unions, and civic groups and organizations. I ask that you invite their close cooperation; that to the extent that they desire, you integrate their efforts with our work on the federal level; and that you encourage joint planning, joint programs and joint administration, wherever feasible."

If this were done, said the President, he believed the nation could proceed to solve the problem "with the greatest possible speed, efficiency, and economy."

For Shriver the situation was, in a way, reminiscent of the day, four years earlier, when by command of President Kennedy he had been charged with forming another history making organization, the Peace Corps. And, as in those earlier days, he began by calling in the best people he could find and having them, in turn, recommend the best people they knew to do the job.

Shriver had made the American Peace Corps one of the most successful and admired organizations ever gathered together and inspired by a government. He had begun then with a task force of talent and he began the new assignment, an infinitely more formidable one, in the same way.

The initiating task force however, began with the President's phone call on February 1, 1964, the day after Shriver returned from a world tour inspecting Peace Corps programs.

By the time Shriver was formally appointed to head the Task Force, by letter from the President on February 11, a major operation was under way confronting what the President himself later called "awesome and exacting responsibilities."¹

By March 16, in six weeks time, the Task Force had completed the President's special message on poverty to the Congress and both the substance and specifics of a bill which became the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 and which, with subsequent amendments,

¹ Remarks of the President at swearing in ceremony of Hon. Sargent Shriver as Director, Office of Economic Opportunity, White House, Oct. 16, 1964.

remains substantially the same to this day. Also completed, by March 17, was a 68 page Congressional presentation outlining the problem, offering specific programs and containing a budget estimate for the first fiscal year of \$962.5 million.²

It was a time of chaos and exhaustion relieved, fortunately, by excitement and exhilaration, itself, at times, the product of a kind of hysteria. "The beautiful hysteria of it all," as one active participant, and present celebrant, described it.

The New York Times reported later that "when Shriver presided over the task force that drafted the OEO Act some of the in-fighting over who would do what got so bitter that it appeared the whole project might be wrecked. 'Sometimes the walls dripped with blood as the empire-builders clashed with the empire-wreckers,' one official reports."

The reference was to the working out of arrangements involving the established 21 government agencies dealing with the U.S.

² OEO, March 17, 1964.

Welfare system in some 200 federal projects many of which were already overlapped and interlocked. The object was to maintain autonomous control as a distinct agency within the Executive Office of the President over major programs, and supervisory responsibility for others operating at federal, state and local levels.

The problem was not with the secretaries of departments involved, according to Hyman Bookbinder, then a Special Assistant Secretary of Commerce on loan to the Task Force and later an Assistant Director of OEO, but with the hundreds of key officials who attended the dozens of meetings day after day and who resisted what they considered to be the beginnings of a gradual dissolution of the prerogatives of their departments.

A letter from Budget Director Kermit Gordon to Senator Gaylord Nelson (D., Wis.), dated March 20, 1964, gives some idea of the number of programs and other federal agencies involved in existing poverty legislation at the time.

Gordon listed as examples the Departments of Agriculture, Health, Education and Welfare; Commerce; Interior; Labor; Housing and Home Finance Agency; and the Veterans Administration.

HEW alone, for example, had legislation covering aid to federally affected school areas, vocational education, maternal and child welfare, public assistance payments and services, including medical care; vocational rehabilitation, construction and operation of Indian Health facilities. And, there was new legislation, Gordon pointed out, for that department alone affecting 14 other

programs.

Later on Dr. Joseph A. Kershaw, former provost of Williams College and before that head of the economics division of the Rand Corporation, came to OEO to set up a computerized cost analysis system. Kershaw compiled a book three inches thick, listing for the first time in the government's history, the names of all Federal programs to aid the poor. There was an entire library of affecting legislation for the programs, a legal labyrinth which was remarkable even in that tortuous field.

Kershaw's recruitment was typical of the Shriver method of OEO Task Force induction. "I was sitting on a veranda last September (1964) at Martha's Vineyard," Kershaw recalled, "when the phone rang. 'My name is Sargent Shriver,' a voice said. 'We're going to spend a lot of money.'"³

Kershaw arrived in Washington to help figure out how the War Against Poverty could get the best possible return for its dollars.

³ Newsweek, Sept. 13, 1965.

And yet, in those early days, a participant later said, most decisions leading up to the President's poverty message and submission of legislation went as consensus recommendations to the White House. The major decision however, to give the Job Corps to OEO rather than to the Labor Department was made by the President after the unresolved differences were sent to him as alternative options. (anecdote memo)

Bookbinder recalled the early days of the task force as "chaotic, hectic, unorganized, disorganized;" but, he amended, "also historically productive."

There was, he said, "a constant traffic of people. Government people were in and out of the sixth floor of the Peace Corps building. At one point the traffic got so heavy that Shriver said we have got to find some more rooms and we found some rooms on the 12th floor."

The Task Force and original OEO staff was to move from the Peace Corps to the old Federal Court of Claims building at Pennsylvania Ave. and 18th St., to the basement of the un-used old Emergency

Hospital, 17th St. and New York Ave., to the New Colonial Hotel, before it moved into the freshly constructed Brown Building at 1200 19th St. N.W., its present headquarters.

The move from the Court of Claims building was an enforced one and accomplished on an emergency deadline one Friday afternoon when an engineer came running into the building crying that there was a crack in the structure (excavation was going on next door for a new Federal courthouse) and that everyone had to get out within two hours. There were about 80 people who had found desk space in the building and they went streaming out, arms flowing with folders and papers.

By Monday space had been located in the Emergency Hospital Building in what had been the basement morgue.

Meanwhile work went on. The hard nucleus of the Task Force, borrowed from other government agencies, met around the clock with representatives of involved Federal departments to sort out and design a message, a program and a bill.⁴

⁴ James Adler, Dept. of Commerce; Hyman Bookbinder; Richard W. Boone,

Shriver's first challenging question to Harrington at lunch in Washington, soon after his phone call, was: "Now you tell me how I abolish poverty?"

"You've got to understand," Harrington said bluntly, "right away that you've been given nickels and dimes for this program. You'll have less than a billion dollars to work with."

"Well," said Shriver dryly, and characteristically, "I don't know about you Mr. Harrington, but this will be my first experience at spending a billion dollars, and I'm quite excited about it."

"In a sense," recalled Bookbinder, "that was what everyone on the Task Force was asking themselves and everyone else, paraphrasing Shriver's famous question, "How do you fight a war on poverty,

Executive Office of the President; Andrew Brimmer, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce; William Capron, Staff Economist, Council of Economic Advisers; Ronald Goldfarb, Justice Dept.; Richard Goodwin, International Peace Corps Secretariat; David Hackett, Justice Dept.; Harold Horowitz, Associate General Counsel, HEW; Frank Mankiewicz; Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Assistant Secretary of Labor; Anne Oppenheimer, analyst, Bureau of the Budget; Norbert Shlei, Ass't. Atty. Gen., Dept. of Justice; Milton Semer, General Counsel, Housing and Home Finance Agency; Richard Still, Chief Counsel, CFA, HHFA; James L. Sundquist, Deputy Under Sec. of Agriculture; Christopher Weeks, analyst, Bureau of the Budget; Stephen Pollak, Office of the Solicitor General; Eric Tolmach, Labor Dept.; and Adam Yarmolinsky, Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense.

what are you supposed to do, and what do you do?"

"It was soon clear," an early participant of the meetings said, "that even though there were different emphases on the poverty problem, the problem wasn't the kind that could be licked by one great gimmick or one great brilliant program that would solve it. It was a multi-pronged problem leading to a multi-pronged program. That basic concept was eventually accepted and there were literally dozens of thoughtful ideas to discuss this, discuss that, and do this and that. And, also it was clear that you could not do everything."

Another participant recalled a memorable morning meeting chaired by Yarmolinsky, who was acting at the time as a sort of sergeant-major. "It kind of pulled us together," he said, "and I think that from that point on all of those involved looked at it more or less this way: Who is it in this country that needs the help? Who is it that is available? What is it that is not available and what priority should we select among those who need help?"

By the time President Johnson delivered his message to Congress

on March 16, that issue was resolved. The President clearly asked for the new agency and declared his intention of appointing Sargent Shriver as its director.

There had, in fact, already been some preliminary compromise in that it was decided the new agency was to have central authority and supervision but that where programs logically fit into the framework of existing agencies they would operate the programs.

It was already clear to all concerned that, with the number of federal programs involved with the question of poverty there were a concomitant number of theories regarding the problem. And it followed that any critical remarks or divergent approaches were destined to cause irritation, if not worse, in some other part of the federal city.

Genesis of the Program

The decision to organize a comprehensive federal program to deal with the massive problem of poverty in America was made by President Kennedy. It was President Johnson's Administration which decided, specifically, what the program should be, how it should be

administered, allocated funds for it -- and got it through Congress.

On August 14, 1960, President Kennedy used the term "war on poverty" in a speech at Hyde Park, New York, marking the fifteenth anniversary of the signing of the Social Security Act.⁵ The speech, written by ghost-writers Hyman Bookbinder and Richard Goodwin (both of whom were to be involved in the inception of the Office of Economic Opportunity), referred to the job begun by Roosevelt that was not yet completed. The opening battle against suffering and deprivation had been won in the 1930's, Kennedy remarked, but the war against poverty and degradation was not yet over. The 1960 Demo-

⁵ There was earlier official attention focused, in very similar fashion, on a legislative attack on poverty. See Daniel Patrick Moynihan's article, "Poverty and Progress," in the Autumn, 1964 issue of *The American Scholar*, in which he says:

"...In 1956 Averell Harriman, as Governor of New York State, called for an 'Attack on Poverty' in his annual message to the legislature. The data he cited were of almost exactly the same order and magnitude as those to which President Johnson called attention in his Message to the Congress eight years later...

...Harriman's analysis began with the discouraging complexity of the problem, and proceeded to a detailed proposal for study and action that moved with some relish across departmental and other jurisdictional lines -- again in a pattern of response to the realities of the situation that President Johnson was to follow. But the time had not come for an attack on poverty. The program moved ahead with great promise, but little public attention, and when Harriman lost the next election the effort was abandoned by the succeeding Republican administration."

cratic platform called for a Youth Conservation Corps, and in Kennedy's Inaugural Address, January 20, 1961, three references were made to poverty, capped by the ringing admonition: "If the free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich."

President Kennedy directed studies to be made on poverty, authorizing the formation and funding of special study groups to investigate the related problems of the poor. One such group was the President's Committee to Study Juvenile Delinquency, an outgrowth of the 1961 Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Offenses Control Act. It established a small program staff in the Justice Department under the "tutelage" of Attorney General Robert Kennedy, and was directed by a special assistant to the attorney general. ~~former Olympic hockey player~~ Dave Hackett. By the terms of the 1961 act, fifteen million dollars was provided to finance live experiments in community action projects. This concept had its roots in unique theories of social action and social psychology that had been germinating in some universities for the past several decades. In the early 1960's, the Ford Foundation's "gray areas"

program, based on the hypothesis that poverty was the product of a complex of economic, social, and psychological problems, had helped evolve the concept of community action as a way to attack the substantive poverty issues. The North Carolina Fund attempted a similar effort on a broader, statewide basis. These "demonstration" precedents were incorporated into the Attorney General's inter-departmental committee's experiments. Based on the Ford Foundation philosophy, the staff sponsored modestly funded projects of community action in a number of cities, one of which was the Mobilization for Youth on the lower East side of New York city. The concept of community action, wrote Assistant Labor Secretary ^(DAMN) Patrick Moynihan, "involves the effort to change the poor who are produced by the system, rather than to change the system that produces the poor."

In 1961, the Area Redevelopment Act was passed focusing upon the "elimination of poverty rather than amelioration of some of its effects," and revitalizing economically depressed areas by attacking structural unemployment through the extension of loans, grants, and technical aid. What had begun as efforts to deal with a behavioral

problem, thus, had broadened in scope. Analysts discovered that beneath the symptoms of delinquency lay deeper problems of teen-age unemployment, slum schools, ghetto living, and broken families. It was learned that government had the capacity, and some felt the responsibility, to alleviate or eliminate these problems. The concrete results of such studies was the Manpower Development and Training Act of 1962, emphasizing job preparation, whereby the impact of technological displacement and related forces was met by job training and retraining. Further, the Vocational Education Act of 1963 provided vocational training for young people in a more sophisticated technology.

The first two years of President Kennedy's administration had been characterized by a preoccupation with ~~matters of~~ foreign affairs. Questions of military strength, foreign policy, the missile gap, defense posture, the Bay of Pigs, the Berlin situation, Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, the Peace Corps, reorganization of foreign aid, and the Cuban missile crisis ^{delegated} ~~reduced~~ domestic affairs to second priority

^{attention} ~~attentive~~. By 1963, for a variety of reasons, including the civil

rights movement, the steel controversy, and the tax cut package which "raised issues of domestic policy," the focus of attention shifted.

Harrington's Other America had been published in 1962. Dwight MacDonal, in a New Yorker article, January 19, 1963, entitled "Our Invisible Poor," reviewed the Harrington book along with three others dealing with the same topic.⁶ "In the last year," he wrote, "we seem to have suddenly awakened, rubbing our eyes like Rip Van Winkle, to the fact that mass poverty exists, and that it is one of our two gravest social problems." The paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty denied real citizenship to a large segment of society; "if that right is denied, 'it impoverishes us all.'" MacDonal placed the blame squarely on the "doorstep of the White House." Federal programs, he charged, were grossly inadequate. More serious was the fact that an aroused public opinion was grievously lacking. He concluded by calling for direct federal programs to help the poor raise

⁶ Wealth and Power in America by Gabriel Kolko
Poverty and Deprivation, Conference on Economic Progress
Income and Welfare in the United States, James Morgan
The Other America, Michael Harrington.

their living standards.

MacDonald later recalled that on request the New Yorker reprinted over 20,000 copies for sociologists, economists, social workers, trade unions, private citizens and so on. By 1964 he had even received requests from the politicians. One "politician" who read the article was Ted Sorenson, special assistant to the President. According to Washington legend and economist Ben S. Seligman, Sorenson was so moved, or astute, that he at once urged Kennedy to read the article. Thus, so the story runs, was born the war on poverty.

Within a month Kennedy proposed a national service corps similar to the overseas Peace Corps. The National Service Program had been the special project of a Cabinet-level study group under the Attorney General, set up to investigate the feasibility of a national service program "patterned after the Peace Corps." Begun in November, 1962, under the Presidential instruction that "we shall be judged more by what we do at home than what we preach abroad," the study group reported to the President in January, 1963.

The significance of the National Service Corps program is reflected in the Study Group's report to the President. Explicitly stated

was a clear recognition of the poverty problem, accompanied by a description of the hardships faced by one-sixth of the nation. The report contained a brief bibliography of poverty, and attempted to dramatize the plight of the needy. By innuendo, the report suggested the need for a program of broader scope and depth.

Another version of the inspirational force behind the Kennedy poverty "program" was given by Richard Boone, a member of the 1964 task force on poverty. According to Boone, Kennedy had been greatly impressed by Homer Bigart's New York Times article on Appalachian problems. On April 9, Kennedy authorized the Appalachian Regional ~~Commission~~^{SS}, focusing national attention and concern on the problems of that region. In October, 1963, the President instructed Franklin D. Roosevelt Jr., then Under Secretary of Commerce, to come up with a comprehensive program for Eastern Kentucky. Roosevelt consulted with various executive departments, initiating a crash program on November 13, allocating \$16 million for a number of projects including job training, food distribution, housing and special welfare, and a Christmas vacation domestic peace corps utilizing college students.

This provided an action model for future thinking about organization and implementation.

There was no single catalyst. Eric Tolmach and Hyman Bookbinder, two OEO officials who were task force members in 1964, recall that the Harrington book got to Kennedy by way of MacDonald's article and a Walter Heller memorandum; nevertheless, a combination of the articles and The Other America prompted Presidential interest, and within weeks Kennedy directed Heller to embark on a study of poverty programs. In early May, 1963, assisted by Robert Lampman of the University of Wisconsin, the Council of Economic Advisors began such a study.

The Bureau of the Budget, which believed that a community action program idea applied locally all over the country would offer new leverage power in coordinating resources primarily of the Federal Government, also became importantly involved.

The Budget Bureau was in the process of preparing a report to be submitted to the Congress in January 1964. One observer noted that the Budget process forced the President and his chief advisors each year to examine the relationship of government operations and national

issues. Kennedy and Sorenson had used the budget technique to raise major issues and force decisions on them. Sorenson, who had taken a direct and personal interest in the poverty issue, was informed of the Kennedy plan to propose to Congress in January, 1964, along with the budget message, a poverty program. Sorenson asked Heller to "collect program proposals for Presidential review," and in late September, 1963, the Council of Economic Advisors instructed major agencies to submit proposals to be included in a Kennedy program designated as "Widening Participation in Prosperity." Agreement was reached on two points: That a federal response to MacDonald-Harrington analysis of poverty was mandatory, and that it would have to "destigmatize" any program from the connotations of the phrase "poverty." Thus, the war on poverty began as a "prosperity" program.

Heller and Kermit Gordon, Director of the Budget Bureau, agreed that the old line agencies, specialized and entrapped by their own self-interests, had to be bypassed. Throughout the sessions no formalized organization emerged. Dave Hackett, Dick Boone of the White House Staff, and Paul Ylvisaker of the Ford Foundation promoted the

idea of community action.

In other parts of the Executive branch officials most concerned with programs related to poverty started to put their heads together. William Capron, Staff Director of the Council of Economic Advisors, had called together a small planning group to "sift through the various program possibilities."

Throughout his last months, President Kennedy was constantly informed of the discussions and planning behind the proposed poverty scheme, and to some degree gave to the planners an overview that could only come from his office. On October 21, 1963, Kennedy even suggested to Heller at a meeting that he would visit some poverty-stricken areas to underscore the problem and focus national attention. At his last Cabinet meeting, October 29, 1963, the President left a memo pad with the word "poverty" inscribed six times, and the word "coordination" underlined twice and enclosed in a penciled box.

A number of factors brought the matter to a head. Throughout the spring and summer of 1963, while Congress stifled Kennedy's social legislation (the National Service Corps and the Youth Employ-

ment Act), "the library of Dickens-like descriptions of life in poor America grew." Night Comes to the Cumberlands, by Harry Caudill vividly depicted the shortcomings of the welfare system in Eastern Kentucky. Edgar May, Pulitzer prizewinner, later an OEO official, wrote in The Wasted Americans what it meant to be "enveloped and surrounded" in the ghetto. In April the Committee on Youth Employment reported that the youth unemployment problem had reached crisis conditions. The literature of poverty, the recommendations made by study groups, the President's distress over the high rate of Selective Service rejectees, and the animating drive that underlay the spirit of the "New Frontier" -- resurrecting the democratic ideals of equality and opportunity in a free society -- all combined to provide an atmosphere of public concern.

The Civil Rights movement, climaxing in the August, 1963 "March on Washington", illustrated the unrest of a disenchanting minority most effected by poverty. The Kennedy administration by that time was interested in launching a national program to give the movement direction and purpose, and to translate its energies creatively.

On the evening of November 19, 1963, Heller met with President Kennedy at the White House. "...I asked the President whether he wanted our work to go forward on the assumption that the anti-poverty measure would be part of his 1964 legislative program. His answer was an unhesitating, 'Yes.'" Heller reported.⁷

Three days later President Kennedy was dead. The following day, recalled Heller, "the very first matter I took up with President Johnson was the poverty program. His immediate response was, 'That's my kind of program...I want to move full speed ahead.'"

By January 8, President Johnson had been given the facts for the poverty section of his State of the Union Message and had, finally and conclusively, launched the War on Poverty. By January 20, he had sent his Economic Message to Congress, along with the chapter on poverty in the United States of the Council of Economic Advisers' Annual Report which became the bible of the antipoverty program.

Shriver met with the President on February 1, 1964. The following

⁷ Newsweek, September 13, 1965.

evening, at Shriver's Maryland home, another meeting was held attended by Heller, Budget Director Kermit Gordon and Adam Yarmolinsky. That was a Sunday. By Tuesday Shriver had organized an all-day session to consider the task. Present were: Heller and his aide, Bill Capron; economist and Ambassador to India, John Kenneth Galbraith; Charles Schultze, Assistant Director of the Budget Bureau; Dick Boone, of the White House Staff who was to become Director of OEO's Community Action Program; Secretary of Labor Willard Wirtz who had long been interested and vocal on the subject; Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Assistant Secretary of Labor; Deputy Director Wilbur Cohen of HEW; Michael Harrington; Paul Ylvisaker of the Ford Foundation and writer Paul Jacobs. Also, John Baker and Jim Sundquist, two of the Agriculture Department's experts on rural problems; Minneapolis Mayor Arthur Naftalis; Frank Mankiewicz of the Peace Corps and Norbert Schlei, a Justice Department legal expert who took charge of drafting the legislation. Business and industry were represented by Don Petrie of Avis Rent-a-Car; Virgil Martin, of Carson, Pirie & Scott; Lane Kirkland of AFL-CIO; Richard Goodwin of the White House Staff; Adam Yarmolinsky, and James Dixon, president of

Antioch College.

The conference agreed on a three-point philosophy:

1. To emphasize the concept of individual economic independence;
2. To build around the theory that poverty was cyclical and demanded answers to break the cycle, and;
3. To focus on young people.

A further refinement of the conference as it was arduously worked out by the succeeding Task Force was that jobs and job training were to be developed by the Labor Department, educational and health problems were to come under the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Boone was to be instrumental in the community action concept and that special rural programs would be guided by the Department of Agriculture.

Then began the job of forming the Task Force and the work of drafting the President's message and the legislation.

On St. Patrick's Day, 1964, Shriver faced the House Education and Labor Subcommittee and thereby kicked off five solid weeks of tumultuous hearings.

In 1961 Shriver had gone to see every single congressman and sena-

tor to tell the Peace Corps story. Before the War Against Poverty

legislation was finally approved he was to duplicate that remarkable

adventure. This time it was harder.

Chapter Two - The Problem and the Cure

Slowly a new image began to emerge in the United States of the early 1960's. Suddenly America recognized a part of itself it had only incidentally been aware of -- the face of poverty. Soon an entire anatomy would be exposed throughout the land.

The sudden recognition was, in a way, understandable. The country was busy. Its accomplishments were already unprecedented in history and each day saw them accelerated; it was richer, more powerful, more inspired by gigantic leaps of attainment and growth than history had ever seen, had not in fact, even dared to imagine.

Who had time, other than the poor themselves -- and they were a voiceless people -- to consider poverty? Besides, poverty as a national affliction was something that had gone away with the depression, hadn't it?

The prevailing attitude in busy post-war America toward poverty and unemployment looked at such conditions as nothing more than

anachronistic economic malfunctions. During the fifties those writers who commented on society were preoccupied with the effects of, to mention some, the structure of the corporate society, the social adjustments of the middle-class (including what to do with leisure time,) the pressures of social conformity and the impact of advertising.

The Keynesian Harvard economist John Kenneth Galbraith, for example, regarded poverty in affluent America as a "remarkable" phenomenon which could not however, "be presented as a universal or massive affliction." By the early sixties however, Galbraith, then Ambassador to India, became a formidable proponent of massive federal action to meet a situation which, it was then clear, was the country's single most challenging domestic problem. Poverty, it was realized, was not something that existed overseas. It was something endemic in America. Complacent Americans could no longer, in the words of the Swedish economist-sociologist Gunnar Myrdal, "conceal from themselves that there is in the United States a large 'underclass' of poor and destitute people in the urban and

rural slums who are largely cut off from the life and aspirations of the nation."

Gradually a hidden landscape was exposed, charted by the handful of imaginative and knowledgeable geographers of humanity who customarily lead the way to major social revelations. And then there was this startling fact: That there existed within the country, in the flourishing sixth decade of the twentieth century, a society of dispossessed Americans populous enough to inhabit entire nations who were receiving American aid in massive commitments, the distressed countries of the underdeveloped world.

These forgotten Americans had more in common, in terms of survival, with the deprived peoples of the underdeveloped world than they did with their middle-class compatriots; malnutrition, illiteracy, high infant and adult mortality rates, unemployment, and predictably moribund futures which would become the hopeless heritage of their children.

In a spiritual sense, the one dictating the attitude of a man towards his entire life, being poor in America could be considered to be even more debilitating than being poor in Africa. Walter

Reuther, head of the Automobile Workers of America, referring to poverty in Tanganyika, said:

"But that is a different kind of poverty. It is economic poverty...a person living in Tanganyika on \$50 a year is a part of their society. He belongs to it. He has a sense of participating.

But poverty in America is more destructive of human values because poverty in America not only robs people of economic opportunity but spiritually. They are invisible citizens of America. When they are set aside they are denied the sense of belonging and the sense of participating as useful members of our society. They are denied their measure of human dignity."¹

There were, it seemed, as unbelievable as it might be, over 30 million Americans, more than half of them children and youngsters, who might just as well have been living in some backward country in Africa or Asia as in the United States where, for them,

¹ Before a subcommittee of the House Committee on Education and Labor; April 8, 1964.

the American Dream was, in reality, a nightmare.

The fact was that America could match slums, rotten houses and spirits corroded by poverty with any country in the backward regions of the world. Children of migrant workers, American Indians on government reservations, Appalachian miner's families, Americans of Spanish descent, Negroes in Alabama, or New York City for that matter, were testamentary to the fact.

Americans, other than those who suffered it, began to learn that poverty was oppressive. It choked, suffocated and annihilated; it crippled and destroyed and hurt. It killed children. It made human life ugly.

Increasingly it became evident that poverty in the Sixties was the major domestic crisis confronting the nation since the sixties of another century when the country was torn by the Civil War.

The Poor Americans

"By one crude index of poverty," said the report on 'Poverty in the United States' compiled by the House Committee on Education and Labor in April, 1964, "it can be shown that every fourth or fifth

family with children under age 18 may have to choose between an adequate diet at minimum cost and some other necessity -- they cannot afford both."

There were, the report said, between 17 and 23 million youngsters in the country, from a fourth to a third of all the nation's children, "growing up in the grey shadow of poverty." The reasonable expectation was that they would grow old in its shadow as well. There is a cyclical trap containing the poor. "Perhaps we should instead speak of a whole succession of circles, almost all vicious," said Dr. Thomas Gladwin in his book Poverty: U.S.A.²

"One such is the circle of cause and effect in which being poor means living in a poor neighborhood, which means going to a second-rate school, which means having an inadequate education, which means having a low-paying job or no job at all, and thus being poor. Or being poor means eating poor food and living in unsanitary housing which means having poor health, which means misusing

² Little, Brown and Co., 1967.

a lot of work or school, or perhaps being handicapped or not strong enough to handle the heavy manual work which is often the only kind available, and thus being unemployed much of the time, and so being poor. Being poor also means realizing that most of the other people in the world are more successful and are able to do things about which the poor person can scarcely even dream, which means that the poor person sees himself as a failure, which means he has no confidence and gives up easily or perhaps does not push himself at all, and thus stays poor forever."

"Unconditional War on Poverty...."

In his State of the Union message before a joint session of Congress on January 8, 1964, President Lyndon Baines Johnson launched the War on Poverty. Elimination of poverty, for the first time in the United States, for the first time anywhere in history, became a national goal.

The President said:

"This Administration today here and now declares unconditional

war on poverty in America, and I urge this Congress and all Americans to join with me in that effort."

He continued:

" ..It will not be a short or easy struggle -- no single weapon or strategy will suffice -- but we shall not rest until that war is won. The richest nation on earth can afford to win it. We cannot afford to lose it.

\$1000 invested in salvaging an unemployable youth today can return \$40,000 or more in his lifetime.

Poverty is a national problem, requiring improved national organization and support. But this attack, to be effective, must also be organized at the state and the local level and must be supported and directed by state and local efforts. For the war against poverty will not be won here in Washington. It must be won in the field -- in every private home, every public office, from the courthouse to the White House. The program I shall propose will emphasize this cooperative approach to help that 1/5 of all American families with incomes too small to even meet their basic needs.

Our chief weapons in a more pin-pointed attack will be better schools, and better health, and better homes, and better training and better job opportunities to help more Americans -- especially young Americans -- escape from squalor and misery and unemployment rolls where other citizens help to carry them. Very often a lack of jobs and money is not the cause of poverty, but the symptoms.

The cause may lie deeper -- in our failure to give our fellow citizens a fair chance to develop their own capacities -- in a lack of education and training, in a lack of medical care and housing, in a lack of decent communities in which to live and bring up their children.

But whatever the cause, our joint federal-local effort must pursue poverty -- pursue it wherever it exists -- in city slums and small towns, in sharecropper shacks, or in migrant worker camps, on Indian reservations, among whites as well as Negroes, among the young as well as the aged, in the boom towns and in the depressed areas."

In his message the President formalized an intention declared at a press conference on December 18, 1963, when he told reporters that

"poverty legislation for the lowest income groups" would be "high" on his "agenda of priority." The President said that "any kind of poverty will be a concern of this Administration. All of us know enough about it to not want the people to have to experience it any more than is absolutely necessary."

The Problem

The dimensions of the problem were contained in two basic initiating documents, the President's first annual Economic Message and the Council of Economic Advisers' Annual Report, both sent to Congress on January 20, 1964.³

The President pointed out that "one-fifth of our fellow citizens," or about 35 million persons, live "without hope below minimum standards of decency," and having only \$590 per capita income in 1962 compared with the national average of \$1,900.

Poverty, the Economic Advisers said, "is no purely private or local concern. It is a social and national problem," in which the

³ See Volume of Appendices.

poor "inhabit a world scarcely recognizable, scarcely recognized, by the majority of their fellow Americans."

Their Report made these points:

-- One fifth of our families and nearly one-fifth of our total population are poor:

-- Of the poor, 22 percent are non-white and nearly one-half of all non-whites live in poverty:

-- The heads of over 60 percent of all poor families have only grade school educations:

-- Even for those denied opportunity by discrimination, education significantly raises the chance to escape from poverty. Of all non-white families headed by a person with 8 years or less of schooling, 57 percent are poor. This percentage falls to 30 for high school graduates and to 18 percent for those with some college education:

-- But education does not remove the effects of discrimination; when non-whites are compared with whites at the same level of education, the non-whites are poor about twice as often:

-- One third of all poor families are headed by a person over 65,

and almost one-half of families headed by such a person are poor:

-- When a family and its head have several characteristics frequently associated with poverty, the chances of being poor are particularly high; a family headed by a young woman who is non-white and has less than an eighth grade education is poor in 94 out of 100 cases. Even if she is white, the chances are 85 out of 100 that she and her children will be poor.

The Poverty Line

At what point should a person be declared poor?

Under a standard set by the Social Security Administration, and used as a yardstick by the government, the poverty dividing line was established at an annual income of \$3,000 for a family of four; or about \$60 a week. This was the measure used by the Economic Advisors. On May 2, 1965, OEO Director Sargent Shriver announced a slightly variant and more detailed definition later developed by the Social Security Administration's Division of Research and Statistics. This yardstick was based on family size, location, and the Agriculture Department's "economy level food plan" based on a cost of 23c per

person per meal per day plus \$1.40 for everything else. The OEO classified as poor a non-farm family of four with an annual income under \$3,130, a family of three whose income was under \$2,440, a family of two whose income was under \$1,990 and a single individual whose income was under \$1,540. For farm families the boundaries were established as: A family of four, \$2,200; a family of three, \$1,170; a family of 2, \$1,400; an individual, \$1,080.

Of its \$3,000 figure, the Council of Economic Advisers said, about \$5 per week per person would be spent for food. Of the remain- in \$2,000, about \$800 would go for housing, leaving only \$1,200 -- less than \$25 per week -- for clothing, transportation, school supplies, home furnishings and supplies, medical care, personal care, recreation, insurance and everything else.

"Obviously," the Advisers declared, "it does not exaggerate the problem of poverty to regard \$3,000 as the boundary."

In 1962, the last year at that time for which there were completely authenticated governmental records, there were 9.3 million families in the country who had total incomes below \$3,000. More

than 1.1 million families, the report said, "are now raising four or more children on such an income."

There were more than 5.4 million families, containing more than 17 million persons, with total incomes below \$2,000.

More than a million children were being raised in very large families of six or more children with incomes of less than \$2,000.

And, there were the persons living alone, the "unrelated" individuals. In 1962, 45 per cent of such persons -- five million of them -- had incomes of less than \$1,500, and 29 percent -- or more than three million -- had incomes below \$1,000.

Thus, 33 to 35 million Americans were living at or below the boundaries of poverty in 1962 -- nearly one-fifth of the Nation.

In December, 1965, the Office of Economic Opportunity estimated that 34,300,000 persons fell under its definition of poverty. The figures were broken down as follows: (See following page)

The Council's report concluded with a request to "focus and coordinate our older programs and some new ones into a comprehensive long-

PERSONS UNDER DEFINITION OF POVERTY- from preceding page reference

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>MILLIONS</u>	<u>PERCENT OF TOTAL</u>
Rural...	14.9	43.4
Farm	4.4	12.8
Non-farm	10.5	30.6
Urban...	19.4	56.6
<u>RACE</u>		
White...	23.7	69.1
Non-white...	10.6	30.9
<u>BY AGE</u>		
Children (0-15)	13.9	50.9
Youths (16-21)	3.0	8.5
Adults (22-64)	12.0	33.0
Aged (over 64)	5.4	7.6
<u>BY DOMICILE</u>		
In families...	29.0	84.5
Living alone...	5.3	15.5

(continued from page 15)

range attack on the poverty that remains."

The President's program

On January 21, 1964, President Johnson submitted his \$97.9 billion budget for fiscal 1965. In it he proposed a network of federal, state and local actions for a coordinated attack on poverty to be backed by an initial federal authorization in 1965 of \$500 million of new obligational authority. In all more than \$1 billion of federal financing would be concentrated on the program in 1965, he said.

Two months later, on March 16, 1964, in a special message on poverty to the Congress drafted by Moynihan, the Galbraith, and Goodwin, the President proposed enactment of an Economic Opportunity act of 1964.

"The war on poverty," the President said, "is not a struggle simply to support people, to make them dependent on the generosity of others. It is a struggle to give people a chance. It is an effort to allow them to develop and use their capacities, as we have been allowed to develop and use ours, so that they can share, as others share, in the promise of the nation."

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The nation should embark on the program, the President said, because it was right that it should, and also because "helping some will increase the prosperity of all. Our fight against poverty will

be an investment in the most valuable of our resources -- the skills and strength of our people. And in the future, as in the past, this investment will return its cost many fold to our entire economy."

The Nation's history had proven, he said, "that each time we broaden the base of abundance, giving more people the chance to produce and consume, we create new industry, higher production, increased earnings, and better income for all. Giving new opportunity to those who have little will enrich the lives of all the rest."

The proposed legislation, the President said, would provide "five basic opportunities":

-- "It will give almost half a million underprivileged young Americans the opportunity to develop skills, continue education, and find useful work;

-- "It will give every American community the opportunity to enlist as volunteers in the war against poverty;

-- It will give the entire nation the opportunity for a concerted attack on poverty through the establishment, under my direction, of the Office of Economic Opportunity, a national headquarters for the

war against poverty."

The President had added to his original \$500 million request \$462.5 million for several additional budgeted programs in the poverty package.

To lead the new organization within the Executive Office of the President, the President announced his intention of appointing Peace Corps Director Robert Sargent Shriver Jr., who was to serve as his "personal chief of staff in the war against poverty." (Shriver had already been sworn in February 18, as a special Presidential assistant to head the Task Force which prepared the antipoverty program and drafted the President's message. The President appointed Shriver to be OEO Director on September 2, 1964. The Senate confirmed the appointment on September 22, and he was sworn in October 16.)

On March 16, the day the President sent his special message to congress, draft legislation outlining the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 was introduced in the House of Representatives by Rep. Phil M Landrum (D-Ga.), and an identical bill was introduced by Rep. Adam Clayton Powell (D-N.Y.), Chairman of the House Education and Labor

Committee. The Senate bill was introduced by Sen. Pat McNamara (D-Mich.).

The compromise act was enacted in August.

The program, as it was to do throughout its history, drew immediate supporters -- and detractors.

~~The Legislation~~

The draft legislation contained six titles embodying programs to be coordinated by the Office of Economic Opportunity which was to be the headquarters for the new war, the President's managerial arm which could reach across cabinet lines to facilitate swift and smooth effectiveness. It called for an expenditure of \$965.5 million in fiscal 1965.

The President's January 20 Economic Report had spelled out a 10-point attack on poverty covering: Income tax cuts, civil rights, regional development, urban and rural community rehabilitation, youth programs, and hospital insurance for the aged.

Provisions of the Act

The itself contained six basic titles comprising a multi-faceted, but coordinated, attack on the problem.

Title I embodied three proposals: A Job Corps that would provide work experience and training for youths in conservation camps and residential training centers, modeled in part on the New Deal Civilian Conservation Corps; work-training programs to provide employment to youths aged 16-21 in their neighborhoods; and a work-study program designed for college youths from low-income families.

Title II established a community action program, federally financed, to assist state, local private and local public non-profit agencies to combat poverty locally.

Title III would give grants to farmers for agricultural materials, loans to farmers to set up non-agricultural enterprises, loans to cooperatives to assist low-income families. It would also erect farm development corporations which would provide for a more economic transfer of land to low income farmers.

Title IV would establish incentive loans to individuals who would then employ the long-term hard-core unemployed. It would also enable small businessmen, exempted from Small Business Administration loan terms, to receive loan assistance.

Title V set up job training programs for the heads of households on public assistance.

Title VI created the Office of Economic Opportunity and its administration, as well as a volunteer national service organization modeled on the Peace Corps, to be called Volunteers for America.

The programs, under the supervision and direction of the Office of Economic Opportunity was to be authorized yearly, with Congressional approval and with an overall projection of three years.

The War on Poverty was not to be a reincarnation of the New Deal. While it embodied some similar programs, such as the CCC and the NYA, the New Deal attempted to provide social services to relieve want and distress; the War on Poverty of the sixties aimed at the roots to expand choice and enlarge human freedom, to open the doors into the main edifice of the economy.

Behind the act was the ~~assumption~~^{assumption} of "operation bootstrap" potential; that success and achievement in American society was available to those who work, given the opportunity.

The Council of Economic Advisors' report had noted that the

proposed programs were designed "to equip and to permit the poor of the nation to produce and to earn...the American standard of living by their own efforts and contributions."

A basic assumption of the economic thinking behind the act was that success in the war on poverty rested largely upon a rapid and steady economic growth, raising the demand for labor and decreasing unemployment. The quality of the labor supply, through education, training, and re-training, had to be raised to meet a changing labor demand constantly stimulated by a steadily accelerating technological and scientific flow.

Observers noted that many of the programs outlined in the bill either incorporated or extended activities that had been operated either in large scale or in prototype at some point in the past, or which had direct analogies in on-going programs. During the hearings before the House and Senate committees, it was remarked that consideration of specific programs had been made before, such as the National Service Corps and the Peace Corps (VISTA); a work-study program feature of the National Defense Education act; a job corps and work-training project

of the 1963 Youth Employment Opportunity Bill; the community action aspect of the Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Offenses Control Act of 1961; and so on. Moreover, it was said, precedents existed in the form of privately sponsored projects, such as the Ford Foundation urban community action planning, the North Carolina state-wide program, and so on. Ad hoc local groups had previously operated their own version of tutoring programs; the Opportunity Industrial Corporation, headed by Leonn Sullivan, a militant Negro minister, had conducted adult education, retraining and job placement programs in poverty-stricken areas of Philadelphia. The NAACP had for years engaged in financing sharecroppers; the National Urban League had supervised retraining projects; and the Southern Regional Council since 1945 had concerned itself with a variety of programs similar to those incorporated into the act. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, one of the original task force members, recalled that at the time of consideration of the OEO Act, the initial impulse "within the second echelon of the government was simply to launch a greatly expanded community action program, following the models already in action." Other considerations, he noted, led

led to a more diverse program. Richard Boone, an original Task Force member who went on to head the OEO's Community Action Program, said later that, barring the CAP section of the Act, much of the rest "was made up of items which could not get through Congress separately. President Kennedy had tried to get the Job Corps through the Congress ~~xxxxxxx~~ under the Department of Labor, and had been stymied. It was felt by President Johnson that this was a good opportunity to put a number of things together in a package and get them through Congress, and he did just that."

The Hearings

During the hearings before the House and Senate committees spokesmen for the Administration took pains to differentiate between antecedent programs and legislation and the present legislation.

There was ample testimony explaining the advantages of coordination, unification, and interagency cooperation by such persons as Shriver, HEW Secretary Celebrezze, and Labor Secretary Wirtz.

The major thrust of the program, Shriver told the House committee, was contained in Title II, the Community Action program. Its purpose

was to "change institutions as well as people." It challenged "hostile or uncaring or exploitive institutions," attempting to make them responsive to the peculiar needs of the "whole community."

The phrase "maximum feasible participation of the poor," which was to cause so much dissension afterward, it was explained, required a total involvement of the poor at each phase of each program in the community. The assumption was that respect and confidence could best be restored by bringing representatives of the poor and the poor themselves into the planning of programs aimed at the poor, by letting them speak up concerning their needs, and by giving them the assurance that comes from participation. The concept, Shriver recalled, brought to mind Jane Addams admonition that "one cannot do good to the poor; one can only hope to do good with the poor."

Title II departed from traditional federal welfare approaches by placing main responsibility on local communities. The reasons given by the Administration were the superiority of local leadership in terms of familiarity with local problems, concern for the principle of state's rights, and a desire to unify communities through broad local partici-

pation.

While the bill went before the Congressional committees, the President waged a vigorous campaign to solicit public support for the measure.

The President appealed to the people and their representatives, personally visiting poverty-stricken regions, highlighting conditions and reminding congressmen of their responsibilities to their constituents. That May the President called for the country to build a "Great Society," based on a "creative federalism between the national capital and the leaders of local communities." A month later, before the AFL-CIO Communications Workers' convention, he announced the objectives of the Great Society: No one would be the "victim of fear or poverty or hatred...and no person, no group, no party is going to stand in the way of that forward march." In a very real sense, one writer observed, the poverty program "would be the test case to see whether the battle standards of the Great Society could be raised up in place of the somewhat tattered flags of the New Frontier."

During the summer of 1964 the nation was "deluged with vivid

descriptions of the life of the poor, statistical accounts of their number and characteristics, and details of their geographic location." Poverty -- the issue, not the reality -- became "fashionable," according to Dwight Macdonald, who noted that even the Saturday Evening Post ran a lead article running to twelve pages entitled "The Invisible Americans." In April the Committee on Education and Labor published a report on Poverty in the United States; Senator Clark was holding a subcommittee investigation on unemployment; Hubert Humphrey published a book entitled War on Poverty which gave official recognition to the theory of the culture of poverty whereby generations bequeath poverty to their progeny "with almost genetic certainty." John Kenneth Galbraith, who less than a decade before had dismissed poverty in a short chapter of his Affluent Society, was writing in Harpers magazine that the impoverished must be rescued from their plight, and in their rescue "a steady expansion in economic output (and) a broad and equitable distribution of services" would be required. By the time Adam Clayton Powell brought the bill to a vote in the House Committee, an emergent public interest had developed.

Eighty-five witnesses had testified in the twenty-five days of hearings before the House Committee on Education and Labor. Nine opposed the bill: Three representing the Chamber of Commerce, one a state manufacturing association delegate, and another from the Farm Bureau Federation -- "lobbies whose opposition to any form of government spending on social welfare and education is a basic ritual" performed regularly. (The National Farmer's Union, the National Grange, and the National Sharecropper's Fund all supported the bill.) Two of the remaining four were Republican members of the Joint Economic Committee whose minority report had accused the Council of Economic Advisor's report of exaggerating the extent of poverty in the country. The remaining two were educators who felt the bill was misdirected and its programs unnecessary. Of the remaining seventy-six witnesses, twelve were technical advisors representing government statistical services and whose testimony was unrelated to the merits of the bill. Twenty-nine were members of the administration or original members of the task force. The remainder represented social-welfare, civic and religious organizations, state and local governments, and businesses.

A critic commented that the hearings were "carefully engineered and overwhelmed by a well-organized administrative lobby." At the AFL-CIO Executive Council meeting, February 17-26, a statement endorsed the poverty war, but said it should be viewed as "hardly a first small step."

Opposition to the bill came from expected quarters. From the first Republican committee members served notice that the poverty bill would not get bipartisan support. Peter Freylinghuysen, (R., N.J.) labeled the bill a potpourri of stale ideas previously rejected by Congress. It would produce confusion of purpose, create a "poverty czar," and usurp the authority of Cabinet officers. On April 28 he introduced his own bill which excluded an independent agency, leaving the administration of a program to HEW and the states. Richard Nixon, at an April press conference, called the war on poverty a "cruel hoax," a charge vigorously denied by the President. Those who would make such criticisms, Johnson responded, were the sort "who would turn the American dream into a nightmare." GOP House Committee members David Martin and M. G. Snyder attacked the President's sincer-

ity in the war; "The President's poverty campaign is nothing more than an election year gimmick," they asserted. Sargent Shriver, in his testimony before the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, replied to this charge: "I think that if the national administration had failed to propose this bill, just because it was afraid that someone would say it was an election year gimmick, as they have, then I would think the Federal Government would be derelict in its responsibility."

New York's Governor Rockefeller, campaigning for the GOP Presidential nomination, accused the administration's poverty war as a "public relations effort to distract people's attention" from its failure to provide more jobs. It was an outdated program, he continued, more "keyed to the problems of the depressed thirties, not the challenge of the sixties. In an advanced, automated economy, a youngster cannot learn useful jobs out in the woods with an axe."

If the liberal wing of the GOP was critical of technique, the conservative element levelled its guns at the program's substance.

Reminiscent of the late 19th century Social Darwinist view of the poor, conservatives argued that poverty was the result of individual fault and not environment. "The fact is," said Barry Goldwater, "that most people who have no skill, have had no education for the same reason -- low intelligence or low ambition." People must earn, and want to earn, any social and economic benefits they receive. In American society, he continued, a person receives rewards by "merit and not by fiat." To be sure, everyone was entitled to an opportunity for education and earnings ("in keeping with the value of their work"), but he did not believe that "the mere fact of having little money entitles everybody, regardless of circumstances, to be permanently maintained by the taxpayers at an average or comfortable standard of living."

Throughout the summer the bill passed through the Congressional gristmill, undergoing slight alteration under sometimes hostile scrutiny. Administration witnesses, testifying on behalf of the proposed legislation, presented a united front to committee members, citing the advantages of each respective provision. Sargent Shriver, designated Director-to-be, reviewed the projected objectives of the poverty program and the functions of the Office of Economic Opportunity. Youth programs,

Secretary McNamara noted, would substantially reduce the percentage of draft rejectees, a known concern of the Kennedy administration.

Cabinet officers testified that the entire Cabinet was behind the bill, while Secretary of Commerce Hodges said in reply to questions about potential departmental conflict, "I'm not scared of anyone taking anything away from me." HEW Secretary Anthony Celebrezze painted a rosy picture of interdepartmental cooperation, denying that Mr. Shriver would dominate other government agencies. If successful war was to be waged on poverty, he said, it was necessary to have a commanding general. Secretary of Labor Wirtz pacified committee fears about the exclusion of religious groups from the community action programs, and Hodges suggested that Title IV would be a useful experiment to test the merits of private enterprise's participation in the poverty war. Orville Freeman, Secretary of Agriculture, praised the Job Corps as a needed adjunct to the Forest Service, and said that urban pressures could be relieved through the grant and loan program to farmers. Speculative pressures from large-scale farming operations had caused undue inflation of farm land values, and the farm development corporations, envisaged by Title III, would make available to small farmers

good farm land at lower prices and would act as an incentive to rural development, he said.

Criticisms and objections to specific portions of the bill generally followed partisan lines, as did the actual voting. In the House Committee, Charles Goodell (R, N.Y.) questioned the absence of a prohibition against aid to religious groups, while Robert Taft Jr., (R., Ohio) felt that the community action programs ignored the proper federal-state relationships. Roman Pucinski (D., Ill.) accused the farm development corporations scheme as being "awfully close to the type of farming we most often criticize behind the Iron Curtain." Peter Frelinghuysen (R., N.J.) said the bill charted "anew and unjustified course for governmental responsibility in general and for the Federal role in particular." He objected to a new federal bureaucracy whose influence would "permeate every nook and cranny of civic responsibility -- public and private."

