

1028 ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ACT AMENDMENTS OF 1967

is implemented, that the Office of Economic Opportunity be permitted to file their response or any response that they so desire, side by side in the record, then there is no objection; is that correct?

Mr. BURTON. That is correct.

Chairman PERKINS. Agreed.

(Information follows:)

OEO STATEMENT ON OPERATION BREAKTHROUGH CG-66-178

Operation Breakthrough, Inc., currently operates under an OEO grant authorized by §§ 204-205 of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, as amended. It is a private non-profit agency instituted by the North Carolina Fund. By virtue of § 603 of the Economic Opportunity Act, as amended, Operation Breakthrough is subject to all the provisions of Section 1502(a) of Title 8 U.S. Code (sometimes called the Hatch Act).

OEO has reviewed a report made by John R. Buckley, Minority Chief Investigator, House Education and Labor Committee, dated June 9, 1967, relating to certain incidents of alleged political activity on the part of Operation Breakthrough and its employees. The report is based upon reports furnished to Mr. Buckley, some of which are vague and contradictory. We have, however, considered Mr. Buckley's report and found that, assuming the correctness of all of the information furnished to him and set forth in the report, it does not disclose any violations of federal law, Civil Service regulations or OEO regulations.

OEO sent its own inspector to Durham, North Carolina, to investigate charges of illegal political involvement of employees of Operation Breakthrough. Our investigation also revealed that no federal law, Civil Service regulations or OEO regulations appear to have been violated by Operation Breakthrough or any members of its staff.

An independent investigation by the Civil Service Commission is now in process. We have, of course, offered full cooperation to the Civil Service Commission. We do not at present know what its conclusions will be, but we have no present reason to expect any conclusions different from those already reached.

We find the instructions issued by the Executive Director of Operation Breakthrough to his staff regarding non-involvement in prohibited political activities an accurate reflection of OEO policy and we have no information indicating that his instructions were violated.

To date, there is no evidence that, while on the job, employees in any way violated their responsibility to be politically neutral.

What evidence does exist of support for any individual candidates relates to off-duty participation in non-partisan political activities. The election took place on a Saturday when, with few exceptions, the employees were not on duty. To the extent that individual employees not on duty participated on that day in activities favoring particular candidates in an election officially classified as non-partisan, this involved no violation of the partisan political activities restrictions of the Hatch Act nor of OEO regulations.

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REPORT DATED JUNE 19, 1967, MADE BY JOHN R. BUCKLEY, MINORITY CHIEF INVESTIGATOR, EDUCATION AND LABOR COMMITTEE, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, WASHINGTON, D.C., OF OPERATION BREAKTHROUGH, DURHAM, N.C., WILLIAM R. PURSELL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SUMMARY

On June 2, 1967, Operation Breakthrough employees advised that during the past year Operation Breakthrough has conducted a voter education community action program in Durham, North Carolina. In conjunction with this program, during the period January-March, Operation Breakthrough neighborhood workers reviewed voter registration books in the office of the Durham Board of Elections and copied registration lists. On April 1, April 8, and April 15, 1967, Operation Breakthrough employees, using the agency's automobiles, transported several hundred Durham citizens to Durham polling places for the purpose of registration. On April 29, 1967, Operation Breakthrough employees, using person-