

Mr. SCHERLE. Now, under the Department of the Interior, who has responsibility if anything goes wrong under this program? Is it your responsibility as the Department head or is it your subordinates or are they subservient to the OEO?

Secretary UDALL. No. The way my Department is setup, the buck goes to my desk. So I will have to say I am responsible, Congressman. I do have with me today the two people who are the ones that I would look to primarily to make decisions, to alert me to the decisions that I have to make, Mr. Bennett, the Indian Commissioner for the Indian program, and Mr. Old Coyote, who handles the Job Corps program.

Mr. SCHERLE. Since OEO has come into existence, it has always been a concern of mine as to how this came to be a part of your Department. Were you obligated to take them or did you ask for them or just how did they come to be your responsibility?

Secretary UDALL. Congressman, there are two answers. Of course, OEO was given the broad responsibility it had toward poverty. We were aware all along, in fact we testified and it was our view, that the Indian people, because they are the most impoverished group, should participate in as many of the programs as possible. So, they were blanketed in terms of the way the legislation was written generally.

Generally, so far as the Job Corps centers are concerned, I go back to my days of Congressman, to something like the old CCC. Those of us who pushed this idea for several years were very pleased when the Job Corps, as it came to be known, was included as part of the total poverty program. Now there are two agencies that have large outdoor areas, the Department of Agriculture and the Forest Service, and my own Department with all the outdoor areas, and the question came up as to how should this be divided up between Interior and Agriculture.

This was a problem. That was quite a tug of war. Then we had the problem with us and OEO as to what they should do and what we should do. We wrestled around with this for several months. We finally came to a settlement and as I say, I think it worked out quite well.

Mr. SCHERLE. Mr. Secretary, as long as there still appears to be a problem of wrestling with the question as to who has responsibility, don't you think it would be a good idea if the responsibilities that you now have over certain segments of the OEO which have been assigned to you, if you just took them over completely and abolished the OEO to that extent?

Secretary UDALL. No; I really can't agree at all conscientiously on that. Let us take, for example, the Indian programs because both in terms of budget, in terms of people, in terms of drive, this has introduced a new element into the Indian picture. This has introduced an element that is competitive in the very best sense with the Bureau of Indian Affairs which, of course, has had the responsibility for over a century.

If you simply say, "Well, we will give you that portion of the budget, of the OEO budget that is now going to Indians and you get so much more money," I don't think this would be nearly as effective as having the focus that you have, the leadership, the drive you have in the Office of Economic Opportunity, itself.