In the Senate, the senior Senator from New York, Jacob Javits, would have preferred to have had the government declare a joint war with the states, instead of a federal war alone. Senators Tower and

Goldwater saw the bill as yet another example of federal intrusion into state and local matters, "complete and untrammelled." Some complained that the bill had been hastily drawn together, and Shriver proudly confirmed that the draft had, indeed, been compiled in six week. Carl Madden, a Chamber of Commerce researcher, reported that a task force consultant seeking his cooperation had said, "we haven't got time to study; we have to act."

Major objections in both the House and Senate committee minority reports focused on the duplication of existing programs, the undermining of federal-state relations, and the confusions that would result from a new bureaucracy. Charges were made of the rehash of older, sometimes rejected ideas gathered together for political purposes. The farm development corporations would institute "agrarian land reform," and the programs by-passed the very old and very young. The Goldwater-Tower Senate minority report wielded a heavy axe. The administration's technique in ram-rodging the bill through Congress recalled "Madison Avenue" and "The Wizard of Oz" practices, it said. It was a "poverty grab-bag," based on obsolete programs, which treated the results and

"not the causes of poverty." Some of its programs were totally "alien to the best traditions of our country."

To some extent outside pressures and events hastened the passage of the bill. In the wake of the summer race riots the New York Times, describing the bill as an "anti-riot" measure, cautioned members of the committees to bear that in mind when it came time for a vote.

In August, the House vote on the bill depended on a bloc of undecided Congressmen, who fell loosely into two affiliated groups. A dozen moderate to liberal Republicans, sympathetic to the aims of the program, and impressed by Shriver's Peace Corps record, faced the dilemma that it was a Democratic bill backed by a Democratic President. These same Republicans had been "flattened by the Goldwater steamroller" at the GOP convention weeks earlier. Democrats in the other group, from marginal southern states, "concentrated in the North Carolina delegation," recognized the need for an omnibus poverty program in their home districts. They had just been "badly torn by the bloody fight over the Civil Rights Act of 1964." They had to decide whether to support a bill which southern critics complained was designed to

force compliance with the Civil Rights act.

Two key events resolved the issue and won support from the undecided bloc. A bargain was struck between conservation lobby groups and top aides in the Poverty Task Force, whereby a percentage of Job Corps enrollees would be consigned to a Youth Conservation Corps in return for active support for the bill by the lobbies. The other event involved the jettisoning of Adam Yarmolinsky, a key Task Force member on loan from the Defense Department. At a critical point in the voting, Representative Ayres attacked Yarmolinsky, quoting an internal memo implying that Defense Department funds were being used to build and equip Job Corps centers before the bill had passed. Rep. Landrum then announced that Yarmolinsky would be excluded from the operations of the OEO, "on the highest authority." A task force member noted that "the southern Democrats had asked for and gotten their pound of flesh -- assurance that the abrasive, intellectual Jew of Russian extraction who had roughed up the military rank and file in the Defense Department, and who was reputed to have been responsible for orders forcing base commanders in the South to declare segregated

facilities in nearby towns off-limits to servicemen, would thereafter be barred from any job in Johnson's poverty agency."

After three days of debate the House of Representatives finally passed the bill on August 8, by a roll-call vote of 226-194 (204D & 22R vs 114R and 40D.)

The Senate passed its bill, after two days of debate, by a roll-call vote of 61-34 (51D & 10R vs 22R & 12D.)

Changes in the original form of the bill were slight. Minority opposition had introduced a gubernatorial veto effective over Titles I and II and that part of Title VI regarding the stationing of VISTA Volunteers within the confines of state. Women were to be admitted to the Job Corps program; federal assistance was to be granted to set up state Job Corps camps; farm aid grants were changed to loans; and the Office of Economic Opportunity was required to operate through existing agencies to the maximum extent possible.

Citing the experience of the New York Mobilization for Youth, staffed by "left-wingers" who indulged in anti-establishment activity, a Dixiecrat/Northern Republican coalition inserted a loyalty oath

requirement into the bill. The idea of a single "community action program" executed by a "community action organization" was deleted, as well as the requirement that the agency receiving funds be "broadly representative of the community." The clause was revised to allow grants to "components of a community action program" without reference to the concurrent planning of a single, carefully planned community-wide administration and the formation of an overall development program." Also, direct grants to agricultural workers were eliminated, as were "land reform" measures. Farm cooperatives were forbidden aid if they engaged in agricultural production or for manufacturing purposes.

On the last day of the 1964 Congressional session, as part of a supplemental appropriations bill, \$800 million was granted to the Office of Economic Opportunity for fiscal year 1965, authorizing 4,000 permanent employees for the poverty program.

President Johnson signed the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (Public Law 88-452) on August 20, declaring:

"Today for the first time in all the history of the human race, a great nation is able to make and is willing to make a commitment to

eradicate poverty among its people.

Whatever our situation in life, whatever our partisan affiliation, we can be grateful and proud that we are able to pledge ourselves this morning to this historic course. We can be especially proud of the nature of the commitments that we are making.

This is not in any sense a cynical proposal to exploit the poor with a promise of a hand-out or a dole.

We know -- we learned long ago -- that answer is no answer.

The measure before me this morning for signature offers the answer that its title implies -- the answer of opportunity. For the purpose of the Economic Act of 1964 is to offer opportunity, not an opiate.

...We are not content to accept the endless growth of relief rolls or welfare rolls. We want to offer the forgotten fifth of our people opportunity and not doles.

That is what this measure does for our times."⁴

⁴ Remarks of the President Upon the Signing of S. 2642 - Poverty Bill in the Rose Garden, August 20, 1964.

The Act was the first major legislation proposed by the President to be passed by the Congress.



Getting Funded

A subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee began hearings on August 14.¹ Shriver asked for \$947.5, the full amount authorized by the Act. In his opening statement Shriver stressed three points; the efforts which had gone into the preparation of the request for funds, why the program needed the full amount and the low overhead involved in the nature of the program.

1. Hearings before the House Subcommittee on Depts. of Labor, HEW, and related agencies

To substantiate his points Shriver said the antipoverty programs were developed by "the best men we could find in America, both in and out of Government, irrespective of party". Called in, he went on to explain, were representatives of business, labor, education; state, city and county officials; and experts from the voluntary agencies working in the field. All of these experts, Shriver said, working in conjunction with officials of the Departments of Labor, Interior, Agriculture, HEW, Justice and the Small Business Administration, had conferred on and approved the budget estimates which were before the committee. "Sums requested for programs to be delegated to one of the departments are the rproduct of coordinated efforts of personnel of that agency and the task force. In each case the pertinent department strenuously supports the request for funds," he said.

Then, in a paragraph, he summarized the substance of the bill. "The funds requested," he said, "will be used to establish needed new programs such as the Job Corps, work-training and work-study program, community action programs, adult basic education programs, adult basic education programs

and the VISTA volunteers program. In certain cases the funds will be used to broaden existing pilot programs which have proved their worth; for example, the loan programs of the Farmers Home administration and the work-experience program of the Bureau of Family Services of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Each of these programs is sound; each is practical. Each will meet a proven need."

From the moment, in March, when the President sent the bill to Congress, Shriver said, "we have planned for operations beginning September 1. We have continually reviewed these plans and are prepared to go ahead on that schedule. To meet our goals we need and will obligate every single dollar authorized and included in these budget estimates."

And, lastly, he ^Sempha_zed, it was a low-overhead program designed to avoid a "giant Federal bureaucracy," and with major development and administrative tasks to be carried out at the local and state levels.

Shriver denied, as he had in previous hearings, that the program would duplicate existing programs, making the point that it had the full support of all related government departments, and that, obviously, the would not

approve of programs which conflicted with their established and ongoing operations.

There were, it was true, Shriver said, three important national groups who were opposed to the program, the National Association of Manufacturers, the U. S. Chamber of Commerce, and the American Farm Bureau Federation. He added, "They were conspicuous in their opposition because they were among the very few that did oppose."

During the series of extended hearings Shriver went on, point by point, to answer criticism and reply to detailed questioning. The program had the support of both a committee and the Council of Governors and the full U. S. Conference of Mayors. (At one point later on there was a strong opposition movement in the Conference of Mayors before it returned to its original position of full support.

During the first day of hearings, Shriver attempted, once more, to illuminate the constructive nature of the program and its fundamental variance from the entrenched welfare system. "I think the problem some people have when they look at this bill," he said, "or hear about it, is

that they think of it as a relief program, they think we are going to take money from the rich and give it to the poor or just hand out checks to people.

"That is not the intent of this bill and under its provisions it would not be possible to do that in any case.

"One of the reasons we call it the economic opportunity program (is) to emphasize the fact it is not a relief program. This is a program which opens up new opportunities and new changes for people who need a chance to get out of poverty and that is why it has such a heavy emphasis on job training, education, and local community action."

Assisted by supporting testimony from U. S. Commissioner of Education Francis Keppel, representatives of Federal departments and key members of his Task Force, on loan at that time chiefly from other agencies, Shriver went on to explain major points of the different sections of the Act.

On the subject of the community action program, the core of the Administration's antipoverty war, Shriver said:

"I can just say the objective of the community action program is to

get action initiated against poverty at the point closest to where the poor people live by encouraging and inspiring local governmental units, and local private voluntary agencies to initiate programs at the local level.

"The philosophy behind this is that poverty can be analyzed and combated best by those who are closest to it; so, rather than putting the individual communities of the United States in a planning straitjacket originated here, or in a state capitol, we are trying to take this responsibility as close to the local government level as we can."²

The hearing, that first day, went on to consider such questions as: poverty in rural areas, grants for program development, technical assistance grants, the migrant agricultural employees program, loans in the agricultural sector, the adult literacy program, VISTA, the administrative

2. This profound and innovative concept of basic social participation which was to become the most controversial issue of the War on Poverty, had been written specifically into the EOA of 1964 which said that Community Action Agencies were to be "developed, conducted, and administered with the maximum feasible participation of residents of the areas and members of the groups involved." A full discussion of the intent, the derivation and application of the phase follows in a subsequent chapter.

structure of OEO and its costs, the relation of the program to the Manpower Development and Training Act, Aid for Dependent Children, the possibility of funds being used to buy educational toys (it was explained that this might come under a community action program and would have to be reviewed as such), review procedure for community action grant applications, requirements for matching local contributions (10 percent would be required, either in cash or in equivalent staff-services or facilities), cost per Job Corps enrollee, aid for Indians, consultant fees; and others.

"I think," said subcommittee Chairman John E. Fogarty (D-R.I.) in concluding the day's hearings, "you have done a good job today in justifying this appropriation. I wish you a lot of luck. You will need it."

"I think," replied Shriver, "we will."

On September 17, the House Appropriations Committee reported HR 12633 which included the FY 1965 appropriations for OEO. The Committee recommended an appropriation of 750 million, a reduction of \$197.5 million from the request, giving as its reasons that, "...it is obvious that when this program was planned it was expected that it would be implemented much earlier than

is now going to be the fact," and that it would take a "considerable amount of time to recruit all the staff necessary." The House passed the appropriations bill by a roll call vote of 209-103 on September 22. It defeated an amendment proposed by Rep. Ben F. Jensen (R-Iowa), which would have reduced the appropriation to \$650 million.

The Senate Appropriations Committee began hearing testimony on the budget on August 15, with Shriver making the point immediately that "we planned right from the beginning...on an operation which would start September 1, not July 1." He went into an explanation of the funding requirements for the act's provisions.

Another Senate hearing was held on September 22, and again Shriver made an attempt to clarify the budget figure estimates by pointing out they were predicated on a September beginning and not on the customary fiscal year basis of July 1 to June 30. On September 29, the Senate Committee recommended an appropriation of \$861.5 million, an increase of \$111.5 million over the House figure and a reduction of \$85.95 million from the Administration

request. The Senate passed its bill on November 1. The next day a House-Senate Conference Committee submitted a report which appropriated \$800 million. The same day both the House and Senate passed HR 12633 by voice vote. The President signed the measure on November 7. OEO began formal operations on November 8.

OEO was able to plan for \$793,042,548 in programs for its first fiscal year and to obligate \$760,394,250.

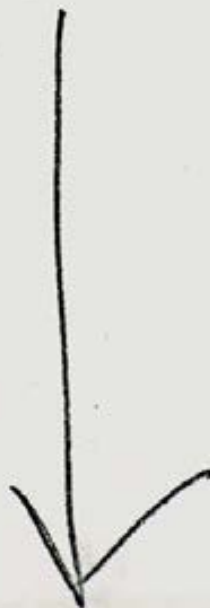


The Targets and the Design

In its first Congressional presentation of March 17, 1965, OEO described the six groups from whom "the community of poverty" was largely drawn: the children of poverty; those by-passed by industrial change; rural families; minority group members; fatherless families; the aged.

While the list was not all inclusive, the report said, it was clear that most of the nation's poor shared one or more of the characteristics included in it and that "together, they constitute what must be recognized, even by the skeptical, as a stubborn core of poverty in the United States."

Toward these targets of opportunity, the report said, its programs would:



-- Stimulate our communities to initiate comprehensive action programs attacking the roots of poverty;

-- Expand the opportunities for your youth to gain the education, skills, and experience they must have to become full participants in our nation's life:

-- Help farmers to increase their income through a program of small capital loans and grants;

-- Provide new employ opportunities--for the long-term unemployed-- by encouraging capital investment, and new orpportunities for small entrepreneurs by making credit available;

-- Encourage more states to orient their programs of public assistance toward rehabilitation rather than support;

--Recruit and train volunteers to work with agencies carrying out the various programs.

"In short," the introduction concluded, "it is a program which can open for the young the opportunity to learn; for the ablebodied, the opportunity to work; and for all, the opportunity to live in decency and dignity."

~~SECRET~~

These goals, in essence, were embodied in the six titles of the EOA. Not all of them were to be administered directly by the OEO since, from the beginning days of the Task Force, the decision had been made to utilize the existing structure of other government agencies in those fields where they had established structures for best implementing the new programs. To insure the efficient operation of these delegated programs the OEO administration included an Assistant Director for Interagency Relations who was to "ensure the implementation of OEO policy in the operation of the several delegated programs, establishing liaison with other government agencies administering poverty-related programs and serving as coordinator for OEO dealings with all other government agencies."

The delegation or responsibility for the programs was:

Job Corps, administered by OEO under Title I; Neighborhood Youth Corps under the Manpower Administration of the Labor Department, Title I; Work-Study program under HEW's Office of Education, Title I; Community Action Program (CAP) under OEO through local agencies, Title II; Adult Basic Education, Office of Education through state governments, Title II; Project Head Start,

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structurally a part of CAP but operated through local Head Start centers, Title II; Rural Loans, Farmers Home Administration of the Agriculture Department, Title III; Migrant Program, CAP, Title II; Small Business Loans, Small Business Administration, Title IV; Work-Experience Program, Welfare Administration of HEW, Title V; VISTA, OEO, Title VI; Indian Programs, CAP through tribal councils, Title II; Upward Bound, by CAP through colleges and universities, Title II.

Within OEO's Headquarters the table of organization called for a Deputy Director to assist Shriver, seven Assistant Directors for Offices of Inspection, Congressional Liaison, Private Groups, Inter-Agency Relations, Public Affairs, Management, and Research, Planning, Programming and Evaluation; as well as a General Counsel. There were separate Assistant Directors, appointed by the President, to head OEO's three main generic programs, Job Corps, CAP, and Vista.

This was the administrative structure of the organization when it went into action with its first grants on November 25, just three weeks after it could, in ^{reality} particularity, disburse any money.

~~Sub-Grants~~

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Chapter Three

Starting Out

First grants, Troubles, Criticism, Achievements

The Office of Economic Opportunity was born on August 20, 1964, when the President signed the Economic Opportunity Act (EOA) certifying its existence. It wasn't however, given any money to spend until October 7, when Congress authorized a budget. The next day marked the beginning of formal operations. But, since the country was in the midst of a Presidential campaign, and to avoid any implications of political partisanship, not a cent was committed or promised during the campaign. The first expenditures and disbursements were held until after Election day. "November 5 was really the beginning of the War on Poverty," Shriver said afterward.

FIRST GRANTS

There were applicants long before there was any money for them. As far back as September, after the House Appropriations Committee had recommended a cut of \$197.5 million, Shriver told the Senate Appropriations Committee¹ that, already, more than 10,000 teachers and counselors had inquired about working in Job Corps Centers; states and counties had already requested 1,500 VISTA Volunteers; there had been more than 100 spontaneous requests for Job Corps centers from governors,

¹ On September 22.

mayors, city councils, chambers of commerce, businessmen and citizen's organizations; more than 125 cities and towns had already submitted community action requests; and, 15 specific contract proposals for Job Corps centers had been received from states, universities and private businesses. Just these last applications alone, he said, would involve 15,000 enrollees in training by the end of the fiscal year, June 30.

Under the terms of the Act, roughly one-third of the total funds were to be available for the individual states for Community Action, Adult Education, and Work-Study programs according to a distribution formula contained in the Act. The balance was to be allotted to those states, communities and institutions which came forward with the best programs first. The total state share would depend on the state's willingness and readiness to engage in comprehensive community action programs, and on the substance and practicality of the projects proposed, as well as on the priority in which the requests were received.

The War on Poverty launched its first barrage, an OEO press release read, on six fronts involving 119 separate anti-poverty projects in two-thirds of the states in the nation. Six Federal agencies simultaneously announced, on November 25, projects involving \$35 million and affecting impoverished Americans ranging from unemployed adults to school children. Details of the initial programming were announced by Shriver following a meeting with President Johnson. Highlights of the programs included:

- The first Community Action grants to help communities plan, develop and operate Community Action programs were made to nine states, 12 cities, six rural areas, and an Indian reser-

vation.

-- The first Neighborhood Youth Corps programs to provide part of full-time jobs for young men and women 16 through 21. The initial 14 programs serving 10,500 youths were located in 13 states.

-- The first work-experience programs for unemployed parents who were to receive training in basic education, work habits and job skills. The initial four projects were located in Pittsburgh, Atlanta; Carven County, North Carolina; and Yell County, Arkansas. More than 1,200 unemployed parents with almost 5,000 children were involved in the four programs.

-- The first construction funds--approximately \$15 million--allocated to build and refurbish Job Corps conservation centers. Construction funds were assigned to the Departments of Agriculture and the Interior to operate the centers. Fourteen governors waived the 30-day veto period for Job Corps Centers and gave their immediate approval for 32 centers.

In other developments covered by that first release, 31 colleges and universities in the Washington, D.C., Chicago and Detroit areas had agreed to conduct work-study programs to assist needy students by providing part-time jobs on and off campus. Meanwhile, VISTA reported that the first 150 Volunteers would begin training before the year's end. Requests for Volunteers had come in from 78 communities in 34 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and American Samoa.

On December 6, OEO announced approval by 21 Governors of the first

Job Corps Centers. Ten days later Shriver announced approval of 18 additional Job Corps centers in 15 states.

The following day, on December 17, President Johnson announced 162 separate War on Poverty projects, ranging from a near \$4 million grant to Chicago for implementing an anti-poverty campaign, to a \$6,000 small business loan to a former Pittsburgh steelworker to expand his 12-seat luncheonette. The package, totaling \$82.6 million, included the first three urban Job Corps Centers, each of them to train between 1,250 and 2,500 enrollees per year when in full operation.

One month later President Johnson announced another giant cluster of projects in 33 states and Puerto Rico for a total cost \$101,960,782. Said the President:

In the first 101 days of this unique national war effort we have brought nearly 400 transfusions of new opportunity to disadvantaged Americans in every part of this land. We have made a major and significant beginning to throttle want and elevate hope. We have changed what some have called the government's War on Poverty to truly every American's War on Poverty. From every state in the nation men and women have come forward to help in this effort.

The President announced the package on January 18. By that time there was already a good deal of backfire.

THE CRITICS

"The program was being roundly denounced," said David Gelman, an information officer on loan from the Peace Corps to write some of OEO's early presentations, "long before it got its first dime. The problem was that it was visible right from January as a task force."²

² Conversation, June 1968.

Criticism came in many forms and in a remarkably flexible use of the American language. "It has always been the Republican approach," said a pamphlet issue by the Republican National Committee, and sounding a minority theme which accompanied OEO from its very beginnings, "to assist the poor and disadvantaged in their climb up the economic and social ladder; not to drag them up forcibly by a green rope of dollar bills."³ The pamphlet quoted a Minority opinion in the 1964 Annual Economic Report of the Joint Economic Committee of Congress:

"A war on poverty will not be won by slogans; nor by shopworn programs and proposals dressed up in the new packaging; nor by the defeatist relief concept of the 1930's; nor by the cynical use of poverty for partisan political ends; nor by overstating the problems and thereby inexcusably lowering America's prestige in the eyes of the world."

"I thought," said Republican Congressman Robert Taft Jr., "we had been working against poverty since the beginning of this country. I thought many of the programs, the Manpower Development and Training Act, vocational education, unemployment compensation, all kinds of measures of this sort were trying to keep our economy strong...Why, at this particular point, are we going ahead with a poverty program as such in an omnibus bill?"⁴

There was less temperate criticism from more radical quarters.

³ "The Alleviation of Poverty," June 1966.

⁴ Hearings before the Subcommittee on the War on Poverty Program of the House Education and Labor Committee, 88th Congress, 2nd session, March 17, 1964. p.99.

"...the Poverty Program is turning into a prize piece of political pornography," said community organizer and social dissident Saul Alinsky, head of the Industrial Areas Foundation well before the program was a year old. "It's a huge political pork barrel, and a feeding trough for the welfare industry, surrounded by sanctimonious, hypocritical, phony, moralistic crap...Across the country, City Halls have their Committees on Economic Opportunity to identify what they call positive and negative programs and leaders. Positive means you do what every City Hall tells you to do and negative means you are subversive, that you think for yourself."⁵

A magazine article at the time cited Alinsky's criticisms of OEO: Before a Washington audience of Congressmen and their aides, Alinsky asserted that the war on poverty is "the first war ever launched in history on a balanced budget." It might become, he said, "the worst political blunder and boomerang of the present administration." He added, "Our slums are not foreign nations to be worked with in such a manner as never to constitute a challenge to the status quo. The Peace Corps mentality does not apply to America's dispossessed...This is not the program for a silky smooth Madison Avenue approach with a major talent for the avoidance of controversy...which fails to understand that dissonance is the music of democracy." Alinsky went on to charge that community umbrella organizations were "stacked at least two to one with payrollers or the party faithful;" that anti-poverty funds are being used to "suffocate militant independent leadership and

⁵ Harpers Magazine, July 1965; Vol 231, No. 1382: Conversations with Saul Alinsky, Part II: A Professional Radical Moves in on Rochester."

action organizations which have been arising to arm the poor with their share of power;" that OEO had created "a vast network of sergeants drawing generals' pay;"⁶ that the Economic Opportunity Act "may well be regarded as history's greatest relief program for the benefit of the welfare industry." An all out war on poverty would be fought only when the poor were "possessed of sufficient power to threaten the status quo with disturbing alternatives, so that it will induce the status quo to come through with a genuine, decent, meaningful poverty program."⁷

PROBLEMS

Two major, wide-ranging incidents that first difficult and path-finding Summer of 1965, both within the framework of the Community Action Program, illustrate the complexity of issues aroused by the introduction -- some called it intrusion -- of OEO programs into the local, daily life of the country. The first concerned a Head Start program for preschool children in the deep South; the second, in upstate New York, involved a pilot community action program which inspired the enmity of the established political and welfare structures. Both had powerful

⁶ From the earliest days of Congressional consideration of the poverty legislation there had been many fears expressed concerning the creation of a poverty "czar." Shriver, according to Yarmolinsky, would insist he was only a sergeant and, disclaiming any ambitions for "czarhood" would direct people to consider "what happened to the czars."

⁷ Erwin Knoll, "Progress on Poverty," The Progressive, July 1965.

political ramifications which caught OEO between activist movements and "the establishment." Both were widely reported in the press, often with decided partisan flavor, and both were accompanied by bitter charges that OEO was either "playing ball" with the vested structure of local and federal government, or, was inspiring and funding disruptive political movements. And, both caused "protest" demonstrations in Washington.

CDGM

Probably the most complicated and long-lasting dispute in which OEO was embroiled was the issue involving the Child Development Group of Mississippi (CDGM). The community organization was formed in the Spring of 1965, specifically to bring the benefits of CAP's newly organized Head Start preschool program to 6,000 children through 85 centers in 24 counties. The board members of CDGM included Dr. A. D. Beittel, former president of Tougaloo College and an employee of the American Friends Service Committee, Marian Wright, an employee of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, and the Rev. James McCree, a minister from Canton, Mississippi.

The first grant to CDGM was awarded on May 18, 1965, to Mary Holmes Junior College, West Point, Mississippi. Mary Holmes throughout the controversy would be the CAP grantee and would, in turn, sub-contract for the Head Start program to be operated by CDGM. Mary Holmes is operated by the Presbyterian National Board of Missions. From every point of view, the project promised to be an outstanding one. In terms

of size it was the largest Head Start program to be funded that first year. In terms of need, the immediacy was evident. The poor children of Mississippi were remarkably good examples of the kinds of children for whom Head Start had been devised; they were very much in need of the social, medical, educational and emotional services the program contained. The May grant to CDGM through Mary Holmes was for \$1,263,480. An additional \$197,268 was granted later, bringing the total to \$1,460,748. The termination date for the grant was the end of August, 1965.

About one month after the program had begun, on June 29, the Senate Appropriations Committee, at the insistence of Senator Stennis, of Mississippi, had sent an investigating team to inspect the project. Stennis had sent a telegram to Shriver on June 3, expressing concern about the program, and especially about the location of CDGM headquarters at Mount Beulah, a center for civil rights activities, notably including the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, and all Black grassroots, Activist groups. Stennis subsequently charged that OEO funds had been used to provide bail for civil rights demonstrators and that the financial management of the entire program was haphazard. OEO had sent its own investigating team to Mississippi at about the same time as the Senate Committee. On the evening of August 1 and 2, the CDGM Board of Directors met with the CDGM staff and representatives of OEO. James Heller, of OEO, told the meetings that OEO was disturbed about various methods of fiscal control, policy procedures and management as well as the location of CDGM headquarters at Mount Beulah. The staff admitted the validity of the fiscal and management criticism but balked at transferring the project headquarters. The Board reversed

its decision on the headquarters move after re-reading a letter from Head Start Associate Director Jule Sugarman to Dr. D. I. Horn, President of Mary Holmes Junior College. The letter said, in part:

To facilitate action by your office and maintain effective control thereafter consistent with your legal responsibilities...we must insist that you arrange for immediate transfer of CDGM's Head Start central administration activities from Mount Beulah...⁸

The Board then voted to move its headquarters to Mary Holmes. On August 3, the OEO Director of Audits recommended to Head Start Director Julius Richmond that Mary Holmes and CDGM be given one week to correct a number of weaknesses at the risk of grant curtailment or termination if they failed to comply.⁹

On August 4, an internal memorandum in the Office of Inspection reported that the CDGM staff had refused to move from Mount Beulah and had threatened to resign en masse rather than do so. The issue created a conflict within OEO itself with some officials of Head Start siding with the CDGM staff and others in the CAP and General Counsel's offices insisting on the move.¹⁰ A compromise was proposed and eventually CDGM headquarters remained at Mount Beulah that summer, but moved to Jackson the following year.

Meanwhile, a re-organization order calling for the preparation of

⁸ Cited in Senate Appropriations Committee Hearings, 1965, (Supplemental Appropriations FY 1966), p.521.

⁹ Memorandum, Nathan Cutler to Julius Richmond, August 3, 1965.

¹⁰ Memorandum, Clampett to William Haddad, August 4, 1965 (in the files of the Office of Inspection, OEO).

records for a final audit was given to CDGM. On August 13, Shriver wrote to Stennis:

As a result of our continuing review of the project we concluded that certain modifications, areas of responsibility have been re-defined to the extent that we are satisfied the project can be continued with full assurance that management and fiscal practices are sound...With these additional controls funding has been resumed...The headquarters of the project will continue to operate out of the location near Edwards (Mount Beulah) because it has been determined that any relocation, at this time, would have a damaging effect upon the program and is just not feasible.¹¹

In October, 1965, following a second visit to the area by Appropriations Committee investigators, Stennis repeated charges of irregularities and complained that Mount Beulah was a "center of civil rights activities...and a hot bed of racial zealots."¹²

Shriver appeared before the Appropriations Committee on October 24 and defended OEO's role in the project. He denied that there had been a lack of supervision of the program and insisted that even a partial listing of OEO's auditing and inspection "reveals that OEO was alert and decisive on all aspects of its operations."¹³ As to charges that CDGM was simply a front for civil rights activities, Shriver said that while it was impossible to oversee the activities of the "many thousands of people who participated in Head Start in Mississippi, this office made clear that civil rights work - or poli-

¹¹ Letter from R. Sargent Shriver to Honorable John Stennis, USS. August 13, 1965.

¹² Senate Appropriations Committee Hearings, 1965, p.515.

¹³ Prepared Statement of R. Sargent Shriver before the Senate Appropriations Committee, October 14, 1965.

tical activity of any kind - would not be tolerated during working hours."¹⁴ He asked the Committee members to be mindful that "diligent and proper attention to administration and management, and rightful concern for frugal use of the taxpayers' money, should not becloud our vision so completely that we lose sight of the fact that nearly 6000 Mississippi children received pre-school training, physical examinations, and medical care, two warm meals a day and a Head Start for the future."¹⁵

There had been another difficulty involving CDGM in that, apparently by design, the provisions calling for full racial integration of all OEO projects were not being adhered to. The use of so-called "freedom of choice" sites had led to a virtually exclusive Negro project. OEO therefore, in the early Fall of 1965, withheld payments for projects in two counties and withheld partial payments in six others where teaching staffs were found to have excluded white teachers. On October 1, Shriver released funds to the six communities involved, noting that future applications from them would go through a special grant review that would seek "concrete evidence" that facilities would be integrated. In December, Samuel F. Yette, special assistant to Shriver for Civil Rights, informed the Head Start centers that "freedom of choice" sites could be used only if it could be shown that they led to greater integration. Otherwise, centers would have to be admin-

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

istered according to a geographical plan wherein children would go to the nearest center. In effect, the situation was the reverse of the one which existed in schools throughout the country outside the deep South, particularly in the great cities.

Meanwhile, CDGM had submitted an application for a new program which was granted by OEO for \$5.6 million on February 22, 1966, but not before a delegation of 48 Negro 5-year-olds from Mississippi, accompanied by 25 teachers, nurses and parents, invaded the hearing room of the U.S. House Education and Labor Committee February 11 to demand that the grant be expedited. The day after the grant was announced Senator Stennis again took the Senate floor and charged it would "undermine and destroy the accomplishments already made" in Mississippi and would "play into the hands of extremists and...give weight to the argument made by those who oppose the poverty program on the grounds that it has no regard for the poor but is, instead, devoting millions of taxpayers' dollars to special groups and individuals who use the money for their own selfish purposes."¹⁶ Senator James O. Eastland and Representative John Bell Williams, both of Mississippi, joined Stennis in attacking the grant. In authorizing the grant, which was to include programs for 9,000 children, OEO stipulated that white persons be added to the CDGM Board, that a new auditing firm be retained, that some administrative personnel be hired. The termination date for the 1966 grant was August 31, 1966.

¹⁶ Congressional Record, February 12, 1966. S. -S. .

In May of that year OEO regional directors of the Southeast, Southwest and Mid-Atlantic regions indicated "concern" that some Head Start programs "have apparently been designed to exclude poor white children." Practices cited as being used to circumvent the intent of the Civil Rights Act were the use of Negro schools for Head Start programs, the selection of predominantly Negro staffs and the concentration of recruitment on Negro families. At the same time reports from Mississippi and Louisiana revealed difficulties experienced by integrated Head Start projects in the South. In Bruce, Miss., several Head Start teachers had resigned following phone threats from persons identifying themselves as "the White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan." Bill Crook, OEO Director of the Southwest region, (later to be appointed Director of VISTA), said in Austin, Tex., July 13 that Klan members in Louisiana had "in numerous cases intimidated white teachers and white volunteer workers into resigning from integrated Head Start programs." Earlier, the April 16 issue of the New Republic had charged that Stennis tried to block the CDGM grant for 1966 and was responsible for its delay until February.

CDGM submitted an application for \$41 million for a full-year program to cover 30,000 children on July 7, 1966. The application was returned on July 14 and on July 16 Sugarman and other OEO officials met with CDGM in Jackson to explain reasons for the rejection. Sugarman told the board CDGM could not be funded for a level of children above the previous program and the dollar amount could not exceed more than two percent above its previous \$5.6 million grant. On July 22 OEO told Mary Holmes Junior College, that OEO had been receiving reports

of serious administrative problems in CDGM. A series of questions on civil rights, expenditures and program administration, to be answered within 14 days, was presented. The answers were received on August 8 and submitted to the OEO Office of Inspection for review. On August 19, OEO Regional Director Sloan wired CDGM, instructing it to cut off the program by September 15. On August 29 CDGM re-submitted an application for a new full-year program.

On September 27, 1966, OEO reached a decision that CDGM, in its present form, could not lawfully be refinanced. The decision was based on OEO audits, inspection reports, program analysis, and management reviews of CDGM's entire history. Unable to arrange a meeting with the CDGM Board on October 1, OEO mailed a compendious report to the Board on its decision not to refund the organization.

The report was 11 pages long and had attached a three-page legal opinion by OEO General Counsel Donald Baker. OEO's decision not to refund CDGM became a national issue through the interest of the Citizens Crusade Against Poverty, headed by former OEO CAP Director Richard Boone, and the National Council of Churches. It should be remembered that the CDGM sponsor, Mary Holmes Junior College, was owned and operated by the National Board of Missions of the Presbyterian Church. Opponents of the OEO decision took the position, strongly, that OEO had capitulated to the desires of Senator Stennis.

The OEO-CDGM Situation Report listed serious deficiencies and irregularities in the CDGM program; determined that approximately \$654,000 could not be approved as valid grant expenditures since they reflected lack of supporting documents, inadequate information, and

activities unrelated to the Head Start objectives. It said, in part:

...these situations would not have occurred if CDGM had effectively and responsibly managed the Head Start program delegated to its authority. The OEO has reached this conclusion despite continuing efforts during the past 18 months to provide all assistance possible to the CDGM program... Nonetheless, the record shows that CDGM failed to monitor its operation, and sometimes through disregard of guidelines, to discharge its responsibilities in areas of program, management and fiscal procedure.

Despite these shortcomings, OEO wishes to emphasize that through the Mary Holmes-CDGM implementation, Head Start was launched over a wide region of Mississippi under difficult circumstances. CDGM, formed in the spring of 1965 by a group of Mississippians interested in the problems of the Negro in the state, was able to enlist indigenous participation from the beginning. Mary Holmes Junior College provided the organized base of an institution of higher learning through which the grant funds could be channeled. The Head Start program administered by CDGM reached approximately 13,900 children, and involved thousands of parents at the grass roots level.

OEO, which has provided as much, if not more, consultant and staff time to this particular community action program than any other, regrets that CDGM has been unable to provide the minimum management and program capabilities required of a grantee during the course of two separate grants.¹⁷

The report then listed, among other irregularities, deficient employee records showing duplicate payments, salaries to persons not present for work, certifications that employees were on the job when they were not and cashed payroll checks endorsed by persons other than than payees. It showed a number of conflict of interest instances involving leased property and transportation contracts. It showed excessive salary payments totaling \$64,000 beyond permissible OEO policy regulations. It identified a number of cases of nepotism involving

¹⁷ "CDGM Situation Report", OEO Document, September 27, 1966.

wives and family-members of Board members, an area administrator and center chairmen. It listed a number of violations of the use of official vehicles and questioned car rental costs of \$25,000 for periods which could not be substantiated. It called into serious question a number of transportation, lease and consultant contracts. It questioned the basic policy of CDGM which, it said, "prefers a go-it-alone policy rather than a policy of cooperation with existing resources and other community groups"¹⁸ and causing serious deficiencies in supervision and health programs. Of its program policy, the report said: "The concern is that without proper supervision by qualified personnel, there is little prospect of improving the situation. CDGM seems unable to improve that supervision."¹⁹

Of its delayed health programs, it said: "CDGM has not been able to recruit a full-time physician to direct the health program. There was considerable delay in getting examinations underway and there has been much difficulty in making arrangements for follow-through care. This can be attributed both to CDGM's own resistance to using existing resources, and to its inability to overcome community hostility."²⁰

The Report concluded that "further funding of CDGM would not be in the best interest of a strong, well-managed Head Start program, of the type which OEO intends to see continued in Mississippi."²¹

The General Counsel's opinion to Shriver, included these findings:

18 Ibid.

19 Ibid.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid.

...On the basis of experience with two prior grants...I see no basis on which you could anticipate substantial improvement in the conduct of the Head Start program or in their management capability.

The administrative and management deficiencies are so manifold as to require a complete reconstitution and reorganization if they are to be eliminated. There is no reason or basis for thinking this can or will be done.

...The program has been increasingly oriented toward the economic needs of adults rather than the educational and development needs of children. CDGM has been unable and unwilling to attract and to use persons most likely to provide intellectual and emotional uplift to the children.

CDGM is not disposed toward the development of bi-racial community action agencies which could mount the broader-based programs contemplated under title II of the EOA. Indeed, there is a great degree of evidence of antipathy to and active opposition to existing community action agencies.

On October 7 OEO announced a 12-month, \$1.2 million Head Start grant to Rust College, Holly Springs, Miss., to administer a program for 600 pre-school children in two counties. In making the announcement Shriver repeated his decision that no single group "has a monopoly on running any of the War on Poverty programs in Mississippi."

The same day, OEO announced an 8-month Head Start grant for \$713,000 to Southwest Mississippi Opportunity, Inc., Woodville, to provide programs for 935 children in three counties.

On October 8, about 3,000 Negroes held a mass meeting in Jackson, Miss. protesting OEO's "political deal." The Rev. James F. McCree, then CDGM chairman, pledged to fight against "political tricks and manipulations" until funds were restored. McCree, who had received telegrams of support from the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was joined by the Rev. Charles Leber Jr. of the United Presbyterian Church and Boone's Citizens Crusade Against Poverty, a private anti-poverty group supported by the United Auto Workers and a grant from the Ford

Foundation. Mrs. Fanie Lou Hamer of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party said: "We aren't ready to be sold out by a few middle-class bourgeoisie and some of them Uncle Toms who couldn't care less." The CCAP appointed a 10-member board of inquiry which concluded there was no evidence to support the OEO charges against CDGM.

That same day OEO released a telegram from John A. Morsell, Assistant Executive Director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, supporting the funding of new Head Start programs in Mississippi. Morsell's telegram regretted the decision to discontinue funding CDGM, but went on to say:

As you know within past two weeks NAACP's Mississippi State Board, State President Aaron Henry, and Field Director Charles Evers jointly and severally urged approval of new grant to CDGM and offered to work closely with CDGM in such event to prevent recurrence of irregularities. But we join our leadership in that State in welcoming decision to continue vital work of providing educational opportunity to disadvantaged children through a new agency of which Aaron Henry is co-chairman. We hope and expect that new agency as well as local programs it conducts will be fully representative of all segments of the community having genuine concern for the needs which are to be met.

And, on that same day, Shriver replied to the CCAP's board of inquiry opinion, stating that its review added nothing new to the situation. He said:

The information available to the government was collected over many months by professional auditors, inspectors and analysts.

Therefore, OEO does not foresee any change in its position. We do intend to move as fast as possible away from de facto racially segregated programs, such as CDGM, to racially integrated programs, such as recently funded Rust College and Southwest Mississippi Opportunity, Inc. We see every reason in morality and public policy to encourage racially integrated groups in Mississippi, which, incidentally, we were told was an impossible goal when the War on Poverty began two years

ago. We intend to encourage such groups in Head Start and other programs.

Furthermore, we intend to encourage additional diversifications of Head Start in Mississippi and to move away from the Head Start monopoly which existed in the past.

Further procrastination, after weeks of discussion and review, could only deny vitally needed Head Start services to children in Mississippi.

Moving quickly, OEO the next day, on October 11, announced a grant of \$3,020,906 to Mississippi Action for Progress, Inc. (MAP) to conduct a full-year program for 1500 children. Shriver said that \$10 million had been reserved to finance MAP child development programs, which could ultimately reach about 5000 children. MAP was to be administered by an 18-member bi-racial board of directors including Aaron Henry, president of the Mississippi State Conference of NAACP Branches; Hodding Carter, III, editor of the Greenville Delta Democrat Times and a number of prominent labor leaders, businessmen and clergymen. It was to include six representatives of the poor, residents of the areas and groups to be served. Additionally, MAP had endorsed the concept of employing a maximum number of poor people to assist in the operation of the program.

Less than a week later UAW chief Walter Reuther announced that the CCAP would withdraw from the CDGM controversy in view of the new grant to MAP. But, he insisted that "OEO acted as it did in this situation in the face of political pressure by forces who are more interested in preserving the status quo in Mississippi than they are in helping disadvantaged children."

On October 15, 70 clergymen, urban specialists of the Episcopal

Church, the United Presbyterian Church and the United Church of Christ, picketed OEO headquarters in Washington charging OEO with "throwing road-blocks in the way of maximum feasible participation of the poor in anti-poverty programs." Shriver met with the church officials on October 17 and strongly denied charges of political pressure. He said, as he had right along, that he was ready to meet with CDGM's board of directors to discuss the possible continuation of its program. On October 24 Shriver did meet with CDGM officials in Atlanta. Following the meeting he said OEO funds to CDGM would not be resumed without "comprehensive reorganization."

The formation of the MAP had brought with it a number of accusations charging that it was a put-up organization. The New Republic had charged on October 13, 1966 that MAP had been developed by White House lawyer Harry C. McPherson, Jr. and Douglas Wynn, a lawyer from Greenville. It listed a number of other accusation as well. MAP board member Hodding Carter, in a letter to the editors of the New York Times, the Washington Evening Star and the Washington Post, hotly contested the accusation. Replying to the cluster of charges in the New Republic, Carter denied that MAP was going to strip the Head Start programs of their community action function; that its board would not be handpicked by its first board members but would be elected within the counties to be served; that it was "a lie" to assert that State NAACP members met secretly with Sen. Stennis prior to or after the organization of MAP; that it was "a lie" that the White House contacted Roy Wilkins, executive director of the NAACP to arrange to have Aaron Henry serve on the board; that it was "a lie" that any White House

assistant or Douglas Winn had any part in forming MAP and that it was "a misstatement to say that this Board is intended as a political vehicle of any kind."

The NAACP sent a memorandum to all of its Mississippi Branch presidents on October 14, 1966, pointing out the significance of the fact that the composition of the MAP board marked "one of the few times that such men of prominence of both races have agreed to work together in behalf of Negro advancement."²² It ended its message:

Anyone who knows the record of Aaron Henry, Reverend R. L. T. Smith and other who have been victimized by bombings, arrests, harrassment and yet have kept the faith and fought for the rights of their fellow men will pay no attention to the carping critics and those who yell "sellout." The NAACP leaders and others who have agreed to support MAP are carrying on in the tradition of those who believe in freedom, justice and equality.²³

And, on October 15, the Morsell attacked the New Republic editorial which had accused Wilkins of giving in to White House pressure to intervene in the CDGM controversy. The authors of the charge, said Morsell, "knew it was a lie, and they have fabricated it in order to cast a slur on the NAACP. Mr. Wilkins has not discussed CDGM with Aaron Henry or anyone in the Administration."²⁴

It was not, even then, the end of public charges and counter-charges,

²² NAACP Memorandum from Gloster B. Current to Mississippi Branch Presidents, re: Mississippi Action for Progress, October 14, 1966.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ NAACP News Release, October 15, 1966.

of controversy and misunderstanding. On October 19, 1966, the New York Times printed an advertisement submitted by the National Citizens Committee for the Child Development Program in Mississippi and signed by scores of prominent clergymen. "Say It Isn't So, Sargent Shriver," the ad read. The sub-head read:

Awesome political pressures have made Poverty Chief Shriver abandon a Head Start program considered "the best in the country." 12,000 Mississippi children, and their parents, are praying he'll change his mind.

Of all the battles Sargent Shriver has fought to keep politics out of the poverty program, none is more crucial than the campaign to save the Child Development Group of Mississippi.

At the moment it looks as if Sargent Shriver has given up.

...CDGM was what Sargent Shriver had in mind when he spoke about the maximum feasible extent to which the poor may participate in the solution of their own problems. It is, in fact, what Sargent Shriver and his poverty warriors have been battling for all along.

Unfortunately, the prospect of a self-emancipated Negro community isn't welcome everywhere in Mississippi. Some political leaders see it, with clarity, as a threat. So they want Sargent Shriver to drop CDGM and then channel the funds through a group of directory they'll approve.²⁵

The ad cited the report of the CCAP review panel which had approved of CDGM's handling of its Head Start programs.

Shriver sent a letter to the Times:

The Times prints a message entitled "Say It Isn't So, Sargent Shriver," dealing with the Head Start grants in Mississippi. For over two weeks I have been saying that it isn't so, that it hasn't been so, and that it will not be so. But some people are unwilling to listen. It is shocking to me that any Americans, and especially members of the clergy, should rush into public print impugning the motives of a public official before ascertaining the facts. Fortunately, and to their credit, a number of other individuals called for in-

²⁵ New York Times, October 19, 1966.

formation before agreeing to sign and then withheld their signature.

...In many respects, the Child Development Group of Mississippi project constitutes one of the more promising chapters of the history of the poverty program. For my associates and for myself, I take great pride in this exciting chapter. Last February, despite problems and loud protests, we refunded CDGM with one of the largest Head Start grants in the country, more than \$5 million. More OEO staff time and energy went into this program than any other one in order to secure good management and good results. There is no group of individuals in the country which has sought and prayed for CDGM's success more than we have at OEO. And while many others have talked OEO has actually worked to try to make CDGM successful.

As the official charged by law to authorize expenditures under OEO programs, I was faced last August with reports about CDGM operations which I could not ignore. I received the unanimous recommendations of all the OEO officials involved--Community Action, Head Start, Auditing, Inspection, Civil Rights, Legal--that under the circumstances I could not again legally refund CDGM. The justification for this decision has been available and is available for anyone interested. Briefly, it adds up to substantial evidence of gross mismanagement and irresponsibility. We could not in clear conscience and under the law ignore findings of payroll padding, nepotism, conflict of interest, and misuse of property. I reject and resent charges that forces outside my agency made that decision--or that I knuckled under any pressures. I did not. Nor did any other of the many officials here at OEO.

It grieves me particularly that clergymen should give their names to a statement that refers to what unnamed people--referred to only as "they"--have said or charged or done. And I have heard from signatories who confess that they never read the statement before agreeing over the telephone to sign it. Now they regret they did so.

My principal associates have met with the CDGM Board of Directors. I will see the Board next week. The channels of communication with CDGM or any other group have always been open. But the plight of Mississippi children is more important to me than the status of any single organization. The children of Mississippi have my pledge that there will be Head Start classes for them and that these will be programs of which they and we can be proud, one in which the poor themselves, Negro and white, will have a major role.²⁶

²⁶ Letter from R. Sargent Shriver, to the New York Times, October 19, 1966.

Shriver then met with the CDGM Board in Atlanta on October 24.

The Board released a statement expressing "keen disappointment at the failure of today's negotiations with Mr. Shriver." It continued:

We expressly regret OEO's misinformation, intransigence and lack of understanding of Mississippi's problems. We have, in good faith, been willing and remain willing to discuss with OEO appropriate steps to be taken by CDGM towards re-funding on a continuing and substantial basis. Towards this end, additional meetings will be held in the very near future between OEO and CDGM officials. We will, however, continue to put before the public all of the facts surrounding OEO's actions regarding CDGM and to use every available means to insure refunding.²⁷

Shriver replied immediately:

I am astonished at the statement issued by the Board of CDGM following my meeting with them today--that this meeting ended in failure. When I left to return to Washington, I felt that it was being conducted on an amicable basis and that solid groundwork had been laid for future productive meetings.

