

Opportunity certainly wants to see the law complied with and will not endeavor to uphold any employee that has made an outright violation.

Mr. GARDNER. Would the chairman yield at this point?

Chairman PERKINS. Of course if there is something involved of a nonpartisan nature that a further determination has to be made, I don't think OEO would want to prejudge this situation.

Mr. GARDNER. Would the chairman yield at this point?

Chairman PERKINS. Yes.

Mr. GARDNER. Would you think that the OEO would be willing to cooperate with the Education and Labor Committee if there was some possibility that a violation did exist?

Chairman PERKINS. Certainly OEO would be willing to cooperate. If there was some flimsy charge that they knew was flimsy, I doubt that it should be dignified by too much consideration, but if there is something where there is a question in the minds of reasonable people, I know that OEO would be willing to cooperate. However, I might observe, not necessarily with respect to the matter with which the gentleman from North Carolina mentions, that many of the complaints concerning the war on poverty have been dignified beyond all proportion to the real substantive good which a particular component is producing.

Mr. GARDNER. Would the chairman yield again?

Chairman PERKINS. Yes.

Mr. GARDNER. I will tell you quite briefly, if you would allow me the time, of an experience I just had with Mr. Shriver and the OEO concerning a community action in Durham, N.C., which I intend to bring up later.

I called over asking for a copy of an OEO investigation report conducted in Durham, N.C., and was told by Mr. Shriver on the telephone that this material was not available to a Congressman. I asked him if it was available to a member of the Education and Labor Committee and was told no.

Mr. Shriver later stated that the OEO acted like the Federal Bureau of Investigation in that this was secret information.

Mr. Chairman, I think we are treading on very dangerous grounds when I feel that we have very legitimate grounds in a community action program that could set a national precedent and a Member of Congress calls asking honestly for information to back up a report, and he is given this type of answer by OEO.

Chairman PERKINS. Let Mr. Shriver comment on your statement there.

Mr. SHRIVER. Mr. Chairman, what I told the Congressman was this: From the beginning of OEO, and I think nearly all the Federal agencies have had a similar department, we have an inspection department which prepares reports which involve lots of extremely confidential information about people and situations. Reports of this type from OEO, as from other agencies of the U.S. Government, are considered executive branch documents. This is not a policy peculiar to OEO. That is No. 1.

No. 2, I told the Congressman that with respect to the election that was bothering him, an election in Durham, N.C.—

Mr. GARDNER. Would the gentleman yield?

Chairman PERKINS. Let Mr. Shriver answer.