

Mr. PUCINSKI. Mr. Chairman, may I proceed for a minute?
Chairman PERKINS. Yes.

Mr. PUCINSKI. I have asked all the county administrators of the poverty program in my State to give me their views and their suggestions on how we can improve this program; how they are getting along with it. I might tell you I am very happy to know that one letter from Kane County says:

It has also been suggested that in effect we abolish the Office of Economic Opportunity and transfer the programs to other departments. I would like to go on record as being totally against such a procedure. The Office of Economic Opportunity, with its short-lived existence to date, has proven beyond a doubt the necessity of this executive office and past experience has shown us the Department of Labor, Office of Education and others do not function effectively for the poor. This is understandable since their basic function is not to aid the "disenfranchised people" of this country but to the broader functions assigned to them.

A case in point for this argument is in the field of education. I am, by profession, a member of the education field and am very sorry to say that educators in general seem to regard the plight of the disadvantaged as a secondary problem.

My feeling is that the problems of poverty are so basic that we need an executive department to convey the needs of the poor to the President, Legislator, and to all of the people.

And to this I say amen. I agree with this person. I think it would be a tragic mistake to try to do away with your Office. I think you have done a good job. The only question I raise here, Mr. Shriver, is that I wonder whether you haven't dissipated a great deal of your energy and effectiveness by insisting very hard on that particular criteria and dissipating a great deal of the cooperation that you could get from local groups in moving forward with the program. That is the question I raise.

Mr. SHRIVER. Well, first of all, let me say that I don't think we have wasted a lot of time and energy. I think in the first year it was a novelty and did take a lot of constructive effort to get it going but the idea has caught hold, I believe, and the early labor pains, you might say, about that are past.

If I might, I just happen to have with me a memorandum which I issued last September on the very subject of involvement of the poor in all of the OEO programs. If the chairman would permit me I would like very much to get this in the record because even today almost a year later it does, I believe, properly express our opinion about this.

Chairman PERKINS. It will be inserted in the record.

Mr. PUCINSKI. Would you like to read it?

Chairman PERKINS. It is too long to read it.

(The document follows:)

SEPTEMBER 9, 1966.

MEMORANDUM FROM THE DIRECTOR

Subject: Involvement of the Poor in all OEO Programs.

Several recent developments prompt me to reaffirm for all in OEO and in OEO-related programs the necessity of including the poor in all our activities, including "national emphasis programs" like Head Start, Upward Bound, Legal Services, Health Centers, Foster Grandparents, etc.

Notable among these developments is the recent speech by the President, ordering an expansion of legal programs and neighborhood multi-purpose centers.