OEO had agreed to work closely with representatives of CDGM to attempt to overcome the serious deficiencies which we found in their program and which led to our decision that it could not be refunded as presently organized.

I personally was impressed by the reasonable exchange of opinions that took place and especially by the frank exchange of information, and the candid exploration of areas of misunderstanding.

It came as an extraordinary surprise, therefore, that following this progress, CDGM saw fit to accuse OEO of "misinformation, intransigence, and lack of understanding of Mississippi's problems."

CDGM has asked me to make a commitment to refinance their program on a continuing basis, something this Agency has not been asked to do by any other program of any kind... This would be completely beyond the authority which Congress has given to me to administer programs on a year-to-year

²⁷ OEO Statement (Press Release), October 24, 1966.

authorization. In any case the application which CDGM had submitted to OEO exceeds by more than one-third the financial guidelines given to them.

I authorized a statement to be made to the CDGM Board that OEO would continue to meet with CDGM to attempt to work out deficiencies of program, personnel, management capability and fiscal responsibility. If such matters could be resolved I said I was "very hopeful that OEO could refinance their program."

In the light of this, I find it almost incredible that this indication of good faith and cooperation has been rebuffed and this meeting called a failure. Nevertheless, I affirm OEO's determination to work with CDGM to bring their program, which has accomplished so much for the poor children and adults of Mississippi, up to the standards where refunding by OEO will be feasible under the law.²⁸

In November Mississippi Governor Paul B. Johnson, Jr., had vetoed the grant of \$713,000 to the Southwest Mississippi Opportunity, Inc. Head Start program. Johnson claimed that the community action agency's program had been infiltrated by at least 20 former CDGM members. Shriver, as he was permitted to do under the law, vetoed the governor's veto.

During November, 1966, discussions between OEO officials and representatives of the National Board of Missions continued. On November 9th, Jule Sugarman wrote:

At your request, I agreed when we met recently to set down in writing a statement of those preconditions which OEO believes must be met by the Board of Missions, Mary Holmes Juniro College and the Child Development Group of Mississippi before any future funding...the conditions listed below are designed to guarantee that any future grant will be administered by an organization which is capable of avoiding the financial difficulties which have been characteristic under previous grants...they are also directed at reinforcing the CDGM Board's announced intention to operate the program on

28 Ibid.

a biracial basis. (Letter from Jule Sugarman to Bryant George of the National Board of Missions, November 9, 1966.)

OEO and the supporters of CDGM moved closer to agreement on the basic point of financial controls and the newly emphasized question of bi-racialism. OEO staff submitted favorable reports on the findings of the Mississippi Task Force. "It would have been easy for CDGM-- indeed, it must have been a great temptation--to use this fiercely loyal constituency to thwart the efforts of the Task Force--both before and after OEO's announced decision not to refund CDGM. At no time was this done." (Memo from Lynn Kirk to Jule Sugarman, November 30, 1966.) Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey met with religious leaders at a Miami Beach conference and promised his good offices. On December 16, 1966, OEO announced that an 'agreement in principle' had been reached between OEO officials and the CDGM Board and its supporters. The joint communique read in part:

1. The Board of Missions and Mary Holmes College agreed to assume full financial responsibility...
2. Mary Holmes College has agreed to assign its Vice President for Development...as administrator of the grant...
3. CDGM has completed the enlargement of its Board of Directors to a total of 19 of whom 6 will be white...
6. The Board of Directors of CDGM has taken action to make it clear to all employees that they are prohibited during working hours from participating in voter registration or partisan political activities, the organization of civil rights activity as defined...the organization of economic boycott or any other activity not essential to the approved purpose of the grant...(OEO Release, 12/17/66).

The rest of December was taken up with working out the practical implementation of these agreements. On January 30, 1967, OEO announced that a grant had been made to CDGM for \$4,927,100 to serve 5900 children in 14 counties. A set of special conditions, reflecting the agree-

ments of December, were attached to the grant.

Senator Stennis renewed his attacks during 1967 and Shriver responded during hearings before the Appropriations Committee:

If there was anybody who got the militant SNCC-type people out of this program, it was us, not somebody else. We got them out before anybody raised a ruckus about it just as we attempted to get people out who were attempting to use our programs for purposes other than we intended.²⁹

With these words, Shriver indicated that the CDGM crisis was over. Head Start in Mississippi would continue despite the difficulties inherent in the Mississippi social system.

THE SYRACUSE SITUATION

Another explosive situation developed in Syracuse when, on November 30, 1965, OEO notified the Syracuse Community Development Association (SCDA) and Syracuse University that future requests for funds would have to be channeled through the city's official anti-poverty agency, the Syracuse Crusade for Opportunity. The SCDA had operated as the organizing arm of the Syracuse University Community Action Training Center, which was training community organizers. The joint project had received a 9-month grant of \$314,000 from OEO. The training center had requested an additional \$568,000 to finance training and research for another 15 months, and SCDA had asked for \$211,000 for the actual organizing. The Association had organized sit-ins, marches and other demonstrations and claimed to have helped more than

²⁹ Senate Appropriations, FY-1968 Supplemental, p.52.

2,000 of the poor to register to vote, in addition to effecting a number of community improvements. Shriver said, on December 1, that OEO would consider financing the training center but that the SCDA would have to work through the city's Crusade for Opportunity. OEO released a \$110,000 grant for a 3-month extension of the university program while its 15-month extension request was being considered. An SCDA delegation met with Shriver in Washington on December 8. The group contended that the Crusade for Opportunity was closely linked with Syracuse Mayor William F. Walsh who had accused the Association of promoting class warfare. At the heart of the situation was the question in the minds of the antagonists as to how far, if at all, should the federal government go toward helping the poor fight City Hall? Compounding the problem in the minds of city government officials and the organized welfare services of the city was the fact that a consultant to the university program was the volatile Saul Alinsky. Under Alinsky's guidance, organizers from the university center were segmenting the low-income sections of the city and organizing groups within them for direct social action. Their demands included improved garbage disposal systems, relief from excessive rents and utility bills, more protection against unjustified evictions and a recreational system adequate for the needs of the poor. Of even greater irritation was the organization of a energetic vote-registration drive supported by a series of neighborhood one-sheet newspapers calling for power through registration. Democratic Party enrollments in the poor neighborhoods began to rise soon after the drive began prompting the Republican Mayor, Walsh, who was up for re-election that year, to protest:

These people go into a housing project and talk about setting a "democratic" organization--small "d"--but it sounds just the same as Democratic--big "D". In a close election it could be decisive.³⁰

The situation boiled furiously and on April 12, Charles A. Walker, a commissioner of the Syracuse Housing Authority wrote to President Johnson protesting that the OEO grant was financing "activities which do no good and will ultimately cause serious trouble in our community if allowed to continue. Walker charged that the university organizers "are claiming that all kinds of benefits will accrue to the tenants of our housing projects if they will join these 'action committees.' One of these promised benefits is the 'improvement of conditions' in the housing project known as the Pioneer Homes. Conditions in Pioneer Homes are as good as the tenants will permit them to be."

Walker's letter enclosed a memorandum from William L. McGarry, executive director of the Syracuse Housing Authority, which said:

I thoroughly distrust any program that identifies two distinct classes of society. In this case, the 'poor' and the 'affluent.' This social-action program follows all of the old patterns of class distinction and hate, so easily identified with Marxism. The obvious cleavage away from the established resources of social welfare and charity in our community by the action group only makes the identity of the classes more distinct. If ever the circumstances that create hostility among these occur, we then have a situation that-- by the grace of God--has never happened in our city.

The charges were immediately labeled as false by Dean Clifford Winters of University College, one of the units involved in the Univer-

³⁰ Ervin Knoll and Jules Witcover, "Fighting Poverty--and City Hall," The Reporter, June 3, 1965. All quotations in this section are from this article.

sity project.

Another item which caused severe inflammation of feelings was a brochure issued by the University which said:

This program differs from most in being solely concerned with the creation of powerful self-directed democratic organizations in areas of poverty.

It added that applicants should:

Have a controlled but intense anger about continued injustice and should be committed to hard work for people who are grappling with apparently overwhelming problems.

Not only the Mayor and other city officials were concerned. They were joined by the city's established social-welfare agencies which banded together to form the Syracuse Crusade for Opportunity, officially designated by the city as its "umbrella" community action agency. OEO funded the Crusade, several weeks after the University received its grant, with \$483,000 about a third of what it had requested.

The approach to the problems of poverty of the two conflicting agencies, the SCDA and the Crusade, were almost classically diametrically opposed. In the view of the SCDA, a program for true social action--based on Alinsky's principals of organized social dislocation--was one which organized poor people in sufficient strength to demand changes and to fight to obtain them. The Crusade approach was one of extending established services to individuals who, in its view, met the qualifications for such services. The executive director of the Crusade organization, Ben Zimmerman, warned that the University project invited civic strife. "If you talk about a mass program, you're saying 'How do you galvanize the poor to break down the walls of the city?' Anger and frustration can bring a program together. But you have to

keep fanning the flames if that's what keeps the program going. This is the kind of program that really demands an outside 'enemy.'"

An entirely different view was expressed by the director of the University project, Assistant Professor Warren C. Haggstrom of the School of Social Work. He said:

Ours is a philosophy of self-help. We want to help the neighborhoods develop strong democratic organizations with as wide a base as possible that will achieve an additional level of power--enough power to enable those individuals excluded from the community to enter it. The poor are outsiders; the problem is, How can they enter the community? If you just give them services, it doesn't pull them in. The failure of past welfare programs proves that.

These, roughly, were the issues under discussion at the December 8 meeting between Shriver and the SCDA delegation. Shriver insisted that the SCDA group would have to work through the Crusade agency, adding that any refusal of funds by the Crusade could be appealed to OEO which would give any such situation the most careful scrutiny and objective consideration. The SCDA decided, on December 17, to refuse to work through the Crusade. On December 21 Syracuse University announced its decision not to renew Alinsky's contract. The decision, the University said, was routine and had no bearing on the controversy involving SCDA. Alinsky responded with the accusation that the government's anti-poverty program was the "greatest boondoggle and feeding trough that's come along for the welfare industry in years." Government sponsorship of community action programs, he said, was "like asking an employer to go ahead and hire a union organizer."

On January 16 and 17, 600 delegates representing neighborhood organizations in several cities met in Syracuse under the sponsorship

of the newly formed Syracuse People's War Council Against Poverty, (a successor to the SCDA). The convention adopted resolutions, among other actions, favoring "control" by the poor of anti-poverty programs effecting them and denouncing Shriver for failing to appear at the meeting.

The SCDA continued for some time with private funding. Several of the organizations comprising SCDA eventually split with the parent organization and sought shelter and funds under the Crusade umbrella. Syracuse University terminated its involvement with SCDA. SCDA was later reorganized as the Organization of Organizations, but, lacking sufficient funding, effective recruitment and organization became impossible. The Syracuse Crusade for Opportunity became the major vehicle for the anti-poverty program.

JOB CORPS - NYC DIFFICULTIES

In the first year of operations, the Job Corps had to confront press and Congressional criticism about administrative deficiencies in recruiting, screening, assignments, transportation, high costs, excessive salaries, disciplinary problems with corpsmen, legal and jurisdictional disputes caused by "riots" and outbreaks at the camps, a variable dropout rate, and the placement success of Job Corps graduates. In addition, the basic philosophy of the Corps -- the techniques and objectives of the residential center program -- became an issue exacerbated by sensitive and often difficult community/center relations. Compounding the problems from without was the constant scrutiny and

evaluation of the program from within, resulting in frequent critical reports about the "authoritarian" administration of the vocational and educational programs.

It is to the credit of responsible Job Corps officials that each major issue had, to some extent, already been anticipated. The Job Corps, an experimental project designed to accomplish the dual role of "human renewal" and job training, had to constantly refashion its methods without encroaching upon its real purpose. In the face of often hostile community attitudes and a sharp-eyed Congress, the Corps' pragmatic flexibility assured the continuation of the program, and came a long way toward success and workable organization. Philosophy and methodology were welded into working components of education, training, program administration and guidelines. By the middle of 1965, however, its future was very much in doubt.

The first major issue to beset the Job Corps planners originated in a national magazine's report of a high dropout rate. Newspapers, journals, periodicals and Congressional investigations perennially focused upon the dropout rate as "evidence" of the program's failure. Lost in the public furor was the simple fact that the Corps dealt with 100% dropouts, and that, lacking precedents, no clear meaning of the rates was assessible until after the program had become clearly established and ongoing. Without consideration of other variable criteria for measuring the program's success -- including the renewal of human spirit and self-confidence, social adaptibility, learned skills and job placement, among others -- the dropout issue alone too frequently became a red herring in the hands of those for whom the program held

little promise at the outset.

During the summer of 1965, incidents of misbehavior by Corpsmen helped shape in the public mind an image of the Job Corps as an unsavory, unworkable, badly administered program. The urban training centers at Atterbury, Camp Parks, and Camp Gary experienced difficulties involving fighting, drinking, assault, racial antagonism drugs, sodomy, and riots.

An incident at Camp Breckinridge in August, was the most severe and got the widest publicity. The center was run by Southern Illinois University, located near Morganfield, Kentucky. Inadequate preparations, a loose administration and coordination system plus deficiencies in discipline had led to a tense situation. A major extortion racket terrorized enrollees, fights and hazing were not uncommon, and a high rate of classroom absenteeism was left unpunished. From within the center some staff members had formed a civil rights group which had produced a high degree of race consciousness. Compounding a bad situation was the "Demonstration for Jobs in Western Kentucky," organized by the NAACP, and virtually paralyzing the administration. The large influx of trainees produced frustration because of a lack of equipment. Complaints were voiced over the quality of food, raw life in the barracks, overcrowding, mistreatment, misinformation, and restrictions. A number of fistfights broke the situation open. When administrators called out a fire truck, the inflamed trainees engaged in a general riot in which thirteen people were injured. About half the camp took part, while others fled to nearby towns. FBI agents and U.S.

Marshalls were called in, as state troopers stood by.³¹

Moreover, it was charged that lack of facilities, the undue haste with which the program was begun, and inadequate administrative techniques had contributed to a general disillusionment about the programs and the dropout rate. To some extent, at two centers, administration was considered by the Job Corps headquarters to be deficient -- a decision which led to the phasing out of universities and the substitution by industry in the running of the centers. This, of course, offended liberal critics, who found private exploitation in the anti-poverty war repulsive.

The announcement of a Christmas vacation furlough in November, 1965, added fuel to the charges of high costs, unnecessary expenditures and overall waste. Disparate comparisons were made between the "salaries" received by Corpsmen and Servicemen; educational textbooks which attempted to involve trainees with realistic and relevant materials provoked public "outrage;" and contrived and false incidents helped to distort the general image of the Corps. Responses by the Job Corps public affairs office, attempting to refute the charges, resulted in charges of "oversell." The mandate to speedily implement the program brought criticism in Congress on the grounds that over-recruitment had led to deep disappointment on the part of applicants who had been rejected.

In sum the Corps experienced the frustrations and headaches of the painful build-up stage, by which innovative techniques and experimental programs came under fire both for their achievements and failures. The Corps could not have it both ways: To reach the "hard core,"

the truly forgotten youth who had dropped out of school and society, whose prospects were welfare roles, prisons, or worse, meant dealing with an element that rejected conventional, middle-class values; thus, to experience problems was a certainty. To avoid these, to concentrate only on the motivated and the "safe" -- those who had demonstrated an eagerness and willingness to repudiate their impoverishment, and a desire to join the "mainstream" of society, and those without criminal and delinquent records -- meant excluding perhaps the largest segment of urban slum youths, and disobeying the original intention of the task force planners.

The first year produced an image of the Job Corps that was hardly credible or creditable. The obloquy it suffered yoked the Corps in terms of the extension of its programs. Subsequent efforts to "spin-off" the program to old line agencies, or to phase it out entirely, to a very considerable degree, originated in its initial incubus.

If the Job Corps ran the gamut of scandals and unpopular publicity in 1965, its companion program in the two-pronged attack on job training could boast of a large measure of success. Conceived by the February Task Force, it borrowed from the local public service employment and training program of the Hometown Youth Employment section of the Youth Employment Opportunity Act. Entitled the "Work-Training Program" in the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, it came to be known as the Neighborhood Youth Corps. Administered by the Department of Labor, it would be set up for young people who would continue to live at home. Like the Job Corps, the NYC intended to increase the capacities of poor people to get and hold decent jobs, particularly at

the outset of their working careers. It would be a hometown counseling and job program for in-school and out-of-school teen-agers between 16 and 21. As Nathan Glazer put it, "the aim of these efforts is not so much the employment of young people as an end in itself, but rather their training for employment, by teaching them the required demeanor for holding any job."

Congress was informed in March, 1964, that "until recently," young people could gain work experience in unskilled jobs that "abounded" in the economy. Today, however, the number of unskilled jobs had declined due to "automation, mechanization and other scientific and technological advances." In the future, jobs would require "higher motivation, more maturity, greater judgement, and broader experience than are possessed by the thousands of actual and potential school dropouts aged 16-21 who need employment."

The Work-Training section of Title I was to provide full- or part-time work experience and training in state and community public service jobs for young people in need. It would encourage them to resume their education, and would be open to women. The stress was laid on "local initiative and control," in which state agencies, local government and private non-profit organizations could develop and conduct work projects, such as work in "hospitals, settlement houses, schools, libraries, courts, children's homes, parks, playgrounds, public and private welfare agencies, and so on."

The projects must increase the "employability" of youths, contribute to an undertaking "in the private interest," and must not displace employed workers or contracts. Its rate of pay must be "appropriate" to work performed, skill involved, and the general locality. It must coordinate with vocational training and educational services so

that the "special needs of the enrollees may be met by the state or local school authorities." It must include standards and procedures designed to encourage enrollees to continue or resume school.

The NYC program was to be flexible, involving full-time on-the-job training, work-study combination, part-time employment, and so forth. It aimed at 200,000 young men and women. 90% of the cost (or \$219 million for the first year) was to be federally financed.

Labor Secretary Wirtz announced the inauguration of the NYC November 19, 1964 Shriver approved the first 14 NYC projects November 25. The projects were to enroll 10,500 youths in 15 states at a federal cost of \$4½ million and a local cost of \$616,000. On February 14, 1965, Wirtz presented to the President a report on the first NYC project because "its success has been so heartening and meaningful." Mr. Johnson commented that the project was "an early indication that we can succeed in this best of all efforts" to combat poverty.

Administrative problems in the first year of the NYC included the enrollment of ineligible young people whose families' income exceeded OEO guidelines. Time Magazine reported that: "The program had scarcely started when investigators claimed that fully one-fourth of the youths drawing salaries came from families well above the poverty line. One indiscreet Youth Corps girl tooled to work in a 1965 Thunderbird, was asked to resign. In Macoupin, County, Ill., Democratic officials turned the program into a patronage pie for their children until OEO found out and ordered 83 youngsters dropped. Protested one \$9,000 a year Democratic jobholder whose stepson was bounced: 'He comes from a broken home, don't he? Anyway, to the victors goes the spoils. You

know what I mean?"

An OEO fact sheet replied to the Macoupin County charge, admitting the scandal, but said: "What is more significant is that the program... is one of only two in the nation to have been closed while a thousand are operating successfully."

The National Observer quoted NYC Director Jack Howard on December 20, 1965, as estimating that as many as 25% of the participants in the 1965 summer program were ineligible. This inclusion of too-prosperous enrollees ("rich kids") was reported to be partly inadvertent, and partly a matter of local officials placing children of political supporters in the program. The Christian Science Monitor quoted Chicago poverty officials as protesting that the income requirements were so low as to exclude some young people whose parents were on welfare.

Officials in Detroit reported June 21, 1965 that they had problems of recruitment. Only 800 of 1,500 vacancies in the program had been filled because of young people's unwillingness to work for the \$1.25-an-hour federal minimum wage. "You're crazy, man; I don't work for that kind of money," was said to be a typical comment. The reverse was true in the case of those critics who pointed out that by the minimum wage, NYC youth would receive higher rates of pay than their parents, if their parents trained under the Manpower Development and Training Act Programs.

In Boston, allegations of financial irregularities, including fraud and stealing as well as the enrollment of ineligible, led the Labor Department to freeze Boston NYC funds on November 17, 1965, pending an investigation. Newsweek, in an article, "The 'Mess' in the 'Pov-

erty War'", May 16, 1966, said that one-third of the 600 teen-agers employed by the NYC claimed they received income tax forms showing more income than they actually claimed they received, according to Charles Goodell. He said, "This is not the first scandal in Boston's poverty program. Falsified and padded payrolls, forged identity cards, and checks, political favoritism, sloppy administration, controversy and bitterness -- all have been a part of Boston's poverty politics." Mark Battle, NYC Deputy Director, conducted the investigation, giving final clearance for the continuation of the program and renewal of funding on November 30, 1965. He announced that improvements in the administration of funds by the NYC had been agreed on by federal and city officials. But the NYC was overruled by the OEO which canceled the release of the NYC funds on December 2.

The Labor Department only had 325 employees to administer the program. "I think the OEO has more people in its public affairs office," the Washington Post quoted NYC Director Jack Howard as saying on February 11, 1966. As a consequence, there was an almost total lack of field supervision, which left NYC officials unable to interdict NYC projects that were inadequate, such as make-work programs, such as leaf-raking.

Despite these charges and incidents, which were relatively minor and were quickly cleared up, the NYC came to be one of the most popular of the anti-poverty programs. During the 1965 Congressional session, the Congress eliminated the Governor's veto power over the NYC.

The power had been used twice -- once by Governor Connally over a grant to the Texas Farmer's Union amounting to \$400,000; and once by

Governor Tim Babcock (R Mont) over a \$550,000 work-training program for rural youths sponsored by the Montana Farmer's Union. Over 300 Governors protested the repeal of the veto power. Senator Ralph Yarborough accused Connally of deliberately delaying and in some cases vetoing Texas NYC projects where enrollees were to be paid \$1.25 an hour, while rushing through projects that paid only \$1.00 an hour, "This abuse of power must stop," he said. Connally replied, "No Governor in any state...has spent as much time as I have on the program trying to assure its success. I have no apologies to make." He justified his NYC veto on the grounds that the Farmer's Union was "quasi-political." The farm organization denied this. The House minority report said the Governor's veto was the only way of getting the poverty czars to consult with the states before going ahead with the programs. The Democratic-inspired removal of the veto power was "one more slash at the authority of state governments." (pp.405-409.) In 1965, Administration requests for FY-1966 was \$255.0 million; obligated funds for NYC in 1965 was \$132.1 million.

1965 Provisions in the amendments: 1) Authorized enrollment of Cuban refugees in the NYC; 2) Extended for one year the 90% funding authority; 3) Authorized the OEO Director to override governors' veto. Of the extension of the 90% funding authority, President Johnson said, "If we do not do this, then many communities, especially those in rural or isolated areas and which lack the resources to get underway quickly, will be unable to qualify before the cut-off date."

Many proposals had been submitted in the first few months of operation, demonstrating an "awareness of the problem." "At first, the

flow of these proposals was slow, uneven, and of variable quality. But with the assistance of the NYC staff, there has been steady improvement in the quality of the proposals." During the first 6 months, the NYC received 600 proposal applications. A total of 167 NYC projects had been announced by March 31, 1965, and submitted to governor's for review. 124 of them provide work-training for youth in urban areas, while only 43 were in rural communities. Together they will accommodate more than 93,000 enrollees. By April, 1965, 40 projects with 20,000 enrollees were in operation. In fiscal 1966, the NYC intended to enroll 265,000 youths, including 50,000 summer enrollees, in 430 projects.

Enrollees in school were limited to 15 hours of work per week, to insure that the workload did not impair their school performances. School dropouts worked 32 hours per week, allowing time for supportive services such as remedial education, training, counseling or other class work.

Wherever CAP organizations existed, NYC sponsors were instructed to relate their projects with the community's program, and these projects were given priority in funding. Moreover, NYC projects were to be coordinated with existing work-training programs through the Youth Opportunity Centers run by the USES. Pre-selection counseling determined the capacities of applicants, and special referrals services are provided to match the enrollee with the basic remedial and training courses. Those who complete training would be assisted in job referral and placement by the sponsoring agency, the Youth Opportunity Centers, and the USES, as well as CAP, civic, voluntary, employer and

labor organizations.

The NYC found that cities, "not surprisingly," were able to construct programs faster than rural areas. "The NYC has now developed active liaison and cooperation with the Department of Agriculture to stimulate rural programs." In 1965 the NYC contributed to the decline in juvenile crime rates during the summer in major urban areas where the projects were operating. Probation officers, police juvenile bureaus, and police officials attributed the drop to the Corps, which had conducted traffic surveys, preparation of educational materials for teachers, cross reference of historical and archival materials, and so on. Evidence of the NYC's popularity came in the 1966 Congressional session, whereby more than the requested funds were allocated to the program.

HARYOU - ACT

HARYOU - ACT was created in the "general conflict, the normative turmoil, and the persistent tensions which comprise the Harlem ghetto." The product of a merger of the Harlem Youth Opportunities Unlimited agency with the Associated Community Teams in the summer of 1964, the joint venture had emerged from the experience of the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and New York's Mobilization for Youth. Kenneth Clark, Columbia University psychologist, educators, administrators, and a host of scholars and concerned community social workers had formed a task force to counteract "the demoralizing realities of an oppressed community." The result was an organization designed to mobilize the commitment and resources of the ghetto community to guarantee to the youth of Harlem "the respect, the preparation, and the living conditions which are essential for creative lives." Dr. Clark became
32
director.

Within a month after the merger Clark resigned from HARYOU's directorship, charging that Adam Clayton Powell, Chairman of the House Committee on Education and Labor, had seized control of the organization to use for his own purposes. As Murray Kempton wrote, Washington saw Harlem as "simply a geographical expression for Adam Powell's private property." To William Buckley, HARYOU - ACT was merely "another of Mr. Powell's expensive hobbies." In November of that year, Cyril Tyson, acting director, also resigned to head the United Community Corporation. He was replaced by Livingston Leroy Wingate as effective head of HARYOU,

32 Youth in the Ghetto: A Study of the Consequences of Powerlessness and a Blueprint for Change, by Harlem Youth Opportunities Unlimited, Inc., New York: Organs Press, Inc., 1964, pp.xi-xiv.

a man described by Kempton as "Powell's steward, a man of noticeable probity, implausible energy, and a talent for almost anything but administration." Coming to office, Wingate said, "HARYOU - ACT, by its very nature, must be scrupulously guarded from politicians and other interests who might seek to divert its program to their own interests." The only order he had ever received from Powell about HARYOU - ACT, he said, was to "keep it clean."³³

In May, 1965, James G. Bellows, editor of the Herald Tribune, had written to Shriver requesting that HARYOU - ACT records be made public. The Tribune had asked HARYOU - ACT Director Wingate for a record of all employees of the agency who earned more than \$8,000 a year, in order to "confirm or refute" charges of "political control, relatives on the payroll, members of the non-paying board of directors being paid as consultants, slipshod record keeping, questionable leases, and shortages in inventory." Wingate refused, saying he did not want the paper "harassing his employees." Shriver affirmed the right of the public to information regarding the expenditure of public funds, but pointed out that only NYC allocations were thus far a part of HARYOU's OEO funding.³⁴

In September, 1964, before the establishment of the Office of Economic Opportunity, a grant of \$1 million was made under the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency. Authorized for one year, and primarily intended for administrative staffing purposes, the refunding application came under the umbrella of the New York community action

33 Louise Lander (ed.) War on Poverty (New York: Facts on File, Inc.; 1967) p. 72; Murray Kempton and William Buckley, "The Broker of Harlem," Washington Daily News, October 19, 1965

34 Letter from James G. Bellows, Editor New York Herald Tribune, to Sargent Shriver, May 4, 1965; Letter from Shriver to Bellows, May 10, 1965.

agency, the Economic Opportunity Corporation. OEO policy was to refund such Juvenile Delinquency fundings, and in June, 1965, HARYOU - ACT received a \$1.2 million grant for housing, education, employment, health, and social services, as a part of the larger city GAP grant. ³⁵

At the end of the month, the initial grant was increased to \$1.4 million, with an augmentation of \$500,000 from the Neighborhood Youth Corps. The program, a summer offensive to carry the "battle against poverty into New York's steaming slums," would establish summer jobs for youths, plant "vest pocket" parks, provide training programs, "block" day camps, and initiate educational programs. Shriver said the demonstration program would test "whether a massive summer mobilization of a community's resources can strike a lasting blow at the poverty that devastates a huge metropolitan slum." The latter grant was made outside the umbrella agency, and was to fund a special crash program for youth employment called Project Uplift. The program's goals were to "demonstrate community involvement, engender community pride and concern," and to refocus resident's horizons from an isolated "inner city" to that of the typical urban "sophisticate." ³⁶

In June, 1965, the New York press, particularly the Herald Tribune, raised concern about HARYOU - ACT's management. Barry Gotteher, Tribune reporter, claimed to have made a deal with William Haddad, OEO Director of Inspection, to "lay off" the allegations provided Haddad would give him the "full story" of its finances after Price, Waterhouse & Co.

35 Memorandum from Jim Kelleher to Bernie Boutin entitled "Sequence of Events - HARYOU-ACT," October 31, 1965; Letter from Shriver to Bellows, May 10, 1965.

36 OEO Release, June 23, 1965; Thelma Griffith Johnson, "Final Report of The Office of Executive Assistant to the Coordinator," HARYOU-ACT, Inc., Project Uplift: Special Summer Project for Harlem, October 1, 1965, p. 1.

(HARYOU - ACT's auditors) had "done its work."³⁷ Throughout the summer the accountant firm investigated HARYOU - ACT's records, and in July made a series of recommendations that were, however, "largely ignored."³⁸ By late August, the New York press carried stories of "hanky-panky" of the organization's funds, an issue that was inflamed by the internal inspection and "anonymous phone calls from OEO" with the tip that \$300,000 in bad checks had been written by HARYOU - ACT. Edgar May³⁹ and Jim Kelleher were able to "stifle" the rumor.

On September 23, 1965, OEO negotiated with HARYOU - ACT to carry out its own audit of their books in anticipation of a grant extension, fully aware of the discrepancies discovered by Price, Waterhouse, & Co. The next day Wingate telegraphed OEO requesting a countersigner on the extension grant. On the 28th, a \$827,000 grant was made to HARYOU - ACT in order to extend Project Uplift through November 30, with the provision

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- 37 Memorandum from Herbert Kramer and Jim Kelleher to Sargent Shriver, September 28, 1965.
- 38 Memorandum from Jim Kelleher to Bernie Boutin, October 31, 1965, p. 2; Another internal memorandum outlined the official policy OEO was to take publicly. It stressed the fact that the HARYOU project overall was a "good one." Shriver drove the point home: It was "better than good. Would they have preferred a Watts?" OEO would point out that HARYOU had applied for an extension, and had obligated funds in anticipation of it, much in the manner federal agencies operate under continuing resolutions in anticipation of appropriations legislation being passed. Lastly, OEO would maintain that the Price Waterhouse recommendations to put the operation on a more "business-like basis" had "been followed." See Memorandum to Sargent Shriver from Herbert Kramer and Jim Kelleher, with concurrence of Edgar May, September 28, 1965.
- 39 Memorandum from Jim Kelleher to Bernie Boutin, October 31, 1965, p. 2. Edgar May wrote, "I learned that part of the greater newspaper in this situation has been caused by the fact that several creditors of HARYOU-ACT have informed the papers." Memo from May to Shriver September 28, 1965.

that OEO countersign the deposition of funds. Approximately \$400,000 of the grant was earmarked for "administration" but in fact covered the obligation HARYOU - ACT had incurred prior to the funding, and which was, as OEO recognized, "for all practical purposes, without authorization or authority."⁴⁰

Justification for the extension was that HARYOU had recruited the more "alienated," "difficult and suspicious" youth of Harlem. To discontinue funding would place the agency in the position of reinforcing their distrust and alienation. An extension would serve also to involve the many additional applicants to the program, thus enabling the project to serve the entire Harlem community and to include many of the grassroot organizations. At the same time, OEO began auditing HARYOU - ACT's records.⁴¹

On October 1, the New York District Attorney, Frank Hogan, subpoenaed HARYOU - ACT, ordering it to produce its financial records. The investigation was touched off by a mother's complaint that her son had not received payment for five week's work for HARYOU - ACT. Wingate called the investigation a "fishing expedition," denying any "mismanagement or irregularities." When the New York Tribune printed the story, Negroes from Harlem promptly picketed the newspaper, condemned Hogan,

40 Memorandum from Jim Kelleher to Bernie Boutin, October 31, 1965, pp 2-3; Samuel Proctor, OEO Northeastern Regional Director, explained to Wingate the reason for refunding the additional \$800,000: "The audit was not complete and since there was not concrete information at that time, it was advisable to fund so that the \$407,000 could be paid to the creditors and the remaining money would enable the program to continue through October 30." Memo from Joe Argrette to Ed May, October 4, 1965.

41 Memorandum from Sanford Kravitz to Theodore Berry, Undated #9160-I.

and threatened violence. "There has never been a grand-jury investigation in Harlem when black babies were cremated in tenement fires," exclaimed Wingate. "This investigation is a smear tactic by forces opposed to the War on Poverty." HARYOU officials appeared at the District Court, but did not produce the records.

Since the 1964 merger of the organization, New York City had granted \$6.8 million for its projects, and made commitments for \$5 million more. The City Comptroller, Abraham Beame, on October 1, advanced \$270,000 to cover bank drafts, a move that some felt had Powell's backing. The next day, OEO disclosed that its own audit was underway, and that the September 28 grant included the counter-signature proviso. The DA's investigation, it said, was "complementary," and should not detract from the program's "highly successful" accomplishments. Poor management by the organization would be corrected, but to withhold funds would be to punish the youth of Harlem for failures of the program administrators.

During this time, Representative Powell formed his own investigating team. After only two days in Harlem, its report said HARYOU's finances

- 42 Lander, War, p. 73; The Harlem Council for Economic Development Bulletin Number 68, "Special HARYOU-ACT Issue," called the precipitators of the DA investigation "The lying son and his impetuous mother." Of Frank Hogan, it said, "We suspect he has a vendetta against BLACK PEOPLE;" New Republic, December 18, 1965, pp. 7-8; William Haddad, "Mr. Shriver and the Savage Politics of Poverty," Harpers Magazine, December, 1965, p. 50; "HARYOU-ACT Subpoenaed," New York Herald Tribune, October 3, 1965.
- 43 Lander, War, P. 73; Memorandum from Jim Kelleher to Bernie Boutin, October 31, 1965, pp. 1-4.
- 44 An internal memo stated: "Sam Proctor visited Adam Powell yesterday afternoon (September 27) and told him the bad news (financial shenanigans). According to Proctos, the Chairman 'hit the roof,' then called Wingate and chewed him out, saying Wingate had only until this morning to remove the 'leeches' from the program." Memorandum from Jack Williams to Edgar May, September 28, 1965.

were "in total disarray." Expenditures could not be correlated with reimbursements; personnel records were inaccurate; and funds from different grants had been intermingled. The size of the security force was unnecessarily large: "There is a policeman at every door, on every entrance and at every floor." Costs for the security force were unable to be determined. In December, four of Powell's investigators were
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 fired.

On October 4, Powell sent Shriver a list of recommendations compiled by his assistant Chuck Stone. They included suggestions to "Stabilize HARYOU - ACT's top administrative echelons and increase its efficiency," through changes in administration by the Comptroller's office, the Business Manager, the Personnel Director. A full-time General Counsel was "desperately" needed, along with a new executive committee representing a greater proportion of poor people. On October 3, Powell had demanded that Shriver oust HARYOU Comptroller Milledge Mosby, to which OEO replied that it did not have the authority over the organization's board duties. Newspapers interpreted Powell's demand as a "last-ditch power play" to save Wingate's job. Several days later, C. Sumner Stone, of Powell Committee staff, said that HARYOU's books "were in a mess," and that the agency had overexpended "roughly \$400,000 spent on programs expanded beyond the initial financial commitments." On the next day, October 11, Powell said he knew of "no misuses or misappropriation of funds in HARYOU-ACT," but that he would demand that all parties concerned resign and be brought to trial: if such malpractices were uncovered. He said that his investigation had found 10 "major shortcomings" of HARYOU - ACT's

45 Editorial, "The Mystery of HARYOU," New Republic, December 18, 1965 pp. 7-8.

administration, but that it had made "absolutely no criticisms of
 46
 HARYOU's programs and accomplishments."

On the same day, New York City's Economic Opportunity Committee announced the withholding of a five million dollar grant because HARYOU could not meet financial management requirements. The Labor Department also revealed that it had audited HARYOU - ACT's apprenticeship program back in April, after the agency had drawn \$141,781
 47
 for administrative expenses, but had employed only five youths.

At a press conference, HARYOU Board Chairman, the Reverend Eugene Callender, announced that he backed Wingate without reservation. He said that OEO had the policy of making verbal commitments of funds in advance of grants, and did so in the case of HARYOU - ACT, putting them on the spot. Director Wingate said that HARYOU's auditors had found "no evidence of financial malfeasance." He admitted that some earmarked funds had, indeed, been comingled: "We had deadlines and we were under pressure" to launch the summer projects. "But we came through.
 48
 For one thing, there was no 'long hot summer.'"

On October 14, in a speech before the National Urban League, Wingate warned of an "ominous movement" in Harlem of militant Negroes who were "prepared to die" in racial warfare if HARYOU were scuttled. "I can see

46 Memorandum from Chuck Stone to The Chairman (Powell), October 4, 1965; "Powell Investigators Bitterly Lash HARYOU," New York World Telegram, October 28, 1965; Lander, War, p. 74; Memorandum from Jim Kelleher to Bernie Boutin, October 31, 1965; "Powell Loses Poverty Fight," New York Herald Tribune, October 5, 1965.

47 Lander, War, p. 73

48 "HARYOU funds Comingled," New York Herald Tribune, October 7, 1965.

bloodshed in Harlem and then in Bedford Stuyvesant, and then Rochester and Syracuse will move." He claimed that HARYOU had "bought time with this movement, by employing its members during the summer," and that "5,000 kids threatened to break us asunder" when the agency reached in and took the money. I didn't give a continental what account it came from." Wingate refused to name the movement for fear of reprisals, but it was generally known to be the 5%'s (the name came from the group's theory that 85% of all Negroes were like cattle, 10% were 'Uncle Toms, but the remaining 5% were properly militant. Said Wingate regarding the 5%'s: "I've talked to police. They're scared, they know the facts. If I tell too much, I'll be the late Wingate." He warned of "holocaust if funds are curtailed," affirming that HARYOU - ACT was the only thing standing between "the black youths of Harlem and the guns of outer society." Remove HARYOU - ACT, he said, and you have "holocaust." Kempton wrote that if funding HARYOU prevented a riot, "presumably then HARYOU was a bribe to the neighborhood to keep quiet." Ex-Director Kenneth Clark said that Wingate was practicing "Black McCarthyism" and playing "a dangerous game" that "could set things off in a volatile community." Wingate replied that the "establishment must give. Otherwise we face a French Revolution." He said, "there does exist a group that refuses to accept grievous social injustices -- and they are prepared to rebel ... I'm not just talking about the blacks. I'm talking about poor whites too." The United Council of Harlem Organizations

49 Lander, War, pp. 74-75; Kelleher wrote that Wingate's shift in emphasis from holding OEO responsible for verbal commitments to blaming unidentified enemies indicated "Chairman Powell's efforts to shift his gears and avoid identification with HARYOU - ACT problems." Memo from Jim Kelleher to Ernie Boutin, October 31, 1965.

had called a press conference to denounce "statements which imply the existence of large hate groups within the community," on October 19. OEO mildly denied Wingate's statements, at the same time emphasizing the program's worth.⁵⁰

On the 9th of October, OEO received the preliminary audit report. Recognizing the "seriousness" of the potential mismanagement, CAP Director, Theodore Berry set up a meeting with the HARYOU - ACT board and OEO Northeast Regional Director Samuel Proctor to make a series of recommendations including specific changes in personnel. OEO suggested that Whitney Young head a committee of three prominent persons to oversee the completion of Project Uplift, and to change the Project Director. The alternative was a cut-off of funds. Day-long meetings on the 9th and 10th were held between the Regional Director (Proctor) and HARYOU, with constant consultation with Washington. The result was a compromise. HARYOU announced "it is seeking specific individuals as Project Director and fiscal manager, and that Dr. James Dumpson, former New York Welfare Commissioner, would head a committee to evaluate the summer program."⁵¹

On the 10th, OEO froze the planning at current levels, and withheld the release of about \$1 million in grants to HARYOU - ACT pending its adoption of new management controls and fiscal tightening. It revealed that its initial audit findings included the discovery of

50 Murray Kempton, "The Broker of Harlem," Washington Daily News, October 19, 1965; Lander, War, p. 75; Memorandum from Jim Kelleher to Bernie Boutin, October 31, 1965, p. 4.

51 Memorandum from Jim Kelleher to Bernie Boutin, October 31, 1965, p. 4; Kelleher wrote: "All moves to this point have been informally O.K.'d by White House staff."

various "deficiencies in record-keeping and overall management." The completion of the audit was to be October 30, at which time recommendations for further grants would be made. Shriver stated that the summer program, despite its problems, was justified. Had the Federal Government not "focused their urgent attention on the problems in Harlem," he said, OEO would have been "liable to severe and justified criticism." Consequently, Harlem did have a program: 35,000 youngsters participated in jobs, education programs, camp experience, and work training projects. OEO had found no evidence of fraud "or other intentional wrongdoing."⁵²

Subsequent personnel changes in HARYOU were made and an organizational restructuring occurred. The Director of Project Uplift, Frank Stanley, was suspended. Milledge Mosby, HARYOU comptroller, resigned, and two new posts were created. Stanley had received less than propitious treatment.⁵³ Originally he had taken Project Uplift to Washington as an Urban League program, but Shriver had recommended that he carry it out through HARYOU, prompting Murray Kempton's comment that "Washington does not permit encroachments on Adam Powell's franchise." The project had, in fact, exceeded expectations, with more than 65% of the adolescents served returning to schools, 20% more than expected. An internal Uplift report, moreover, stated that "the wonder is that the Comptroller's

52 Undated HARYOU - ACT statement for Mr. Shriver; OEO release entitled "HARYOU- ACT Discusses Future of Project Uplift with OEO Officials," October 11, 1965; Telegram from Sargent Shriver to Mrs. Anne Roberts, Executive Director, Economic Opportunity Committee, October 10, 1965.

53 Murray Kempton, "Broker of Harlem," Washington Daily News, October 19, 1965; The Harlem Council for Economic Development Bulletin #68, dated October 9, 1965, said of Mr. Stanley, "This guy doesn't even live in Harlem - was infiltrated into HARYOU - ACT from the white-dominated Urban League."

office was able to function at all in the earlier days of the program," due to a small staff and inadequate procedures. The Comptroller's ability to function in payroll matters was further hampered by the pressures placed upon his office because of the 'panic psychology of the agency.' Instead of permitting the orderly rectification of payroll errors and omissions the Comptroller's staff was repeatedly summoned by the Executive Staff of the agency and told to 'Pay the kids.'" 54

Dr. Samuel D. Proctor OEO Northeast Regional Director, said on November 8, 1965, that "Somewhere around the midpoint of the summer they found it necessary to expand the program ... Then HARYOU - ACT made what I consider a management misjudgment. They found themselves with their nose against the fiscal grindstone." Given the crisis situation, "I would call (the summer program) a victory." 55

HARYOU's Board of Directors announced December 6, 1965, that Wingate would be relieved of his responsibilities until February 1, 1966, to "concentrate all of his time to clarifying HARYOU - ACT's fiscal matters from January 1, 1965 to October 31, 1965." At the same time the Board reaffirmed its vote of confidence in him. His departure was a move interpreted by the press as the result of OEO pressure, which Wingate confirmed later. He was replaced by G. Douglas Pugh. OEO Director Shriver stated that federal funding of the agency would be resumed "after we are formally notified" of the Board's action. 56

54 Thelma Griffith Johnson, "Final Report of the Office of Executive Assistant to the Coordinator," HARYOU-ACT Inc., Project Uplift: Special Summer Project for Harlem, October 1, 1965, p. 8.

55 Lander, War, p. 76.

56 OEO Release, December 6, 1965; "Wingate Vows He'll Keep Post," New York Times, December 10, 1965; "Study in Confusion," New York Times, December 9, 1965. The Harlem Council for Economic Development applauded Mr. Winegate's success in deterring Harlem riots "regardless of how he approached this need. This goes for commingling of funds, borrowing from the banks or petitioning the OEO for more funds, or delaying payment of salaries until funds are available." Bulletin #68, October 9, 1965, p. 1.

Chairman Paul Screvance of the Antipoverty Operations Board said that HARYOU had agreed to a new fiscal and bookkeeping controls, and that city funds would be released in a "special sequestered account," as soon as the new procedures had been instituted. Shriver publicly commended the Board "for apparently initiating a responsive total re-organization of management and fiscal organization since the completion of the OEO interim audit on October 31." The step was "encouraging and most significant to the future of the Harlem antipoverty agency." On December 9, 1965, Powell called HARYOU "the best program in the country -- fiscally too," but said that he had designated a subcommittee of the House Education and Labor Committee under Representative Hugh Carey ⁵⁷ (D. New York) to investigate the agency.

On January 18, 1966, the New York Times published the conclusions of a three-man investigation's report, consisting of Dr. Inabel Lindsay, James R. Dumpson, and Dr. Roy Nichols. It praised Project Uplift for "involving large numbers of people in a self-help program," but criticized it for administrative inefficiency, "a total disregard for the principle of accountability," and "confused lines of authority and communication." It said, "We believe that ultimate goals were obscured by the pervading thought that something must be done to keep trouble from erupting in the ghetto during the summer." In May, the Executive Board of HARYOU voted to reinstate Wingate. An OEO spokesman said that the OEO was in a "position of wait and see" as to the effect of Wingate's reinstatement on future funding. ⁵⁸

57 OEO release, December 6, 1965; Lander, War, pp. 76-77.

58 Lander, War, p. 77.

BLACK ARTS THEATRE

Adding to the financial and administrative problems of HARYOU-ACT were the events surrounding the Black Arts Theatre, a part of Project Uplift. The HARYOU-ACT imbroglio of the summer and fall of 1965 was, to some extent, symptomatic of the diffusion of responsibility and locally-oriented lines of authority inherent in OEO-sponsored community action projects. The politics of the locality, as well as a troubling concern with the impact of the program in the tinder-like atmosphere of the Negro ghetto, contributed to the methods by which OEO responded to an altogether bad situation. In the context of managerial disorder, the Black Arts Theatre under Le Roi Jones was able to gain a role in the program. By the time the press broke the story, OEO investigators had discovered that the Black Arts Theatre contract had been accomplished without the knowledge or consent of OEO.

Le Roi Jones, a widely recognized black playwright who taught at Columbia University, had incorporated the Black Arts Theatre in an effort to duplicate an earlier project in the San Francisco area. Its charter read: "To explore, develop, extend, propogate and preserve the dramatic arts and talents of the Afro-Americans, with particular emphasis on linking such expressions to the African past and present in order that the black community may realize and protect and nourish distinctive aspects of its own historical culture." Jones, writer of three successful off-Broadway plays, a novel and two books on poetry and jazz, had formulated a militant philosophy of black nationalism. America, he once wrote, must

59
59. Memorandum from Jack Williams to Edgar May, March 3, 1966.

be "stormed" by "20 million spooks (Negroes)...with furious cries and
 unstoppable weapons. We want actual explosions and actual brutality." ⁶⁰

In May 1965, Jones set out to promote the reeducation of "the nearly half a million Harlem Negroes to find a new pride in their color." Accordingly, Jones and his cohorts, claiming foundation support from Guggenheim, Rabinowitz and Magdelene, approached Frank Stanley of Project Uplift for a grant. Meeting with a negative response, they "crashed" into Livingston Wingate's office at HARYOU-ACT, at which point Wingate overruled Stanley in favor of Jones. Wingate, in a verbal commitment, agreed to finance the Black Arts Theatre project with funds from Project Uplift. Justification for the grant was on the grounds that all other Uplift programs ended at five o'clock, and that a twilight program would benefit the ghetto youths with hours of daylight ahead of them. ⁶¹

By mid-July, the theatre project was enlarged to include, in addition to dramatic arts, a school of cultural history, the political philosophy of the black man in America, playwriting, painting, dancing, sculpture, remedial reading and mathematics. During the course of the summer, five plays were produced, on a seven-night-a-week schedule, from a portable stage in different parts of Harlem. These included: "The Super," "The Liberal," "Black Ice," "Jello," and "The Experimental Death Unit." Collectively, the plays denounced Martin Luther King's philosophy of nonviolence, advocated rebellion by black people, challenged the liberal rhetoric as hypocritical, exposed white capitalist exploitation of the

60. Cited in "U. S. Cash Aids Negro Spiel of White Hatred," Chicago Tribune, December 1, 1965.

61. Williams wrote, "the real reason for Wingate's decision was fear. This probably was less personal physical fear...than fear of the embroglio Jones and his adherents might create if they didn't get 'a piece of the action.'" There was an apparent connection between the 5%'s and the Black Arts group. Black Arts Theatre School, Inc. (BATS) FBI summary report (undated); Memorandum from Jack Williams to Edgar May, March 3, 1966.

ghetto, and invoked a quasi-Marxist form of political and social revolution.

