

Mr. SHRIVER. I am pointing out the Civil Service Commission has the same responsibility. There is the same danger of other Federal employees of other agencies getting involved in political activities as there would be with us.

In addition to that, you talk about the one Operation Breakthrough. They are not literally OEO employees.

Mr. GARDNER. Do they operate under your restrictions?

Mr. SHRIVER. Excuse me, they are employees of Operation Breakthrough, but they are covered by the Hatch Act just as if they were Government employees, because Congress extended the restrictions of the Hatch Act to cover those people.

Now, what I am trying to make is this very significant point: They work for North Carolinians, they are North Carolinians. They are supervised by a board of directors which is broadly representative of the community in which they work, and that means on that board there are businessmen, religious people, social welfare people, poor people, and so on.

That board itself has got the capacity in these local situations, as thousands of people across the country, to make sure and to bring to light very rapidly any improper political activities.

Why? Because there are people of different political persuasions on those boards, so there is not going to be something that somebody gets away with in a place. Even if they do it for a little while, they are not going to be doing it long. They are watched by newspapers, Congressmen, by the board that is nonpartisan.

It is not just that we have the job of watching them, the community is watching them. That is one of the strengths of community action and why so little has gone wrong with it—because it is a community.

Chairman PERKINS. Time is expired.

Mr. Steiger?

Mr. STEIGER. I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina.

Mr. GARDNER. Would you, did this in any way, shape, or form help the war on poverty in Durham?

Mr. SHRIVER. I don't know that it occurred.

Mr. GARDNER. Let's use a test case. Suppose it happened in Durham, N.C. Do you think it would help the war on poverty?

Mr. SHRIVER. I wouldn't have any concept of why they would be doing it without knowing the full story. There may be some reasons I don't know about that was approved by the board of directors of Operation Breakthrough as being desirable or some reason I don't know about.

If there is a political violation, we vigorously pursue those. In addition to that, we would refer that to the Civil Service Commission. We have fired people, we have reprimanded people of my own party—that is the Democratic Party—for violations of the Hatch Act or of our own regulations which have been out ever since we started the program.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. Shriver, this all sounds very good and noble and I am certain that it has been the intention of your organization to try to police it to this extent. But I again say that I think it is a very dangerous trend.