

Mr. FORD. They ultimately will have to do that. Maybe the Attorney General will have to render an opinion. I think we ought to lay the cards on the table and be honest. If we are simply talking about the transfer for the sake of operating the program more efficiently, fine. But if we are not willing at the same time to admit that the transfer carried with it a secondary purpose of taking out of the business of operating Headstart people who are already in it, why don't we say so.

Mr. CHRISTIAN. I don't think any chief State school officers want to take away from the parochial or private organizations this opportunity of Headstart. Our interest is furthering the education but it ought to be in the educational agency.

The OEO does more than just education. The U.S. Office of Education is an educational agency. We consider Headstart an educational agency. For that reason it ought to be in the U.S. Office of Education.

Someday we are going to grow into a program nationwide where we recognize the kindergarten and preschool youth, that we can prepare program right now. This has moved into the various States in the Nation. They were not prepared for it.

Consequently we had to do the best we could.

Mr. GURNEY. Let me ask this question if I may.

Mr. FORD. I will yield to the gentleman as soon as I respond to the gentleman.

Mr. GURNEY. I had the floor before you did.

Mr. MEEDS. A point of order. The gentleman is out of order.

Mr. FORD. I will yield to the gentleman as soon as I respond. I will say I don't disagree with what you have said but you are not saying what Mr. Fuller has said.

Mr. Fuller will not go so far as to say that the State school officers do not want to change the administration of Headstart with respect to nonpublic school agencies operating Headstart program.

Mr. CHRISTIAN. I go back to my question.

This is the question you should ask the U.S. Office of Education.

Mr. GURNEY. Perhaps this will settle this ball game right now.

Do you gentleman have any nefarious schemes to take away the operation of Headstart from any of the organizations that are now in the program, other than public school organizations by your recommending that it be placed under the Office of Education?

Mr. CHRISTIAN. I want to speak for Florida, absolutely not.

Mr. PAGE. No.

Mr. GURNEY. I think that answers the question, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. FULLER. I would say "No," too.

Mr. FORD. I want to make it very clear that no one on this committee has suggested that Mr. Fuller or anyone else had a nefarious scheme. But Mr. Fuller and members of this committee have been consulting on this subject so long that I don't think we are ruffling his feathers or surprising him with any of these questions. This is not a new question before the committee or a question with Mr. Fuller. We respect very fully his expertise in the field we are dealing with.

Mr. MEEDS. Perhaps this would put it in context, Mr. Chairman. Would it be fair to ask you gentlemen that if you knew that by a change in the program from the Office of Economic Opportunity to