The Black Arts Theatre performed the street-corner plays for about six weeks, attracting thousands to the evening presentations. The plays, which were performed before audiences including women and children, got mixed, but generally enthusiastic responses. On the one hand, some Harlem community leaders protested to HARYOU-ACT officials about the use of "foul" and "vulgar" language, prompting Wingate to admonish Jones to "keep Haryou out of trouble;" thereafter, the Project Uplift staff blue-penciled the plays. On the other hand, an OEO investigator later pointed out that the plays were very well received on the streets of Harlem, where the people enjoyed taunting the "whitey" being portrayed through blackface-in-reverse. It was this portion of the theatre presentation that incited the wrath of the press, which described it as a "crude, racist" philosophy "preaching hatred of the white race." The use of the word "whitey" inclusively portrayed, as James Harris, a local critic observed, "bungling fools with a monopoly of the human defects of avarice, ignorance, cowardice and stupidity."

62. OEO Statement on Haryou-Act and the Black Arts Theatre, November, 1965; Memorandum from Edgar May to Sargent Shriver, December 13, 1965; Memorandum from Jack Williams to Edgar May, March 3, 1965.
63. Memorandum from Jack Williams to Edgar May, March 3, 1966; Statement on Black Arts Theatre (undated).
64. See, for example: "Aids Negro Hate Troupe," The Hammond Times, November 1, 1965; "Hatred is Theme of Negro Theatre," New York Tribune, November 30, 1965; "Fatal Confusion in Race Relations," Sunday Advocate, December 5, 1965; "Public Finance for 'Hate' School," Des Moines Register, December 2, 1965; Statement of Black Arts Theatre.

Public reaction to the press coverage of the Black Arts Theatre required an official OEO response. "We'd rather see these kids fussing on the stage," said Jim Kelleher, Deputy Director of Public Affairs, "than on the streets." The overall program was a good one, he stressed, and "we have to figure that this (the Theatre-school was a part of its success. HARYOU-ACT wanted Jones in the program. He is a legitimate playwright, whatever you may think about his views. We knew about it when we granted the money and we have no apologies." 65

In September, Wingate had ordered the Black Art theatre's continuation under a new supplementary grant. In discussions between OEO staff and HARYOU officials, "HARYOU specifically asked that the entire supplementary budget be for the Black Arts Theatre." This was rejected by the OEO with the recommendation that at some point in the future a separate cultural arts demonstration proposal might be funded. 66 On September 17, according to an OEO statement, "as a result of local indignation and the action of the program's director," the Black Arts Theatre project was cut off from the HARYOU-ACT program. Perhaps out of fear of reprisal (HARYOU controller Mosby had been threatened by a Black Arts member, an incident represented as "racial blackmail"), Wingate immediately telegraphed delegated HARYOU agencies blaming "whitey" (Washington) for HARYOU's financial plight. 67

65. Cited in Chicago Tribune, December 1, 1965. This statement was at variance with a November release which said: "This was accomplished (Black Arts Theatre grant) without the knowledge or consent of OEO, and even without the knowledge of the Haryou-Act Board of Directors." OEO Statement on Haryou-Act and the Black Arts Theatre, November, 1965. Interestingly, Kelleher's office was flooded with hate mail, of which the following was typical: To Jim Kelleher - Tax-paid political parasite (sic). Poverty funds, to divide people. You disgraceful pharisee."

66. Memorandum from Sanford L. Kravitz to Edgar May, December 16, 1965; Memorandum from Jack Williams to Edgar May, March 3, 1966.

67. Donald Washington, Black Arts member, reportedly had said to Mosby, "You said you'd pay me if I kept the Black Arts off your back." Mosby thereupon threatened to resign. Memorandum from Joe Argrett, Jim Brenner, Jack Williams to Edgar May, October 19, 1965; Memorandum from Jack Williams to Edgar May, March 3, 1966; OEO Statement on Haryou-Act and the Black Arts Theatre, November 1965.

During this time, OEO was conducting its own investigation to discover exactly how the Black Arts Theatre had become involved in the first place. An F.B.I. tracer, "to separate the wheat from the chaff,"⁶⁸ was begun to check the names of the top members of the theatrical group. The Office of Inspection determined that the "Black Arts originally crept into the HARYOU-ACT funding pattern through the back door" on a contract that was contingent upon approval of a supplementary application submitted in early August, which was never approved. Technically, then, the contract was null and void. The project had been "imbedded" in the summer day camp program of Project Uplift, which it was assumed by OEO at the time, "was the typical camp arts and crafts program." It was not until December 1965, that OEO first came into possession of the original Black Arts proposals to HARYOU-ACT. Wrote an investigator, "OEO was never told of this contract, nor was a copy ever furnished. The Office of Inspection came upon it in the ACT files during the September investigation and had it xeroxed." On September 28, the OEO supplemental grant to HARYOU-ACT specifically ruled out the Black Arts Theatre.⁶⁹

Initial estimates of the cost of the Black Arts Theatre ran to about \$18,000 in Federal funds. Later estimates raised the figure to \$95,150; and still later, the HARYOU-ACT Internal Investigations Committee also submitted a report showing the Black Arts project costing \$115,200. The funds had been used for a variety of purposes, but primarily to pay the

68 Edgar May had said, "It is harder to get accurate information such as number of plays out of HARYOU-ACT than information from Peking." Memo from Jack Williams to Edgar May, October 5, 1965; Black Arts Theatre School, Inc. (BATS) FBI Summary Report (undated).

69 Memorandum from Edgar May to the Director, December 16, 1965; Memorandum from Jack Williams to Edgar May, March 3, 1966.

wages of the program's participants.

OEO Director Shriver stated that he deplored the involvement of the theatre in the HARYOU component program. "It is unfortunate," he said, "that the Harlem antipoverty program was disgraced this way. It happened at a time when a crash effort was underway to get a massive program going. Frankly, it illustrates the lack of administrative control that was in effect." As an OEO official statement put it, "it obviously never should have been permitted to occur at all. It will not occur again in the war on poverty."⁷¹

To attempt a balanced view of the entire incident whereby OEO was charged by the press with funding a racist, obscene, and quasi-Marxist revolutionary movement it is important to bear in mind that OEO never sanctioned, directly or indirectly, the plays or the poetry readings. Equally important to observe is the fact that the Black Arts Theatre was credited with serving as an emotional catharsis, easing the threat of civil disorder in Harlem. Noting that the temperature "hovered near 100 in Harlem during the four days of Watts, yet there was no eruption," OEO inspector Jack Williams brought to the incident perhaps the wisdom and honesty that it deserved. He wrote:

"Those plays aren't a popular subject for conversation in Harlem (as they aren't at OEO) and I've yet to find anyone sufficiently familiar with them who doesn't have a vested interest in a point

70 Williams wrote: "Under some duress, Jim Kelleher put out a press statement on Black Arts which indicated that BATS share of the HARYOU summer funding (which, unaccountably, was listed at \$1.8 million rather than \$2.2 million) was 'less than 1%' or some \$18,000. This is sheer malarky, and someone's going to find it out....In reality, I'd estimate the overall cost to OEO of the Black Arts program as being substantially above \$100,000 including close to \$90,000 in costs alone." Memorandum, Jack Williams to Edgar May, March 3, 1966; OEO Statement on HARYOU-ACT and the Black Arts Theatre, November, 1965.

71 Shriver statement re Black Arts Theatre School.

of view. It's clear that the civil rights movement has focused the attention of this generation upon the indignities and injustices done to Negroes in America, currently and in the past. Their knowledge was never lacking for an individual Negro, of course, but in earlier days it was suppressed. Now its out in the open and for many Negroes it seems to be it is only expectable that the reaction will be -- and is -- rage, for both the present and the past. Because it has been long suppressed, this rage is particularly virulent, but it must come out if the Negro is to reach an accommodation with his own personality and his everyday world. It comes out, it seems to me, in Watts -- and it can also come out in "The Super." As Dr. Diggs points out, whatever the intrinsic artistic merit of the play, it was well received by the people of Harlem. The taunts and anger are part of this badly needed catharsis, and such white-baiting is going to continue, with or without OEO participation. The Black Nationalists and the Muslims have made it a way of life with their adherents, and I believe the teaching of an Elijah Muhammed or Malcolm X, strikes some chord of sympathy within any Negro." 72

As Shriver succinctly had put it: "Would they have preferred a Watts?"

THE CRITICS

There was continually a constant accompaniment of charges of high salaries and low intentions; of waste, opportunism bungling, nepotism and malfeasance.

On August 23, 1965, when OEO was just eight months old, U.S. News and World Report published a denunciatory article called "Poverty War Out of Hand?" which presented its summation of charges against OEO to date. These included allegations of Presidential concern "about the swelling volume of criticism," complaints of "administrative chaos, bureaucratic bungling, waste, extravagance, costly duplication of existing services and internal squabbling," along with a number of other indictments. The OEO Public Affairs Office issued a memorandum on the article, answering, point by point, the charges made.⁷³ Sample rebuttals: "Of course the White House is concerned--just as it is over attacks on any key administration program. But only last week the President gave high praise to the entire program, and the OEO, before a meeting of Congressional leaders. There is no evidence whatsoever of his dissatisfaction." And: "The article conveniently omits the preponderance of favorable reaction, the consensus that recently led to such overwhelming victories for the new anti-poverty bills in Cong-

⁷³ August 24, 1965.

ress. And it fails to question how, in the light of such 'bungling' the program managed to serve over three million poor people in 2,000 communities in its first nine months."

Along with rising statistics and expanding programs there continued to be the chorus of critics who became, in a way, an adverse adjunct of the War on Poverty. Undeterred by progress, and not deflected by quick rebuttal and explicit answers to charges, they continued their barrage of headlines-inspired invective. In those days, and all the subsequent ones, Shriver had good reason for reading, often, the maxim from Edmund Burke which he kept in his office:

"Those who would carry on the great public schemes must be proof against the most fatiguing delays, the most mortifying disappointments, the most shocking insults, and worst of all the presumptuous judgment of the ignorant upon their design."

There were charges of federal anti-poverty funds being used to rent tuxedos for high school boys, secret meetings at which democratic congressmen were given preferential treatment for projects in their districts, an allegation that OEO had flown Job Corps enrollees from Hawaii to California to pick asparagus; assertions that students were being sent to see "the Sound of Music" and being given ballet lessons; accusations that OEO was an advocate of violence in black ghettos and comment by Senator Dirksen which led to an editorial in the Wall Street Journal headed "Tent Shows and Snake Oil".

Such charges made very readable headlines. The OEO replies, many signed by Shriver personally, did not make for such sensational reading. But, in their explicit denials and exposition of facts, they consti-

tuted a new departure for federal agencies in responding to allegations.

By the Associated Press, May 26, 1966: "A 'glorious victory against poverty' was cited in the House floor today--high school youths at Fort Lauderdale, Fla., can get tuxedos at government expense.

"Rep. Robert M. Michel, R-Ill., quoted the Fort Lauderdale News of May 22 as reporting the government is footing the \$250 bill to enable 16 boys in Dol Palos Union High School to attend a junior prom.

"'In addition,' Michel said, 'the bill for dinner afterwards and tips will be courtesy of the taxpayers.'

"'...I know that dancing and partying are very much in vogue in this administration but I am a little surprised to find that they are considered such vital areas in the War Against Poverty,' Michel told the House.

"'Perhaps it will be deemed equally important to furnish mink stoles for those who want to attend the opera but wouldn't feel they were properly attired without a furpiece.'"

By OEO, May 26, 1966: "Mr. Shriver branded Rep. Michel's assertion as complete nonsense.

"He emphasized that no money from any OEO anti-poverty program had been used or would be used for such a purpose, in Florida, as Rep. Michel alleged, in California where such an incident was previously reported, or anywhere else in the United States."

By United Press International, June 3, 1966: "A Republican Congressman from Ohio complained today that California Democratic Congressman had been promised at a 'secret meeting' that they would be given a 'preferential preview' of anti-poverty projects in their districts.

"Rep. William H. Ayres, ranking GOP member of the House Education and Labor Committee, asked in a letter to OEO Director Sargent Shriver that Republican lawmakers be given the same privilege.

"'I can well understand the concern of these members,' Ayres said, 'For many of them have stated they find themselves blamed for ill-advised OEO projects over which they have had no control.'"

By OEO, June 3, 1966: "Sargent Shriver...said today that he had not as of late Friday received the letter which Representative William H. Ayres...announced in the press he had sent to Mr. Shriver.

"Mr. Shriver said he wanted to make it clearly understood that there are no secrets or 'secret meetings' at the OEO, as Representative Ayres charged. This is a typical misrepresentation issued for

political purposes, he said.

"Mr. Shriver said that the OEO has for months supplied governors and mayors with notification of all applications made to OEO as part of the routine practice of informing elected officials of OEO business at the earliest possible time..."

From the Chicago, Ill. Tribune, June 9, 1966: "RIPS 'JOYRIDE' FOR JOB CORPS PICKERS." Rep. Charles S. Bubser (R-Cal.) charged today that the Office of Economic Opportunity spent 'at least \$8,000' to fly 40 workers from a Job Corps camp in Hawaii to pick asparagus in the San Francisco bay area.

"It is almost inconceivable that the OEO would do this,' said Gubser in a speech in the House. 'It is stupid and ridiculous that the war on poverty uses money like this after the taxpayer has worked so hard to earn it. It almost seems like Sargent Shriver is trying to think up new ways of squandering it.'"

By OEO, June 9, 1966: "The statement by Rep. Charles S. Gubser of California...was completely in error.

"Dr. Franklyn A. Johnson, Director of Job Corps, said that no Job Corpsmen have been flown from the Hawaiian center, Koko Head. 'A group of 14 young men, who formed the cadre for the center, were the only ones at the center on May 15, when the trip allegedly was made,' Dr. Johnson said..."

"Airline representatives reported that on May 7 a group of 50 farm workers flew from Honolulu to San Francisco, destination, Stockton, to help harvest crops. The trip was privately financed."

Letter from OEO Public Affairs Director to columnist Ruth S. Montgomery of the Hearst Newspapers, June 10, 1966: "...a letter has come in protesting the use of OEO funds to underwrite the cost of sending all students in a Hawaiian elementary school to view the motion picture, 'Sound of Music,' a charge which is absolutely ridiculous. Another story has it that OEO funds are paying for ballet lessons of poor youngsters in Omaha. The fact is that the local community action agency applied for a cultural component which did do this, but it was turned down..."

"The point is, I think, that in this silly season of politics the superficiality and absurdity of such charges makes good copy, but hurts the effort being made to help the poor help themselves and also degrades the good name of politics..."

Comment on the Senate floor by Senator Everett M. Dirksen, which stimulated the "Tent Shows and Snake Oil" editorial in the Wall Street

Journal brought letters from Shriver to each. To Dirksen, Shriver said, on November 8, 1966:

"You recently commented sharply on the unclear language of an application filed with the Office of Economic Opportunity by the Young Adult Project of Northwest Pasadena, California, and on the unworthiness of another application from Pasadena to set up a community theater.

"I have no quarrel with your evaluations of the proposals, but I assure you this office had no hand in their preparation. We are thus being criticized because citizens in the Pasadena community sent unsolicited proposals to OEO. These projects have not been funded. Even though they have not, your remarks indicated that OEO is somehow to blame for their existence...

"You also criticized two Legal Services projects, one in Karnak, Illinois, with a population of 667, and the other in Eldorado, Illinois, with a population of 3,573.

Actually, the first project serves not only Karnak, but also Alexander, Pulaski, Union, Massac, and Johnson Counties with a population of 60,514. The second project serves the combined Counties of Saline, Hardin, Pope, and Gallatin with a population of 43,897, based on the 1960 census."

To Vermont Royster, Editor, Wall Street Journal, November 8, 1966:
"The charges contained in your editorial...was grossly unfair and presented a distorted view of the War on Poverty.

"...What you failed to make clear is that these are simply proposals submitted by private citizens and have not been funded by OEO. There is, as you will undoubtedly agree, a vast difference between a suggestion and an implementation. However, your editorial was couched in such language that you in effect, held OEO responsible for the content of each and every proposal sent to this office, whether it has been accepted or rejected.

"Two of the Legal Services Programs of the OEO also came in for your editorial wrath. One you indicated was in Eldorado, Illinois, with a population of 3,573. The second, you identified as operating in Karnak, Illinois, with a population of 667.

"In both instances, your facts were at variance with reality. The first project does not serve Eldorado alone, but a four county area--Hardin, Salina, Pope and Gallatin--with a population of 43,887.

"Similarly, the second project does not serve Karnak alone, but the Counties of Alexander, Pulaski, Union, Massac and Johnson, with a population of 60,514.

From these cases you draw the conclusion that a smaller appropriation to the OEO would require more careful spending, with the implication that care has not been exercised in the past. This is roughly

analogous to proposing that an editor's salary be reduced in order that he will be more careful in his work. Neither argument has real validity.

"OEO has continually exercised care in the evaluation of projects and in their funding. This will continue."

An editorial in the St. Louis, Mo. Globe-Democrat, June 27, 1966, headed "Poverty War Profiteers" brought together a number of charges common to OEO's most dedicated critics. "The conduct of the Vietnam war," it began, "might be considered a model of efficiency compared to the much-touted 'war on poverty' and the way it's run. The public has been aware of a scandal here and a scandal there, but the full impact of its boondoggles is not realized until one tots up the score in the aggregate. The Office of Economic Opportunity, which administers the poverty war, is well-named indeed, so far as its employees are concerned."

The editorial went on to charge disproportionate salaries to OEO officials and other examples of bureaucratic irresponsibility" and quoted Senator Strom Thurmond:

"Shorn of its garish and deceptive political trappings the war on poverty is revealed to the taxpayer as an irresponsible waste, and to the victim of poverty as a cruel hoax. For all the money spent, about all that has been produced is a series of program catch-words, such as 'VISTA' and 'Head Start.' Congress should take a cue and impose some catch-word programs of its own like 'Head Knocking' and 'New Start!'"

Shriver sat down and wrote another letter:

June 30, 1966

Mr. George A. Killenberg
Managing Editor
Globe-Democrat
12th Boulevard at Delmar
St. Louis, Missouri 63101

"Dear Mr. Killenberg:

"Your editorial of June 27, headed "poverty War Profiteers," has come to my attention.

"While I am gratified by responsible coverage of the American press in reporting the anti-poverty campaign, I am less impressed with reports which tot up the score, as your editorial put it, with a disproportionate share of statements without basis of fact.

"Here is a point by point rundown of your "aggregate:"

"It is not true that 70 percent of the OEO appropriations goes for salaries. In fact, a little more than 1 percent of the anti-poverty budget goes for salaries (in 1966 OEO was authorized by Congress to spend out of \$18,006,000 for salaries, out of a total appropriation of \$1.5 billion).

"It is not true there is one "super-grade" employee for every 16 employees. The ratio is one super-grade to about 102 employees. (OEO has 2,870 on its payroll, of which 28 super-grade salaries of \$19,619, or above, and six more are high-level positions created by the President or Congress.

"It is not true that 154 school teachers were pirated from schools, many at doubled salaries, for the Gary Job Corps Center. Teachers' former salaries were based on a nine-month school year, and 18 percent should be added because of legislative-ordered pay raise.

"I don't think it can be factually stated that OEO employees "often" get higher salaries than they did at their last job. Some get higher pay and many others do not. In December of last year when I made a personal check on the salary of the top men at OEO, the top twenty officials at that time were receiving a total of \$3,500 less than they had received before they came to OEO. In other words, in the aggregate, these top officials had accepted a similar loss in order to take on the top responsibilities in this agency.

"It is not true that 13 of the first 16 Neighborhood Youth Corps youths screened in Philadelphia had arrest records. This has been formally denied by George Brown, former Neighborhood Youth Corps Project Director there, and also by the Philadelphia municipal government.

"It is not true that only 10 out of 153 youths to be enrolled in the Neighborhood Youth Corps in Omaha, Nebraska, were eligible. Every Omaha applicant was eligible.

"It is not true that anti-poverty funds were used to rent tuxedos for high school boys in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, or anywhere else in the United States.

"It is true that an aircraft was chartered in August 1965, by the director of a project named the Child Development Group of Mississippi. The event was the Head Start graduation ceremony at the first of 83 projects administered by the program, and a number of local officials were attending. The project director and an aide arranged the 400 mile round trip. The cost was \$109.

"If you wish to go beyond the remarks you cite by Senator Strom Thurmond on VISTA and Head Start, you will find that there are 3,500 VISTA Volunteers working for their country in a variety of urban and rural projects, and that Head Start has given educational and medical help to 1.3 million underprivileged children.

"The above, I think presents a different picture than advertised in your headline. If there is any scandal, it is the extent of confusion and distortion carelessly put forward about the anti-poverty program.

"The Office of Economic Opportunity welcomes inspection and review of its programs. Our office is at your service if your newspaper wishes facts or figures or information on what the OEO is doing.

"I can't say that I thank you for presenting an editorial which I do not believe was balanced, but I am not unmindful of pro and con controversy about the program. I support such discussion, and only urge that it be done with objectivity, in the public interest."

In May 1966, the Republican minority⁷⁴ (with one exception) of the House Education and Labor Committee had issued a 100-page compendium of criticism in a minority report assailing OEO for abuses, scandals and mismanagement. The report urged the dismantling of OEO, and the substitution of an "Opportunity Crusade," in its place. Under the plan the Job Corps and Neighborhood Youth Corps would be placed in the Labor Department, Adult Educations programs would go to the Office of Education, leaving only the Community Action Program and VISTA in OEO.⁷⁵ Shriver's comment on the report as issued by OEO on June 2: "...I have read the so-called Minority Report. It is nothing other than a patchwork of old newspaper clippings and worn rumors, gossip and alleged scandals, the vast majority of which have been proven wrong over and over again, or where there was substance, the situation has long since been corrected. In the communication field, there is a well-known technique called 'the big lie' which says that if you repeat something over and over again people may believe it..."

Not all of the surveys condemned OEO, by any means. In October,

⁷⁴ The report was signed by Reps. William N. Ayres, Ohio; Albert H. Quie, Minn.; Charles E. Goodell, New York; John M. Ashbrook, Ohio; Dave Martin, Neb.; Alphonzo Bell, Calif.; Glenn Andrews, Fla.; and Edward J. Durney, Fla.. Of the Republican committee members, only Rep. Ogden R. Reid, New York, did not join in the dissent.

⁷⁵ On July 17, 1968, the Senate voted to transfer Head Start to the Office of Education effective July 1, 1969. And, on July 25, the House approved an amendment to transfer Upward Bound to the Office of Education, effective immediately. These actions will be discussed in the final chapter.

1966, the Christian Science Monitor asked its correspondents throughout the United States to assess the federal anti-poverty program's first 18 months. "They have found some 'tooling up,' some solid achievement, but much disorder and faltering," the italic prelude to the series, written by William C. Selover, said. "This newspaper," said the first article, "found that the process alone of getting local communities to accept the challenges of cooperation--to sacrifice petty political and bureaucratic interests--has been so formidable that the initial expenditure of time and money was beyond anyone's expectation." In his fifth article, Selover said: "Nobody's amazed that problems and potential scandals have turned up. In the bright lights of vast publicity the war on poverty is being watched for every false move, by newspapers, by OEO itself, by the administration, by local and state governments, and by the political opposition. What is remarkable is not that such instances have cropped up, but that there have been so few of them, and that in the sizable majority of local programs, there hasn't been a whisper of scandal."

That conclusion proceeded from a lead which said:

"The American 'war on poverty' may have established some kind of all-time record."

"Believe it or not, in the nearly two years of operation, there hasn't been even a whisper of scandal in the administration of the overwhelming majority of programs across the country..."

That is not to say that the programs have been wholly efficient. They haven't in many cases.

But, in general, the local administrators have taken great care to maintain close watch on funds and to keep the programs free of patronage of graft..."

Real problems and difficulties did exist, the paper said, "but, unfortunately for the program such stories paint a completely distorted view of the program as a whole...

On the other hand, the findings of this Monitor survey are so unexpected as to be newsworthy and pertinent. it may also prove important simply because congressmen and other opponents of the program have capitalized on the relatively few shortcomings of the program, without pointing out the remarkably clean record of the majority of the programs.

Still, the story is indisputable. In city after city, Monitor reporters found the same freedom from dishonesty and graft."

In February, 1966, Shriver told a Chicago Sun-Times reporter:

"I suppose maybe we shouldn't have started so many programs so fast and we wouldn't have got so many people excited... Maybe we should have limited the amount of programs we put out and waited six months longer to do some of the things we did. Things would have been much quieter and calmer but the poor wouldn't have been helped so much."

EARLY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

From the beginning, and afterward, up until the day he left OEO on May 6, 1968, to become the U.S. Ambassador to France, Shriver had maintained that struggle was part of the War Against Poverty. In September, 1965, he told Newsweek that "abrasiveness and conflict are part of being alive. I do not see waiting just because we don't have it all worked out. If you worried about the sixteenth hurdle before you started, you'd never get over the tenth hurdle." Before that, in the days of the first orders of business, Shriver had made his attitude toward unenlightened criticism clear when he said, "For six months we had our sign out like a lawyer's shingle begging for con-

structive ideas on how to wage this war. Those who have challenged the substantive parts of our program have been asked by me to come up with something better. For a half-year I've been saying: 'If you've got a better mousetrap, show us,' and they proposed nothing. Our program has been endorsed by economists and by an extraordinary cross-section of business leaders--men who certainly would not lend themselves to any crass vote-getting scheme. We are the first to admit we don't have all the answers. This is a war that is going to require social inventiveness, just as we needed military inventiveness when we were plunged into World War II.

"When I started serving in the Submarine Corps (He entered as an apprentice seaman and emerged as a lieutenant commander), I remember our torpedoes hitting an enemy ship and never explide. We have the same job now of perfecting our weapons and developing new ones."

The War Against Poverty, said one reporter, started off like the cowboy who jumped on a horse and rode off in all directions at once looking for the Indians. Shriver himself said, in 1966 recalling the earlier times, "it's like we went down to Cape Kennedy and launched a half-dozen rockets at once." He had said too, even earlier than that, "The American People are just plain confused about what the poverty program is all about. It's just like giving an American sports page to an Englishman."

And yet, in its first Congressional Presentation of April, 1965, OEO could justifiably say:

"In its first six months the War on Poverty translated a Congressional mandate into a working program." It did not wait, the report

"until perfection could be guaranteed, or criticism avoided," having determined at the outset that such an approach would condemn programs to committees or the drafting boards.

"In these first days," the report went on, "many of the myths about poverty, and what would happen when OEO was established, were effectively destroyed," including:

--that no Southern official would voluntarily cooperate with Negro leaders in local anti-poverty programs;

--that the poor were apathetic, inarticulate, incapable of working for their own welfare in organized systems;

--that nobody would volunteer for VISTA without the exotic appeal of service in foreign countries;

--that Negroes would not live with whites in Job Corps Centers, or vice versa;

--that towns and cities wouldn't want Job Corps camps nearby.

The first signs, said Shriver in the presentation, were encouraging:

"We have a Job Corps.

We have a Neighborhood Youth Corps.

There are Community Action programs all across the country.

Work Study, Work Experience and Adult Basic Education are in operation as are the Small Business and Rural Loan programs.

VISTA Volunteers are at Work.

The beginning has not only shown the difficulty, but the possibility."

By the time OEO celebrated its first fiscal birthday--at the cal-

endar age of less than eight months--it had a number of facts and accomplishments to record. This it did in its First Annual Report, entitled, "A Nation Aroused." "In a short time," the introduction said, "the War on Poverty has produced--as it must--quantifiable results, numerical results. We know for example, that by December 1965, 440,071 young men and women had participated in Neighborhood Youth Corps projects, that 104,017 unemployed adults had benefited from Work Experience programs, that Office of Economic Opportunity programs had reached 178 of the Nation's 182 poorest counties, that a total of 4,896,873 poor persons had been helped--directly and indirectly--by our programs." The report contained charts and graphs to document the accomplishments listed.

"But the War on Poverty is not simply a series of numerical results," it continued. "it is also a means of arousing, of mobilizing, of harnessing the moral energies and the conscience of the American people..."

"The 16,946 young men and women who, on December 3 were earning and learning in 76 Job Corps Centers is an important and an impressive figure. So is the fact that 561,359 children received valuable pre-school training during the summer of 1965 through Project Head Start. But just as impressive is the fact that within a very short time span, millions of Americans--the 'haves' and the 'have nots'--have looked inward at their country, their neighbors and themselves and admitted that there were problems that needed solving."

The report contained tables to show that in its first eight months OEO had: More than 10,000 enrollees in the Job Corps in 36 Conservation Centers, seven Men's Urban Centers and five Women's Centers; 278,426 enrollees involved in 639 projects in Neighborhood Youth Corps activities; 1,120 educational institutions conducting Work-Study pro-

grams for 38,015 students in the Spring program, 40,761 in the Summer program and 107,525 in the Fall program; 15 approved state plans for Adult Basic Education programs and 25 with conditional approval involving 37,991 participants; had granted 10,984 individual loans totaling \$18,733,800 and 82 cooperative loans totaling \$929,200 in the Rural Loan program; had extended 159 Small Business Loans totaling \$1,766,350; had 88,700 trainees in 164 Work Experience projects; had placed 202 VISTA Volunteers in the field and had 851 more in Training; under the extensive CAP program had given 315 grants for program development, 313 grants for administration, eight for technical assistance, 84 for research, training and demonstration projects; 53 grants for work with Migrant workers; and, in the Head Start program had given 2,398 grants for work with 561,356 children in 13,344 centers attended by 46,182 non-professional employees hired from among the poor and 96,540 volunteer workers.

In its Second Annual Report, issued in 1966, OEO summed up some of the lessons it had learned:

The poverty program was meant to be both a pivot for experiment and a focus for change. Gradually, this has begun to happen.

...Possibly the most heartening gain since last year has come from human resources. Because the War on Poverty is an experiment in people, any success we have had it accountable to something deeper than money, something nobler than the fad-value of idealism-pit comes from the aspirations of people who are willing to use their own energies to fulfill their own needs. We have slowly evolved out of the New Deal philosophy of welfare into a new federalism whereby the work of a democratic government is not of finding things to do for the people, but to let the people do things for themselves...

For countless Americans, the War on Poverty has pro-

duced personal results that will never be told in headlines and has brought private changes too deep for print. The ultimate outcome, assuredly, will not be known for some time- as was remarked, we do not fight on the winning side, but we fight to determine that poverty is being eliminated and the poor are being listened to. The nation has been alerted..."

Part II

Chapter Four

THE PROGRAMS

On April 5, 1968, the day after Martin Luther King was shot, Bertrand M. Harding, Acting Director of OEO appeared before the Subcommittee for Labor, Health, Education, Welfare and Related agencies of the Senate Appropriations Committee and called upon it to approve the President's full OEO budget request for FY - 1969 for \$2.18 billion.¹ It was "significant," Harding told the Committee, that the President had asked him to seek the full amount of the authorization and was clear "evidence of his (the President's) recognition that OEO dollars are not only producing results--but are doing it efficiently--with a minimum of waste and duplication." All OEO asked for, Harding said, "is the chance

¹ Harding had served as Acting Director since March 22, following Shriver's resignation. He had been Deputy Director of the agency since June, 1966. On July 15, President Johnson announced his intention of nominating Harding, a career government service official, as OEO Director. The nomination was sent to the Senate. Harding had worked for the Budget Bureau, the Veterans Administration and the Atomic Energy Commission. In June, 1961, he had been appointed Deputy Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service where, among other innovations, he was instrumental in instituting the IRS Automatic data processing system.

to maintain our momentum and to build on the foundation already strongly established." The foundation: "Jobs, education, housing, health, justice."

The five-word summation was a lucid and concise exposition of the OEO charter to extend the availability of these basic needs to Americans deprived of them.

This section of the OEO history attempts to survey the programs directly administered by the Agency in the effort to implement that charter--the Community Action Program, the Job Corps, Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA)--their beginnings and development; their problems, failures and, their achievements.

Derivations of the Community Action Program²

The concept of a comprehensive, root-level community action system grew out of a series of disciplined and studied experimental attacks on social problems developed and financed by the Ford Foundation, the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime and the National Institutes of Mental Health in the early 1960's. In its most important sense it was the Committee on Juvenile Delinquency which was the seminal force beyond the concept of Community Action.

The Federal Government's first post-war expression of con-

² This section draws heavily on four chapters of a book (unpublished at this date) which grew out of the February, 1968 Seminar on Poverty organized by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences at Brookline Station, Boston. The chapters are, "The Beginnings of OEO," by Adam Yarmolinsky, a key Task Force member on loan at the time from the Defense Department and presently teaching at the Harvard University School of Law; "The Community Action Program: Past, Present and Its Future?" by Sanford Kravitz, also a Task Force member borrowed from the Justice Department and who later became Chief of the Research and Program Development section of CAP, now teaching at the Florence Heller Graduate School for Advanced Studies in Social Welfare, Brandeis University; "For the Poor, Opportunity," by James Sundquist, a Task Force member borrowed from the Agriculture Department and presently with the Brookings Institution; and, "Administering the Community Action Program; the Politics of Local Responsibility" by John G. Wofford, a Task Force member who became a Deputy Director of CAP, now Associate Director, Institute of Politics, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. Sundquist edited the book.

cern over juvenile delinquency was contained in a message to Congress by President Eisenhower on the subject of health.³ At that time juvenile delinquency was considered to be a deviation from the norm; to be diagnosed and treated just as any other sickness. By the time the Kennedy administration took over the problem however, an entirely different concept had evolved, one which looked upon the delinquent as a conformist to a stream of enforced social behavior over which he had no control and which was at violent odds with outer society. This view became the general principle of the task force, headed by David Hackett, a young attorney with the Justice Department who reported to the then Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy. The President's brother was to become the chairman of the Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime.

Eisenhower included in his message a proposal for \$5 million a year to go to the states to assist them in combating the incidence of delinquency which had, in each year since World War II,

³ Jan. 31, 1955, Public Papers of the Presidents, 1955, pp. 226-23.

risen faster than population growth. The proposal, supported by a previous series of hearings by a Senate Judiciary subcommittee headed by Democrat Estes Kefauver, was incorporated in a bill he submitted in 1955. A similar bill was introduced by Republican Senator Alexander Wiley. Despite the combined support of the administration and leaders of both parties the bill encountered one difficulty after another involving jurisdictional, budgetary and inter-agency conflicts. It wasn't until 1961 that the Senate passed a bill based on a 1960 modification of the original proposal. President Kennedy had, in May, 1961, also submitted a bill on delinquency and created at the same time his own committee on Juvenile Delinquency. The emphasis of the new law was on federal assistance for research and demonstration projects, the proposal for state grants having been abandoned by that time.

The theme which inspired the Juvenile Delinquency Task Force had already been sounded, in 1956, by Saul Alinsky, executive-director of the Industrial Areas Foundation when he testified:

"...in the main, delinquency and crime arise out of inadequate, substandard housing, disease, economic insecurity, inadequate educational facilities, discrimination, and a series of social ills which combine to foster and relate to each other in a vicious circle with each feeding into the other so that frustration, demoralization, and delinquency mounts... The job is one of community organization..."⁴ There was other evidence of this line of thought. In 1958 the Henry Street settlement which had been seeking funds for a comprehensive approach to the problem of delinquency had gone to the Columbia University School of Social Work for help in working out a program. Professors Richard Cloward and Lloyd Ohlin devised a research project based upon which the settlement and other neighborhood groups formed an organization called Mobilization for Youth. The National Institutes of Mental Health then gave the organization a two-year planning

⁴ Delinquent Children's Act of 1956, S. Rept. 2765, p. 6.

grant.⁵ During that same period Cloward and Ohlin were completing a book which became the philosophical basis for the juvenile delinquency program of the Kennedy administration.⁶ The sociologists insisted that delinquency was part of a community pathology and not, as had been stressed by the Eisenhower message, an individual affliction. The lower class youngsters have entirely conventional goals but are confronted with a disparity between what they "are led to want and what is actually available to them. ...Faced with limitations on legitimate avenues of access to these goals, and unable to revise their aspirations downward, they experience intense frustrations; the exploration of nonconformist alternatives may be the result."

The book's conclusion:

"...services extending to delinquent individuals or groups cannot prevent the rise of delinquency among others. For delin-

⁵ Sundquist cites "Dilemmas of Social Reform: Poverty and Community Action in the United States", Atherton, 1967, for this account.

⁶ "Delinquency and Opportunity, Free Press, 1960.

quency is not, in the final analysis, a property of individuals or even of subcultures; it is a property of social systems in which these individuals and groups are enmeshed. The pressures that produce delinquency originate in these structures, as do the forces that shape the content of specialized subcultural adaptations. The target for preventive action, then should be defined, not as the individual or group that exhibits the delinquent pattern, but as the social setting that gives rise to delinquency.

"It is our view, in ~~other~~ words, that the major effort of those who wish to eliminate delinquency should be directed to the reorganization of slum communities. Slum neighborhoods appear to us to be undergoing progressive disintegration. The old structures, which provided social control and avenues of social ascent, are breaking down. Legitimate but functional substitutes for these traditional structures must be developed if we are to stem the trend toward violence and retreatism among adolescents in urban slums.

One of the first things Hackett did was to call a conference of experts for March 16, 1960. Ohlin attended. "I quickly learned from the March meeting that you can't get consensus among professionals, so I had to pick one of the best and rely on his judgment," Hackett said, according to Sundquist. "He picked Ohlin."⁷

Beginning in 1959, and continuing concurrently with the work of the Juvenile Delinquency Committee, the Ford Foundation, through its "gray areas" (city slums) grants to selected cities, had been financing a number of coordinated social welfare approaches to urban problems which were forerunners for OEO's Community Action Program.

A third force leading to the comprehensive community action approach were the discoveries resulting from the implementation of the Labor Department's Manpower Development and Training Act. The problem was that the MDTA wasn't reaching its main targets, the chronically unemployed, because such large numbers of them were illiterate and unable to qualify for the training which was

⁷ Sundquist, p. 120.

to provide them with jobs. In various places the realization was becoming clearer that one effect of poverty led to another and that only a combined program, taking into account entire communities, could begin to meet the problem.

The Gray Areas program had helped to develop agencies designed to develop and coordinate programs in employment, education and community services. The Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Offenses Control Act of 1961 was able to provide "the staff with a broad mandate to attack the social antecedents of juvenile crime, i.e., youth employment, poor housing and alienation on lower class communities."⁸

Sanford Kravitz at that time served as Program Coordinator for the President's Committee. "The staff," he wrote, "was small and tightly knit for a government operation and intensely loyal to both Hackett and Ohlin. We believed that the answers to lower class delinquency and poverty lay in a massive reform of institutional practices in schools, social welfare agencies, and employ-

⁸ Kravitz, p. 6.

ment services. We believed with fervor that a combination of refined intellectual understanding of problems, mixed with political 'clout' and new funds would be the magic ingredients in the war on delinquency. This same belief in rationality and money was to be carried later into the War on Poverty."⁹

On the basis of recognition by various communities that a comprehensive, community approach was mandatory, the President's Committee funded planning programs in sixteen cities and gave action funds to Mobilization for Youth in New York City which had already completed its planning phase under the NIMH grant.

Some of the grants, said Kravitz, "were outright failures, others had mixed success, but the total experience threw a strong national spotlight on a number of revealing problems. These included the failure of many voluntary welfare programs to reach the poor and the inappropriateness of services when they did; the lack of realistic understanding by professional welfare and public leaders of the problems of the poor; the unrelatedness of

⁹ Kravitz, *ibid.* p.7.

various programs closeted off from one another; and the virtual exclusion of residents of communities from the planning and implementation process of programs designed to aid them.

"The program contribution in each community of these two demonstration efforts was mixed," said Kravitz, "but the fact of their development and even the criticism and attacks they sustained--escalated long-festering problems into wide public view, so that discussion of them as critical national issues could no longer be avoided. The two programs had prepared the ground, through the discussions they had stimulated and the questions they had raised, for the Community Action Program, a major plank in the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964."¹⁰

When Walter Heller, Chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisers (CEA) got the "green light" from President Kennedy in October, 1963, to "pull together a set of proposals for a 1964 attack on poverty"¹¹ he and his assistant, William

¹⁰ Ibid, pp. 10-12.

¹¹ Quoted by Heller in a speech at Indiana State College, Indiana, Pa., March 25, 1965.

Capron, began a search of government agencies for specific anti-poverty proposals. They gathered 58 ideas, mainly from the departments of Labor and HEW. "Budget Bureau, CEA, and White House staff were in the midst of a review of the departmental responses when they were interrupted by the news from Dallas."¹²

The following day the new President made it clear to Heller, who had briefed him on the program, that he fully supported it and to "move full speed ahead."¹⁴ There remained the basic question of what the new legislation would contain. The need was to distinguish the program from a number of others. An entirely new and combined impetus was needed. It was provided by Hackett and his associate, Richard Boone who had had detailed experience with the Gray Areas Program. Hackett and Boone met with Heller and Cannon. There followed inter-departmental meetings between CEA and the Budget Bureau, at that time importantly involved in the discussions as the coordinator of the President's programs. William B.

¹² Sundquist, *ibid.* p. 137.

¹³ Heller, Pennsylvania speech.

Cannon, of the Budget Bureau seized on the community action approach and suggested in a memo that 10 demonstration areas be chosen and a "development corporation" be begun in each. The corporations would receive federal financing to institute a variety of programs. "In the course of a single week," said Sundquist, "in mid-December, aid to community organizations was transformed from an incidental weapon in the war on poverty into the entire arsenal." It was decided that an "action" program was better phraseology than "development corporation;" somebody put the word "community" in front and the name was born.¹⁴

The language and concept of Community Action as it appeared in the act was hammered out chiefly by Capron, Hackett, Boone, Harold Horowitz, at the time Associate General Counsel of HEW and presently a professor at the UCLA School of Law; and Frederick O'R Hayes, a Budget Bureau economist who became Deputy Director of CAP before going on to his present position as Budget Director of the City of New York.

¹⁴ Sundquist, *ibid.* p. 139.

The CAP Concept

Title II of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 defined CAP as a program which:

1. "...mobilizes and utilizes, in an attack on poverty, public and private resources...
2. "...provides services, assistance, and other activities of sufficient variety, scope, and size to give promise of progress toward elimination of poverty through developing employment opportunities, improving human performance, motivation, and productivity, and bettering the conditions under which people live, learn, and work;
3. ...is developed, conducted, and administered with the maximum feasible participation of residents of the areas and members of the groups served...; and,
4. ...is conducted, administered, or coordinated by a public or private non-profit agency...which is broadly representative of the community."

The concept of community action, as diverse as its component parts were--and they included every facet of established social organization--was essentially a concentrative one. It sought to combine, in an interlocked system of cooperative endeavor, every governmental, public, private, civic, business and labor organization as well as representatives of racial and ethnic groups.

And it sought to focus their resources through a single device-- a community action agency (CAA)--on the manifold problems of the poor. themselves in the planning and the operation of the agency; they were to benefit from the operations of the agency but they were also, in a direct sense of planning, to work for it as well.

Nothing in terms of social welfare before had approached the dynamism, the scope and the aims of the program: That the causes of poverty were complex and inextricable and that the cure had to be comprehensive. An illiterate adult, for example, had to learn to read and write before he could benefit from a work training program. A mother on welfare could not take a job to receive training unless there was a day care center or community

school program for her children. The teen-ager might not have dropped out of school if he had learned to read instead of being passed from grade to grade as a functional illiterate, or if there had been a work-study program available to him. OEO's first annual report, "A Nation Aroused," put it this way:

"Mobilization of community resources is the essence of Community Action, and OEO funds usually go to those local agencies which encompass all the separate groups--public and private, long established and newly-created--that are working for the poor.

"Traditionally, such organizations have tended to go their own ways, working in their own domains on their own special concerns. It has been convenient to see poverty as a set of unrelated social ills--lack of education, poor health, unemployment, bad housing, racial discrimination. And for each of these ills there was a cure; for every problem, an institutionalized answer:

--for health, the clinic and the public health agency;

--for unemployment, the employment office and the unions;

--public housing for the housing situation;

--civil rights organizations to work for equal opportunity.

"But in poverty, no factor exists alone. The family living in a foul hovel most likely needs medical attention. They live in such conditions because the head of the family is unemployed; and he's probably unemployed because he's unskilled and uneducated. He was to be trained for a decent job, but poor health may keep him from such training--and so may his color.

Wherever you start in the poverty syndrome, you find a whole network of social and economic problems. And since there is no single problem standing as an entity, the CAP agency must go beyond single solutions... The local CAP organization is responsible for seeing that poor people do not fall between agencies or get lost in the shuffle between one or the other. Its basic function is to help the poor make best use of existing agencies and to help those agencies best help the poor."

CAA's would be mandated to serve the poor of parts of a city, entire small cities, towns, single counties, multi-county rural areas, Indian reservations and among migrant workers. Although

there were guidelines galore, special grants for planning CAA's and programs, and regionally based OEO officials to offer detailed help in getting started, OEO provided no blueprints for specific plans of attack. It took the position that the communities--if they were organized according to guidelines and controls which were specific--were best acquainted with their own problems and could, through a properly organized CAA, best meet those needs. It did not always work out that way. There was however, a controlled system of checks and counter-checks exercised through the Washington headquarters of OEO; evaluations, reviews, inspections and always strong and final authority in the hands of the Director.¹⁵ While encouragement was given to new and varied programs there were strict headquarters standards applying to the reasonableness and feasibility of the programs proposed and applied for. Unacceptable, for example, were programs that lacked support in organizations proposed as sponsors; programs that require staff

¹⁵ A departure from OEO's administrative policy took place on December 8, 1966, when Shriver authorized OEO's seven regional directors to approve 90 percent of all CAP grant applications involving planning grants of up to \$75,000, administrative grants of up to \$500,000 and state agency grants of up to \$250,000.

not available in sufficient numbers to indicate success; programs which exorbitant per-capita costs, and ones which were opposed by the people they were proposed to help. To be avoided was a mandated, pre-packaged series of programs since the emphasis was to be on the community's own ingenuity in dealing with its own problems. A "building-block" process was envisaged as a model introduction to the process of community organization in which one key program would be instituted as a base on which to expand programming. An example of the process given in an early set of criteria was the selection of an area of high need by a community which would start a Youth Employment Center. It might then add a health services program for youngsters who were found to be in ill health, move on to providing family services through a public welfare neighborhood center and then institute housing and literacy programs. Uncovered would be deficiencies in high school counseling, remedial studies and curriculum programs; these would be re-considered, through the focus brought to bear on them by the CAA, by the school system. Other organized federal services and

systems were to be involved in the comprehensive programming which would utilize them so that employment services would be aided by the local branch of the Labor Department's U.S. Employment Service; health programs through the apparatus of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare; urban renewal and community facilities programs through the Department of Housing and Urban Development and job training through programs developed by the Manpower Development and Training Act under the Department of Labor.

