

and that they had drawn up criteria as to whom they would represent and under what circumstances?

Mr. JOHNSON. That is correct, almost half of our legal services grants have been made to existing legal aid societies to enable them to enlarge and improve their programs.

Mr. MEEDS. So that you have not imposed criteria upon local operating units or ones that you have taken in?

Mr. JOHNSON. Right, whether it is an existing Legal Aid Society or a brandnew entity, the local community develops the means test or financial criteria that are going to be used.

Mr. MEEDS. And in all instances these legal services programs are operated by the board of local practitioners, judges, and the people right in the community which it serves; is that correct?

Mr. JOHNSON. That is correct.

Mr. MEEDS. And you have no voice in the selection of these people?

Mr. JOHNSON. That is correct. It's almost like a little community action agency and it's formed very much the same way and its board is constituted very much the same way, except that a legal services program will generally have a majority of lawyers on its board.

Mr. MEEDS. Fine, thank you, Mr. Johnson.

Chairman PERKINS. Mr. Esch?

Mr. ESCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Gentlemen, I think it is significant that we are faced with the problem of separating those programs for which we have the greatest need from those for which such a pressing need does not exist during the shortage of funds.

In that light I would like to associate myself with those who favor much stronger support for the family planning programs. Testimony here and elsewhere indicates that we do need to move ahead with these programs rapidly.

With that, let's turn to the legal services, if we might.

Mr. JOHNSON, you stated we need approximately \$250 million a year for a total program that would meet all of the needs of your area and this might involve 32 million people. Do you envision this as an ongoing program? Are we going to develop a permanent structure for legal aid services for the poor from now into the next century? Or do you look at this as a terminal program?

Mr. JOHNSON. I feel that it is essential that we establish a program that would continue ad infinitum, because the poor are going to need justice ad infinitum. I would reserve the question as to whether or not there necessarily has to be a Federal program or that through the years there can be more and more State and local involvement, but I think it is essential that we get the program established and ongoing.

Mr. ESCH. I share with you the concern of making sure that the poor do have legal services. What I am trying to determine is whether these are short-range or long-range programs we are structuring. Now let's get into the other question, legal services.

You suggest you are an advocate of the poor in terms of governmental relations.

Do you envision your legal services group serving as a spokesman and advocate on some of the pressing social problems of the day, that