

Although we are only at the beginning of a new era of the Federal interest in American education, I believe that the lessons we are learning have justified the magnificent legislative program that provides the foundation of the Office's activities. With the continued effort of the entire education community and with the benefit of the findings of such studies as are now being made by the Special Subcommittee on Education. I feel confident that this region and all the rest of America will be glad that the Federal Government is interested in education.

I thank you for this opportunity to appear before this select committee.

Mr. QUÉ. The criticism that I get from people in educational organizations in Washington especially and some in the field is that they really want to go to Washington because the guidelines haven't filtered out to the regional offices.

I had a kind of feeling in Maine that they don't have the same institutions as the institutions in Boston because you talk about close proximity. You can go to lunch together and call each other on the phone without any additional cost in Boston but in Maine, it is a little bit further away, to use that as an example.

Do you have any comments on your relationship where there is a tendency to go over you to Washington?

Dr. DEHART. Of course, tradition is a powerful factor and the Office of Education is the last Office in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to attempt decentralization.

There frankly is some resistance to it. You will find a variation of attitudes over all of New England. I suppose it is an inherent weakness that the schools near us in Boston can see us more often just by walking down the street or picking up the telephone. However, I would say that there is extensive field service in which our program officers go to visit these institutions whenever it is necessary.

We are a little concerned at the moment because of the present freeze of personnel which has made us short-handed and the added pressure, which I learned of yesterday, to take a hard look at travel and cut out as much of it as we can.

If too much of it is cut out that would, of course, weaken the field service and would prevent our men making necessary visits to local institutions and would give rise to further criticism of this kind.

What you have just said is fairly understandable to us who are here in the region. Then, too, we have not had the authority in the region to make some of these recommendations and decisions that Dr. Knowles mentioned. Our field service having been reorganized so very recently, and because we are one of the regions here that is not yet reorganized with a regional assistant commissioner and further delegation of authority, perhaps we are not performing at the same level as they may be for instance, in Atlanta, Ga. That was the first one to be reorganized and I understand is now working on a reorganized basis.

I feel that once we are fully reorganized and we are delegated the authority—

Mr. GIBBONS. Will you speak a little louder, Dr. DeHart.