The program was so widespread and so complicated that difficulties began from the moment it was instituted. Repercussions followed immediately in what might be termed, accurately as it turned out, a ricochet effect. Of all the programs engendered by the EOA of 1964 the Community Action Program was consistently the most praised and the most damned. Undeniably the most far-seeing, the most experimental, the most difficult and the most irritating of OEO's programs--none of them simple in practice, no matter how clear in design--it was obvious from the start that it

would go hand in hand with conflict.

A good deal of the problem was political. It was a program which lent itself--indeed, provided fodder--for political rhetoric, condemnation and accusation. More fundamentally and importantly it was legitimate ground for serious political concern as well.

Another factor which added to the problem was the intractability of entrenched interests and organizations which interpreted change and newly expressed views as challenges to prerogatives and established authorities, welfare agencies, lawyers, doctors, storekeepers and the police. Frequently, just the declared intention of beginning a Community Action Agency was considered to be a challenge. For the first time in the experience of many of the agencies dealing with the poor their clients had a mechanism for evaluating their services in a way which demanded attention and could, in a manner which could not easily be ignored, demand improvement. The point was that, in almost any institutionalized field which dealt with the poor, there was a need for improvement. Many times there weren't even any services to improve.

Other Voices

CAP gave a vocabulary, and then a language, and then a voice, to the poor. They did not, any longer, have to be silent.

There was criticism and complaint from every side of society with OEO frequently in the middle of the cross-fire. Militant civil-rights advocates charged that the program was deliberately excluding them from wide participation on policy-making levels. Such criticism ranged from cries of an "Uncle Tom" program designed as a "sop," to the more measured rhetoric of Herbert Hill, labor director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People who, on June 28, 1965, at the NAACP convention, called the administration program inadequate and an "extension of white welfare paternalism...We must rescue the antipoverty program from the social-work progression and from the politicians who want merely a sterile and ineffective program that will mean little or nothing for the Negro community...NAACP favors a real war on poverty, not a symbolic encounter." Nevertheless, the con-

vention supported the program in general and called for appropriations in fiscal 1966 of at least the amount requested by President Johnson.

Of all the difficulties, the chief one, the one from which derived the most bitter invective and the most prominent headlines, was the stipulation that the poor had to have maximum feasible participation in community programs. On this point there was no disagreement among any OEO officials; those who had instituted the proposal and those who later were engaged in interpreting it and making it operative. There was never any question that the requirement was to be implemented with firmness. In this they had Shriver's leadership and support.

By 1968, after the furor surrounding the mandate had subsided and the principle was established throughout the nation, Kravitz could say: "The concept of participation in program operation and decision making by the residents of the target areas, thought to be completely unworkable, has become an accomplished fact...Prior to this development, social welfare could be adequately charac-

terized as a noblesse oblige responsibility of one group for the less fortunate. In the three years of operation of the Community Action Program, many communities have faced major changes in the leadership and power alignments which effect the coordination and distribution of social services." ¹⁶ The path which led to that conclusion was a rocky one.

The Governors Veto

The issue of the Governor's Veto, considered by early observers to be a concession to state's rights advocates, received more verbal attention and press comments than it did official action. In September 1967, when OEO made a count, it added up to just 28 Gubernatorial vetos in 21,000 grants.

The original EOA had taken into account the sensibilities and concerns of state government machinery and provided Governors with a veto over projects involving VISTA, Job Corps, Work Training and Neighborhood Youth Corps; and Community Action. The prospect

16. Kravitz, *ibid.* p. 19.

of integrated Job Corps camps, VISTA Volunteers manning voter registration drives, and CAA's providing a funnel for Federal money into civil rights activities were obviously important considerations to be taken into account in passing the legislation.

The Governor's veto was exercised just five times in 1965.

The issue was brought up in the 1965 House hearings when the House Education and Labor Subcommittee made a tentative decision, on May 13, to repeal the veto power over community action and Neighborhood Youth Corps activities. The move was denied after a majority of the governors from both parties strongly oppose it. A provision giving the OEO Director the right to override the veto was approved, however, on projects involving Work-Training and Neighborhood Youth Corps (Title 1B), and Community Action. The absolute veto on Job Corps and VISTA was retained, provided it was exercised within a 30-day period after the project had been submitted to a governor.

A resolution approved at July 1965 National Governor's Conference had expressed firm opposition "to any diminution of the power of a Governor to veto proposed projects and programs under the Economic

Opportunity Act." It requested Congress to "preserve intact the relevant provisions of the current law."

Earlier, Shriver had told the Conference that, "confronted with such unique opportunities for creating a new chance for millions of Americans, it seems paradoxical that there has been worry, even dismay or disgust in some quarters, over the amendment passed by the House of Representatives last week, the amendment which provided for overriding the Governor's veto under certain circumstances... Perhaps it would be well to remember that the Congress inserted the Governor's veto last year into this legislation on its own initiative...The veto is a symbolic question, but it may also be a misleading one. None of you, from the statistics, appear to have been particularly anxious to exercise the veto..."

In the question and answer period that followed, Gov. Scranton of Pennsylvania said: "Forgetting the veto...Our problem revolves around what participation the state government should or should not take in initiating or responding to community action programs..."

Shriver: "I would say in a sentence that we would look forward to the maximum initiative by states in getting community action programs inaugurated." For the most part, Shriver's expectations were realized. The real concern of the Governors, in the light of how infrequently the veto right was exercised subsequently, may have been expressed in Scranton's question; that the veto was relatively unimportant, except as a means of insuring that OEO confer with the governors.

In an address to the Republican State Convention, in Anaheim, California, on September 23, 1967, California Governor Ronald Reagan, a strong opponent of the antipoverty program, said that he had vetoed seven OEO approved projects within a period of several months. (He had come into office less than a year earlier.) But, he did not mention that, up until that time, California had approved 99.3 percent of all OEO grants at a cost of \$288 million, making it the largest state recipient of OEO funds. Nor did he mention that California was the first in the listing of state's requesting OEO projects. It

had become clear that the states welcomed OEO projects whether their governors were Republicans or Democrats. One obstacle, permanently with OEO however, was a perpetual insufficiency of funds with which to meet requests for programs.

PARTICIPATION OF THE POOR

The issue of maximum feasible participation of the poor, according to Yarmolinsky, arose early in the Task Force meetings. It was brought up at the very first brainstorming session in connection with Community Action, when one of the participants, Richard Boone "...noted the danger that a local plan for community action 'might just be a plan among organization,' and it might not 'involve' the poor." At one point during the February 4 "brainstorming session, when Boone had used the phrase 'maximum feasible participation' several times, this writer," notes Yarmolinsky, "recalls saying to him, 'You have used that phrase four or ~~five~~ times' "How many times do I have to use it before it becomes part of the program?"

17. "The Beginnings of OEO," Seminar on Poverty, p. 19.

"Oh, a couple of times more," was the reply, "He did, and it did."

Horowitz, who drafted Title II of the bill, says that the chief theorists^E of the participation of the poor provision were Kravitz and Boone and that he actually wrote the phrase "maximum feasible participation of residents of the areas and members of the groups served," himself, "At one point," said Horowitz, "Kravits said it represented 'a twenty-five year leap in the structure of public programs.'"

The first draft of the bill, for internal Task Force use only, Horowitz recalled, dated February 19, 1964, contained a requirement that community action organizations had to have on its governing body representatives of public and private agencies and "persons who are representative of community and neighborhood groups." A second draft, dated February 24, refined the language to read that a community action organization is, among other criteria, "developed and conducted with the maximum feasible participation of residents and members of the groups..." involved. There were precedents for the concept, if not the precise language, Horowitz said, in a

draft bill prepared by HEW dated February 2, 1964, and in a Labor Department draft bill dated February 1, 1964.

The ramifications of the requirement, according to Yarmolinsky, which were to become one of the most difficult problems involving the law, went beyond the expectations of the persons who envisaged it. "But there is an irony in the failure of the original Task Force--this author included--to anticipate the violent reaction of poor people and poor neighborhoods to the opportunity to affect their own lives through Community Action programs. In a community as sensitive to the problems of the distribution and transmission of power as Washington, the power potential--constructive and destructive--or the poor themselves was largely overlooked."¹⁸

Kravits says the requirement was "one of the outstanding innovations, with import beyond the hopes of the bill's drafters...During the short span of three years, Title II-A in its development of a new array of actions or at least a rearrangement, in its focus on problems, and in its precise emphasis on the poor, has wrought some changes in the

18. Poverty Seminar, *ibid.* p. 21.

interests, the power alignment, the leadership and the social welfare programs of most communities that have felt its impact."

During the Task Force period, Kravitz goes on to say, "Much of the emphasis on resident participation...centered around creation of new sub-professional job opportunities. During this period there was clearly a concern for their presence at the neighborhood advisory board level, but the issue of whether residents controlled a community action agency never arose and was never cited by those of us who were planning the program as a basic requirement. The clear intent was to substantially increase resident participation in program development and in the administration of programs at the neighborhood level. The inclusion of the requirement for maximum feasible participation brought little or no attention from the Congress during the 1964 hearings."

Kravitz quotes the David Grossman, a former CAP official, "... the Civil Rights Act...opened up opportunities for Negroes and other minorities to claim long overdue rights... The Economic Opportunity Act had the potential effect of making...exercise of these rights more than a theoretical possibility for the vast proportion of the nation's minorities who were trapped in poverty. The civil rights

movement carried with it overtones of participatory democracy that had been dormant in much of American life for decades. This legislative combination clearly had much to do with the way the maximum feasible participation phrase was interpreted by Negroes, and to a lesser extent Puerto-Rican, Mexican-American and other minority groups." 19

1967 Changes

The Community Action Program was drastically revised in 1967 20 with a series of amendments to the EOA which comprised a complex legislative change. Existing programs were altered and new ones devised. Stricter legislative control, both programmatically and structurally, was given to OEO programs with greater emphasis

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19. Grossman, David, "The Community Action Program: Innovation in Local Government. 1966, mimeo, p. 16.
 20. PL 90-222, Dec. 23, 1967

on local control. The amendments rewrote the Act's title II provisions authorizing urban and rural community action programs a community action agency was defined as a State or political subdivision of a state, or combination of such subdivisions, or a public or private non-profit agency designated by such a government entity or entities capable of conducting a comprehensive community action program.

Programs had to be administered by boards of not more than 51 members, one-third of whom were public officials, at least one-third representatives of the poor and the remainder representatives of major groups of interests in the community. Upward Bound, Head Start, Follow-Through and Family Planning programs, which had been

21. A 50-page handbook "Organizing Communities for Action" under the 1967 amendments was issued early in 1968 by OEO. It listed 12 major categories, each with up to 10 sub-sections, of mandatory requirements for a CAA to be able to fulfill the basic requirements of the revised EOA and the guidelines issued by OEO pursuant to the Act. On June 13, 1968, CAP Director Theodore M. Berry issued a memorandum covering and attached draft instruction which was a further refinement and exemplification of the poor participation precept. "We expect," said Berry in his memorandum which was given the widest distribution and asking for comment, "these comments to help us improve and strengthen the draft, so that the final policy issuance stands as testimony that the OEO and its grantees have renewed their dedication to involving poor people in the struggle to eliminate the barriers that have isolated them from the mainstream of American life...Experience testifies that the health and peace of the entire community is better served by open, honest, often heated discussion of controversial issues, with all the participants on an equal footing, than by suppressing debate and letting the issues smolder unattended. Communities in every part of the country are beginning to understand the necessity

of active participation by the poor in the search for solutions to the problems and causes of poverty."

operating under general CAA authority were made statutory "special emphasis" programs, to which were added a new Health Career Program, an Emergency Food and Medical Services Program, and a Senior Opportunities and Services Program. The Legal Services Program was forbidden to defend persons formally charged with crimes, except in extraordinary circumstances.

The 1967 legislative hearings which ended with the passage of the amendments and funding authorization were the most difficult, the most conflicted and protracted and the most arduous of any OEO had

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encountered to date. At the heart of the argument was the issue of local control by elected officials of government, a control which opponents of the amendment called a "pork-barrel" device and which its supporters insisted was essential to keep the program from floundering in administrative and unchecked chaos while offering community dissidents financial backing for disruptive activities.

an opponent of the amendment, Rep. John Brademas, said it would turn

22. A subsequent section on the "Crisis of 1967" will discuss the situation in detail

community action programs "over to politicians to be used as a patronage football," and its sponsor, Rep. Edith Green insisted that CAA's "now have no responsibility, we just give them the money and they spend it as they see fit."

By that time the concept of community action was firmly established in the structure of the entire nation (there were 1050 CAA's organized) even if there was still a great deal of bitter debate as to what, precisely, an acceptable definition of it was. Nevertheless, it was clear that the concept of community action, as it was formalized and implemented through OEO, had a profound, and continuing effect on the very structure of American society.

Conflict on the Local Level: Mayors and others

The stipulation for representation of the poor had gone through the legislative process, and was converted into law virtually without contention. The first sign of trouble to come however, arose early in the life of OEO, in its first month of operation, according to an account by William F. Haddad. When the War on

23. "Mr. Shriver and the Savage Politics of Poverty," Harpers, December 1965

was announced, says Haddad, Philadelphia's Mayor Tate organized a 13-man task force, 11 of them city officials, to direct the local program. He proceeded to ask for \$13 million in OEO funds and invited local civic groups to submit plans on how to use the money. "The operating agency was to be the Philadelphia Council for Community Advancement, a group financed by the Ford Foundation which was about to close up shop and had already been sharply criticized for its lack of grass-roots support." The Mayor and his program came under attack from Americans for Democratic Action, the Congress on Racial Equality and the NAACP. And, the criticism was well covered in the local press. Ignoring the protests, Mayor Tate took his proposals to Washington. "He was stunned," wrote Haddad, "when OEO coldly told him that not more than a third of his board could be made up of city officials. Tate pushed all the political buttons but no one jumped. By October, a month before the 1964 election, it was clear that Mayor Tate was coming home empty-handed, and his plight was intolerable. He had promised to help the poor. Now

he was charged with letting political and patronage considerations override his humanitarianism. Actually, Mayor Tate was only guilty of doing business as usual. No one told him the rules had been changed." The result was that an independent board was set up, including five Mayoral appointees, the Presiding Judge of the County Court, Twelve representatives of religious, racial, and labor organizations and social agencies, and twelve representatives of the poor.

That example ignited interest in city halls throughout the country. In June 1965, the U. S. Conference of Mayors came close to adopting a resolution accusing OEO, in effect, of trying to wreck local governments by setting the poor against the city halls. The resolution, introduced by Mayor Sam Yorty of Los Angeles and John F. Shelley of San Francisco said that, "...no responsible mayor can accept the implications in the Office of Economic Opportunity Workbook that the goals of this program can only be achieved by creating tensions between the poor and existing agencies and by fostering class struggle.

Yorty had also charged, on May 29, that "mayors all over the United States are being harrassed by agitation promoted by Sargent Shriver's speeches urging those he calls 'poor' to insist upon control of local poverty programs" (Yorty, who had defeated Rep. James Roosevelt in the April 1965 mayoralty race was reportedly interested in running against California Gov. Edmund G. Brown in 1966.)

On August 17, after the devastating riots in Watts, Yorty charged, in a telegram to Sen. George Murphy, that OEO's objections to the local antipoverty program in Los Angeles constituted a "reckless effort to incite the poor for political reasons" and "was a factor in precipitating the Watts riot." He said the delay in approving funds resulted from "strong-arm tactics" and pressures from the Los Angeles Democratic delegation in the House of Representatives.

Shirver replied at a news conference the next day, calling Yorty's allegations "intemperate and unfortunate" and untrue." Shirver said Los Angeles was the "only major city in the United States" which had failed to organize and acceptable central antipoverty organization. He charged that in Los Angeles "a few local officials have made it extremely difficult for the private agencies, minority

groups and the poor to join in the war on poverty."

OEO had granted about \$17 million to individual public and private agencies in Los Angeles but withheld about \$22 million from the city's "umbrella" agency favored by Yorty.

Undersecretary of Commerce LeRoy Collins had arrived in the city to advise on the racial situation on August 18 and by August 23, with his intervention, a compromise was worked out between OEO and Yorty under which a new Economic and Youth Opportunity Agency would be formed, including the minority group representation demanded by OEO.

The Mayors Conference resolution was not voted on but went to the Executive Committee which in turn decided to establish a Special Continuing Committee to meet with Vice President Humphrey on the matter. The Vice President had been asked by President Johnson, in 1964, to help in the coordination of the antipoverty program, especially in the area of reconciling differences.

A number of meetings involving the Vice President, members of

his staff, OEO officials (including Shriver), and various mayors followed. The Vice President acted as conciliator, assuring the mayors that they had an important role to play on the poverty program. But, he insisted that the legislation clearly mandate participation of the poor. Vice President Humphrey took the position throughout the controversy that in the great majority of cases it has been possible to work out programs involving the utilization of local machinery and participation of the poor. He did not think the components were incompatible. In a speech to the League of Cities organization in Detroit on July 27, the Vice President said that city government must "play a key role in Community Action programs...there have been some problems in this connection. But the fact is that we are happy in Washington that our nation's mayors have, by and large, helped lead development of local poverty programs. No sooner was the Economic Opportunity program enacted than many of you started mobilizing your cities for it. I have had numerous discussions with the mayors of America and with officials of the poverty program, and I can not tell you that your important

role is assured--as it should be...There has been, and there will continue to be, flexibility in the administration of Community Action...

The great bulk of all community funds are being routed through Community Action Agencies. And in the future this will be even more so...This is as it should be...This process is already started."

The chagrin of the mayors in 1965 may have been aggravated by their recollections of the 1964 hearings before the House Education and Labor Committee. On April 14, 1964, Mayor Richard Daley of Chicago had explained to the Committee that he would be satisfied if the same procedures for coordination at the local level would obtain under OEO programs as prevailed under existing demonstration programs in his city. This meant direct or indirect control of the programs. Rep. Peter H. Freylinghuysen commented "This is not what the bill would do Mayor --" Daley responded, "As far as we are concerned, Congressman, that is what it does." (1964 House Hearings, p. 767) Later, in May 1964, Adam Yarmolinsky assured Dr. Denton Brook, Daley's Community Affairs representative, that it was OEO's firm intention to deal exclusively through the Mayor's committee

committee in Chicago and that the bypass provisions would be invoked only where there was no coordinated effort in the community. (Internal memo. Yarmolinsky. 5/27/64)

In a speech to the American Bar Association in Miami Beach on August 11, Shriver said, "Our statute requires maximum feasible participation of the poor in all aspects of antipoverty programs. We intend to carry out the mandate of Congress on this. But to do so does not require the imposition of inflexible and arbitrary quotas. We believe in flexibility. But flexibility cannot become a euphemism for evasion of our statutory duty."

On November 5, 1966, an article in the New York Times again drew national attention to the controversial stipulation, this time bringing the Bureau of the Budget into the situation. "The Budget Bureau," the article, by Joseph Loftus, said, "fiscal arm of the White House, has told the Office of Economic Opportunity that it would prefer less emphasis on policy-planning by the poor in planning community projects...In the Bureau's view, this means primarily using the poor to carry out the program, not to design it..." There

were immediate charges that the Budget Bureau was acting under orders from the White House to take the pressure off local political structures.

Budget Director Charles Schultze, in answer to questions relayed through White House Press Secretary Bill Moyers, said on November 6 that the Bureau had merely raised the issue of participation of the poor with the OEO in connection with reviewing its budget and had not advised on the matter. Moyers said the White House had not given guidance to the Budget Bureau.

The N. Y. Times story brought forth a major policy statement from Shriver on November 5. From Scottsdale, Arizona, where he was inspecting OEO projects Shriver issued a clear and explicit statement. The meaning of involvement of the poor, he said was more complicated than the emphasis of the poor on planning rather than on operation of projects. "Unfortunately," he said, "the article gives the impression that the Bureau of the Budget's alleged position is official Governmental policy that is about to be implemented by

by OEO. Moreover, it seems to imply that such a policy has been enunciated by the White House. Frankly, no such change in OEO's policy has been directed or ordered by anyone in the Administration. Our policy is today and will remain exactly what it has been from the very beginning." While the help of the Budget Bureau had been "extraordinarily useful from the earliest days to the present," he said, "in this case, the Bureau...may well believe that we have stressed the statutory requirement too strongly. But the poor don't think so." And, while it was true that the statutory requirement of participation of the poor was subject to numerous interpretations, it was perhaps, for that very reason had not specified "precisely how" it was to be achieved. From the very beginning, Shriver said, OEO had acted in accordance with five fundamental principles:

First and foremost, we have maintained there can be no successful war on poverty without participation by the poor.

Second, a community action program where there is no participation by the poor cannot be viewed under any circumstances as fulfilling the legislative requirement.

Third, to carry out a new concept such as "maximum feasible participation of the residents of the areas and groups to be served" requires time--time for education and understanding, time for negotiation, time for experimentation, and time for total imple-

mentation. And as a consequence, the Office of Economic Opportunity has, in the past, and will continue in the future, to fund programs where at the start there may be little participation by the poor so long as there is a convincing showing of local intent to live up to the letter and spirit of the law.

Fourth, the concept of maximum feasible participation by the poor is an evolutionary one. Where there has been virtually no participation by the poor (or even minimal participation by minority groups) we have uniformly imposed conditions requiring that these defects be progressively overcome. Fortunately, our confidence in the honesty and effectiveness of local leadership has not been misplaced. Over and over again community action programs have not been misplaced. Over and over again community action programs have not been dominated by politicians or businessmen or labor leaders or religious groups or civil rights workers or by any other single group. These community action programs are controlled by the community. And that means all the people including the poor. Hundreds upon hundreds of communities have started community action programs in full compliance with the law. Ninety percent of the boards of all community action programs have representation from the persons or residents of the area to be served. And on those boards where there is such representation, they average thirty percent of the board.

Fifth, we do not interpret participation by the poor in a narrow or restricted manner. We do not limit ourselves to the single idea of membership on a board of directors or on advisory committees. Rigid, arbitrary percentage figures, magic formulas, and Federally-dictated blueprints are all unworthy of a nation which gave to the world a new concept of democracy, of revolution, of Federalism and of human rights. No single blueprint -- whether it be 33 percent or 99-44/100 percent -- can be dictated uniformly to a nation larger and more diverse than the Roman Empire at the height of its power. From the outset the Office of Economic Opportunity has maintained that there were a variety of ways by which the poor could be involved. Membership on the board of directors is one and only one. Others include:

- employment of the poor as members of the staff of community action programs;

- programs to educate and train the poor for leadership roles in their community;

- special job training, counselling and placement programs;

- carefully supervised work experience coupled with formal instruction and psychologic counselling;

- stimulation of self-help efforts by the poor;

-- encouragement of the formation of neighborhood groups in poverty areas.

All of these approaches -- and others -- can and are being used to involve the poor in all aspects of anti-poverty programs.

Therefore, it is a serious misunderstanding of fact and policy to conclude that there has been or will be a decreased emphasis on maximum feasible participation of the poor. There will be no retreat from our earlier policies and no slackening in our effort to press for vigorous and creative compliance with that requirement."

Again, on December 6, at an antipoverty conference in Chicago, after acknowledging the difficulty of implementing the requirement, Shriver tried to clarify the issue. He listed three principles as essential to its implementation: "First we say don't prejudge the poor. They have much to teach us all. Second, don't prejudge the so-called 'establishment.' It has the capacity to listen, to respond. And third, don't cry failure at the first sign of controversy." He went on to describe the relationship between officialdom and the poor in metaphorical terms: "Many well-meaning people say: 'Why ask the poor how to conquer poverty? If they knew they wouldn't be poor. It's alright for them to have jobs in the program -- but they shouldn't design the campaign.' To which we reply: When a man goes to a doctor, the first thing the doctor usually does is ask: 'What's wrong? How

do you feel...?' That's what we are asking the poor. 'Where does it hurt?'...ⁿ_wWe have to ask these questions--and keep asking them. That's what involvement of the poor is all about."

The question had been an issue of considerable debate even within the OEO itself. To be weighed were, in addition to Shriver's ultimate opinion, the various interpretations of different officials as to definition and operation, and a number of guidelines and explanations contained in the Community Action Program Guide, issued in February 1965. This said explicitly:

A vital feature of every community action program is the involvement of the poor themselves--the residents of the areas and members of the groups to be served--in planning, policy-making, and operation of the program.

The Guide specified that CAA's had to have representation from the elected officials of the political jurisdiction involved, as well as representation from community, non-public leadership and the groups and area to be served. This tri-partite division was later to be formalized into law. The participation requirement was supplemented in a subsequent Workbook which spelled out that, "...involving the poor at the administrative level of CAA's is a condition

of funding. This condition cannot be satisfied by a mere symbolic act of placing a member, or members of the client population in the policy group of the organization. It is required that the poor and the advocates of the poor occupy positions of evident influence."

Haddad, as Shriver's Inspector General, a position he had held under Shriver at the Peace Corps where he had been an Assistant Director, was a zealous advocate of representation of the poor. The author, Edgar May, who was to take over the Office of Inspection in September, 1965, about eight months after Haddad had set it up, recalls that what Haddad did principally "was to insure participation of the poor." The Office of Inspection worked assiduously at that time to emphasize that aspect of the program more than any other office in the organization. It got into programmatic matters which brought it into conflict with CAP. It would call up people and check to see if they were really poor. This was part of a pre-grant review process. The difficulty, even within the Agency, May said, was to "determine what was adequate representation." There were decidedly differing views on the matter. At one time the fi-

gure of one-third was used but Shriver objected to being pinned down to a formula, insisting that flexibility was required to decide individual cases. But, May recalled, Shriver's reliance on the Inspection Office reports gave it a virtual veto on all early grants. Jack Conway, who had come from the AFL-CIO's Industrial Unions Department as a Task Force member and who became OEO's first director of CAP, objected to the influence of Inspection Office reports on policy. He considered them to be an infringement of the CAP function and authority. There were a number of head-on clashes between Conway and Haddad over that issue. For a while, May said, field inspection reports concentrated heavily on board make-up. Every other problem was minor compared to that issue and its implications in those formative days. After a while, May said, the important question became not who was on the board but what was the program accomplishing in the community.

The 1966 amendments to the EOA however, made it a statutory requirement that one-third of the members of governing boards of CAA's be representatives chosen by the poor. In 1966, Rep. Sam M.

Gibbons, of Florida, confessed before the House Rule Committee that in attempting to define the maximum feasible participation mandate, "I went back and tried to find out exactly what the administration meant by that law. I examined the testimony of Mr. Shriver at that time and he did not mention these words or even call attention to this section...To my knowledge, the only witness that I even talked about these words, and then for only a couple lines, was the then Attorney-General of the United States, Mr. Kennedy. There is a great deal of difference as to what these words really mean. Some people say these are the revolutionary words of this statute, that this is something new that nobody ever dreamed of before. Other people say this is just sort of an amiable expression, that we meant these people would be employed and utilized as much as possible in these programs."²⁴

On June 15, 1966, the U.S. Conference of Mayors at its annual meeting in Dallas adopted a resolution which was a far cry from the resolution considered in 1965. It said:

²⁴ House of Representatives Hearings, 19661 p. 84.

"...be it resolved that the Conference calls upon the President and the Congress to expand the community action program through local umbrella-type agencies which should...have broadly representative governing boards including those affected by the program, representatives of local government and civic groups having an interest in the program..."

Testifying before the Senate Subcommittee on Employment, Manpower and Poverty of the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee on June 23rd, Mayor John V. Lindsay of New York City explained:

The resolution declares the enthusiastic support of the Nation's mayors for the community action program. Scattered doubts and disagreements during the early months of the program have given way to a clear endorsement of the community action program as a touchstone for the institutional changes that will permit our cities to deal more effectively with the blight of poverty. The Mayors of America have come to play a decisive role in this drive against impoverishment.²⁵

In dialogue with Sen. Jacob K. Javits, Lindsay developed the point:

Javits: Would you say, Mr. Mayor, that the conference of Mayors sees no objection to community action programs by virtue of whatever content of social action, after crystalization and refinement, they may still retain?

Lindsay: The answer is, 'Yes.'²⁶

The 1966 and 1967 amendments clarified the issue decisively.

By July, 1968, OEO records showed that in fewer than 10 percent of

²⁵ Senate Hearings, 1966, p. 232.

²⁶ Ibid. p. 242.

the cases die public officials move to take over existing private, non-profit CAA's even though they had the option to.

But, even as the conflict subsided between Washington and local officials OEO continued to stress the need for the direct involvement of the poor in making programmatic decisions. There was no question any longer as to participation of the poor but there remained a large one as to how much they had to say about the actual planning of programs. Nevertheless, the intent was clear and explicit. In a memorandum to the entire CAP organization on September 9, 1966, Shriver said, "...our insistence on participation of 'the residents of the area' has not been limited to, and will not be limited to, membership on CAP governing boards. That particular 'bone of contention' is for the most part now behind us." Shriver then quoted the "man from Watts who told me:

Sargent Shriver, you listen and listen good. I'll tell you exactly how it is. We want to run the jobs. We want to run the programs. It is our lives. It is our future.

"We have no intention," he continued, "of course, of letting any one group, even the poor themselves, 'run the jobs' or 'run the

programs.' That's not Community Action. But it is crucial that all of us understand the intensity of poor people's determination to participate actively in programs designed specifically to help them help themselves.

"...The new element in community affairs--involvement of the poor themselves--has not always been understood, and is still being resisted. This is the reason for this memorandum. I will not consider any program a true community action program which does not have maximum feasible participation by all segments of the community--and that must include the intended beneficiaries of that program."

As strong as its emphasis was on deep involvement of the poor OEO was, however, frequently the target of groups representing the poor themselves. In 1965, for example, The Woodlawn Organization (TWO) which was later to be funded by OEO in a highly and consistently controversial program, issued an 11-page "black paper," calling the antipoverty program a "war against the poor" in which Negroes were treated "like animals in a zoo... We are sick unto despair of having

rich whites and their carefully chosen black flunkies tell us what our problems are, make decisions for us and set our children's future," it said. TWO strongly objected to an OEO grant to the city's "umbrella" agency, the Chicago Committee on Urban Opportunity which was administered by two citywide committees appointed by Mayor Daley.

ACHIEVEMENT

In the summer of 1968, OEO brought together a report on its FY-1967 activities which could point to the establishment of some 1,050 Community Action Agencies. In addition, 61 others were serving 105 Indian tribes on reservations. With few exceptions, they



had been started from scratch shortly after OEO was formed. "Despite their short existence," the report said, "these CAAs have become positive forces for constructive change. They have developed, through experiment, new attacks on poverty which are shaped by local people to meet local needs and circumstances and are tested on the pragmatic question, WHAT REALLY WORKS? They have coordinated and integrated many related programs and activities to assure maximum efficiency and results from every dollar invested."

The report emphasized a number of innovatory planning, budgetary, managerial and training techniques designed to improve the program and emphasizing the exertion of local agency control. In planning, for example, a number of CAAs had helped prepare community proposals for the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Model Cities Program. Ten multi-purpose training centers and six urban training centers in Boston, Detroit, Los Angeles, St. Louis, San Francisco, and Cayey, Puerto Rico were funded. The centers offered training in administration, personnel and fiscal management, health and manpower and basic OEO orientation. They were

designed for CAA and delegate agency directors, planners, supervisors, administrative staff, volunteers, neighborhood center directors and others involved in community action programming and operation. Other training programs included an Indian Training Consortium administered by the Universities of Arizona, South Dakota and Utah; internship programs to prepare college students for community action careers; and, legal service centers, to train lawyers in handling poverty problems.

The concept of the multi-purpose neighborhood center had been put into effect widely and was being expanded, the idea being to concentrate the entire range of services available to the poor and to utilize them fully. Three-fourths of all CAAs had planned to operate such centers in FY-1967 although many were postponed because of cutbacks in funds. Still, there were about 700 by the end of FY-1967. The report estimated that four million persons had obtained health, legal aid and other services through the centers. The center in Washington, D.C., offered job counseling and placement, legal, housing and social services and a credit union. The U.S.

Employment Service and the D.C. Departments of Welfare and Recreation had stationed personnel there to be available to people who needed their services. In the rural Jessie Cosby Neighborhood Center in Waterloo, Iowa, the activities of 17 different agencies had been drawn together. And that year saw the launching of the Federal Interagency Pilot Neighborhood Centers Program, in which four Federal agencies (OEO, HUD, HEW, and Labor) coordinated their efforts to provide funding for a multiplicity of services in pilot neighborhood centers in 14 cities.

In Manpower Development, one of the major developments had been the emergence of subprofessional roles for the poor within the CAAs. Efforts were made to hire more men and older persons, provide more and better training and to give greater attention to the possibility of lateral transfer to existing jobs in newly established public agencies. During FY-1967 some 41,000 poor persons were employed by CAAs in subprofessional jobs. By the end of 1967 the majority of CAAs were performing manpower and related services and were prime sponsors for 19 of the 21 concentrated employment pro-

grams started during the year. With the initiation of the Cooperative Area Manpower Planning System in the spring of 1967, many CAAs achieved a voice in the planning and implementation of Comprehensive Manpower Programs funded by the departments of Labor, HEW, HUD, Commerce, and OEO, in each of the 50 states and the territories. Examples of effectiveness:

-- In the Spanish-speaking community of South Baretas, outside Albuquerque the local CAA hired a man from their own neighborhood as an employment counselor. In a three-month period he placed 56 unemployed in vocational training, 20 in vocational rehabilitation through HEW, and 197 in temporary and permanent jobs.

-- Almost 1,500 formerly jobless Detroiters, helped by an adult and youth employment project costing \$788,000 were earning some \$4 million a year and paying about \$650,000 a year in taxes.

-- Elsewhere: Some 900 jobs in San Francisco were created or newly opened for minority group members in three months; in Pittsburgh, more than 1,000 low-income people were placed in jobs within eight months; in Grand Rapids, 1,644 people received job training

and 835 placed in jobs within a year. In Philadelphia the program, in three years, provided jobs for 3,000 persons, added \$8 million to the city's economy and saved the state \$2 million in welfare costs.

One of the most significant and productive advances in manpower development during FY-1967 had been the joint funding of 18 Opportunities Industrialization Centers as Community Action Programs by OEO, and the Departments of Labor and HEW. OICs took the unemployed as well as the underemployed, gave them basic, prevocational and vocational education, and classes designed to increase their motivation.

The report contained additional information and records of achievement in the fields of credit unions, housing, education, special summer programs and other activities involving the multifarious range of CAAs.

A tabulation of results concluded that benefits were transcending the boundaries of depressed neighborhoods to affect entire communities. Examples:

-- St. Louis reported that in one area juvenile delinquency had been reduced by 60 percent since the introduction of CAA youth programs;

-- Of 693 high school dropouts enrolled in a Neighborhood Youth Corps project through the New Orleans CAA, 200 found employment, 54 returned to school, 65 were placed in the Job Corps, 40 entered Manpower Development and Training Act programs, 12 obtained positions in the state or Federal Civil Service, 15 were hired by their NYC supervisors for permanent jobs, five went to college, and 20 entered the armed forces.

Failures and Reviews

The expectation of failure was not one reserved for critics of the program. Built into the structure of OEO was an elaborate, and continually revised, system for ferreting it out. Many programs were only partially successful. Many were total failures.

Internal OEO memoranda give some of the flavor and reasons for the termination of programs by OEO itself. Some of these are listed

below as representative examples.

The Reno County Community Action Program, Inc., of Hutchinson, Kansas, never got started because of lack of organization and direction. At the time of the report a board meeting hadn't been held for six months, both the director and assistant director had resigned the previous month, and a committee appointed to consider applications for a new director had never met. No programs were funded.

A total of \$155,000 was channeled into the Franklin County, Ill. Caa before the program was terminated by OEO for failure to comply with the stipulation to truly represent the poor. The picture in the county was one of high unemployment, steep relief rolls and general sub-standard housing. OEO found that an active and enthusiastic Board ignored representation from the community's most poverty stricken area, that the so-called low-income members were questionably so and that the advisory committee membership was linked with local politics. There were no low-income persons on the 30-man advisory committee at all.

In Nampa County, Idaho, bickering among board members held up

the entire program.

A lack of interest resulted in no CAP office, staff or programs in the Reno County Community Action Program of Hutchinson, Kansas. It was closed.

The Ford County Community Action Committee, Dodge City, Kansas, with the exceptions of a Head Start program and a National Youth Corps program, failed to get any of its programs operating. Closed.

The Northeast 4-County Development Corp., Wolf Point, Montana, couldn't engender enough interest to get any programs operating, and there was a similar situation in Rapid City, S.D., where a Rapid City Community Action agency had been formed.

A memorandum dated June 15, 1967, on the subject of failures reads:

"Here are a few of our more notable failures:

In East Boston, Mass., two years after the establishment of a community action agency, not a single program has been mounted; only four aides have been hired, and they are uncertain as to their function. The cause is an internal squabble in the East Boston community which has spilled over to the CAA board.

In King Ferry, N.Y., a program for migrant workers was a failure because of the concerted opposition of farmers, who refused to allow the migrants to take part in any programs during any hours during which bean-picking might conceivably be accomplished. The

farmers also refused implementation of a component which would assure the migrants of at least one good meal a day , largely because the farmers felt they could get more work from a hungry migrant than from an un-hungry one (and because the crew leaders profited from the food they sold to migrants at their canteens.)

In the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn, N.Y., not a single 'community aide' has been trained and found employment in the private sector, despite a work program which contemplated as many as 1,300 such placements a year.

A review of the Givson-Posey Economic Opportunity Corporation, Gibson-Posey Counties, Indiana, came up with the following evaluation:

Slow to move...Several in the area say the director is unimaginative and incompetent and responsible for the program's inaction. The director is unimaginative. Board of Directors is drowsy and lack-luster. A void of programs other than canned ones such as Head Start--and even that is substandard. CAP non-professionals, with exception of two part-timers, are not poor. By-laws are flawed. Board of Directors elect their own members. Rural poor have not been reached. CAP almost unknown in the area.

...For the 1966 Head Start program, the director, because of a slip-up in Chicago, was allowed to purchase expensive durable equipment (\$480 electric typewriter, \$480 worth of mimeographing wquipment) which duplicates equipment in CAP office... In the proposal for refunding, the director again asked for \$1,963 in durable equipment (film projectors, screens and record player) duplicating items that he received for last summer's program. This was quickly knocked out by the Chicago analyst. Program terminated.

Such brief assessments represent the most minute distillation of the elaborate and detailed evaluation and inspection processes which were constantly employed by OEO to measure the value of its programs and the entire machinery used to put them into effect.

This process will be examined later, in the sections on the Offices

of Inspection and Research, Plans, Programs and Evaluation.

OEO had also periodically employed the services of a number of outside consulting firms to examine its programs and to recommend changes. One such report submitted in six sections over a period of months created a furor on the floor of the House of Representatives and in the newspapers. The action was touched off in the 1967 hearings on OEO legislation when Rep. Green, who had obtained a section of the report critical of some regional management procedures, demanded that the entire review be made public. The study, done by McKinsey and Company, Inc., was an exhaustive survey, with recommendations, of CAP's entire managerial system. One section found low morale and dissatisfaction among regional antipoverty workers reflected in a high personnel turnover rate. Shriver made the entire report available to House Education and Labor Committee Chairman Perkins, asked that it be shown to Mrs. Green and that it be treated with executive privilege.

Shortly afterward, on October 25, 1967, OEO made the entire study available in its library. The announcement of its availa-

bility was included in a release which made public a letter to Shriver from Bruce W. Rohrbacher, head of the Washington office of the consulting firm. In his letter Rohrbacher pointed out that, because the reports were for people already familiar with the organization, they were not designed to provide a full list of accomplishments, strengths and weaknesses, but rather to focus on opportunities for improvement. This is what OEO itself had retained the firm to do. "The full report," said Rohrbacher, "contained some 68 pages, and only a few of these were given to a recitation of the underlying problems; all others were focused on the improvement actions to be taken. And over the past four months, CAP in headquarters and in the regions has had a massive effort underway to act on those improvement recommendations."

As an outside and impartial evaluation of the CAP mechanism, Rohrbacher's letter is pertinent to any consideration of the program:

...In our view, CAP is to be congratulated on its accomplishments to date and, perhaps more importantly, on its unyielding desire to continually improve its efforts and accomplish its most

worthwhile goals. In each of its dimensions, the CAP mission is as difficult and complex as any we have seen in or out of government. For example, the task of 'defining the market' - i.e., identifying poor people and their needs - is just the starting point and by itself is extraordinarily complex. Nevertheless, in the face of such challenge, in an environment of almost constant criticism, and with inadequate staffing, CAP has made remarkable strides in:

- Gaining widespread public support for the need to aid the disadvantaged;
- Developing vital program concepts such as Neighborhood Service Centers, Foster Grandparents, Head Start, Legal Services, Upward Bound and many others;
- Building an extensive field organization, including 1,100 Community Action Agencies and seven regional offices;
- Attracting a nucleus of excellent talent;
- Developing working relationships at the national, state, and local levels where none had existed.

"These are examples of basic building blocks that any organization - public or private - must put into place before it can fully accomplish its mission. These building blocks, coupled with the management improvements now under way, will provide CAP with the sound administration needed for accomplishing its ultimate objectives...

"We sincerely regret that its critics do now view CAP in this perspective. It is particularly regrettable that, despite CAP's many judgments of a few individuals in some far-flung reaches of the programs can bring severe criticism and even stinging indictment of the entire program.

"In sum, our analysis of the Community Action Program has been exhaustive and our recommendations have been or are being implemented. These steps, coupled with CAP's existing strengths, will provide a solid platform for successful operations. Given adequate support, we believe CAP will continue to be of substantial aid to the nation's disadvantaged." 26

The institutional process of self-revision was a continuing one. In July, 1967, CAP announced a program to integrate and improve those management processes and systems which were primarily "information based." Crucial to this move was the establishment of a series of "program accounts." These 23 stipulations were the building blocks which described the total range of CAP programs carried out by grantees. They constituted a common language for planning, budgeting, grant application, accounting and reporting by grantees and began slowly to replace the variable component project systems used by CAP from the beginning. In June, 1968 CAP embarked on a program to improve the management capabilities of CAA's - their planning, organization, leadership, coordination, personnel, budgeting, accounting, reporting, etc. The first step involved grants to 30 CAAs with which they could contract with consulting firms for intensive assistance in assessing their management capabilities and setting out improvement plans.

Other systems included the completion, in May 1968, of two new financial management manuals on grantee accounting and financial

control techniques; policies were issued to grantees on their non-Federal share requirements to assure acceptable non-Federal share and to reflect the amendment to the EOA of 1966 which increased the non-Federal share from 10 to 20 percent; in August 1967 a new system of program progress reports to give a definitive picture of results in relation to plans went into effect. And, in July 1968 a new grant application process was begun to be implemented over a period of 15 months based on the timing of a program rather than a fiscal year. The new process required CAAs to present their overall strategy and plans for programs, including three-year projections of funding requirements among other innovations.

A thoroughgoing review of community action program was issued by the National Advisory Council on Economic Opportunity in June, 1968.²⁷ The Council, established by the EOA, and consisting of a distinguished group of persons representing every field of endeavor in the country, focused on the community action program, it said, because its programs accounted for half of OEO's fiscal-68 budget, "and also because the Council believes that this part of the total

FOOTNOTE

27 "Focus on Community Action"

endeavor of the OEO is the least understood and the most challenging of all the programs of that office."

In its review the Council consulted 285 reports and documents and was in touch with nearly 2,600 governors, mayors, county officials, and national organizations "on the question of how anti-poverty programs are being administered in their communities."

"The OEO," the preface said, "in little more than 3 years has made significant progress. It spends less than 10 percent of the funds paid out by the Federal Government to help the poor, the aged, and the underprivileged, but its impact has been without precedent..."

The Council concluded that the OEO was an essential tool in the national effort to eradicate poverty; that it represented a unique governmental approach toward solving a major social problem; that its programs had been experimental and innovative, and they "must remain so." Of OEO's different efforts the Council cited the community action program for special praise. It made a number of recommendations including the need for programs to remain flexible, experimental and multifaceted; the continuance and strengthening

of full participation by all elements of a community; that no reductions be made in appropriations and that, moreover, funds for community action be "substantially increased at the earliest possible moment;" that every effort be made to insure that OEO was "not disrupted by serious delays in annual appropriations" and, finally, that "the Nation maintain the integrity of the community action programs of the OEO for at least six years beyond 1968 in order to permit a full 10-year period of experience with community action programs."

The National Emphasis Programs

The Economic Opportunity Act did not specify any particular programs for mandatory institution. Its language dealt with areas of need and, with regard to these, it authorized Community Action programs "including, but not limited to, employment, job training and counseling, health vocational rehabilitation, housing, home management, welfare, and special remedial and other non-curricular educational assistance for the benefit of low-income individuals

and families." This was in accord with the emphasis, strongly advocated by OEO, on the need for local option and flexibility in determining program priorities. Many communities, lacking administrative structure to handle the kinds of comprehensive programs envisaged by OEO took the easy way out and began haphazardly to meet what they considered to be reasonable need, or just to spend the money available to them. "...local bureaucracies with a capacity to spend Federal funds--such as school systems who needed more remedial teachers--obtained large amounts of money. Most community action proposals were little more than a number of separate 'component programs' put together in one binder. It was the rare community which developed those linkages among programs which community action was supposed to facilitate.²⁸

The need to provide at least some priorities in specific programming was realized very early at OEO, not only because too many communities were floundering in getting started but because of the distinct need to prove the value of the entire program to Congress

²⁸ Wofford, p. 40.

and the country at large--with measurable results. What was needed was something to show, quantitatively, exactly how help was being provided and, at the same time, to provide help where it was critically needed and virtually unsupplied. Shriver decided to make available funds for specific purposes which could be obtained beyond established quotas according to definitive guidelines--in short, pre-packaged programs. All the community had to do was to be willing to institute the program, after having shown a need for it. These National Emphasis Programs began with Head Start in the Summer of 1965 and expanded afterward into a variety of legal service, manpower and health programs, to be discussed in detail in a later section. Head Start proved to be so popular that in 1966 Congress began for the first time to earmark Community Action funds for specific programs. In the 1965-67 fiscal year, for example, Congress earmarked more funds for Head Start (\$352 million) than it made available for unrestricted use by communities in all other community action fields (\$323 million.) This was seen by many close to OEO as a threat to the program as a whole. "As of July 1, 1967,"

said Wofford, "there was not enough unrestricted Community Action money left even to refund all existing Community Action projects."²⁸

²⁸ Wofford, *ibid.* p.41.

5 second draft

Project Head Start

On February 12, 1965, the staff of the Community Action Program received a memorandum beginning, "OEO will be announcing this week-end the initiation of Project Head-Start." It continued:

This program is focused on providing federal assistance to communities for the establishment of child development programs during this coming summer. These programs will involve health, social services and educational activities for children who are to enter school in the fall.

...Mr. Shriver is sending letters to community leaders throughout the nation which will call their attention to Project Head-Start. His letter will include a registration card which can be returned to OEO indicating that the community is interested in the program... These applications will be processed by a special staff of analysts knowledgeable in the field of early childhood programs... Community action agencies will receive preference in funding the proposals, but there will be a determined effort to use this program as a first step toward community action in a number of hard-to-reach communities.

The memorandum, signed by Jule Sugarman, was in size (just one page,) and in modesty of tone (as evidenced above), one of the shortest and most innocuous appearing pieces of paper ever to have circulated in an organization perpetually inundated by hurricanes of memoranda, a good deal of it written in tendentious desperation and much of it running to volume dimension. No one could have logically foreseen the outcome of the Sugarman memo, certainly not even

the small group of people who, less than four months earlier, had set out to implement one of Shriver's plentiful requests.

OEO had been functionally operational only several weeks when word filtered down that Shriver was interested in something called the "kiddie corps," Sugarman recalled.²⁹ It was not, by any means, a new concern for Shriver who had been aware from the beginning days of the Task Force that ~~something~~^S something specific needed to be done for the children of the poor. The question was, of course, what. It was known, for example, that 17 percent of the nation's poor, or nearly six million, were below the age of six. The statistic, translated into the daily lives of children constituted one of the more appalling aspects of ~~the situation of~~ poverty in America.

