

Mr. GARDNER. OEO has no basic guideline which they go by on a maximum or minimum of board members, or any criteria they have to follow?

Mr. HESS. The criteria that is followed is primarily that that is stated in the legislation, one-third representation of the poor. But at the neighborhood level you find, I think we can make a generalization, that more than half are the poor people themselves, because the neighborhood center is in the neighborhood and the neighborhoods are generally predominantly populated by poor people.

Mr. GARDNER. I would like to go back again to the Kirschner report. They say this is not working. Are you planning to continue along the same lines of having one-third or one-half of your local boards made up of poor people despite the report that I believe OEO has done which says they are ineffectual?

Mr. HESS. There are a few things that we are doing. That is, No. 1, providing them with some basic education, some fundamentals as to how to be effective participants on a board.

No. 2, we are trying to give them some general orientation as to the problems that they ought to be dealing with and how they might be dealt with.

I think in part some of the criticism that is mentioned here is the fact that in many cases there is a domination of the Community Action Agency, its board and its directors, over the neighborhood center, itself, the neighborhood center director and the neighborhood center council.

We are attempting now through a research and demonstration program, to learn whether there are more effective ways in which a neighborhood center can be effectively structured in its relationship to the CA.

Mr. GARDNER. May I quote one more section from the report. I am sure it must be discouraging to you. It says:

When asked what the centers had done for them and their families, between one-fourth and one-third of the clients report nothing. This is interesting because most of these clients were contacted either at the center or through center records which indicated they had received attention through center personnel.

Do you find this is just because of a lack of time in the program? Do you feel this will be overcome in time or is this an endless battle with your clients?

Mr. HESS. I don't know that it is an endless battle, but statistics are continuing to be improved. I think another statistic revealed in that report is one which says that a very large percentage of them feel that a neighborhood center just by its presence in the community and knowing that it is there and they can go there for services and the people reach out to them to help them, I think 90 percent thought this was a good feature of the neighborhood center.

But we are trying to improve our intake and outreach procedures so that the people in the community are more aware of what the services are and they are brought to them.

Chairman PERKINS. Mr. Dellenbach.

Mr. DELLENBACH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I apologize for having missed the first part of your testimony. I will be sure to read the transcript on this.