

Mr. WHITTEN. I think you are correct in this sense that there is nothing in the bill that forbids it. We made a very thorough investigation to try to see what thinking had gone on behind this bill. It is very evident that in a community action project, whatever a community action project turns out to be, that there could be involvement of rehabilitation. We do not argue this at all. We think it would be difficult, however, in that kind of program to involve the rehabilitation agencies in such a way as to make a very significant contribution to the program, but it could be.

Mr. HAWKINS. Why can they not be involved as well as any other agency? Are they so different that they will not cooperate or that they cannot be involved as well as any other agency?

Mr. WHITTEN. Well, it is not that they wouldn't cooperate but the organization of the vocational rehabilitation agencies makes it difficult. For instance, they do not operate on a county basis or on municipal basis. They operate on a statewide basis with the assignment of individuals to various sections. There would not, for instance, be spelled in every municipality where they might be an urge to develop a community action program. So it would be more difficult for them to participate administratively in this sort of thing.

I certainly want to say again that we assume and feel confident that they would work to the maximum of their possibilities in the community action programs. We just think these special programs are necessary. After all, what we are suggesting is not out of the spirit of the bill. Actually, this type of transfer of funds is provided for in all these other programs, the youth program, the college training program, the welfare program, to attack the problem of dependency. This legislation is right along the lines of these current provisions of the bill.

I don't think it is out of harmony or spirit of it at all.

Mr. HAWKINS. I do not think so, either. That is why I suggest that the bill at the present time, without this amendment, facilitates having everything done that you suggest but to the extent that you rewrite a bill and put in, in effect, a separate title with special attention, pulls away from the bill a specialized program, and there is no reason why it should not be done for each group. If you do it for each group, then you do not have any overall plan. You may as well not have any director. You may as well just set up an appropriation bill and give the money to the various agencies; and what would we have then? We would have nothing.

Mr. WHITTEN. I, of course, don't agree with you as you probably didn't expect me to on that point. For instance, I wondered, myself, is it not possible, I said, for the Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity to make this transfer of funds to the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, without any amendment to the bill?

Mr. HAWKINS. If he so desires, I assume it can be done.

Mr. WHITTEN. There is nothing in the bill that forbids it but when I got to talking with people, including the staff of the Office, what staff they have, I talked to some of the high officials in it, they felt there was practically no likelihood that it would be done because it was not written in and these others are written in. They seem to feel more or less the fact that some are spelled down with specific au-