Shriver asked Richard Boone to look into the question and Boone, acquainted with ~~Shriver's~~^S Shriver's method of operation, began immediately to identify and then to contact persons preeminent in the field. Boone appointed Sugarman, who ~~became~~^(later became) ~~in time~~^{Head Start's} Head Start's

²⁹ Conversation, July 16, 1968, in his office at HEW, where he was Associate head of the Children's Bureau.

Associate Director, as his deputy, ~~on the project~~. Sugarman, a public administrator and political scientist, had been one of the original members of the OEO Task Force. Boone and Sugarman got in touch with Dr. Robert Cooke, head of the Johns Hopkins Pediatrics Department and Dr. Edward Davens, Deputy Medical Director of ^(the Health Department of) Maryland. An additional number of experts were consulted and after about six weeks of periodic meetings, during which time Sugarman was detailed full time to the project, a report containing the essential precepts of Head Start was prepared for Shriver. "No sooner had it hit his desk," Sugarman said, "than we were told, 'O.K., let's get it operational.'" Very shortly afterward "Shriver said, 'I want, by this afternoon, a budget and a program.' At that time we didn't even have a name for it. We had a brain-storming session and Judah Drob, who was on the ~~training~~ staff, said, 'How about Head Start.' And that became it"

It is not surprising that the name of Dr. Julius B. Richmond had been brought to Shriver's attention. Richmond, dean of the medical faculty at the State University Upstate Medical Center,

Syracuse, was also vice president of the Child Welfare League of America and had served as chairman of the section on child development of the American Academy of Pediatrics. "He came down one Sunday afternoon in the midst of a snow storm," Sugarman said. "I went to Dulles Airport to pick him up and delivered him to Shriver's driver. Several hours later he emerged as Director of Head Start." Although there was a 14-member Head Start Steering Committee, headed by Dr. Cooke, and comprised of prominent pediatricians, educators, psychiatrists, social workers, nurses and psychologists, the actual staff of Head Start at the time consisted of Dr. Richmond, Sugarman and a secretary.

The Steering Committee had outlined the scope, the problems and the hopes of the program. An early report pointed out that many poor children "...never have used cut-out scissors, looked at a picture book, or scribbled with a crayon, been told a fairy story, been coaxed into completing a simple task successfully, or been talked to as human beings." It continued:

Thus they learn more slowly, speak later and less well, and have little curiosity and imagination. Because of this, they think of the outside world and school as threatening places.

And so these children of poverty will start building a foundation of failure--and thus a pattern of poverty--which will stretch throughout their lives.

It was clear that children of the poor needed special help to overcome part of their cluster of handicaps at the threshold of their first days in school. Head Start was not to be a kindergarten, nor was it to be a substitute for it. Like other OEO concepts, it was to be a new and comprehensive program drawing together the disciplines, the knowledge and the resources of a variety of interlocking fields. It was to be an attempt to meet the total needs of the poor child; emotional, medical, nutritional, societal. Their health was to be checked and they were to be given medical and dental care to make certain that they could begin classes. They were to be shown their future schools and introduced to their probable teachers, to reassure them that school would be an interesting place. They were to be introduced to policemen, firemen, storekeepers, health and welfare workers and others to prove to them that there were people in their community who were friendly and interested in them.

Members of the Original Steering Committee

Dr. Robert E. Cooke	pediatrician-in-chief of the Johns Hopkins Hospital and Given Foundation Professor of Pediatrics at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine
Sister Jacqueline	president of Webster College, St. Louis, Mo.
Dr. Mamie Phipps Clark	executive director of the Northside Center for Child Development Inc., N.Y.C.
Dr. Mary King Kneedler	assistant professor at the Development Evaluation Center, Western Carolina College, Cullowhee, N.C.
Dr. George B. Brain	dean of the School of Education, Washington State University at Pullman and former superintendant of the Baltimore public schools
Dr. Urie Bronfenbrenner	social psychologist at Cornell University
Dr. Edward P. Crump	professor of pediatrics at Mcharry Medical College, Nashville, Tenn.
Dr. Edward Davens	acting commissioner of the Maryland State Health Dept
Mitchell I. Ginsberg	associate dean of the Columbia University School of Social Work
Dr. James L. Hymes Jr.	professor of education and chairman of the early childhood education department at the University of Maryland
Dr. Reginald S. Lourie	director of the department of psychiatry, Children's Hospital of Washington
John H. Niemeyer	president of the Bank Street College of Education
Dr. Myron E. Wegman	dean of the University of Michigan School of Public Health, Ann Arbor
Dr. Edward Zigler	associate professor of psychology at Yale and chairman of Yale University's psychology department's child development program.

They were to become acquainted with the adult work-world in libraries, stores, farms, and factories; with the children's world of constructive play and learning in sandboxes, parks, zoos, museums and beaches. And, their parents were to be drawn into the framework of the entire process, *As were volunteers from all kinds of society.*

In January Shriver wrote a letter to all the principals of schools and welfare agency heads throughout the country announcing that OEO was seeking 100,000 children in 300 counties to be included in a comprehensive preschool program. A week later a deluge of mail arrived in reply. "It quickly became apparent we were in for something much bigger than anything we had anticipated. In April we set a goal of 300,000, and in May it went up to 500,000 kids. What we actually got was 560,000 kids and 2,300 *I* communities and we had no staff," Sugarman said. In a frantic month's time the staff *W* grew from three to 400 steadily employed persons.

P Head Start made a determined effort to get into most of the poorest counties in the country. It gathered the services of more than 100 management interns from 40 government agencies and sent them on a

four-week barnstorming campaign of poor counties throughout the country explaining the program and helping groups write applications.

And so, in the first summer of Head Start, there were 240 of the 300 poorest counties of the United States involved in the program.

An early, and continuing problem was the shortage of people trained to work with children. A meeting was called at the University of Maryland the result of which was that contracts were signed with 140 universities to set up six-day training programs. That first summer Head Start trained about 42,000 persons in the program.

Dr. Keefe Osborne of the Merrill-Palmer Institute of Detroit, a Head Start advisor, then drew up a list of experts on the problems and psychology of early childhood. A letter was sent to 150 of them on a Monday asking them to appear the following Saturday for a conference in Washington. Only ten were unable to come. Aside from soliciting advice from them they were asked if they would travel throughout the country to set up programs and each of the 140 who attended the conference agreed to undertake the task. Support was also obtained from the American Academy of Pediatrics, the National

Association of Social Workers, the American Dental Association, the American Optometric Association and organizations of psychologists.

Policy was being made every day as the deadline for beginning the program--that Summer-- drew nearer and one of the problems was of translating it to the 400 staff members who had themselves been drawn together under pressure. The largest number of the staff members were a group of substitute school teachers enlisted from the District of Columbia and nearby Maryland counties. Work began at 8 A.M. and lasted until midnight seven days a week. Staff meetings were held at 10 every night.

After the grants were processed and even before the program was launched, Shriver gave a party for the staff and said the project would become a full-year process rather than just a summer one. This had been the recommendation of advisors right from the beginning. The build-up for a full year program began before the Summer program was under way.

Eventually the program grew to include, in addition to summer sessions for children 5 to 6, a full year program for 3, 4, and

5 year-olds; parent and child centers for children up to two years old, and a ^(school) follow-through program for children from 6 to 8.

Before the program began, based on his experience caring for an average of 50,000 poor children a year at his Johns Hopkins children's clinic, Dr. Cooke said that the medical review would turn up a large number of medical and mental defects. The startling facts went far beyond the estimate.

In Tampa, Fla., nearly 10 percent of the children enrolled had eye defects. About 50 percent suffered nutritional deficiencies. In Jacksonville, 52 percent were anemic. In Detroit, examination disclosed that out of 6,000 children examined, 80 percent needed dental care. In Prince Edward County, Va., where the public schools were closed for five years to avoid integration, children from share-cropper families could not understand even the simplest picture books. Children shown pictures of kittens identified them as rats. A nine year old boy who had never been to school until the Federal Government forced Prince Edward to reopen public schools stared blankly at a picture in a book of a pair of galoshes. The

word was printed underneath. But he had never seen a pair of galoshes so neither the picture or the word had any meaning for him. And, a reporter wrote in the Detroit News of March 8, 1966: "A child who had never spoken a word, presumed to be mentally deficient, did not talk because he could not hear. And he did not hear because of massive deposits of wax in his ears. He had never been taken to a doctor, despite the suspicion of mental abnormality..." There were children by the thousands who had vocabularies of less than 100 words. There were many thousands more who had never been seen by a doctor. A sampling of 55,000 children enrolled in Head Start the first summer revealed that 70 percent were receiving their first medical or dental examinations; more than 44 percent had cavities; 60 percent had not been immunized against measles; 32 percent had not received smallpox vaccinations. A Boston study of 1,442 Head Start children made in 1965 found 31 percent suffering from major physical defects or emotional problems.

A count made in 1968 showed that of the 2,000,000 children who had participated in Head Start programs: 180,000 had failed vision

tests; 60,000 needed eyeglasses; another 60,000 had skin diseases; 180,000 suffered from anemia; 40,000 were either mentally retarded or had learning problems requiring specialized attention; 20,000 had bone or joint problems; 1,300,000 had dental problems; and, 1,200,000 had not been vaccinated against measles. The figures, as they emerged each summer, were successive shocks to Americans.

Head Start provided new and deep insight into the lives and outlook for the children of the poor. It had been known, of course, that children of 4, 5, and 6 started school with anything but an equal chance. But, the extent of the social and cultural and physical neglect was shocking, even to educators, and perhaps the medical neglect was the most shocking of all. By July, 1968, more than two-thirds of the children enrolled in Head Start had received the medical and dental services they needed.

It was the uncovering of such deficiencies in the lives of children, and the enthusiasm of parents, teachers and all other elements of community society in America for the program right from its earliest days, which accounted for the support it received from

Congress, and the President. An while there were difficulties encountered every day, some of them of major proportion as in the case of CDGM in Mississippi, and most of them in finding qualified persons to operate the program, the most enthusiastic people of all were the ones who administered Head Start in Washington.

In this they had the strong support of President Johnson even before the program had begun. Mrs. Johnson had been the honorary chairman of Head Start and had given a tea in the Rose Garden of the White House on May 18, 1965, to launch it. And, Luci Baines Nugent, the President's daughter, had been chairman of Volunteers for Vision, an auxiliary of the American Optometry Association, which examined the eyes of nearly 50,000 children in the first three months of the program.

The President's endorsement for Head Start, and the programs it engendered was unqualified and enthusiastic. The situation of poor children in the country was to him, as it was to anyone acquainted with the facts of their lives and the predictability of their futures, one for deep concern. And, the measurable effects on the lives of children in the program as it advanced, plus the response of virtually everyone

involved in it, from the children to their parents, from teachers to volunteers, obviously gave him a great deal of satisfaction. On May 18, in launching the program, the President had said:

I believe that this is one of the most constructive, and one of the most sensible, and also one of the most exciting programs that this nation has ever undertaken. I don't say that because the most ardent and most active and most enthusiastic supporter of this program happens to be Mrs. Johnson.

We are taking up the age-old challenge of poverty and we don't intend to lose generations of our children to this enemy of the human race...

The bread that is cast upon these waters will surely return many thousandfold.

What a sense of achievement, and what great pride, and how happy that will make all of us who love America feel about this undertaking.

Then, just three months later, on August 31, when the first astonishing results of the program had begun to come in, the President gave a reception, again in the Rose Garden of the White House, for Shriver, Dr. Richmond, and other Head Start officials and spoke of the hope which had entered the lives that summer of a half million poor children. The President said:

...But today, after the first trial of Project Headstart, these children are now ready to take their places beside their more fortunate classmates in regular school.

Through Headstart, children who had never spoken learned to talk. Parents who were suspicious of school authorities came to see the Centers and they stayed on to help the teachers. Volunteers gave millions of hours to children and proved to these children that somebody after all really cared...

Teachers tried new approaches and they learned new techniques. All the workers lived--lived time and again--through an infinitely rewarding moment seeing a child open his eyes and his mind to the wonders of this world in which we live; seeing a child who had never seen a book; a child who had never held a pencil; a child who had never tasted a banana; or one who had never heard a fairy tale.

...Project Headstart, which began as an experiment, is now battle tested and it has been proven worthy.

...And so today, we have reached a landmark--not just in education, but in the maturity of our own democracy. The success of this year's program and our plans for years to come are symbols of this nation's commitment to the goal that no American child shall be condemned to failure by the accident of his birth.

The President then congratulated Shriver, Dr. Richmond and the Head Start officials and offered his "thanks, and my very deep appreciation for what you have done for human beings."

In June 1966, as Head Start began its second summer Shriver sent a letter to Mrs. Johnson because, "I thought you might like to know where we are." In it he spoke of growing enthusiasm for the program, from the public, from various organizations and from "both sides of the (political) aisle." He reported that 680,000 children in 2,600 communities would be served in summer programs that year; that 180,000 children between the ages of three and five would participate in year-round programs; that over 140 universities were cooperating in running training programs on and off campus. Reports of the previous summer's operation, he said, showed generally that children entered school "better prepared and with greater self confidence and greater intellectual capacity than children from similar backgrounds who did not have a Head Start experience. He went on to enumerate that:

Dr. Leon Eisenberg, Professor of Child Psychology at John Hopkins University, evaluated the Head Start Program in Baltimore, and found a rise of 8-10 I.Q. points in the children who participated, bearing out his opinion that even a six-week project can produce significant intellectual gains in children from impoverished backgrounds.

Dr. Eisenberg adds that a year-long project in Tennessee was able to advance four-year-olds in a control group eight months further in mental age than those without the program. This is equivalent to a gain of 15-16 points in I.Q.

A program sponsored by the Staten Island Mental Health Society reported an intellectual gain by their children of 14 months in two months.

At the Montessori Schools in Clovia, Calif., children advanced from 4-12 months on intelligence test performance during the six-week Head Start program.

The progress of children who participated in the program was observed both by the teachers who conducted the summer classes and by others who have taught the children in first grade in the fall of 1965. Ninety percent of all summer teachers believed the impact on children they taught was significant enough to continue the program another summer; and 80 percent of the first-grade teachers interviewed saw a difference between those children who had participated in Head Start and those who had not.

Teachers were articulate in their enthusiasm for the benefits of Head Start. 'Though the Project,' wrote one, 'all of my children have acquired a surer grasp on their sometimes shaky heritage, which promises them the right to the pursuit of happiness...Project Head Start is making it possible for every American child to face the future with some confidence.'

Another teacher wrote, '...I see growth in social adjustment, the ability to work with others, both with children and adult friends. I see children becoming less fearful, less tearful, and more secure in the school environment. I see children learning that someone really likes them and accepts them.'

...School systems everywhere have learned the value of volunteers and paid teachers aides from the community. In Minneapolis, 200 mothers have been taken off welfare roles and out to work as teacher aides.

Nashville, Tenn., has instituted a city-wide follow-up summer project for last summer's Head Start children to be in special programs this coming summer. The parent participation program paid parent aides-- and parent involvement projects, such as a mother's reading corner to help

the mother know what reading can help her child.

In Clarksdale, Miss., Project Second Start is giving job training to the parents of Head Start children.

...I think that a statement in the NEA (National Educational Association) bulletin about Head Start will give you the kind of boost it has given me. That journal wrote--Head Start has shown us a new path--Education will never be the same again."

As early as 1965, when various newspapers were writing review series of OEO's manifold activities, all of them, no matter how complimentary; studded with criticism, there were very few words of condemnation for Head Start.

United Press International reporters, for example, conducting a nationwide survey in December 1965, heard high praise for Head Start in nearly every section of the country. The only exceptions were in some areas of the Deep South where there were some cases of controversy stemming from the nonsegregation policies rigidly enforced by OEO.

From Mobile, Ala., came the report that "the project has left hard feelings among both whites and Negroes." OEO had held up funds for the Mobile project on grounds that local officials had not tried hard enough to desegregate the teaching staff. Head Start projects in Baton Rouge, La., and Gainesville, Fla., were canceled on similar

grounds, with similar local repercussions. But, representative reports from UPI correspondents quoting local school officials and civic leaders said:

Philadelphia - "A tremendous success."

St. Louis - "This program was very favorably received and parents whose children took part in it were very happy with the results."

Ohio - "21,000 children were enrolled in 94 communities throughout the state. Reaction was very favorable."

Rhode Island - "By far the most successful of the antipoverty programs."

Portland, Ore. - "The most successful antipoverty effort here."

Dallas - "Got a good reception from the Dallas schools."

Tucson - "Quite successful."

The program continued to grow in popularity from the moment when, on August 31, 1965, President Johnson announced that Head Start had been "battle-tested" and proven "worthy". By fiscal 1966 Head Start was costing more than half of the total CAP budget. That year, for the first time, Congress earmarked funds within the Titles of the EOA for fiscal-67 and allocated \$352 million for Head Start activities. Its initial budget, for fiscal-65, had come out of the CAP appropriation and had come to about \$84.5 million. For fiscal-66 it received \$180 million. The appropriation for fiscal-68 was for \$337 million, the \$15 million drop below 1967 reflecting a Congressional cutback of \$287 million from the overall Administration request for \$2.060 billion.

The Programs

In 1968 Summer programs were operating in about 1,400 communities at a cost of \$101 million. The programs averaged four hours a day five days a week for eight weeks at a cost of \$150 per child per month. The first summer saw 561,000 children enrolled in this program. The second summer served 573,000 children enrolled in this program. The second summer served 573,000 children. In 1967 summer grants provided for about 465,000 children with the decrease representing community decisions to switch funds from summer to full-year programs.

Full-year programs were mounted to serve about 215,000 children in about 1,000 communities in 1968. There were both part and full-day Full-Year programs with the choice being made by the communities administering the programs. Part-day programs averaged four hours a day, eight months a year at a cost of \$97 per child per month. In fiscal-66, 147,000 children were included in such programs and the figure rose to 154,000 the following year. In 1968 the figure was expected to be about 215,000.

Full-day or day-care programs offered an extended day of Head Start

activities and care for the children of parents who were working or otherwise unable to care for them. About 50,000 children participated in these programs in 1967, an increase of 37,000 over fiscal-66. In 1968, 54,000 were included. The full-day programs averaged about 11 hours a day, 12 months a year, and cost about \$115 per child per month.

Does it work?...Follow-Through

Late in 1965 OEO financed a study by Professor Max Wolff and Mrs. Annie Stein of the Ferkauf Graduate School of Education, Yeshiva University, New York, to test the results of the Summer Head Start Experience on children six to eight months later, while they were in kindergarten.

In the introduction to the study, submitted in August 1966, the authors¹ cited an earlier study² which concluded that significant gains were made by Head Start children from June to September 1965, as compared with a control group which had not participated in the program. And the quoted an opinion by Ivor Kraft of the Division of Research, Children's Bureau³ of HEW who asked:

1. Six Months Later: A comparison of Children who had Head Start, Summer, 1965 with their Classmates in Kindergarten: A Case Study of the Kindergartens in Four Public Elementary Schools, New York City.

2. Eisenberg, L. and Conners, C. K. "The Effect of Head Start on developmental processes." Presented at 1966 Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation Scientific Symposium on Mental Retardation, Boston, April 1966.
3. "Are We Overselling the Preschool Idea," Saturday Review of Literature, Dec. 18, 1965, p. 63

"What will happen next...? That will depend on what takes place in the first grade, and the second grade - and so on throughout the ensuing school careers of those children who live in low-income and slum neighborhoods."

And answered:

"...We can easily predict that even the finest preschool experience for deprived and segregated children will wash out and disappear as these children pass through the grades."

A supplemental study to the Wolff Report included the intensive interviewing of 300 parents of children in the kindergarten classes observed, 150 who had had children in the Head Start program and the others who had not.

It quoted a Negro mother who said: "Head Start developed a thirst for knowledge in my child." And a Puerto Rican mother: "Head Start is one step forwards in terms of their whole life. You never come back."

Then it went on to say:

perhaps this Puerto Rican mother is right and there are permanent long-range gains the children have made. The warmth of the support given the program by the parents interviewed may indicate that her views are widely shared. The strong memories of Head Start retained by the children speak in support of her belief.

The finds of this Study show that, overall, the children who had Head Start still have greater readiness for learning than their classmates, six months later.

They also show that in the kindergartens studied, no educational gains had been made despite their greater "thirst for knowledge."

The report ended by categorically stating that "Head Start cannot

substitute for the long overdue improvement of education in the elementary schools which have failed the Negro and Puerto Rican children. It can only prepare them to reap the full benefits of better education when it is provided."

Based on these findings, the New York times, on October 23, headlined a story, "Head Start Value Found Temporary." The story was picked up across the country and created considerable reaction elsewhere.

On November 18, 1966, Shriver presented a six-point challenge to educators to improve the benefits of their elementary grades to meet those initiate by Head Start. Addressing the opening session of the Great Cities Research Council annual meeting in Milwaukee, Shriver told the educators from the 15 largest cities in the United States that the present school system, particularly in urban areas, was "critically inadequate to meet the needs of children of poverty. This seems like a harsh judgment, but it is borne out by a recent follow-up study of Head Start children," he said. The study (by Professor Wolff) he said showed that Head Start gains were being nullified by the disappointment and discouragement of slum school classrooms. Many of the children, Shriver said, fall further behind their classmates who did not receive the Head Start experience, adding that "the readiness

and receptivity they had gained in Head Start has been crushed by the broken promises of first grade."

Shriver termed his six-point proposal Project Keep Moving. He suggested:

1 - An across the board reduction in pupil/teacher ratio, to correspond with that required by Project Head Start, namely one teacher to every 15 children;

2 - The ratio of adults to children in the classroom should be increased by using new sources of educational manpower, such as teacher aides, sub-professionals and volunteers;

3 - A program of tutorial assistance to be established, in which older students, from high school and college, would take part. They could also be drawn from the Neighborhood Youth Corps, Work Study groups, and VISTA;

4 - Parents should be involved in the activities of every public school. "This does not mean the traditional PTA meetings in the auditorium at night. Rather the establishment of neighborhood councils and community associations, which would find the schools open to them during the day.";

5 - The adequate supply of all necessary physical properties, equipment and supplies, such as books, toys, films, as well as the broad use of electronic learning aids. Electronic aides, he said, had already proved to be effective in Head Start classrooms; and,

6 - The initiation of training programs to open up a new educational career, that of the childhood development specialist. Such specialists would work exclusively in early primary grades, diagnosing obstacles to the individual child's progress; and prescribe the intervention of other professionals, such as psychologists, socialologist, and reading specialists.

Calling Project Head Start "a short term experience, and a shot of educational adrenalin whose effects can wear off in the frinding boredom and rustration of slum classrooms, "Shriver asked school systems to pick up the challeagne of Project Keep Moving. "The results," he said, "would inevitably be a revolution in education from preschool through college.

Only if we maintain the pace of Head Start throughout the school system, can we create an educational process which will give every disadvantaged child in our Nation a chance to obtain the highest educational level in his power...I feel sure that if the pressure to effect this change is great enough, funds will be available from the Federal and state governments to make this revolution possible."

The administration had already given a massive boost to education in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, the emphasis of which, in Title I, was on increased services during early childhood years, and which was directly attributable to the Head Start experience.

Shriver undoubtedly had this in mind when he spoke of the possibility of more funds to improve the quality of early education. And, assuredly, he also had in mind a section of the Wolff study which said that the preschool inventory test results were uniformly lower for Head Start pupils in classes in which the teaching was poor and that, conversely, Head Start pupils scored consistently higher than their classmates in groups with good teachers. "This finding," the study said, "Indicates the hazards as well as the opportunities that are opened up by preschooling.

It reinforces the belief that Head Start advantages can be maintained only if the level of teaching and the curriculum in the kindergarten are strong.

It implies the opposite as well--that more damage is done to the child who looks forward eagerly to an educational program he has learned to enjoy than to the child who has had no previous knowledge of what to expect, if the later school experience is poor."

Soon after Shriver's Milwaukee speech, the President, in his 1967 State of the Union Message said: "We should strengthen the Head Start program, begin it for children three years old, and maintain its educational momentum of bollowing through in the early years."

Then, on February 8, 1967, the President sent a special message to the Congress on Children and Youth in which he announced the Follow Through program "during the first school grades for children in areas of acute poverty." For poor children, and their parents, the President said, "Head Start has replaced the conviction of failure with the hope of success." He continued:

The achievements of Head Start must not be allowed to fade. For we have learned another truth which should have been self-evident - that poverty's handicaps cannot be easily erased or ignored when the

poor of first grade opens to the Head Start child.

Head Start occupies only part of a child's day and ends all too soon. He often returns home to conditions which breed despair. If these forces are not to engulf the child and wipe out the benefits of Head Start more is required. Follow Through is essential.

To fulfill the rights of America's children to equal educational opportunity the benefits of Head Start must be carried through to the early grades.

We must make special efforts to overcome the handicap of poverty by more individual attention, by creative courses, by more teachers trained in child development. This will not be easy. It will require careful planning and the full support of our communities, our schools and our teachers.

In addition to requesting authorization of funds for Follow Through, The President said he was also asking for funds from Congress, and director Shriver to strengthen the full year Head Start program; to enlarge the number of three-year-olds participating in Head Start; and, to explore, through pilot programs, the effectiveness of the Head Start experience on even younger children.

On January 28, 1967, a strong letter on the Wolff report was sent by Dr. Urie Bronfenbrenner, to the editors of the N.Y. Times and the Washington Post. Bronfenbrenner, Professor of Psychology and Child Development at Cornell University, former President of the Division of Developmental Psychology of the American Psychological Association, and member of the National Advisory Council of the National Institutes of Child Health and Human Development, was formidable opponent. He had

also been a member of the Planning Committee of Project Head Start since its inception two years earlier. Bronfenbrenner's views deserve full consideration since they dealt with the most widely publicized study of Head Start to date. He was writing, Bronfenbrenner said, because the President's State of the Union Message, announcing upward and downward extensions of the Head Start program, gave added importance to the Wolff study. "This investigation of several hundred children," he said, "...has been described both by the authors and by the press as demonstrating that the effects of Head Start 'fade away' within six months of the child's entry into school."

He continued:

Although widely reported in the press, the study itself has not been published. As a result, it has not received the independent scientific review which such publication would have of the actual data on which the report is based not only fails to justify the interpretations made, but actually points to an opposite conclusion.

The study, he said, compared the educational performances of over 100 children who had had Head Start with an equal number of their classmates who had not. The investigators reported that when the children were tested after six months in kindergarten, there were no significant

differences in score between the Head Start children and the others.

It was on this finding, Bronfenbrenner said, "that the conclusion of 'no educational gains' is based." But, he said, "such a conclusion necessarily implies that the two groups were comparable to start with. No direct evidence is offered on this score, since no tests were administered to the Head Start children or their controls at the beginning of either program. In other words, there was no real baseline from which actual gains or losses could have been calculated."

The assumption in the Wolff report of similarity in the backgrounds of the two groups of children was seriously open to question, Bronfenbrenner said. He pointed out, from tables in the Wolff report, that:

-- the proportion of Head Start families with incomes over \$5,000 a year was 27%; for the controls the figure was 41%;

--- there were twice as many families on welfare in the Head Start group;

-- among the Head Start families, the proportion with more than three children was 44%; the corresponding figure for the controls was 29%;

-- among fathers of the Head Start children, 38% had an eighth grade education or less, as against 24% for the controls; and,

-- among mothers of the Head Start children, 37% had a high school education or better as against 50% for the control group.

Then, Bronfenbrenner pointed out that the best established findings in research on child development was that children from smaller families,

with larger incomes, and higher levels of parental education do better in school. "This means," he said, "that before either program began, the children who ended up in Wolff's control group were more advanced in intellectual development than those who participated in Head Start, and that that the effect of Head Start was to enable the more deprived children to catch up with their less disadvantaged classmates. In short, contrary to the interpretation given by the authors, what Wolff's data seem to show is that children coming from underprivileged homes who participated in a Head Start program were enabled to hold their own with children from more favored backgrounds well into the first year of school."

Studies which compared Head Start children with others from "appropriately matched" and "truly similar" backgrounds, Bronfenbrenner said, had shown that the scores of the Head Start children at the end of kindergarten "were reliably higher than for children not participating in a preschool program." But, he went on, there were no grounds for complacency. In some instances the gain was not more than a few I.Q. points, and even when the gain was substantial, the Head Start child, even though ahead of children from similar homes who had not had Head Start, were still unable

to catch up with children from middle-class homes. "most sobering of all the rate of improvement of Head Start children after they enter kindergarten is unifromly lower than the rate of gain they exhibited while in the Head Start program itself, this differential being greatest wehn children find themsleves in slum schools taught by poor teachers. In short, the benefits of Head Start cannot be realized if upon completion of the program the child is dumped into an inferior school environment," he said. He concluded by stating that "if we are to fulfil the rights of America's children to equal educational oppportunity, the benefits of Head Start must be extended into the primary grades...to deny funds for Follow Through is to risk undoing most of what Head Start has accomplished in enhacing the competence of children and replacing for their parents, their teachers, and themselves the conviction of failure with the possibility of success."

On March 13, 1967, there was another Head Start ceremony at The White House, this time with a Follow-Through addition. Shriver gave another summation of the Head Start experience. The competence and devotedness of the people responsible for operating Head Start were certainly praiseworthy,

Shriver said. But, he asked, were they unique? "Is Head Start the only program so favored? Obviously not." The answer, he said, was simple:

"We let the American people do it themselves!"

Here Shriver touched on the spirit of voluntarism which had characterized the operation of Head Start from its inception; the willingness of people in every category of American life to give services, time, and facilities to aid the program dedicated to aiding children.

"Washington paid for it," Shriver said, "but the people ran it. And I don't mean educators, doctors, lawyers, merchants or chiefs--I mean the people; plain, ordinary American citizens.

"Today, for example, 55 percent of all Head Start children are attending classes in private, nonprofit institutions. They are not in public or parochial schools.

The American Optometric Association - Luci Baines Nugent's Volunteers for Vision, gave more than 100,000 free optical exams.

The American Academy of Pediatrics supplied more than 200 pediatricians as Consultants.

The American Dental Association mobilized its members, helped to write the guidelines and prepare special materials for dentists.

More than 250,000 private citizens worked for Head Start free of charge.

Shriver continued to speak of other innovatory aspects of the program; its effects on and expansion of civil rights and the microcosm it provided for the concept of community action in operation. With roughly 40 percent of the children participating in Head Start White; 40 percent Negro; and 20 percent Spanish-speaking, another point had been made.

"Poverty is color blind - a lesson of special meaning in the Deep South," he said. The state of Mississippi was to have 30,000 children in Head Start, all of them in bi-racial programs, the first bi-racial activities in the history of the state. Mississippi leaders, he said, working together through new, private nonprofit groups had accomplished what others had insisted couldn't be done. The point was, of course, to take care of children, but it was also to prove "once again to the American people that they can accomplish miracles - if they work together - poor and rich - educated and unlettered - amateurs and professionals. That's what we mean by Community Action, the national program of which Head Start is a part."

The Follow-Through program was designed to prevent the loss of progress noted after children had left Head Start. The objective of the program, developed jointly by OEO and the U. S. Office of Education of HEW, was to continue into the early school years the same kinds of specialized

and individualized attention and support for both the child and his family they had experienced in Head Start. Programs included special personnel to work with the teaching staff, health services, nutrition improvement, psychological and social services, and continuing parent activities--essential points made by Shriver in Milwaukee. The program was delegated for operation to the Office of Education, working closely with Head Start, CAAs and OEO. In 1967, its first year, Follow-Through was a pilot operation. Forty-one programs were begun in the 1967-68 school year and were to continue through the 1968-69 school year.

Parent and Child Centers

Also launched in 1967 and developed in partnership with HEW, and the Departments of Labor and HUD was a project funding the organization of 32 Parent and Child Centers in urban slums. These were to serve families with children below the age of three with the focus on the entire family; other children, parents and anyone else who was part of the family. The hope was to meet deficiencies in children before they got to the Head Start stage and also to support the entire family structure by making available the help of every Federal program in the city. The project posed the question: Was it possible to take something like the manpower training

program which was under Department of Labor jurisdiction, and use it in support of parent members of a Parent and Child Center? Was it possible to obtain the services of one of the Children's Bureau's Comprehensive Health Service Centers and make them available to all of the children in a PCC. An interdepartmental group, acting as a steering committee was organized to develop that aspect of the program and personnel from all the agencies involved were dispatched to work directly with the communities to find out if the resources of all Federal agencies could be mobilized in support of a single comprehensive program.

Training, Impact, Research and Evaluation

Even more so than in other OEO programs, Head Start was working in uncharted territories. Training people, both professional and non-professional, to supervise and operate Head Start programs was a basically important part of the entire program as were efforts to determine its effect. In 1968, a survey showed that of 19,400 non-professionals then employed in full-year Head Start programs, a substantial percentage, with supervision and continued training, would be able to assume professional responsibilities. Even among the professionals, relatively few had been trained to work with disadvantaged children. Special programs were designed

to increase their competence including: A Regional Training Officer in each state, working out of a university and able to draw on its resources to assist grantees with in-service training programs; five-day summer orientation for new summer staff members; eight-week training for 1900 full-year staff members; six-day training conferences for approximately 800 program directors; a supplementary education program of financial assistance for approximately 3,000 full-year staff members; and technical assistance provided by 500 experts in early childhood development, health psychology, social work, parent participation, nutrition and administration. Contracts were signed in 1967 with 13 universities to become Evaluation and Research Centers to organize evaluation processes, to encourage the development of more adequate tests to measure the effects of Head Start, and to involve the professional community in basic and applied research related to the development of disadvantaged children. The emphasis was on what kinds of programs work rather than on whether Head Start was being successful or not.

The enthusiasm which arose for the program brought with it great numbers of volunteers. In 1965, there were nearly 97,000 vol-

unteers; in 1966 the figure rose to nearly 130,000 and subsequent years leveled off to about 100,000.

There was a definite influence on the entire field of early childhood education. Universities and colleges, particularly in the South where the field had not been largely developed, began to establish new departments on early childhood education. The membership in the professional National Association for the Education of Young Children rose from 7,000 in 1965 to 11,000 in 1968. A third of the states began studies to determine the desirability of establishing certification standards for teachers in early childhood education.

Sugarman, and a number of other educators, sociologists and early childhood development experts, believe that the Head Start process -- from Parent and Child Center to Follow Through -- will become the pattern for all American education in the future. "This whole process focuses on poor kids," Sugarman said, "but it also might be desirable to use it across-the-board for all kids in the country." The chief flaw, Sugarman thought, was the failure of the greatest

majority of the programs to "carry out what we had in mind as a philosophy and as a policy at the beginning. Very few have yet learned to mesh all the constituent parts of the program together in a supportive fashion. Although almost all of the programs have the formality of parent involvement, they tend to concentrate more on the form rather than the substance of involvement and participation. There is not enough attention to real involvement of parent and child together. But, there has been decided growth. It's still a long, hard road to go."

On July 17, 1968, over the strong objections of OEO, the Office of Education, and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, the Senate voted to transfer Head Start to the states under the supervision of the Office of Education. The action, said OEO Director Harding in a memorandum to all OEO employees, "taken without hearing of full discussion, does not provide the proper safeguarding to insure dedication of the program to the best interests of the poor. For this reason we will continue to oppose this action with all the means available to us." If the House of Representatives agreed, the transfer was to take effect July 1, 1969. Senator Joseph S. Clark opposed the "shotgun wedding" transfer which, he said, neither Head Start or the Office of Education

wanted at the time. The transfer would commit the program "to the tender mercies of states that don't want it," he said.

The Head Start amendment was proposed by Senator Peter H. Dominick and was supported by Senator Wayne Morse, a continuing critic of OEO programs in Oregon. The amendment would begin the issuance of block grants to the states, effectively removing control from Head Start which examined and approved grants on an individual basis. The amendment would call for a state plan to be subject to approval by the Office of Education, but the Office could not finally disapprove a plan without the state being given an opportunity for a hearing. By removing control and discipline, as well as the elaborate inspection, evaluation and research apparatus from the jurisdiction of a central authority the amendment, if enacted into law, would effectively destroy the very nature of the program.

Volunteers in Service to America

The essential structure of Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) was outlined almost step by step in a program prepared by the Administration of President Kennedy under the title of the National Service Corps. Although VISTA was to be incorporated into the EOA of 1964 with so little friction that it could serve as a model to illustrate how congenial the legislative process can be, its prototype was throttled in the House Committee on Education and Labor the previous year. Introduced to a hostile Congress on April 11, 1963,³⁰ the National Service Corps bill was passed in the Senate on August 14, by a marginal vote of 47 - 44. The House Special Labor sub-Committee reported its bill to the full House Education and Labor Committee on December 11. They, repeating the fate of much Kennedy Administration legislation, it never was reported out of the committee. Under the stimulus of the Johnson administration however, and the increased awareness of the facts of poverty in the

³⁰ In the Senate by Sen. Harrison D. Williams (D, N.J.) and in the House by Rep. Frank Thompson (D, N.J.)

country, the situation, only a year later, was entirely different. It is clear nevertheless, that VISTA was launched with remarkable organizational and structural facility because a charter of precepts and a mode of operation based on the remarkable success of the Peace Corps, had been outlined earlier. The entire program, in fact, had been pre-mounted.

A preliminary study group, headed by the President's brother, Attorney General Robert E. Kennedy, searched the need for and the outline of a National Service Corps. Then, on November 17, 1962, President Kennedy established a Cabinet-level Study Group³¹ chaired by the Attorney General to study "the feasibility of such a program patterned after the Peace Corps."

The President asked the Study Group to consider all aspects of a National Service Corps. The Attorney General's preliminary report had said: "The President's challenge to all Americans to ask what they can do for their country has had an initial answer in the exem-

³¹ Including: The Secretaries of Interior, Labor, HEW, and the Administrator of the Housing and Home Finance Agency, The Director of the Budget Bureau and the Director of the Peace Corps. Added afterward were the Secretaries of Agriculture and Commerce; the Director of the Veterans Administration and the Chairman of the Civil Service Commission.

plary support of the Peace Corps. But for many Americans there is still a paradox -- a desire to serve but no clear path to meaningful volunteer commitment. We need to offer visible avenues for service to these people. The Attorney General's report had suggested that the Corps be open to all ages; that the period of enlistment be for one year; that it be relatively small; and that pay should cover living expenses with a modest separation allowance. All of these provisions, with very slight modification, were later incorporated into VISTA.

The Study Group worked from its formation on November 17, through the fall and into early winter. On January 14, 1963, it sent its report to the President, strongly recommending the creation of the program. It had, at the behest of the President, looked into areas in which the program might be most useful; probable volunteer response; the relationship of the program to public and private agencies at the Federal, State and local levels; size and composition; training requirements; and estimated costs. The next day, in his State of the Union Message, President Kennedy said:

The overseas success of our Peace Corps volunteers... suggests the merit of a similar corps serving our own community needs...

Following up, on February 14, in A Message from the President of the United States Relative to Our Nation's Youth, he added:

Through the years millions of Americans have served their communities through the willing donation of their time and skill to voluntary private service organizations. But in a population growing in numbers, urbanization, and the recognition of social problems, we need not only more professional personnel--but an even greater number of dedicated volunteers to support the professional in every area of service.

I, therefore, recommend legislation to establish a National Service Corps--a small carefully selected volunteer corps of men and women of all ages working under local direction with professional personnel and part-time local volunteers to help provide urgently needed services in mental health centers and hospitals, on Indian reservations, to the families of migrant workers, and in the educational and social institutions of hard-hit slum or rural poverty areas.

The areas of service mentioned by the President became, under VISTA, the five fields of its main emphasis: Urban slums, depressed rural areas, Indian reservation, migrant worker camps, and mental health.

A continuing Study Group staff was formed to develop the program. The group agreed at one point that in about three years time the number of volunteers should be about 5,000. And, in July, 1968, VISTA had 3,204 volunteers in the field and 1,828 in training for a

total of 5,032.

The Study Group was aware that 5,000 -- even 50,000 -- volunteers "could not alone solve the problems facing America's needy citizens, and it felt that effective solutions can be achieved only through the personal concern and involvement of millions of additional Americans working on the problems in their own communities. It was agreed that a program of modest costs would serve to stimulate the interest necessary to generate new voluntary efforts among those Americans now serving, as well as those who do not know how or where to help their fellow men help themselves."³²

As it continued its work the Study Group documented: The purposes and goals for the proposed Corps; the areas of need; shortages in the helping professions; the favorable response of the public, civic and medical organizations and institutions, the press, and state and local governments. Fifty project models were presented showing the need and precisely what volunteers could do to help in

³² "Information on a Proposed National Service Program." S.1323, H.R.5625, prepared by the President's Study Group on a National Service Program.

the five major categories of aid proposed; eligibility and terms of service were worked out as were details for recruitment, selection and training. Finally, budget estimates and administrative structure were detailed. It seemed that everyone in the country and every major organization, with few exceptions, was in favor of the program except the Congress.

The provision calling for the establishment of VISTA in the anti-poverty package which became the EOA of 1964, went through the House of Representatives and the Senate with virtually no disagreement. Considering that it was essentially the same proposal which had failed to gain approval one year earlier it was further testimony to the impetus of the Johnson Administration in activating social legislation.

VISTA in the Field

By the time VISTA was two months old it had already received more than 4,000 applications for service. At that time, on December 12, 1964, President Johnson welcomed the first 20 VISTA Volun-

teers at the White House as they were about to enter training. The President told them "Your pay will be low; the conditions of your labor often will be difficult. But you will have the satisfaction of leading a great national effort and you will have the ultimate reward which comes to those who serve their fellow man!"

By the end of FY-68, more than 13,000 Americans had enlisted in VISTA, 40 percent of them having either re-enlisted for a second year or extended their periods of service for periods of months. VISTA Volunteers were serving on 447 projects in 49 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam and American Samoa. They were working in more than 1,000 communities; in every case at the invitation of local sponsors, under local supervision and in projects specifically approved by the Governor of the state involved. Only the state of Mississippi had denied their services. The demand for Volunteers rose steadily as the program became known and by 1968 VISTA had received formal requests for 23,170 Volunteers to serve on 1,992 projects, or nearly four times more than its budget could support.³³ Wherever they had served,

FOOTNOTE from page 108 124

33 Budget obligations: FY-65 - obligated 3.2 million
66 - " 16.0 "
67 - " 26.0 "
68 - " 30.0 "

in almost every instance, more Volunteers had been asked for than it was possible to supply.

The Volunteers ranged in age from 18 to 86; 16 percent were over 50 years of age. Many were retired professionals and teachers, widows and widowers, craftsmen and farmers. Fifty-three percent were between 20 and 24; 24 percent between 25 and 49 and seven percent between 18 and 19. In 1968, 51 percent of the Volunteers were male and of all the Volunteers 80 percent had attended a college or university. After a year of service 1968 records showed that 27 percent re-enrolled; 13 percent extended their service; 29 percent went on to college or graduate school; 8 percent entered the helping professions; 7 percent found jobs within the OEO structure; about 10 percent entered military service; and 6 percent were retired.

VISTA Associates

In the spring of 1966, it became apparent from the volume of mail received that among those willing to serve were many who could not volunteer for a full year of service. The VISTA Associates

program began as a demonstration project that summer to test the effectiveness of tapping the talents of persons willing to serve for shorter periods on a full-time basis. The Associates program brought to bear on carefully selected problem areas the impact of large numbers of persons who might otherwise not have been able to participate. Graduate student, teachers, lawyers and others volunteered to devote their summers. During the first summer, 500 VISTA Associates were concentrated in four adjoining Appalachian states. The following summer the program grew to 2,000 Associates serving on selected Indian reservations and in urban areas. In 1968 the program was fully operational with 92 projects in 40 states and encompassing summer service as well as short-term service during other times of the year.

The Citizen Corps

The idea for a Citizen Corps arose in the Fall of 1966 as a device to further utilize the spirit of voluntarism evidenced by the receipt of more than 150,000 letters expressing interest in the

program. President Johnson, who had welcomed the first full-time Volunteers two years earlier, officially launched the Citizen Corps in an open letter. He wrote:

If half the young people in our high schools and universities, and only one American housewife out of every three would volunteer a few hours each week, this could provide a personal tutor for almost every potential high school dropout; a teacher's aide for every Head Start child; a personal counselor for mothers who are struggling to rear families in poverty...I urge you to join the VISTA Citizen's Volunteer Corps--a new and promising project to enlist public-spirited Americans in the effort to improve life for all our people.

The program concentrated on local efforts from which everyone would benefit: The community by the infusion of needed services; the sponsoring agencies by having access to previously unavailable manpower; the American public by being given a meaningful channel for its social concerns; VISTA, by enlarging its outreach and thus stretching and increasing the impact of the limited funds at its disposal. Volunteers in the Citizen Corps served without stipend or remuneration of any kind. (Full time VISTA Volunteers received living expenses and a monthly stipend of \$50, held back until completion of service.) In 1968 there were more than 50,000 VISTA Citizen Corp members serving alongside VISTA Volunteers in communities

the country.

Questions Without Answers and Problems

Because of the ground-breaking nature of its assignment and the difficulty of obtaining reasonably qualitative information in its early stages, VISTA improvised policy as it went along and incorporated successful results into its methods. There were questions: Was the basic purpose of VISTA to give advocates to the poor against the "establishment?" Or, was it to provide manpower to hard-pressed public and private agencies? There were people among the staff, and among the Volunteers in greater numbers, who came to the conclusion that the systems established to "deal" with the poor were not only ineffective, but actually added to the dependency of the poor. Others argued that it was unfair to judge all established agencies in a lump; they thought systems could be improved from within; that significant changes in a welfare department, settlement house or educational system had a greater pay-off, since the agencies were permanent and effected large numbers of people steadily. The types

of projects funded, the selection of Volunteers, and the training given them depended on how VISTA resolved such issues and each one received different consideration.

Another question was, should VISTA be limited to community development and community organization tasks, or should the program also include social services, counseling, tutorial activities, and referral to social agencies?

The EOA called on VISTA to contribute to alleviating the problems of mental health. A number of Volunteers and staff members thought such activities dissipated the central mission of the organization and that, with the limited pool of manpower available, VISTA ought to fund only those organizations that provided for citizenship development. Many of those who saw VISTA as a force for social change rejected the "Mickey-Mouse" approach of traditional social work, a term developed by the Volunteers. If that point of view had held it would have made little sense to recruit senior citizens and persons committed to working with young children.

A number of considerations attendant on directions of thought

in the field of social work came to rest at VISTA's doorstep. Throughout the field of social work it was increasingly thought, for example, that local inhabitants of the neighborhoods being served should be invited to become part of the service system. But, could they become good Volunteers? Some experts said only Negro workers could operate effectively in Negro neighborhoods. Should VISTA assign white Volunteers to Negro neighborhoods? Should Volunteers be recruited from among the poor themselves? Should integrated teams be assigned to work in slums? From the beginning, VISTA assigned white Volunteers to Negro neighborhoods despite a general apprehension on the part of the official leadership of the communities. There were risks. And, failures. But VISTA accepted as an important goal of its program the bridging of differences and the breaking down of ghetto walls. It was VISTA's decision to continue the policy of integrated voluntarism while waiting to see if the separatist movement in the city slums would grow so as to make it impossible. VISTA felt that the lessons which might come from its experience would help the social welfare field determine its course.

of action on matters affecting the composition of staff and assignments. And, there were the questions as to whether Volunteers should be assigned in teams or isolated so that they became individually assimilated into the communities. To what extent could Volunteers be trained in a relatively short period of time (most training programs were six-weeks long,) to tackle some of the most complex problems of society in distress. There were no blanket answers but daily experience, successes and failures, gradually began to develop a beginning expertise in selection, training and, most importantly, the matching of individual Volunteers with the nature and the location of the work to be done. There was, for example, the case of an early Volunteer who arrived at a training site in Florida, spent half an hour looking around, said he had to have his car serviced and never returned. The following morning he called VISTA in Washington and complained to the director of training that, among other things, the housing was run down, the food bad ("baloney and dried bread"), that there were a bunch of desks sitting in the middle of the yard, and that workmen were "leaning on their shovels at \$4.00

an hour." He concluded that the place was a "mess," and that as a taxpayer he felt someone in Washington should know about it. His conversation was laced with such phrases as "nigger beatnik with a goatee," "worst kind of bums," "bunch of people drinking wine," and "sea of mud in a nigger community." Finally, he said "he didn't need a whole lot of instruction anyway."³⁴ The complainant was 51. The VISTA official explained that the site was desirable because it physically approximated areas in which the Volunteers would be working, although bad food and other allegations of disorder and insufficiency were not included in the training plan. The fact was that conditions at the camp had improved since the previous training cycle; a new sewage disposal system installed, the dining hall enlarged and the desks were being unloaded from a truck. The problem, as it turned out, was the Volunteer and not the camp. By the following year the selection system had been improved so that it was no longer likely that a person with such ideas would be accepted for

³⁴ Internal memorandum, January 5, 1966.

training.

