

Mr. GARDNER. Could I ask you also what restrictions or what requirements OEO would place on a group like the North Carolina fund? Would they operate, for example, under OEO restrictions?

Mr. BERRY. Yes, they operate under our guidelines and under our regulations, if they, in fact, conduct any programs.

Their primary function was to serve, at the request of the Governor, in the absence of an established technical assistance agency at the beginning of our program. They served as an effective liaison and catalyst for developing a community action agency enabling North Carolina to get off to a very fast start on the war on poverty in comparison with other States which did not have that preexisting agency which was completely indigenous to North Carolina.

Mr. GARDNER. May I say that I am, of course, very proud of the State of North Carolina and the fact we have looked into the area of poverty in our State and have been willing to meet the challenge.

I would like to ask Mr. Shriver several questions.

As you know, I am deeply concerned in the involvement of any OEO programs and any funding by OEO into the area of political activity. Do you have at your disposal any records so far as to the total number of registered voters OEO programs have been able to register during the last several years, or during 1966?

For example, I think I remember 50,000 voters were registered in Houston, Tex. by an OEO program there.

Mr. SHRIVER. I am almost certain that we don't have any such figures because we don't finance voter registration programs as an entity like, say, family planning or housing or adult education or manpower.

Mr. GARDNER. Excuse me one second. Do you consider this a vital part of your war on poverty, the registration of voters?

Mr. SHRIVER. I would not say that that by itself is; no.

What we are trying to do with the poor is this: We are trying to make the poor full participants in all aspects of American life, get them to the point where they can buy goods that are produced by American industry, get them participating in the form of getting justice, getting them participating in terms of education, getting them participating in PTA's, as Mrs. Green was talking about a little while ago. Also getting them to participate in community and civic life, so we have programs which we call citizen education, and in citizen education people could be taught, as we teach kids in school, how to run a voting machine, for example.

We try to encourage people to exercise their franchise. We try to get them to do it, but we are extremely sensitive to the political overtones of those programs and we have very strict rules to make sure that whenever activity of that type takes place, that it is on a strictly nonpartisan basis, that it is not in favor of a particular candidate and so on.

As I testified a day or so ago, in response to some questions from you, Mr. Congressman, many other Congressmen—as a matter of fact in the Senate and House—were both concerned about the same issue and they brought all of the programs and all of the personnel under the Hatch Act and we report regularly any instances that we find which are real or threatened invasions of the Hatch Act to the Civil Service Commission for followup.