

Do you feel with the guidelines you presently have that if the Headstart program were shifted to the Office of Education, that you would be able to implement your program fast enough and that we would not have the situation existing in Headstart programs?

Mr. LIBASSI. I wish I could tell you I was absolutely consistent that would happen. We have sent out several letters from the Commissioner of Education to the chief, State school officers and if the committee wishes I would be glad to submit those for the record which would indicate the efforts we have made to be sure these Headstart programs remained fully desegregated.

I can assure you we will insist on the same level of desegregation that OEO has required in any transition of those programs into the Office of Education.

Mr. MEEDS. As a matter of fact, it is quite possible, is it not, that it would take several years even if your very excellent guidelines and the implementation of these to assure any substantial desegregation in Headstart programs were this program shifted over to the Office of Education?

Mr. LIBASSI. We will not fund segregated, preschool programs. That is, if a school district, and on inspection we find this and we ask for a statistical report, if we found school districts operating segregated Headstart programs in the Office of Education we would not fund those programs and in fact the school districts would jeopardize all Federal funds if they did.

We allow for a gradual desegregation of the school system but when it comes to the Headstart programs these must be operated initially and completely on a desegregated basis. There is no freedom of choice basis in Headstart programs.

Mr. MEEDS. Let me compliment you on that policy.

Mr. CAREY. I am very much interested in this critical discussion on the possibility of desegregation of Headstart facilities if the Department takes on a larger role in the administration of Headstart programs.

I say you insist that Headstart programs be fully initiated. Where have you achieved this?

Mr. LIBASSI. The Office of Education in the Headstart programs has required that the programs be staffed and operated in such a way as to provide for the maximum desegregation.

Mr. CAREY. I am well aware with what they are doing and I am fully in accord with what they are doing but you say that in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare program that the Headstart program be desegregated from the start.

Now you name me one school district where there is a desegregated pattern for Headstart where you have been successful in desegregating from the beginning?

Mr. LIBASSI. I do not have it with me but I would be glad to provide the committee the percentage of segregation in Headstart programs and the desegregation in other classes so we can see these as well in comparison.

Mr. CAREY. You say you will furnish information on the extent of desegregation of Headstart programs. On your testimony a few moments ago you could not have any desegregation of Headstart pro-