VISTA training however, continued to be realistic. A basic precept of the entire program, one modelled on the Peace Corps experience, was that the VISTA Volunteer would live in the community in which he worked and that his food and accommodations would be similar, if not identical, to those of the community residents'. As a rule, the result of the stipulation was an entire new network of communication, the discovery of new interests, new talents, new responses and new leadership, previously undiscovered. One case upon another illustrated that it was the ability of the Volunteer-- through his or her living-working relationship with the people served--that had been the link between the poor and their new-found ability to solve their own problems. The residential requirement was not without inherent problems. Volunteers found that they were on probation in the communities until they had proved the sincerity of their intent and the meaning of their presence. The sudden arrival of Negro Volunteers on an Indian reservation or a white Volunteer in a Negro ghetto or a Puerto Rican in an Appalachian hollow

needed a good deal of accommodation by all concerned. But, the adjustment process proved to be a two-way street, in most cases, and VISTA's experience proved to be remarkably parallel to the communication achieved by Peace Corps Volunteers in foreign lands.

Persons long acclimated by sometimes bitter experience to suspect the motives of the newcomers, particularly those promising "help", came to recognize in the VISTA Volunteer a new kind of person, remarkable for his sincerity. The misunderstandings which did arise-- anticipated by VISTA and realistically faced by the Volunteers-- were, considering the situations they encountered, remarkably few. In those incidents where individual and particular projects clashed, the sponsoring community almost invariably chose to continue to host Volunteers and the Volunteers chose to continue their residential involvement.

One incident which created more furor than most involved two young female Volunteers who were assigned to the Red Cliff Chippewa Indian reservation, Wisconsin, in the first week of October, 1965. The Tribal Council had asked for Volunteers to set up day-care and nursery school programs and sports and recreation projects. In

the next 10 weeks the Volunteers, 20 and 22 years old, began a day-care center, a youth activity program to include both study hours and recreation; started a community newspaper to inform residents about programs; recruited for the Job Corps, and established a warm relationship with the young people of the reservation. Several community leaders, however, resented the Volunteers and five weeks after their arrival their presence was put to a test before the Tribal Council. The Council voted to support the Volunteers. A month later, in December, the same council met and reversed its position. VISTA recalled the Volunteers. In January, following another meeting, the Council asked VISTA to return the Volunteers and two weeks later they did, to take up the work they had begun.

In February, 1966, four Volunteers in New York City became active in the anti-Vietnam War movement, used an apartment paid for with federal funds, for end-the-war activities, and issued public statements in the name of VISTA Volunteers. They also sent a letter to the President announcing a march on the White House to be organized by "VISTAs for Peace." VISTA called the Volunteers to Wash-

ington and, at the same time, OEO propounded a policy declaring guidelines for political involvement. This said that VISTA Volunteers as individuals had the same right as any citizen to protest or to express their opinions on public issues so long as their activities did not interfere with their work. But, Volunteers could not use the name of VISTA to propagate individual views. In a hypothetical question and answer sheet, VISTA said:

Q. Will action be taken against VISTA Volunteers who march and protest publicly against the U.S. involvement in Vietnam?

A. Of course that is a matter for his superiors and each case would be judged on its own merits. But, generally speaking, a Volunteer who takes part in a legal demonstration--as an individual--without invoking the name of the public antipoverty program for which he works would not be subject to any action. If a Volunteer were to use or display in some way the name of the program in an effort to publicize his personal views, it seems to me that he would be deliberately violating the agency's rules.

A story in the Washington Star of February 7, 1966, quoted an

OEO spokesman as saying the four were told at the Washington meeting that they were "entitled to propound any point of view they wished, as individual citizens." They were told they would be asked to resign or be fired if they continued to use their VISTA affiliation in public protests of U.S. foreign policy. The story said, "An OEO official said limitation of the Volunteers' right to free speech was 'the farthest thing from our minds.' The decision to forbid identification with the poverty program was made because OEO could not allow 'any small group of volunteers acting as a spokesman for allVISTAs in any manner.'" The Volunteers refused to accept the OEO decision and were discharged.

In the summer of 1966 shots were fired into the home of two VISTA girls living in Chesapeake County, Virginia, in a rural area near Norfolk. The girls were working as volunteers with a Head Start program sponsored by a Negro church and primarily serving Negro children. The program however, was integrated in that there were five white children among the 40 attending the school. The girls were not at home when someone got out of a car and fired a

number of .22 caliber rifle shots through the flimsy walls of their frame house. Efforts to find the attacker were unsuccessful but the sheriff's office gave the girls protection and helped to locate them in another house in a nearby but less isolated section of the community. The girls remained on the job and completed their tours without further harrassment.

In the Appalachian regions of West Virginia and Kentucky, there were more complicated actions of resistance, the most publicized involving a young man working in Pike County, Kentucky. The Volunteer was deeply involved in efforts to stop strip mining operations in the county which caused landslides to destroy homes and farmland. The Volunteer had been helping people in the hollows to organize and seek help from the state legislature. Other persons were working in the county to oppose the strip-mining companies, notably the Southern Conference Educational Fund, an organization charged with being associated with Communist organizations. Local law enforcement officers raided the Volunteer's home in the middle of the night and seized a number of books there. The local prosecuting attorney charged that police had seized a "carload" of Communist literature

in the raid. Further investigation, however, revealed that the literature was a collection of textbooks and histories, including several on the works of Marx. Also included were a number of conservative books and a copy of Senator Goldwater's "Conscience of a Conservative." The Volunteer was charged with sedition under a state statute. The charges were later thrown out by a higher court. The charges, however, did not turn the people of the hollows against the Volunteer. When the prosecuting attorney later ran for office and relied to a considerable degree for support on his raid of the Volunteer's home, he got less than a majority in his home county.

Other Volunteers also encountered severe opposition from the officials of the area when they attempted to secure an equitable distribution of Federally-funded free school lunches for poor children. People had complained that no matter how poor they were their children were not getting free lunches. In a number of schools Volunteers learned, lunches were being distributed to all children, whether poor or not, at reduced prices. OEO investigators were told by one principal that he saw no reason why his children should

have to pay more for a lunch in order that some others would get free lunches. Complaints were made that the Volunteers were unkempt, rude, that they had attempted to persuade people to turn against officials and that they had interfered with the administration of the schools. A storekeeper complained that a Volunteer had attempted to persuade a family not to trade at his store. It developed that what the Volunteer had done was to offer transportation to the family so that it could shop at another town where prices were considerably lower. One school principal was irate because Volunteers, who had wished to discuss a food-distribution plan, appeared at her office after she had refused to see them.

Despite such signs of hostility, however, the Volunteers managed to win acceptance from a very large part of the population. They were also able to remain and to continue their work in the great majority of these counties.

On March 24, 1966, Mississippi Governor Paul E. Johnson vetoed a VISTA project in the state. The move became a blanket veto and, as of the Summer of 1968, Mississippi remained the only state in

nation not to have VISTA Volunteers working in it. Governor Johnson's veto applied to a project involving Saints Junior College, a predominantly Negro school in Lexington. Under the College's supervision, and as approved by VISTA, four to six Volunteers would have conducted preschool, day care and adult literacy programs in a project called Second Start. The Governor's letter to VISTA Director Glenn W. Ferguson (appointed Ambassador to Kenya in October, 1966)³⁵ said:

Mississippi is not participating in the VISTA Volunteers program, whether it be Saints Junior College, of Lexington, Mississippi, or some other place in the state.

We have had various authorities from the Washington Office of the OEO here before, and each time have advised them that we are not ready to participate in the VISTA program.

I strenuously protest any VISTA Volunteers being assigned in the State of Mississippi; and I do not consent to the referral or assignment to duties or work of any VISTA Volunteer under the application of the Saints Junior College in its Project Second Start.

There were problems of a different variety, including insufficient supervision for many Volunteers and a lack of understanding by sponsors of what VISTA was supposed to be doing. Training in

³⁵ Ferguson was succeeded by William H. Crook in March, 1967. Crook was appointed Ambassador to Australia in June, 1968. Padraic Kennedy, a former Peace Corps official, acted as Director between Ferguson's departure and Crook's appointment and again after Crook had left to take up his ambassadorial post.

too many instances wasn't relevant to the community Volunteers were assigned to and numbers of Volunteers should not have been accepted for service for a variety of reasons including lack of maturity, judgement and humility or, hardening of attitudes in an area where openness and flexibility were indispensable.

An attempt to meet some of these institutional problems was made in January, 1967 when VISTA decentralized many of its functions to regional offices. Regionalization brought not only cost-savings and greater management efficiency but also physically located VISTA staff in proximity to Volunteers for greater communication, field support, in-service training, and project development. Regional training centers were established and equipped to train persons in the very community in which they were to serve. Finally, substantial improvement was made in the selection process which better assured the motivation and quality of the Volunteers for the work assigned them.

An early assessment of VISTA by the magazine writer Andrew Kopkind was generally critical but ended with a pat on the back.

Kopkind noted that a contingent of Volunteers were dismissed by the city of Newark administration "presumably, for getting in the way" by insisting on working with a Negro activist group founded by Students for a Democratic Society. Kopkind thought that many Volunteers were being wasted and cited one girl Volunteer who "wound up acting as an interior decorator for a settlement house director," and another who "turned out to be a glorified chauffeur for his agency chief. Many more are involved in busy work, and some in not very much work at all."

But, in the most primitive areas--among the Eskimos, or in isolated rural communities--the volunteers are providing services and a contact with the rest of the world that no one else has done...In the places where young VISTAs work with the young poor--in a semi-recreational way--there are immediate benefits; dropouts are dropped back into a more constructive life. For the elderly poor, or the mentally ill or retarded, and to a large extent the rural poor, no amount of 'community action' can make a difference in their lives; they need the kind of simple individual attention that VISTAs, and very few others, are willing to provide.³⁶

Kopkind concluded by quoting a VISTA girl from a small town in the Midwest: "The first thing that happened was that we found out how

³⁶ The New Republic, March 19, 1966.

bad life can be. I guess that's the first step. I hope in a year we can find out what the second one is."

Evaluation and Achievement

Until recently, VISTA's capacity to record and quantify the impact of the Volunteer had been limited. In the early days, achievements were highlighted by examples of success gleaned from individual Volunteers. Beginning in 1968, VISTA developed techniques for the retrieval of data on the quantitative accomplishments of Volunteers and the analysis of those factors which affected accomplishments. The range of Volunteer activities was determined and a framework for planning and programming within the OEO PPB System was established. A wide-ranging survey was made to assess the accomplishments of Volunteers in quantitative terms and the resultant cost-benefit of their achievements. While the information had not been fully analyzed by August, 1968, it was felt that a great deal had already been learned about VISTA activities and impact in certain areas.

In one project on New York City's Lower East Side, for example, Volunteers sponsored by a CAA, Action for Progress, were reaching thousands of Spanish-speaking residents in an attempt to solve the problems relating to slum housing. Four Volunteers, it was shown, had:

--assisted over 530 families with their housing problems on an individual basis. Over half of the cases resulted in tangible improvements in apartments and buildings;

--formed 15 tenants councils with over 200 families which were serving as vehicles to press slum landlords and the city to face many of the problems of substandard housing on a neighborhood level;

--relocated 80 families who had been evicted, to larger and more adequate apartments;

--placed three buildings under tenant management. The buildings had been in receivership under the N.Y.C. Housing Code. Money paid in rents was being used to maintain and rehabilitate the buildings. The incremental cost of the project, which provided measurably better housing for the inhabitants, was only \$11,000; the benefit to residents from the activities of VISTA Volunteers was \$273 for every \$1 invested by VISTA.

In the light of such information, VISTA began to shift its planning and allocation of resources orientation from a concentration on tract (urban, rural, Indian, migrant, mental health,) to a consideration of functional areas of activity such as housing, health, income and employment, education, etc. The retrieval and analysis of data then in process was expected to enhance and faci-

litate the shift in planning emphasis.

There were earlier examples of effectiveness. Examples:

In New Hampshire, 33 Volunteers worked with more than 16,000 persons in a twelve-month period; involved 80 percent of them in specific community betterment or self-help programs; increased the net worth of community facilities by an estimated \$160,000 and found jobs for 87 poor people, reducing the welfare rolls and increasing the incomes of the poverty communities by nearly \$250,000 a year.

In West Virginia, an average of 100 Volunteers assigned to the State Department of Mental Health, worked in 50 of the state's 55 counties and served in every mental hospital and clinic in the State.

In one year's time they had been in contact with more than 45,000 of the families of the institutionalized patients. As a result of their efforts, more than 600 patients were released and more than 1,000 chronically ill patients remained in their homes rather than in State institutions for an average of three months longer than they otherwise would have. State officials estimated that the work of the Volunteers resulted in a direct savings to taxpayers of the

State of more than \$485,000 in a single year--an amount equal to 17 percent of the entire mental health budget of West Virginia.

Twenty-five Volunteers worked on bail bond projects in San Francisco, Baltimore, Philadelphia and Miami. They interviewed more than 27,000 prisoners awaiting trial who were too poor to afford bail. As a result of the interviews, 7,000 prisoners were recommended for release pending trial of whom 5,600 were actually released with 97 percent of them reporting for later trial. Savings to the cities were estimated at more than \$2 million based on the amount it would have cost taxpayers to keep the defendants in jail awaiting trial. Additional savings in terms of income earned by these defendants (and welfare they would have otherwise been given to their families) more than tripled that amount.

Volunteers on a rural project in Santa Clara, California, organized a self-help housing project; initiated a mental health project funded by the National Institutes for Mental Health for \$168,000; generated a \$10,000 grant from the Ford Foundation and \$750,000 from HEW for a medical clinic for migrants; and formed a

senior citizens group which found jobs for 60 persons.

In New York City in one summer, Volunteers conducted recreational programs for 9,000 children and teen-agers on 50 separate blocks in the city's slums. An average of 4,100 teen-agers participated six days a week through the summer. The cost of the program--credited by the Police Athletic League with cooling tempers and reducing tensions throughout the area--came to 98 cents per day for each child, or 16 cents an hour.

In a rural community of North Carolina, Volunteers organized a crafts fair in which 50 residents exhibited and sold their products; helped set up nearly 200 small home industries; established cooperative stores serving the entire county of 9,000 residents; and obtained donations of materials totalling \$9,485, clothing worth \$4,000, cash donations totalling \$5,000.

In the Fall of 1967, when Congress let lapse the continuing resolution which permitted Volunteers to receive subsistence allowances while it considered legislation, VISTA Director William Crook wrote each Volunteer and told him that he might soon be without his

living allowance. Crook asked them to remain on their jobs as long as they could.

The first reaction came from Volunteers themselves. But, it was quickly followed with offers of support from governors, mayors, industrialists, lawyers, businessmen, sheriffs, clergymen, community organizations, and the poor themselves.

There was, to begin with, a telegram--to be followed by hundreds of others--from a group of Volunteers in San Antonio: "We will stay because the poor must stay," they said.

A group of 29 Volunteers in Denver sent a telegram to the President: "We want you to know that we intend to keep our commitment to the people with whom we live and work--in spite of the fact that Congress has not kept its commitment to them or us," they said.

In Cotulla, Texas, where six Volunteers were helping 50 Spanish-speaking children in pre-school programs, the community pooled its resources to keep them there. "If the Volunteers have to leave," said Father Joe Daspit, their sponsor, "we will be lost without them,

because we have no other resources."

A county sheriff in St. Albans, Vt., opened his jail and put up four girl Volunteers, on a strictly open-door basis, he said.

In Kentucky, a landlord gave a volunteer two months of rent-free housing. The Housing Authority of McKeesport, Pa., provided apartments and in Franklin County, Md., a local hotel offered two Volunteers free rooms.

Volunteers working with the Philadelphia Bar Association on a bail bond project were offered the use of the city jail, but the Bar Foundation came up with a grant to support them for two weeks.

The governors of Hawaii, Alaska and Florida, Mayors Lindsay of New York City and Barr of Pittsburgh pledged support.

In Arizona, a group of lawyers pledged \$2,000. A group of businessmen in Baltimore raised a \$6,000 weekly fund for the city's 94 Volunteers. The Associated Press reported that 25 New York City Corporations had agreed to back VISTA with a \$100,000 fund.

"Everybody seems to love the VISTA Volunteers except their government," read the lead of a Chicago News story.

In Chicago, Volunteer Frank Torres, 18, of New York City, said, "I guess most of us feel that if the people we work with can live in poverty without money, we can do the same."

New Directions

Exploring new directions, VISTA in 1968, was recruiting, training, and assigning Volunteers who could contribute specific technical skills to community development efforts. Volunteers were being recruited from such graduate schools of business as Stanford University to assist in the development of credit unions and cooperatives; architects and urban planners from Harvard, M.I.T., and Yale; and social workers from the University of Maryland School of Social Work. It was experimenting with "education in action" programs such as the VISTA Legal Fellows-Master of Law Program in which students would study at George Washington and New York Universities in curricula especially designed to train them for field work as VISTA lawyers. It was also developing new projects utilizing a team concept wherein a group of Volunteers representing a variety of skills

would work together on a multi-pronged approach to the complex problems of poverty. It was combining its efforts for impact on specific problems with the Community Action Program in a special planners project, and with the National Alliance for Businessmen in a potential project to assist hard-core unemployed.

There were two major by-products of VISTA's development.

Through highlighting the problems of poverty in communities throughout the nation on a person-to-person basis Volunteers were able to channel the concern of citizens and private organizations into hundreds of thousands of manhours of service and millions of dollars in cash-or-kind contributions to the War on Poverty. And, service had a profound effect on the Volunteers themselves. Thousands had already been motivated to enter the helping services which were notoriously under-manned throughout the nation. The effects of their service would become a permanent part of the awareness, the motivation, and the conscience of the country.

JOB CORPS

(Footnotes to Come)

The Job Corps, "one of the most extraordinary emergency efforts in the Free World,"³⁸ frequently has been compared to the New Deal's Civilian Conservation Corps. Its origins, however, are more diverse, and its objectives more far-reaching and ambitious. Focusing on teenagers whose birthright and background foreshadowed a life of poverty, the Job Corps would create a "clean, healthful Job Corps center where massive injections of remedial education and job training would turn them into law-abiding, tax-paying good neighbors."³⁹ Supervising the operations of the centers, universities and business corporations would apply their "brainpower and administrative ability" in the introduction of new techniques and a flexibility that the public schools had not adopted. At the outset of the program, officials of the Office of Economic Opportunity hoped for speedy, visible results to demonstrate the success of a nationwide strategy to increase the earning power and social adaptability of a critical segment of the nation's population.⁴⁰

Prior to the formalization of the Task Force in February, 1964, planners in the poverty war had emphasized youth as the place "where the poverty cycle could best be broken."⁴¹ It was thought that ser-

vices, such as improvement of health, education, training, welfare and rehabilitation, would assist youth in developing their capabilities. This approach, however, was opposed by Secretary of Labor Willard Wirtz, who maintained that while desirable, conventional techniques would produce no visible results. "Poverty is, by definition, lack of income," he said, "and income comes from jobs."⁴² Thus, the priority item must emphasize employment. In February, the Labor Department pressed for a program which embodied, in modified form, the youth employment section of the Youth Employment Act that had been stalled in the House Rules Committee. Emphasis was placed on the large "urban" training and remedial education centers rather than on conservation camps.⁴³

The Youth Employment Act had its roots directly in the old Civilian Conservation Corps. In 1942, the Corps had officially died, only to be resurrected again several times in the ensuing decades. Senator Hubert Humphrey (D Minn), spelling out his recommendations in a Harper's Magazine article entitled, "A Plan to Save Trees, Land and Boys," in 1958 and 1959 proposed legislation designed to put unemployed young men to work in woods. Faced with a general lack of Congressional interest and Administration opposition, the two bills failed to pass. The Democratic part, eyeing the 1960 elections, "started to sift through the possibilities for new proposals on which to build their platform."⁴⁴

The 1960 Democratic platform included endorsement of the Humphrey program, and in 1961, Humphrey, testing Kennedy support, forced the issue by submitting his bill on the day the 87th Congress opened its doors.

President Kennedy, David E. Bell, and the Bureau of the Budget, "unconvinced that the Conservation Corps concept by itself was an adequate answer to youth unemployment,"⁴⁵ had decided on a small, experimental Youth Conservation Corps of 6,000 members, with another 50,000 to be employed in local public service and on-the-job training programs.⁴⁶ Accordingly, these provisions were incorporated into the Administration substitute Youth Employment Act. The Act reflected to a large degree the influence of Dr. James Conant's study presented to the National Committee for Children and Youth, in which he upheld the environmental and cyclical view of the "culture of poverty." In his testimony before the Congressional committees reviewing the measure, Arthur Goldberg, then Secretary of Labor, quoted Conant's findings.⁴⁷ The Congress, rejecting the Kennedy bill, revised the scope of the program, but the final reported bill was killed by the House Rules Committee.⁴⁸

In the first few days of the Shriver Task Force meetings, Willard Wirtz submitted a report showing that across the country one-third of the 18 year old draftees and volunteers could not qualify for the Armed Forces entrance requirements. It stated that "a major proportion

of these young men are the products of poverty. They have inherited their situation from their parents, and unless the cycle is broken, they will almost surely transmit it to their children.⁽¹²⁾⁴⁹ Wirtz and Selective Service Director General Lewis Hershey reasoned that since Armed Forces mental requirements were geared to eighth-grade levels, the rejectees were potential poverty victims, for they would be disqualified from decent jobs.⁽¹³⁾⁵⁰ The Task Force also discovered that close to 750,000 young people dropped out of school every year before obtaining a diploma, and that one out of every six dropouts was unemployed. In urban areas, the proportion was even higher, close to fifty percent. One out of every four young persons coming into the labor force each year was without a high school diploma.⁽¹⁴⁾⁵¹ They predicted that if current trends continued, in five years "we will have almost one and one half million unemployed youths - without adequate education or training, without jobs, and without a future."⁽¹⁴⁾ The need, therefore, was to formulate a program which would prepare these young for jobs that would merit decent wages.⁵²

The Task Force concentrated on the 16 - 21 age bracket, dropouts not yet in the labor market. The reason was "not so much by their potential for violence, which had not yet become apparent (the first long hot summer had not yet begun), but rather by the fact that these young people had clearly identified themselves as needing help."⁵²⁽¹⁵⁾ To prevent

a generational continuation of poverty, the Task Force fixed on the idea of residential centers "offering school dropouts a chance to live, learn, and work in a completely new environment where they would be prepared for a productive role in society."⁵³

The Youth Conservation Corps - Hometown Employment Program of the Youth Employment Act had been incorporated into the President's 1964 budget, to be funded by \$160 million in allocations. Shriver reacted negatively to the Corps "largely out of intuition and an innate distrust of the conservation agency bureaucracies whom he felt would control it."⁵⁴ At a February 4 meeting, Shriver responded enthusiastically to the urban residential center plan to "enroll high-school dropouts whose family and community environment made it nearly impossible to help them while they lived at home."⁵⁵ To Shriver, the urban boarding school idea had the potential to reach into every county and town in the country with at least some small impact. It would involve nationwide recruitment, and would affect every "pocket" of poverty that might otherwise be bypassed. To some extent the program was a replica of the residential vocational schools aspect of the 1963 Vocational Education Act, but it had been formulated by Adam Yarmolinsky and Secretary of Defense McNamara, who proposed utilizing obsolete military camps and the resources of the Department of Defense to oper-

ate large-scale training centers.⁵⁶

The basic difference between the Task Force's program and the antecedent Conservation Corps was a desire to "help kids, not trees."

The Kennedy bill had divided the Corpsmen's work week between 35 hours for work and 10 hours for education and training. Shriver and the Task Force decidedly gave priority to the kids: "There was never any question but that the Job Corps was a program designed primarily to solve the nation's youth problem; any conservation work accomplished in the process was simply an incidental benefit -- a by-product subsidiary to the main task."⁵⁷

The conservation lobbies, called to testify for the Kennedy bill, were not called upon for the Job Corps. Few proponents of the Youth Conservation Corps viewed their program as an antipoverty measure, except insofar as a rural or forest environment and work experience would somehow "inspire the enrolled youths to despise their juvenile delinquent, slum-ridden neighborhoods," and impell them to achieve higher goals.⁵⁸

The Task Force's choice of a Job Corps carried with it certain decisions of priorities other than trees versus kids. Within the context of an all-out war against poverty, a decision had to be made whether to prepare jobs for people, or people for jobs. The Task Force decided on the latter partly because "this was thought to be the less difficult task, and in part because it was thought that the first increment of new jobs would come from the proposed new tax cut, which

was part of the same legislative program.²²⁵⁹ It was felt that "while the jobs created by the tax cut were picking up the first wave of newly trained people, new programs could be developed and launched for the second wave of qualified job applicants, who would not be ready for some time."⁶⁰

The Council of Economic Advisors had similar expectations. In response to the query -- "Why train these young people when no jobs exist for them?" -- a staff memorandum, circulated among the Shriver Task Force, explained that the high unemployment rates resulted from "the inadequate level of demand" plaguing the economy. The tax-cut was expected to create "approximately 1.7 new million jobs" in 1964 alone, with increases in the succeeding years. The tax-cut, accompanied by the "continued rapid pace of economic activity" indicated that "quick implementation of the Job Corps and related programs will

begin producing trained young people just as the economy becomes most ready to absorb them." Moreover, the memo concluded, "we can gear our programs such that people will be prepared for the specific types of jobs that will be opening up, whether it be during the next year or the next decade, ever recognizing the need for developing a flexible labor force that will be readily adaptable to our ever-changing world."²⁴⁶¹

Shriver expressed yet another point of view in response to those who held that only a planned economy would suffice to achieve maximum employment and eliminate poverty. "Right now," he wrote in December, 1964, "there are hundreds of thousands of jobs open in our economy, but poor people lack the qualifications to fill them." Thus, the first order of business was to "fill the jobs which are already open in today's labor market," and hence the need for the Job Corps program. Moreover, new jobs could be created and the economy could be expanded without altering its basic structure. Therefore, he concluded, "I am optimistic that we can complete the job of eliminating poverty without moving to a planned economy, and I will operate the poverty program on that assumption until there is firm contradictory evidence."²⁵⁶²

In addition to the theoretical economic rationale underlying the Job Corps, there were political considerations as well. Shriver was

ever mindful of the President's directive to "come up with programs that would produce visible results quickly," as well as the need to demonstrate that poor people could change, and wanted to change. Other sections of the Economic Opportunity Act appeared to have little prospect of quick results; however, the Job Corps seemed to have "the greatest potential," and became that segment of the poverty program counted on to produce the early, and necessary, success. ⁽²⁾63

While the details were being mapped out, the Task Force searched for an appropriate name for the program. The roster of titles grew daily -- American Youth Corps, You Opportunity Corps, National Youth Corps, Opportunities for Young Americans, National Training Corps, and so on. By the end of February, at a staff meeting, Shriver reviewed the list of potential names and said, "Nuts. Let's just call it the Job Corps. That's what these kids are really interested in -- a job." ⁽²⁾64 Staff members objected to the name, feeling it had no "ring," or appeal; but Shriver prevailed.

Early in the planning stages, the question arose as to which department would direct the program. The logical choice was the Defense Department, which had the necessary logistical capacity, disciplined nationwide organization and professional training expertise. A "think" paper had already been circulated in anticipation of that Department's

role in administering and monitoring the program. The projected outline envisaged Army execution, Defense coordination, and a civilian Youth Corps division to handle the educational-vocational aspect of the program. While "not an unreasonable suggestion on the face of it," the prospective military role "aroused violent emotional reactions among those who had been traumatized by World War II basic training."²⁸⁶⁵

One Defense Department staff member felt it would "scare the hell out of a substantial number of liberals," who would be fearful of the Administration drafting dropouts into a militaristic society, "totally regimented according to Washington directives."²⁹⁶⁶ Moreover, disaffected Labor Department planners whose Youth Employment program had been lifted out of their jurisdiction also objected.³⁰⁶⁷

The issue of the role of the military administering the mechanics of the training programs was exacerbated by an Evans and Novak Washington Post column,³¹⁶⁸ and so sensitized the planners that, within two weeks, a new direction had been taken. The Task Force decided on 40,000 enrollees to be on board by June 30, 1966, and 100,000 by the following June. Input of trainees would begin by mid-September. Seven training centers were to begin operations by the end of the first year. Qualified civil-

ian staff was to be recruited to administer the 24-hour-a-day programs.

This new tact emphasized the civilian administration of the educational aspects of the program, and limited the military role to logistical support and administrative backup. Shriver, testifying before the House Committee on Education and Labor, stressed the non-military nature of the Job Corps. Enrollments would be voluntary, trainees could resign at any time, and no standard "tour of enlistment" had to be completed.⁶⁹ Secretary McNamara stated, "these are civilian, not military camps. They are designed to fit men for participation in our civilian society, not for participation in our military forces. Therefore, I think it is quite appropriate that a civilian agency and not a military agency be in charge of the camps."⁷⁰ Christopher Weels, who became Deputy Director of the Job Corps, wrote that Congress certainly would have rejected a military-run Job Corps, and that the Task Force decided the issue on the basis of "political necessity."⁷¹

Initial projections of the Job Corps program aimed at the lowest end of the spectrum of teen-age poor. The planners envisaged 100 conservation centers under the Agriculture and Interior Departments, located on government-owned land such as parks and forests. These would be small -- 100 to 200 youths -- and isolated, providing basic

education, training, and work experience programs. Those with the most severe educational gaps and least ready for vocational training would be assigned to the conservation centers. The objective was to involve the enrollees in a rounded living experience, enabling them to profit from a cooperatively-oriented society. Half their time was to be spent on conservation projects through which they would learn simple skills.

By May, both Agriculture and Interior submitted plans for 308 proposed conservation center locations capable of holding 40,000 enrollees. The estimated costs for construction ranged as high as \$1 million each, four times the amount budgeted by Job Corps for construction. Administratively, there was some advantage in the establishment of the conservation centers, in that the machinery and capabilities existed in the old-line Federal and State conservation agencies, along with a regionalized system for the delegation of responsibilities. It would be far easier to set up that part of the program.

The other portion of the Job Corps program -- the urban residential centers -- clearly was its most innovative feature. It was to be a wholesale experimental program of compensatory education, vocational skills training, and development of social skills and attitudes. These were to be constructed on vacant and obsolete military bases, and would receive the more advantaged of the target group, up to 1,000 or 2,000 youths per center. The emphasis here would be on job training at a higher level, with supplemental educational programs. The objective was to produce young men able to begin apprenticeships, or to move on to more advanced training in a regular vocational school. The urban

training centers rested on no philosophical, administrative or educational precedents. Some experienced administrators saw the program as a potentially # "horrendous disorganization into which millions of tax dollars could be poured with no assurance of success and an attraction for a variety of impractical theorists and opportunists. (25) 172

The Task Force planners, throughout the spring and summer of 1964, had to face specific questions of "power and policy," as well as Congressional review. Decisions had to be made on the design standards for constructing and renovating centers, recruitment and selection criteria, transportation, allotment procedures, medical support, center staffs, educational materials, equipment, purchasing procedures, clothing, and a host of logistical minutia. Specific answers were required for the allocation of corpsmen to conservation or urban centers, the propriety of utilizing profit-seeking corporations with universities and non-profit organizations to manage the centers, Job Corps' competition with schools and labor, and the critical issues of placement and costs. The Job Corps had an enormous planning task, but was, according to Weeks, the most understaffed, overworked, and bore the greatest responsibility for producing successful results. (26) 73

On March 25, Shriver announced the appointment of Vernon Alden, president of Ohio University, to head the sub-group planning the details of the Job Corps. Alden's academic credentials were ideal to defend against any "frontal attack" from hostile educational institutions in the states, or the National Education Association, since the Job Corps looked suspiciously like a federally-operated public school system that would compete with local school systems. ⁽³⁷⁾ 74

In April, Alden outlined a typical arrangement for a university-contracted Job Corps center:

"Let us say a job training center was set up at Camp Kilmer next to New Brunswick, New Jersey, and we developed a prime contract with Rutgers's University. We would say to the people at Rutgers, 'We will deliver 2,000 people at Camp Kilmer on such a date. We will take responsibility for housing, clothing and feeding these people. We will give you the responsibility for developing a new education program which would include supervision of work, physical fitness and basic education and vocational education. You would have the responsibility for developing the basic materials although you can avail yourself of materials developed by Zacharias of MIT, and people working closely with Frank Keppel and with others. You would recruit people on your own faculty on a part- or full-time basis. You will avail yourselves of the rich resources of the teachers, colleges, and other educational institutions in New Jersey. You will avail yourself of people in the secondary school system, maybe people who are retired teachers, maybe people who have retired from the service at the age of 45 and are productive and have ideas. You will pull in social service workers, returning Peace Corps volunteers, even alumni of Job Corps, and develop an imaginative, creative, new educational program.'"⁷⁵ (38)

At this stage of the planning, it was agreed that universities would be contracted to run the centers -- the logical outcome of a basically educational program. Universities had the reputation as "think tanks," and the experience in experimental projects. Moreover, a number of universities in the country had been involved in former governmental programs, though mostly in overseas efforts such as the Peace Corps, AID, or its predecessors. There was, however, recognition of the drawbacks regarding university involvement. Universities had "limited experience in training people for sub-professional jobs," and were unlikely to be able to "spare the resources required in the operation of a training center." Further, the universities had "little or no experience with the target population of the Job Corps."⁽³⁹⁾ Initial apprehensions, as it developed, were borne out in later experience.

Business enterprise was brought into the Job Corps through the person of John Rubel, vice president of Litton Industries, and a member of Shriver's Task Force,⁽⁴⁰⁾ and through the formation of a Business Advisory Committee, "looking towards the time when business would be called on to provide jobs."⁽⁴¹⁾ Rubel convinced Shriver of business'

ability to run the centers through a "systems capabilities" planning and program technique -- under a general framework, specialists would perform specific interim tasks, continuously evaluating and modifying the system in light of ongoing analysis. Rubel forewaw three types of centers: One run by federal employees, one by the universities, and one by corporations. It would be experimental and competitive to see which one worked best. To Shriver, business involvement offered a way to channel Job Corps graduates into industry, and would obviate an unweildy government bureaucracy.⁽⁴²⁾⁷⁹

The issue of profit versus non-profit management, however, "ranged the partisans of business enterprise against the champions of liberal tradition."⁽⁴³⁾¹⁸⁰ Some Task Force members were appalled at the prospect of private enterprise exploiting the poverty war for profits, while others conceded that industry, by virtue of its training experience, management capability, extensive resources, and placement potential,

was a logical choice. One acknowledged drawback was industry's "philosophy of training," which was to "select those people who are most likely to succeed with existing training methods." The Job Corps philosophy, on the other hand, said in effect, fit the training to the man; whereas industry traditionally fit the man to the training.⁽⁴¹⁾⁸¹ Shriver was determined and in the spring went before the Business Advisory Committee to suggest the possibility of business involvement: The reaction at that point was "restrained."⁽⁴⁵⁾⁸²

By May, Task Force aides alerted Shriver to the need for a larger planning staff for the Job Corps. Vernon Alden had spent less time in Washington because of university commitments, and consequently was out of touch with what was going on. Poverty Task Force sessions were held frequently, and in April, Education Commissioner Frank Keppel began attending meetings. Keppel designated Wade Robinson, a Harvard University faculty member, former school dropout, and planner for the Department of Health, Education and Welfare's Cooperative Educational Research Program, to attend. Robinson and Yarmolinsky agreed to give the task

of designing the entire Job Corps educational program to the Office of Education under Keppel. At the same time Alden was "phased out" of the picture. ⁴⁶₃

The Job Corps program took shape during the legislative scrutiny of the entire bill. The planning staff grew in size as planning experts in counselling, education, testing, and a variety of other areas were contacted. Harold Brewster, Director of Employee Relations for IT&T, headed the planning, recruitment, screening and selection assignment of Job Corps applicants. Dr. David Gottlieb, another former school dropout and professor of sociology at Michigan State University, joined as a program analyst. Wray Smith, previously with the Peace Corps training program, was recruited, and David Paynter, professional baseball pitcher and school superintendent, came to administer and coordinate the conservation centers. Definitions of responsibility were established in the matters of recruitment, the designing of centers, and allotting funds for equipment and supplies. Access to Office of Education funds allowed the initiation of pilot projects run by contractors on an experimental basis, as well as the preparation and testing of new educational materials. ⁴⁷₈₄

It was decided that the conservation centers were to be designed and run entirely by Job Corps personnel according to standards and criteria set up by Job Corps directives. . Since the urban centers would

be run by private contractors, responsibility for their management was left to the companies. By July, however, no contractors were involved in the program. A few had expressed "skeptical interest."⁸⁵ Shriver had wanted the centers to open either in September or October. The universities indicated that thorough planning, taking up to six months, was required for the programs to even be proposed. It became obvious to some that if Shriver's time schedule was to be met, the centers could not be run by the universities alone.

In July, Federal Electric Corporation, with experience in staffing and administering large-scale government programs, expressed an interest in the Job Corps. To diversify operations in view of expected Defense Budget cutbacks, the company found in the Job Corps an ideal project. Robinson dispatched Lewis Eigen, a young educator from Temple University, of the Job Corps planning group, to meet with the Federal Electric staff. Ten days later, the corporation submitted a list of 115 assumptions for confirmation or modification covering nearly every phase of the operation. By August, basic guidelines for the centers had been worked out between Job Corps and Federal Electric staff, which became the working guidelines for negotiating with other contractors.⁸⁶

In the meantime, Lyle Spencer, president of Science Research Association and consultant to the Task Force, arranged with Eigen for his company to establish a center. Rutgers and Oregon University soon began work on a program, with Litton Industries following suit. By mid-November, a dozen potential contractors were formulating proposals, including Philco, Sperry Rand, Southern Illinois University, and the Texas State Education Agency. By the spring of 1965, "the line of contract applications had quadrupled in length, and several more of the top corporations in the country had jumped on the bandwagon." One commentator remarked, "there have been three waves in the war on poverty. First came the do-gooders like Michael Harrington, who roused the American conscience. Then there came the Government programs, Sargent Shriver and the business establishment to legitimize it. Now we're getting the deluge of 'operators' -- many of whom have been operating in the hard-sell atmosphere of the Pentagon. Those are the boys who are knocking at the poverty door."⁸⁷ (50)

The Job Corps was formally presented to Congress in March, 1964. Its details were spelled out in the Congressional Presentation and the bill itself. The Job Corps was to build toward an enlistment of 40,000 young men in the first year. Corpsmen would be "those whose background, health and education make them least fit for useful work."⁸⁸ (51)

In more than one hundred camps and centers the volunteers' programs would be divided between the conservation projects and the job training centers. Participants would enroll for two years and be assigned to one of the two types of centers. Justification for removing these youth from their native environments and placing them in remote centers was because some were in the migrant labor stream -- "at home nowhere" -- others lived in communities lacking adequate "resources and concern," while still others came from impoverished rural areas, isolated mountain hollows, and urban ghettos: "the spark of motivation is not likely to be ignited in the same communities which have so long stifled it."⁵⁷ 189

Recruitment would be handled by the United States Employment Service, school, Armed Forces Examination Centers, boy's clubs, churches, and other public and private agencies. "Mentally retarded or emotional unstable youth and narcotics addicts will be referred to appropriate existing rehabilitation facilities."⁵⁸ 190 The conservation camps were to provide more than simply work experience and basic education: They

were to "change indifference to interest, ignorance to awareness, resignation to ambition, and an attitude of withdrawal to one of participation."⁹¹ Under the general supervision of OEO, enrollees would work under the Forest and Park Rangers, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Land Management, Reclamation, or Sports Fisheries and Wildlife. A variety of work experience programs would be available, and the educational program would attempt to bring the enrollees up to minimal levels. Staff would be recruited from many sources, and would undergo a "special, intensive training course" to prepare them for their work in the camps.⁹²

The urban training centers, initially conceived as from 500 to 5,000 enrollees, and eventually pared to approximately 2,500, would be communities "larger than 80% of the townships in the United States, larger than 70% of all American cities," with populations "greater than 99% of the secondary schools."⁹³ The major emphasis in these centers would be on vocational training and "basic educational improvement in preparation for permanent employment." Skills taught would vary from center to center, and would be incorporated into a rounded program of health training, recreation, counseling and physical fitness programs.⁹⁴ The Job Corps would award "diplomas," which would identify "specific levels of educational and occupational accomplishment."⁹⁵

Enrollees would receive living allowances ranging from about \$30 to \$50 a month, and each member would receive a separation payment of \$50 per month. Enrollees could allot half of this amount to a dependent, and if he did, the Office of Economic Opportunity would match his contribution. ^(S)6 The total budget estimate came to \$191 million for the entire Job Corps program.

It was recognized early in the planning stages that the Job Corps' potential as a "revolutionary educational innovation" would encourage questions and controversy. For this reason and others a program of evaluation was established, in order to determine, for example, the average yearly earnings of a Job Corps "graduate" for five years after leaving the program, the basic educational gains per enrollee, ~~and~~ measurement of acquired skills, and differences in attitudes that might take place. The success of the program would be assessed by the "style of life adopted by the Corpsmen once they have completed their training and returned to their homes or other communities." This would require a post-training follow-up, a design that was contemplated and formulated at the outset. ^(C)

Shriver began his testimony before the House Committee on Education and Labor with general operation~~y~~ descriptions, stressing the basic underlying concepts of the Job Corps program. If the Job Corps aimed at the lowest end of the spectrum of the teen-age disadvantaged, the Neighborhood Youth Corps would supplement the program by soliciting teen-agers who could benefit from training programs in their home

environment. Shriver had hardly begun his testimony when Edith Green, the "Gentlelady from Oregon," asked why women were excluded from the Job Corps. The Task Force had not considered a residential program for girls. The initial thinking had been to limit the program to young men because they were typically people who had dropped out of school and thus the labor market. Statistically, young men had "bulked several times as large as young women" in cases of juvenile delinquency, crime and unemployment.⁽⁶¹⁾⁹⁷ Shriver eventually conceded to Green's demand, and by the first week of hearings he had gained an "ironbound commitment."⁽⁶²⁾⁹⁸

The task of planning women's centers fell to Dr. Jeanne Noble, Associate Professor of Human Relations at New York University, recommended by Edith Green.⁽⁶³⁾⁹⁹ In May, she was given a free hand by Shriver

to set up guidelines, and she immediately formed a staff compiled of women drawn from the military and educators. Noble decided that contracts should be drawn with universities, education organizations and other private groups. To focus national attention and stimulate widespread involvement, she promoted a national conference held in Washington, D.C., attended by diverse, interested groups who contributed their ideas. With the personal endorsement of Mr/s. Johnson, more than one hundred attended on July 29 and 30. The conference consensus was that the centers should be small and located near downtown urban areas. This decision presented a problem to the planners, for it required ten women's centers to every one men's center. Since the target was 7,000 girls for the first year, it meant that one women's center would have to open every ten days throughout the first year. Profit returns were smaller and the projected costs higher, with the result that corporations expressed little interest in the distaff projects. Consequently, local school boards and agencies like the YWCA, neither ideally suitable, were the first contract applicants.¹⁰⁰

In addition to the requirement to enlarge the scope of the Job Corps program to include women, Congress further modified the original legislative proposal. Alphonzo Bell (R Cal.) introduced an amendment that would prevent enrollment of high school graduates except in unusual circumstances, and prohibit enrollment of youths unless local high school authorities concluded that it would be impractical for them to continue their education or training locally. Representative Thompson (D N.J.) had this stricken since it could lead to discrimination in

100 Shriver to the Washington Post

the South. Senator Javits (R N.Y.) added a measure authorizing the Job Corps to make grants to state youth and conservation agencies to operate centers, and Senator Prouty (R Vt.) required that Job Corps applicants would be free from inquiry into their political affiliation, and could not, except as individual citizens, participate actively in political campaigns.⁶⁵

Objections were raised at certain points concerning the implications of the program. Many middle-aged or older Congressmen remembered the CCC's with a nostalgic approval, even if they weren't entirely convinced that any sort of revival of the program was called for. Some, of course, were overtly hostile. Senator Lausche (D Ohio) questioned the cost per trainee,⁶⁶ while Senator Tower (R Texas) attacked the Job Corps as "renaming of the old Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930's." It was doomed to fail, he said, and hardly worth the effort, since it would cost more to rehabilitate one corpsman than it cost "to send a student to Harvard or Yale." Shriver call the comparison "superficial, invidious, and inaccurate." The real question, he wrote, was whether it was worth "investing tax revenues, in education and training to keep these young men and women off tomorrow's relief rolls, and out of tomorrow's courts, and get them into tomorrow's ranks of productive citizens and taxpayers. That is what the Job Corps is all about."⁶⁷

Senator Robertson (D Va.) brought up the race issue, warning that centers would be integrated: "This means, of course, that in the South, at least, there will be what amounts to segregated camps, because only one type of citizen will attend." In floor action, Representative Howard W. Smith (D Va.) said that any Southerner who planned to vote for the bill would abet implementation of the civil rights bill; thus, it would

"not^{bc} very popular south of the Potomac."⁶⁸ The critical challenges came, however, on the issue of a governor's veto. The issue was resolved in a Smathers (D Fla.) Humphrey compromise, which granted veto power to governors with the qualification that if the veto was not forthcoming within thirty days after federal notification, centers would be established in that state.⁶⁹

The division of resources between conservation and urban training centers became an issue affecting the conservationists "whose primary interest was in preserving natural resources."⁷⁰ The conservationists believed they "had the bill blocked," contingent upon an amendment introduced by Congressman Saylor (R Pa.), which required 40% of the enrollees to be assigned to separate Youth Conservation Camps within the Job Corps. The amendment "soothed the ruffled feelings among the conservationists who had seen their prize Youth Conservation Camps swallowed up in a Job Corps that was to be dominated by the large urban training centers."⁷¹ Finally, John Bell Williams (D Miss.) inserted a requirement for a loyalty oath and a signed affidavit disclaimer, plus a pledge of allegiance to be made by enrollees. "Staff members from the poverty task force in the gallery gasped," wrote Weeks. "A pledge of allegiance, OK. But to ask a sixteen-year-old high school dropout to file a non-Communist affidavit seemed ludicrous."⁷²

A subsidiary issue had arisen during the summer concerning which federal agency would conduct recruiting and screening for the Job Corps -- the U.S. Employment Service or Office of Economic Opportunity instrumentalities operating in competition with the old line state agencies to reach out for a new clientele. Both the Job Corps and the USES had been negotiating the subject without resolve. Shriver opposed having the Employment Service handle the task, preferring instead local agencies or even Job Corps neighborhood centers patterned after the

Peace Corps' technique. A conflict emerged out of the Labor Department's announcement of a major new program calling for the establishment of "Youth Opportunity Centers" in slum neighborhoods in over one hundred cities: To some extent, these would be that Department's equivalent community action program agencies. Since CAP and Labor were "locked in a jurisdictional battle," the Employment Service (part of Labor) "felt no compunction to complete its negotiations with Job Corps."⁷³ The Budget Bureau, opposed to duplication, eventually intervened and forced a compromise solution: The Job Corps could set eligibility criteria with advice from Labor, and would rely primarily upon the Employment Service for recruitment and screening, with provisions for special recruiting efforts after joint consultation. It was to be a dual operation utilizing Employment Service facilities.⁷⁴

By mid-October, the situation changed. Shriver had disliked the idea of depending on the Employment Service, which he felt was incapable of reaching into the pockets of poverty nationwide. Shriver, Wade Robinson, and Otis Singletary, who had been brought in to be Director of the Job Corps,⁷⁵ decided to set up a Peace Corps-style recruitment drive, by which simple applications were to be sent directly to Washington on postcards. These were to be in the Employment Service Job Corps packets.⁷⁶

During December, 1964, pilot projects intended to test "audience reaction" were initiated in Baltimore and two Appalachian counties. The results were positive, and accordingly, kits were sent out to state Employment Service centers and other organizations which could be relied upon to reach the target population.⁷⁷ Recruitment and screening for women would be handled by the Women in Community Service (WICS),

a cooperative merger of the National Council of Catholic Women, the National Council of Jewish Women, the National Council of Negro Women, and the United Church Women.⁷⁸ By January, 1965, the Job Corps had received more than 15,000 applications, a week, and by the end of June, more than 234,000 inquiries had been acknowledged.

On August 15, 1964, prior to the distribution of preliminary materials to the press, and before any advance notice had been given to governors, senators and congressmen, President Johnson announced at a press conference the locations of the first proposed twenty-two Job Corps conservation sites. The list had been narrowed down from over three hundred suggested locations, and the selecting had been made in secret.⁷⁹ There was an abundance of possible sites from which to choose: National parks, forests, seashores, reclamation areas, and wildlife refuges. But there were dissuading factors "which were often pushed aside in the ranking of priorities," such as the remoteness of some sites, "the questionable adaptability of turned-off, urban males to the wilderness scene," as well as the resources and attitudes of the rural communities.⁸⁰ Selection was done on the basis of location, costs, available facilities -- medical, recreational -- attitudes of local citizens, and the poverty of the locale. An official stated, "all other things considered equal, we prefer to locate a Job Corps center in an area where the economic impact will tend to benefit an area which is now poor or partly poor."⁸¹

More difficult was the choice of the urban center sites. Job Corps planners frequently discovered that the only available locations were remote, often even rural, deactivated military bases and "second-rate downtown hotels."⁸² An official recalls, "The relatively small

anti-poverty program could seldom pick and choose, because the choice sites were, more often than not, in demand for industrial complexes, for renovation or destruction by urban renewal, or even for other Federal or local agency's operations."⁸³

The Executive and Congressional mandates had urged speedy implementation of the Job Corps program. Consequently, inadequate consultation with community authorities resulted. Preliminary community relations evaluations had been undertaken, but often the anxieties of local citizens, the indigenous political complexities, and peculiar local laws and customs "were either lost in the shuffle or ignored."⁸⁴ Significantly, no camps were proposed for the southern states of Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Georgia or South Carolina, reportedly because of "anticipated opposition to the requirement that projects be integrated."⁸⁵

The Job Corps, late in 1964, had already been exposed to local community hostility. On November 25, 1964, Shriver had announced the start of the first Job Corps projects. Governors of fourteen states waived the 30 day veto period to approve the setting up of thirty-two conservation centers. But a proposal to establish a center at Yorktown, Virginia, had erupted into what was known as the "Battle of Yorktown" incident. Misinformation, racial prejudice, an equivocal stance by the governor, and resistance on the part of local officials resulted in a defeat for the first center in that state. The crux of the issue was local fear of "an onslaught of out-of-state Negroes -- especially those who might be shipped in from northern ghettos where there had been racial unrest and scattered riots."⁸⁶ Shriver attempted to calm

the situation by announcing that ethnic balances would be maintained, no center would be thrust upon an unwilling citizenry, and that a 35% quota for Negro corpsmen would be imposed at the camps. The Yorktown defeat, ~~consequently~~ ^{forbiddingly}, did not set a precedent, for twenty of the original camp locations were approved by governors.⁸⁷

The Yorktown incident, ~~consequently~~, raised serious questions for the Job Corps administrators. Shriver had stated that the Job Corps was in effect designed for "the kind of American who could be welcome anywhere in the United States," during the Yorktown imbroglio. Applicants would be "carefully screened to make certain that he was of good moral character and sincerely desired a chance to prepare himself for the responsibilities of citizenship."⁸⁸ It became a matter of policy to carefully screen applicants on the basis of their physical, mental and emotional capabilities, with specific attention being given to their police records. Handbook guides differentiated between serious and minor offenses, automatically disqualifying those convicted for such crimes as rape, arson, murder, grand larceny, and so on. Minor or "isolated incidents of anti-social behavior or offenses," however, would not be regarded as grounds for ineligibility. The success or failure of the Job Corps, cautioned the screening handbook, "depends on the job done by the local screening agencies."⁸⁹

Liberals and skeptics of the program objected, primarily on the grounds that the original intention of the Job Corps, as stated by the President in his March address to Congress, was to seek out those "whose background, health, and education make them least fit for useful work," as well as those "alienated and disadvantaged, both economically and culturally," who "have had failure as a constant companion."⁹⁰

The issue was, as one liberal journal put it, who to enroll? Shriver's statements indicated that Job Corps' range of selection would be "absurdly narrow," since the majority of slum youth have police records. The war on poverty "will by necessity have to welcome into its programs young people who are not welcome anywhere in America," including "hoodlums from Harlem, and spics and wops and the dirtiest white trash. It must come to grips with the prejudices of affluent America, not run with them."⁹¹

There had been reports that Job Corps officials, in the face of local protests, "usually withdraw~~d~~ without much argument," on the grounds that there were plenty of available camp sites, and therefore no need to put a camp where it was not wanted. In the fall of 1964, the Job Corps had decided on a site for a large urban center in an unused Veteran's Administration hospital in Nashville, but because it was located in the middle of a "comfortable middle-class neighborhood, and not far from the wealthiest section of Nashville," the governor and local officials were reluctant to approve the operation, and the Job Corps "quietly dropped the VA hospital from its plans."⁹²

In mid-December, President Johnson announced plans for establishing three urban centers at Camp Gary, in San Marcos, Texas, Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, and Tongue Point Naval Station in Oregon.⁹³ The first conservation center to open was Camp Catoctin, Maryland, in January, 1965. Ouachita, Arkansas, and Winslow, Arizona soon followed suit. Enrollees were divided up partly on the basis of preference, and partly to establish a balance of urban, rural, white and Negro proportions.⁹⁴ At the outset, the experience with the new enrollees was eye-opening. At

Catoctin, for example, a young Job Corps enrollee failed to eat for several days. When a counselor questioned him, the young man broke down and cried. "My teeth hurt so much when I eat that I was afraid you would find out and send me home." A dentist removed seventeen teeth. He found the infection had spread throughout the young man's body, affected his ears and eyes, his weight, his view of life.⁹⁵ Another corpsman, with tears streaming down his cheeks, read the first book he had ever held and the first words he was ever able to read, "I am not an ant. I am a man."⁹⁶

Job Corps officials discovered that ^{enrollees}~~enrollees~~ viewed the Job Corps as a last resort. At Catoctin, one corpsman drew an outline of a prospective Job Corps shoulder patch, and within the circle of the design he wrote the words, "Your Last Chance." Findings of the first thirty enrollees revealed that many had never seen a doctor or dentist in their lives. Some slept in beds for the first time in their lives at the center, and many had never had a balanced diet. Many lived in broken homes or with adult surrogates. Some had moved about so frequently they never had a chance to find roots in any neighborhood or in any one school. Their reasons for dropping out of school were due to falling behind in their studies, but primarily because of economic deprivation and the necessity to work. Without exception, the enrollees were highly motivated, "highly desirous of learning a trade and of learning more in the basic education areas." Their grade achievements were low, indicating a potentially higher performance capability. "They have already learned," wrote one Job Corps analyst, "that this life of the streets, a life without education, a life without a trade, that a life of law violation is no answer... My only hope is

that the adults who are going to be working with them, that the society that is going to be dealing with them, invest only half as much desire and energy in order that these youngsters might attain success in the Job Corps and later in their adult lives."⁹⁷

In its first year of operations, the Job Corps found that of the first 10,000 corpsmen, at 48 centers in 26 states, two thirds came from sub-standard and overcrowded housing. Forty percent came from families receiving public assistance, while sixty percent were from families whose primary wage earner was unemployed. One half came from homes where the parent's education level was eighth grade, and only fifty percent of the corpsmen had completed sixth grade, and ninety percent had never held a regular job.⁹⁸ Many were apprehensive about the program, and felt that the Poverty Program would disappear after the news stories had been written and the pictures were taken.⁹⁹

Shriver had predicted early in 1964 that by June 30, 1965, if Congress acted with speed to pass the bill, 40,000 ~~enrollees~~ ^{applicants} would be in the Job Corps. By December, 1964, given the enormity of the planning task and construction problems, the sights were lowered to 25,000. By March, 1965, in light of the slow progress, the objective was lowered again to 10,000. What became known as "Operation 10,000" went into effect. By midnight, on the last day of June, the target was met. A great deal of effort was spent on the logistical problems of building, staffing, equipping, transportation, housing, clothing, food, and so on, all of which was compounded by the vast influx of new enrollees coming in to meet the target deadline.

Partly because of the initial burdens of getting established, the

shortages in equipment, and the high-powered publicity campaign to applicants, many corpsmen became disillusioned by the disparity between the reality of what they found and their own high expectations. Corpsmen discovered that center life was "no tea party," and that it was a "rough, tough society in which raw power tended to set the pecking order despite the presence of resident workers and counselors in the dormitories."¹⁰⁰ Homesickness, racial confrontation, administrative entanglement, frequent lack of adequate facilities and equipment, all contributed to the frustrations and difficulties of the inception of the Job Corps program. Its birth pangs were at once the subject of controversy and debate, in the press, in Congress, and within the Job Corps itself.

Within the first year, reports indicated that dropouts from the centers were high. Incidents of violence involving Corpsmen made headlines. In some communities, hostility to the presence of Job Corps centers was flagrantly obvious. New management was required to salvage two centers "that were clearly floundering." Congressional watchdogs exposed internal administrative foibles, adding fuel to the doubts of many as to the program's worth. And to top it all, some Job Corps enrollees publicly expressed their disillusionment. Said one, "the Job Corps -- its the biggest lie of them all."¹⁰¹ By early June, the effects of the "mismatch between expectation and fact were already evident in Job Corps centers." The New York Times disclosed that fifty of the first one hundred and sixty-two corpsmen sent to Camp Catocin had dropped out. Soon after a news service clip exposed the first of many incidents that were to plague the Corps -- several corpsmen at the Atterbury center in Indiana had been arrested by the

FBI and charged with committing a group sexual assault on a fellow trainee.¹⁰² Deputy Director of the Job Corps Christopher Weeks wrote, "no one in the Job Corps was surprised at the fact that incidents involving Corpsmen started happening inside centers and in communities nearby. These were expected, given the habits of the young men and women being enrolled. But that did not make these cases any easier to explain to Congress, the press, or irate local citizens, when they occurred."¹⁰³

Sporadic outbreaks of rowdiness, brawls, and violence beset Job Corps Headquarters during the summer of 1965, concurrent with Congressional hearings of the 1965 Amendments to the Economic Opportunity Act. The largest issue to first concern the Congressmen, however, was the dropout rate. In May, 1965, Newsweek reported that 17.5% of recruits who had entered the Corps since January, had dropped out. Shriver immediately launched a statistical survey to determine the actual rate, the reasons, and the general implications. No one had really known what rate of dropouts was to be expected, or whether it meant serious programmatic weaknesses. Newsweek had disclosed that of 2,268 recruits, 385 had left. By mid-June, the OEO survey showed that of the first 6,000 enrollees, 1,100 had dropped out, been discharged, or left for medical reasons. Three quarters of the dropouts had spent less than a month in the Corps, and the typical dropout stayed only a week or ten days. If a recruit remained for at least thirty days, the chances for his staying on were substantially smaller. On this basis, of the percentage who remained more than thirty days, only 200 had left, or a 3.2% dropout rate. "If you are as old as I am," Shriver told the Senate Subcommittee on Poverty, "you will remember the days when there was a law coming in to permit the sale of 3.2 beer because it was generally agreed, I think that 3.2 beer was weak enough so that it was

it was practically harmless to anybody who imbibed it. Well, that actually is the dropout rate, 3.2, in the Job Corps."¹⁰⁴

Shriver stated that the major reason for dropouts was homesickness, and in some cases urban youths could not adapt easily to a rural environment. Some, he admitted, were disillusioned: "They drop out because the program does not live up to their expectations."¹⁰⁵ In light of the nature of the youths with which the Job Corps worked, he said, it was remarkable that the percentage was so low. College freshmen, the Peace Corps, and even the old CCC had higher rates. Deputy Director Christopher Weeks attempted to put the dropout rate into perspective by pointing out that the Job Corps enrolled not just the "marginal candidates," but "the young men in America who have grown up in the worst circumstances (and) who have failed almost literally everywhere along the line. For him one new failure is nothing new." Thus, to reach this kind of person at all is an achievement, and for him to drop out is to be expected.¹⁰⁶

Still, the dropout rate developed into an irksome problem that was taken up by the programs critics and a hostile press. In June, it was reported that at Catoctin, 30% of 162 enrollees dropped out. Al Maxey, camp Director, stated that it was due to an inadequate and poorly trained staff as well as to corpsmen's misconceptions about the program. Life magazine, in a July editorial, reported a 17% overall dropout rate, but concluded that if the 83% who stuck it out became self-supporting, "the Job Corps will have brilliantly justified itself."¹⁰⁷ Whatever the varied reports of the rates were, and they were varied and many, it was still, in 1965, difficult to make any meaningful calculations of dropout rates. To some extent, it was partially a symptom

of the painful build-up phase of the program. Officials admitted to inadequate preparation, delays in processing, mis-screening and mis-information, malassignments, and mismatching of enrollees to the proper areas as contributing factors.¹⁰⁸

The Job Corps experienced headaches with corpsmen misbehavior during the first summer. In June, at the Tongue Point center near

Astoria, Oregon, Governor Mark Hatfield called for federal intervention to maintain discipline and control as a result of two fist fights with racial overtones, involving two boys in each case. The corpsmen had been aroused and milled about uncertainly for several hours during the night. A major outbreak was barely avoided, but the incident was stopped without any outside help. The camp Director said that fights at the center were "no more serious than those they have every day in public schools."¹⁰⁹ At Lewiston, California, residents complained of an incident in which a corpsman fired a pistol in a downtown parking lot. Local newspapers charged the enrollees with drinking, brawling, and the camp with lax administration and a lack of facilities. San Francisco papers inflated the incident into national significance, and Senator Murphey (R Cal) read it into the record during the Senate hearings. Shriver testified that the President of the Lewiston Chamber of Commerce had indicated his support for the Job Corps, and an OEO reply to the charges downplayed the "knife fight" as "horseplay by two friends during which one accidentally cut his finger on a knife lying nearby."¹¹⁰

At the Atterbury, Indiana center, following the sodomy arrests, a series of incidents provoked a good deal of comment. The facilities

had been inadequate from the start, and the Midwestern Education Foundation, contracted to run the center, was forced to change directors three times in four months. The Job Corps' policy to delay sending enrollees to the center until administrative problems had been worked out, led to a situation whereby the staff-enrollee ratio was approximately six to four. The center also experienced a high dropout rate and nearby community hostility. Shriver informed Job Corps Director Otis Singletary that "he should have no qualms about drawing up a recommendation that a prime contract be canceled if he is sure there is little or no chance of a viable, productive program getting under way soon." Subsequently, the Midwest Education Foundation contract was allowed to expire, to be replaced by Westinghouse.¹¹¹

In August, the Breckinridge center, located near Morganfield, Kentucky, and run by the Southern Illinois University, was torn by a riot in which several people were injured. Inadequate preparations, administrative deficiencies, loose coordination, and a lax system of discipline had led to a tense situation. It was discovered that a major extortion racket was flourishing, hazing and fights were not uncommon, and high rates of class absenteeism was left unpunished. Some staff members had formed a civil rights activist group, inadvertently producing a "high degree of race consciousness within the center."¹¹²

"Operation 10,000," invoking a large influx of recruits, broke the situation open. Corpsmen frustration with the lack of training facilities and equipment, raw life in the barracks, dissatisfaction with the food, overcrowding, "alleged mistreatment by security guards," restrictions of passes to nearby Morganfield, and general misinformation given

to recruits by screeners prior to their entering the Job Corps, provided the necessary ingredients. A "Demonstration for Jobs in Western Kentucky," organized by the NAACP in the center virtually "paralyzed" the administration. Several days later, a number of fist fights broke out, center officials called out a fire truck, and a riot ensued, in which thirteen people were injured. About half of the enrollees took part, while others fled to nearby towns. FBI agents and U.S. Marshalls were called in, as state troopers stood by. The incident was headlined in papers across the country.¹¹³

Shriver and Job Corps Director Singletary de-emphasized the affair, pointing out that the press had "grossly exaggerated the situation," ignoring accomplishments in other centers. Singletary publicly asked, "Are we supposed to move these kids from their homes and turn them into little angels? A lot of good things do happen to them, but the walls don't come tumbling down."¹¹⁴ Administrative changes took place at Breckinridge after a Job Corps investigation, and, like Atterbury, the Southern Illinois contract was allowed to expire.¹¹⁵ The lack of a high degree of efficient administrative coordination and direction produced the early experiences at Breckinridge and Atterbury. The Job Corps profited from the early mistakes, and began delineating clear definitions and divisions of responsibility down the line, as well as improving auxiliary aspects of the overall program -- community relations, counseling, integration of program components, and so on.

A July incident occurred at Camp Gary, near Austin, Texas, in

which five Chicago enrollees were charged with felonious assault after attempting to hold up two enlisted men from Lackland Air Force Base. Two of the airmen were shot. Other incidents at Collbran, Colorado, Redding, California, and Cottulla, Texas, involving a beating, marijuana possession, and burglary, again, made wire service headlines, and illustrated the problems of discipline that plagued the Corps in its first year. Shriver, responding to unfavorable publicity, pointed out that "to read some newspapers one would believe that the Job Corps is characterized by riots, fights, violence and mismanagement. The facts, however, reveal that...less than 1% have ever been involved in any disturbance," and that most people have never heard of the centers in which "nothing" ever happened -- "nothing, that is, except education, work, and rehabilitation of youngsters formerly out of work and out of school."¹¹⁶

Official OEO policy was to downplay the incidents, to show they were no worse than many unreported occurrences on college campuses. In Job Corps centers, top management worked out ways to get back-up control forces into centers quickly in the event of future outbreaks. Permissiveness, as it was applied to Corpsmen discipline, "was cast in dispute, and the order of the day became 'tighten up.'¹¹⁷

A segment of the nation's press came down heavily on the Job Corps as a result both of the incidents and from a general disagreement with the poverty war in general and the Job Corps' assumptions in particular. A good deal of the criticism stemmed from the "outrageous costs," exemplified by the Air Force Times which pointed out that grad-

uates joining the armed forces would "take a cut in pay." Typical cavils ranged from charges that the Corps was a "hoax on the public," an "elite club of culls" training an "army of drones and busm who will expect to get something for nothing," to pious outrage concerning textbooks which attempted to make subject matter realistic in terms relevant to the trainees. Much of the press reportage was inaccurate, such as charges that Job Corps paid money for rental of motels, brass buttons for uniforms, tuxedo rentals, and transportation for Hawaiian fruit pickers to California. The Southeastern Regional Director of Public Affairs, Dupree Jordan, summed it up when he wrote, "unfortunately, it is usually the unfavorable and the spectacular that makes the headlines."¹¹⁸

In the 1965 Congressional session, Republican opponents of the program stressed the negative aspects of the Job Corps, emphasizing the reports of fighting, drinking, and other abuses by enrollees. Additional grievances included placement of graduates, the speed with which the Job Corps' centers were established, and the overall cost of the program.¹¹⁹ Significantly, however, the Job Corps suffered only minor changes in the 1965 Amendments. The Director of OEO was required to issue regulations preventing displacement of employed workers or interference with existing contracts for services by the Job Corps. Cuban refugees were authorized to enroll in the program, and payments to individuals or organizations as compensation for referring candidates to the Corps was prohibited. The affidavit requirement was deleted,

Federal Employees Compensation was extended to enrollees, and males were limited to the Youth Conservation Camps.¹²⁰

The House Committee majority report stated that the Job Corps had made "an impressive beginning," but cautioned against too much reliance on camp building and not enough preparation for jobs. Failure to establish Job Corps centers for women in adequate numbers was a "great disappointment." The minority report charged that public relations oversell had resulted in great number of applicants being turned away from the program, "further battering the shattered self-image of often-rejected youth." It would be a "thoughtless act," it continued, to add more to the camps until "the results of this program can be analyzed." Finally, it stated that in light of the absence of a comprehensive evaluation of the program, there was no justification for doubling existing authorization.¹²¹

Between the 1965 and 1966 Congressional sessions, the Job Corps continued to be plagued with incidents, providing opponents of the program with grist for their mill, and adding to a hostile legislative attitude. In November, OEO announced that the Job Corps would lay out close to a million dollars to pay round trip fares for trainees to spend their Christmas vacations at home. While there was little government expense involved, the leave program helped "sharpen the image in the minds of the public that their money was being spent to fly poor kids across the country by jet." Letters and Congressional inquiries flowed into the Job Corps headquarters.¹²² The Washington Post reported that Job Corps officials "wore smug little smiles" as

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they announced that 10% of the 13,500 trainees had returned.¹²³ One illustrative case exemplified corpsmen motivation to return: A boy who had left home to join the Corps "with his parents drunk and throwing beer cans at each other," returned for the Christmas vacation to find his parents still drunk, still throwing beer cans. After a few days, he called his camp director and said he was returning early. He had developed new attitudes, recognizing that the old way of life was not good enough any more.¹²⁴

On the day that Shriver made a dedication at the Fort Custer center near Kalamazoo, Michigan, some sixty trainees were involved in a brawl with local youths and police. Kalamazoo police chief Dean Fox contended that the unrest "did not result until the Job Corpsmen arrived." The OEO stated the "police have had previous calls in response to fights in that neighborhood before the Job Corps began visiting the city." Shriver dismissed the incident as no worse than some fights he had seen when on navy shore duty in World War II.¹²⁵ On the following day the OEO was "shocked" at the news that a Chicago trainee at Camp Gary was stabbed to death in an Austin street brawl after a local YWCA dance. Incidents at Fort Rodman, Mountain Home, St. Petersburg and Charleston, West Virginia, throughout the winter of 1965 and 1966 cast the Job Corps into general disrepute and provoked one commentator to exclaim, "I feel the situation is building up to an explosion."¹²⁶

At Fort Rodman, near New Bedford, Massachusetts, an incident involving corpsmen, local youths and police resulted in unfavorable press

reportage of cost, disciplinary, and administrative problems at the center. The city council voted unanimously to ask President Johnson to remove the center, whereupon camp director Jerome Zeigler, assuring local citizens that "immediate steps" were being taken to improve discipline, publicly invited a full-scale investigation by state officials. In the spring, the center became involved in the local Congressional primary.¹²⁷

On July 19, 1966 the Job Corps Center for Women in Excelsior Springs, Missouri, was served with a warrant that charged it with being a public nuisance. Twenty residents had complained that corpswomen were loud, profane, promiscuous, sometimes drunk and on the streets after curfew. The center trained nurses, cooks, secretaries to about 300 teen-age dropouts. C. M. Horned, the center's director of community relations, said the problem largely resulted from the fact that the center was located in the heart of a residential neighborhood, suggesting that OEO avoid placement of this type in the future. He stated that community residents were unused to interracial dating and were "very concerned" about it. (approximately 60% of the center corpswomen were black) Similar community-center difficulties surrounded the St. Petersburg women's center, operated by the Pinellas County school board, and led to a new contract with the Delta Educational Foundation, and the relocation of the center at a new site. A Job Corps official recalled, "St. Petersburg, despite the beginnings of a good program on-center, was a case of bad site location, lack of understanding and support by the School Board contractor, and a generally

hostile environment which should have been avoided at all costs."¹²⁸

At the Mountain Home conservation center in Idaho, a trainee was knifed by a corpsman who, it was later disclosed, had three previous felony convictions in California, and had jumped probation in one county. The Job Corps was thus put into a position of having transported a convicted criminal across state lines. Worse, the corpsman had been identified as having "leadership capacities," and had been promoted to a Corpsman leader. The incident reached national proportions when Congressmen Goodell and Qu9e criticized the Job Corps for having provided the boy with a lawyer and a psychiatrist.¹²⁹ The Women's Job Corps center in Charleston, West Virginia, made the New York Times after a razor fight left one girl with a slashed chest. The center was reportedly "struggling with trouble," as a result of charges of prostitution, drunkenness, lesbianism, thefts, truancy, shoplifting, and fighting. One Job Corps official responded to the furor by stating, "society has failed them...their families, the schools, the police, sometimes psychiatrists have had a crack at them and lost. They've dropped out of school, they've gotten into trouble, they can't find or hold an adequate job."¹³⁰

Finally, in April, 1966, a Job Corps recruit, who had shot a lady in Billings, Montana, and had been sent to Breckinridge to await trial, went AWOL, stole a car, and smashed it head on into a car containing a family of four, all of whom died. Senator Mansfield wrote to Shriver, "I do not like admonishing the Job Corps...but it seems to me that there is something wrong." Lee Metcalf, junior Senator from Montana,

was less restrained: "This incident is wrong and really burns me up." Congressional hostility was exacerbated by the incidents, and attacks were launched against Job Corps screening mechanisms, permissive administration in the centers, and so forth. In view of the general atmosphere surrounding the Job Corps during the fall and winter period, the leaking of the Kilmer report to the press provided ironic commentary on the nature of the double-edged sword with which it had to contend.¹³¹

On November 17, 1965, Joseph Loftus of the New York Times disclosed the contents of a September 30 report that was extremely critical of the Job Corps camp at Kilmer, New Jersey. Federal Electric Corporation had contracted with the Rutgers Advisory Committee for advice on curriculum and teaching methods. The report was comprehensive in scope and sharp in its tone. The report included severe criticism for "flagrant deficiencies" such as overcrowding, high absenteeism, little learning, slow implementation of some vocational programs, inadequate recreational facilities, physical violence, and failure to understand the nature and life styles of a poverty culture.

Center officials were indicted for an excessive concern to maintain a "good front," subjecting the corpsmen to a "kind of middle-class colonialism" and the "value system of the Kilmer staff." The original goal -- "to provide the Corpsmen with marketable skills" -- was "no longer the foremost consideration. Camp officials equated success with "social control over the behavior of the Corpsmen."¹³² To place "low-income, school dropouts in an abandoned army post, in a

chancey proposition."

The report challenged the whole philosophy on which the Job Corps was planned and approved by Congress, charging that disadvantaged teenagers could not be "resocialized" in the centers. "It is well known," the report stated, "that corporate hierarchy and military hierarchy are modeled after one another." The vestiges of military procedures-- "recruiting, induction, passes, terminology (AWOL), and the substitution of campuslike controls" --should be eliminated. It concluded by recommending that the "autocratic-authoritarian type of administration should yield to a type of approach which would serve as a model for future democratic living by Corpsmen," and urged "the removal of all vestiges of military procedures."¹³³

Actually, the Job Corps had implemented two contrasting philosophies in the administration of the camps. The first held that a non-authoritarian, generally permissive framework was the answer for "youths to whom authority has been The Man and for whom the overly-structured nature of our institutions has been destructive." The other, such as Kilmer, veered toward a paramilitary institutional setting whereby orders were given and obeyed, rules were established "so as not to confuse the boys," and attempts were made to simulate classroom and industrial shop settings realistically. Since there were no precedents, both approaches were tried, and eventually "most of the better parts and practices" were assimilated into the current Job Corps program.¹³⁴

Compounding the Kilmer report was a Job Corps report on the dropout rate which implied it had assumed racial overtones. The New York

Times revealed that whites were dropping out of the Corps four times as rapidly as Negroes. The majority at women's centers was Negro, and at Camp Kilmer, two-thirds of the camp was Negro, as compared with two-fifths before the Christmas furlough. David Gottlieb reported that the high incidence of white dropouts was due to their predominantly rural background. White recruits were less travelled, less adaptable, generally from intact families, and more subject to homesickness. Negroes in the Corps tended to come from urban environments, giving them a greater mobility and adaptability. They came mostly from broken homes, and thus had less to return to. "A black Job Corps would be a terrible, terrible thing," Gottlieb stated. "Nothing could be worse than to create a program that has broken down racial walls and then let it turn into a segregated system."¹³⁵

The Office of Economic Opportunity subsequently attempted to recruit more whites and balance the ratios by writing to principals of rural high schools, working through 4-H clubs, and sending state employment staff into the field. Moreover, the Job Corps initiated a "Corpsman advisor's system" at four centers in January, 1966, in which an adult "big brother" was assigned to entering enrollees on a one to ten basis.¹³⁶

The incidents had invoked a plethora of editorial comment taking both sides of the disciplinary issue--either accusing the Job Corps of "soft" and "lax" disciplinary policy, or waxing vigorously on the "totalitarian nature of the camps."¹³⁷ In the flurry of press reportage about incidents and scandals, real or contrived, the sense of the Job Corps--its meaning and purpose and impact--was somehow lost to many. Shriver

attempted to put the program into perspective by stressing its potential worth. The challenge, he said, was to create a Job Corps' attitude and ideal that embraced every young person in need, a sense of community where enrollees came together and discovered the true meaning of society and themselves. The Job Corps was to provide an environment of warmth, compassion, reaching out and understanding, as well as special opportunities that would hopefully be transferred to the larger society. The Job Corps would function as a catalyst - centers as focal points for creativity - and were, above all, learning laboratories. Businesses, schools, other government agencies, unions, and churches -- all had become involved, and many had learned to benefit from the techniques employed at the centers. Thousands of visitors per month inspected the centers, and the State Department scheduled them as regular stops for foreign visitors, in response to foreign requests. 138

The cumulative impact of the Job Corps incident -- opening the centers, the conflicts with local communities, costs, dropouts, and so on -- had created a public image that was "hardly creditable." Editors and unfriendly Congressmen portrayed the Job Corps as "an expensive boondoggle which ships juvenile delinquents and hoodlums across the country by jet, mollycoddles them in camps which are shot through with gang fights, looses them each weekend on defenseless communities to riot and vandalize private property, and shows no notable success in turning them into better, more productive citizens." Part of this image resulted from the adage that "bad news makes good reading"

- thus, a sensationalist press made hay with scandals but too infrequently reported the good work accomplished. As Oliver Wendal Holmes said, a half-truth is like a half-brick: It could be thrown a long way.

Moreover, the Job Corps was scrutinized more closely than many other parts of the anti-poverty program, because it was a federal agency directly responsible for its acts. The Job Corps, a "foreign agent" in most communities, was more susceptible to criticism by an indignant citizenry. Finally, the Job Corps, in the first two years, before it had a chance to solve many of its problems had clearly profit from early mistakes, was the victim of too optimistic expectations.¹³⁹

Given the public attitude, the Congressional session of 1966 proved critical for the very survival of the Job Corps. The central issues focused upon by friends and critics alike were costs, extravagant staff salaries and nepotism, discipline, the dropout rate, and graduate placement. Disapproval of the Job Corps program in Congress led to a "broader attack on the OEO for alleged inefficiency, lack of administrative expertise and financial mismanagement."¹⁴⁰ The Job Corps, to allay Congressional anxieties, prepared answers to each of the charges. Under the title "Mythology of a Mandate," the OEO stated, "the War Against Poverty has taken the field with broad-ranging effect, a whole new mythology... Compounded of a potpourri of misinformation and misunderstanding, ignorance and ignobility, novelty and nonsense, the syths have sometimes obscured the meaning of the fast-moving anti-poverty programs."¹⁴¹

The Job Corps, it stated, had been charged with contracting out to private industry, suggesting high profits and unscrupulous motives of blue chip corporations exploiting the "ever-expanding social legislation market." However, the highest fixed fee in any contract was 4.7%, a profit margin far lower than in many other fields. Industries had demonstrated a concern for the potential human resources that Corpsmen represented for the future. Moreover, it was to their own interest to develop expertise in training and education which could be invaluable in the transition of their own employees displaced by an improved technology. As Shriver told Yale lawyers, "American industry is changing when the president of General Electric can be photographed proudly in a Job Corps center in Iowa, surrounded by 300 giggling teen-age girls."¹⁴²

Regarding the "lack of discipline" at the centers, "Mythology" gave comparative figures for the overall 16-21 age group arrest incidents. Statistically, the Job Corpsmen should have had 906 arrests in an 11 month period, according to the FBI, and an expectation of 80% offenses involving larceny, assault, and auto theft. Actual arrest totaled 834, and the latter percentage was 50%. Thus, Corpsmen responded better to discipline and order than their contemporaries, regardless of background. Most of the incidents would not have received attention had they involved college students or servicemen in the same communities.¹⁴³

On the issue of high salaries, a perennial complaint, OEO pointed out that salaries were "hammered out with stringent control by a Con-

Discipline in the Job Corps rested on the basic purpose of the program, "to prepare for the responsibilities of citizenship young men and women." Such preparation requires learning what responsibility is, recognizing other's rights, and adherence to high standards of conduct. It also is based on participation, "wherein freedom of expression and individuality are encouraged and the person gains by practice the vital knowledge he or she must have of oneself and society." Job Corps discipline was geared to parallel the "real world," recreated by the World of Work implemented in the centers. Corpsmen attended citizenship courses, had a student government, participated in "problem-solving" sessions, and lived under the center's system of penalty sanctions. Job Corps' goals were "positive citizenship-oriented behavior, not merely to prevent incidents from occurring." While incidents were to be expected, "the great majority of Corpsmen are moving forward steadily to increased employability and active citizenship."¹⁴⁷

In November, 1965, the Job Corps had announced a program for placement of graduates, stating that the "rate of graduates will increase rapidly until the spring of 1966, when it is estimated 5,000 young men and women will be graduating from centers each month." In December, a second release revised the estimates downward, and in January, 1966, a third release stated that "by July, 1966, it is expected that Job Corps will be graduating about 4,000 per month." The Labor Department, it concluded, estimated that for the next ten years, business and industry would have as many as a million job openings to fill every year in about thirty fields, "nearly every one of which is

part of the curriculum in one or another of the Job Corps centers."¹⁴⁸

It was also reported that more than ten thousand jobs had been stockpiled, with training needs and qualifications being checked. Job stockpiling had begun with the assistance of Vice President Humphrey, who had written to more than six thousand employers urging them to hire Job Corps-trained men and women. He had written that "to take their place in today's world involves much more than being motivated and having training--they need the opportunity of a permanent, worthwhile job." In view of an encouraging response, Shriver stated that "by being able to show them concrete proof that meaningful jobs are available at the end of their training, we...increase their already substantial motivation and determination to succeed."¹⁴⁹

In Congress, Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania attacked the Job Corps as condoning "race friction, crime and violence." Shriver, testifying before the House ad hoc subcommittee on poverty, admitted that some centers were not operating to capacity, specifically citing the Camp Breckinridge experience. But, he added, "we are changing contractors as a result of this performance."¹⁵⁰ As of June 30, 1966, the Job Corps was operating 106 centers, including 86 conservation camps, 8 urban residential centers for men, 11 for women, and one special training center. The Corps had enrolled 57,430 recruits and was training 28,547. The total cost to the Job Corps was \$499,404,998. The cost per trainee per year was \$9,945, but was expected to drop to \$7,765 by December, 1967.¹⁵¹

An investigative task force under the aegis of Adam Clayton Powell

issued a report that was withheld until September 19. In the report, the Job Corps "scandals" were said to have "received publicity far beyond their significance." It noted that initial grievances and problems had arisen in the Corps because of the haste with which the centers were established. It warned against outside political interference: "When the choice of staff plus policy is taken away from the center and director and placed in the Governor's hands (Atterbury) or given to a county school board (St. Petersburg) problems are imminent." It suggested that there was a "conceptual problem" in rural centers, and that enrollees there were not being taught marketable skills.

During the 1966 session, Republicans attempted to spin-off the Job Corps to the Labor Department. In view of the misbehavior of some enrollees, amendments were submitted (and rejected) that would require enrollees to undergo physical and mental examinations, fingerprinting, and thorough investigations of their backgrounds to determine the existence of criminal records and probationary restrictions. Any Job Corps recruit found to be convicted of a felony would be immediately discharged.

The Republicans singled out the Job Corps as that program in the antipoverty war that had "failed more noticeably" than any other program. They introduced their own substitute version of the Job Corps within the context of the GOP antipoverty strategy, recommending that the Job Corps go to Labor. A Republican National Committee memorandum called for a "Realistic Crusade," urging that the Corps be run by the Defense Department. The Office of Economic Opportunity summed up the Republican attack as a "carefully-planned attempt to destroy public confidence in

the Office of Economic Opportunity." Poverty memoranda, "spilling out of Republican congressional offices with increasing rapidity as elections draw near," resembled "hit-and-run guerilla warfare," ignoring the facts in a partisan campaign to get votes. One editor commented: "Whether it is due to television commercials or what, there has arisen in our country in recent years the myth of instant success. If something doesn't succeed glamorously almost at once, there is a tendency to discard it. Yet everyone should realize that rehabilitating youngsters who have never had a chance at all can be no instant proposition." ¹⁵⁶

Administration requests for \$228 million for the Job Corps were cut back. By the earmarking provisions, "under no circumstances" could funds be transferred within OEO to increase the final authorized sum of \$211 million to the Job Corps. The Congress limited the number of enrollees permitted in the Corps, twenty-three percent of whom were to be women. The cost per enrollee was to be reduced to \$7,500. Albert Quie introduced an amendment requiring Job Corps officials to stimulate formation of "indigenous community activity" in center implanted areas, to insure a "friendly and adequate reception of enrollees into community life." ¹⁵⁷

Congress required the Job Corps to place enrollees in centers within the same geographic region as their home in order to interdict the "jet-set Job Corps." OEO was subdivided into seven such regions. Standard enforcement procedures were to be maintained in all centers, and the Job Corps was to carefully guard against violating parole and probationary procedures of states by transferring recruits across juris-

dictional boundaries. Finally, Congress required the Job Corps to set up four pilot demonstration projects providing youth employment and training on a combined residential and non-residential basis. These were to be conducted under the Job Corps and the Neighborhood Youth Corps, and when the latter was involved, the Secretary of Labor would be given joint authority over the projects.

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The 1966 Congressional Amendments to the Job Corps were designed to insure tighter discipline, better evaluation, and a different method for assigning enrollees to centers. The stringent earmarking provisions and the authorization cutbacks appeared to many, as the New Republic put it, "one step forward, three steps back."

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In the summer and fall of 1966, three times as many corpsmen were in the Job Corps, and there were no riots. By the turn of the new year, the Corps' management had clearly learned lessons in preparation, better training procedures, and discipline. Yet, in the President's major message on poverty delivered in March, 1967, entitled "Message on America's Unfinished Business: Urban and Rural Poverty," the Job Corps was singled out as needing "tighter cost controls, firmer discipline and more effective recruitment."

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Edward K. Shanahan wrote that

continued GOP hostility to Shriver and the poverty program, and their intention to push for an entirely new program involving the abolition of the OEO, the spin off of programs to other agencies, and the phasing out of the "troublesome" Job Corps, had impelled the White House to send to Congress a "completely rewritten poverty bill which places ex-

tremely heavy emphasis on tightened administration of such controversial programs as community action and Job Corps." ¹⁶¹

The Administration bill requested authorization for the Job Corps of \$874 million (including job training programs). It recommended more stringent administrative controls -- screening and selection procedures -- and barred persons with histories of antisocial behavior. Curriculum and disciplinary standards would be maintained, advisory councils would be created to promote better relations between centers and communities, and a new placement system would be set up. The bill required a systematic evaluation of the centers' effectiveness, and required better coordination with state agencies. Of the total 45,000 enrollment, 25% were to be women, and costs per enrollee were to be kept to \$7,300. Both employees and enrollees were banned from partisan political activity. ¹⁶²

Hearings on the Administration bill began in June, at which time the Republicans introduced the "Opportunity Crusade," another alternative to OEO. It had been drafted by Congressmen Quie and Goodell, and would eliminate the Job Corps, setting up instead an Industrial Youth Cosps, which would grant employer tax credits to stimulate business participation in the creation of jobs for unemployed slum youths. ¹⁶³

In the House hearings, Goodell asserted it was unwise to place "rejects from society" into isolated camps, urging instead they be integrated into vocational centers with high school graduates. William Kelley, Director of the Job Corps since January, replied that it would be a mistake to put the poor into general vocational programs. "If you don't concentrate on the poor," he said, "somehow the resources aimed

at helping them will go somewhere else."

Admittedly, Kelley went on, the Job Corps had suffered its "share of failures," but the value of the Job Corps was in its promise for "human renewal," restoring enrollees' dignity, health, respect for law and order, and proper social behavior. The Job Corps, he said, "made one mistake. We had no notion of how poor the poor were ... it would be a national tragedy to abolish the Job Corps." ¹⁶⁵ Thirty percent of the enrollees could neither read nor write; eighty percent had not seen a doctor or dentist. Seventy-five thousand had graduated from the Corps, of which 76% had found jobs, 14% had returned to school, and 10% had gone into the military. The cost per enrollee had dropped to \$6,950 per year, and was expected to decline further by 1968. In light of the summer riots and public concern for law and order, Kelley assured the committee that the Job Corps had been found to be "a very good neighbor." ¹⁶⁶

In the Senate, it was reported that the Job Corps enrollees' average age was declining, and that there was a substantial increase in the proportion of Negro and other nonwhite enrollees, posing the threat that centers would "reach a state of de facto segregation." Senator Curtis attempted to kill the Corps by proposing an amendment that would eliminate authorization and transfer funds to HEW vocational programs. Senator Clark, in opposition to the Curtis amendment, said the Job Corps "is directed to the poor, not to the middle class. This is a poverty bill." The amendment, he continued, would "strike at the heart of one of the most important and one of the most successful programs to take young boys and girls off the streets and turn them from potential

juvenile delinquents into useful citizens." The amendment was defeated.

To some extent the unveiling of the report in the highly charged atmosphere of the 1967 Congress was, as Camp Director Robert Bransom charged, "a totally political effort to scuttle new appropriations." Moreover, as the OEO pointed out, the report, when deliberately, circulated among Congress in October, was 14 months old. Besides, critical recommendations had been acted upon.

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An issue raised during the session concerned the publication of a report made by the Government's General Accounting Office, which was critical of some aspects of the program, particularly with the Litton System's Incorporated of the Parks center at Pleasanton, California.

In the hearings, it was noted that the Job Corps had a "new look," and a better overall image. Edith Green, at one point, said, "The Job Corps does have a different face since Mr. Kelley has come in." Partly responsible for the improvements was a series of Lewis and Harris research studies undertaken throughout the year. The results demonstrated the need for a "new orientation" in the overall program. Subsequently, changes were made and announced publicly. Among these were:

Job Corps Screeners have been instructed to give recruits a clearer picture of the Job Corps on initial contact; the orientation program has been changed to try to make it more effective; the Job Corps behavior code has been tightened up; discharge authority at the centers has been facilitated to move faster to enforce discipline; efforts have been instituted to obtain greater minority representation on center staff to alleviate problems of racial tension; an effort is being made to improve the feedback to corpsmen on how they are doing while at the centers; the time between the initial screening and assignment has been shortened; and new corpsmen have been assigned to centers nearer their homes. 169

The Harris survey, moreover, indicated that increases in rates of pay were higher for graduates than for dropouts, higher for dropouts than for discharges, "and even higher for discharges than those who never
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went to the Job Corps at all."

Majority reports indicated satisfaction for the Job Corps, pointing to "noticeable improvements in this year's programs as compared to that of last year." Notably, in the House a spin-off amendment of the Job Corps to HEW was defeated by Southern Democrats, one of whom justified his vote on the basis of personal animosity to Harold Howe, of the Office of Education. "The best thing I can think of to do," said Joe Waggoner (D, LA.), "is to keep all the trash in
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one pile; do not scatter it." The minority reports sustained the party line, urging a Job Corps phase out and transferral to an expanded vocational education program.

The effect of the Job Corps, it said, "has not been without drama. It has been a dramatic flop with overtones of classical tragedy."

The Job Corps got \$295 million for Fiscal Year 1968. The Amendments made no radical departures from the Administration-proposed bill, with the minor additions requiring that 40% of male enrollees be assigned to the conservation centers, the establishment of an experimental program involving the operation of community vocational education schools and skill centers in urban areas, and the permission for the Director to cooperate with states in the administration of state-operated Job Corps centers. In December, the House had earmarked authorized funds, but the Senate and Conference committees eliminated that provision, reducing
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the Administration request from 2.06 billion to \$1.8 billion.

In 1966, given the (background of the) average enrollee in the

centers, the Job Corps' burden remains great indeed. Corpsmen's profiles illustrate the persistence of the problems faced by the planners in 1964. ¹⁷³ Six out of every ten come from broken homes, while 63% come from homes where the head of the household is unemployed. Sixty percent lived in substandard housing and 64 percent were asked to leave school. Eighty percent had not seen a doctor or dentist in ten years, and half the male recruits of draft age were found to be unfit for military service for educational or health reasons. 62% read below the 4th grade level, while more than 30 percent are illiterate. Thirty-three percent had records of anti-social behavior or had serious convictions. Employment records of enrollees showed that 60% made less than \$1.25 an hour in low level jobs with little or no chances for advancement.

The Job Corps has learned that the 16-21 year-old illiterates can be successfully educated, and that their lack of achievement was not due to innate deficiencies, but to their poverty condition. Essentially, enrollees showed the need for a structured and organized program, incentives for learning, and a demonstrable relevance between education and a trade or real-life experience. Emphasis at the centers is on individual attention, group participation in decisions, and a system whereby corpsmen are informed of their status and progress. Educational programs are self-paced, the materials relevant, and the teaching techniques up-to-date. Internally, corpsmen are instructed in the art of responsible citizenship, through such activities as student-government, group discussions and community involvement.

In March, 1968, the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America voted to manage training programs at thirteen centers, and

to place graduates at minimum starting wages of \$2.50 an hour. Other Unions have combined to assist in training and job placement with businesses, state and local and the federal government. A Job Corps Police Academy was developed in coordination with police chiefs from forty-one major cities throughout the nation.

Conservation work performed by the Corps was estimated at over \$46 million in such projects as fire suppression, road building, park development, fish and wildlife development, reforestation, and timber preservation.

A Lewis Harris study of January, 1968, indicated that 76% of male graduates were working, in school, or in the military. Graduate incomes have risen, and wages average \$1.80 an hour. Obstacles still presented formidable problems in the matter of employment. Unemployed graduates cited three major reasons for their status: 23% said they had no way to get to work, 27% cited racial discrimination, and 42% said employers demanded high school diplomas. The Job Corps acted to have the Employment Office pay readjustment and final living allowances, and coordinated with the NAB to minimize employer requirements for high school diplomas. The Wall Street Journal wrote that the Job Corps "gets surprisingly high marks; 60% of the 159 companies hiring Corpsermen rate them satisfactory workers." The hope is, of course, that a momentum would develop among corporations and businesses and unions that absorbed corpsermen, to perpetuate a successful placement program. Follow through programs developed by the Corps attempts to soften the "shock" of returning to society as a productive worker. The Joint Action for Community Service,

and Women in Community Service are two volunteer organizations involved in such a service. Gate Houses have been set up to provide "direct and centralized Job Corps professional support services in cities with the heaviest concentrations of returnees, unique problems, or inadequate facilities."

The status of the Job Corps today remains in considerable doubt. Rumors of Congressional intentions to transfer the program to the Labor Department, or to close out the program entirely on the grounds of its dubious value, leave its future the subject of speculation. More important, in the summer of 1968, applications fell sharply, the result, perhaps, of psychological factors in the uncertainties of an election year that witnessed two assassinations of public figures high in the minds of the young. In addition, potential enrollees have undoubtedly been funneled off into any number of other available training programs. Enrollments at the centers thus were less than capacity, and the special problems relating to the kind of administration -- permissive or authoritarian -- remain.

In light of what the Job Corps has learned often through trial and error, and in view of its imperfections, it would be important to bear in mind the words of Sargent Shriver, whose public task was to sustain in the public conscience the original purpose of the Job Corps. In the turbulent mid-sixties, shaken by urban uprisings and the rhetoric of social and political radicalism, the Job Corps, however limited its success, plays an important, if unobtrusive, part. "Karl Marx," Shriver once said, "could never have foreseen the Job Corps ... the Job Corps can help to prove that Marxist social theories are equally passe."