

There would be just one thing, Mrs. Benson, that I would tend to ask, and I had a chance to scan the bulk of your testimony as it appears in written form.

As the various league groups throughout the country have made this assessment of the war on poverty, they haven't, I assume, had a chance to actually examine H.R. 10682 themselves, have they?

Mrs. BENSON. Well, many of them, I am sure, have, on their own behalf, but it hasn't been in print a great deal of the time. We described it to them the best we could before it was actually in print, and they were greatly relieved to see that we didn't miss the mark in any important way. I think most of them are aware of its major provisions, but not of the details. They will be very shortly, but they have not yet had a chance to be.

Mr. DELLENBACK. I think it is important that the league be aware, as you have undoubtedly made them aware, that H.R. 10682, as proposed, certainly doesn't make any move in the direction of disbanding the war on poverty. It is talking of making changes in it, in making in some instances, we think, significant additions thereto, and making some improvements therein, but we don't by any stretch of the imagination visualize it as a disbanding of the organizations, as you realize. For example, Community Action agencies, the program would still be continued, as an exceptionally fine part of what has been done, in my opinion, and many of the individual programs are good ones. I read you, as you make your comments on continuing the OEO, as really saying, if I listened correctly, that you think there ought to be some coordination in the various efforts made in the attack on the war on poverty. I don't read you as necessarily approving of everything that the Office of Economic Opportunity has done, or is doing. Am I correct in this?

Mrs. BENSON. Yes, I think I would like to add to that, as I believe I said in my statement, we don't give a sort of blanket approval to everything the Office of Economic Opportunity has done. We don't know about it. I am sure we don't know about a great many things that it has done. We have concentrated primarily on the education and employment aspects of the problems of poverty.

I would like to say a little bit more, and that is that we do feel that there is a need for an agency to do this coordinating. We question the ability of a council without powers to implement, and to actually originate, to carry out this coordination process. In other words, it is not just any old agency. I think we would need to be convinced that one should, for instance, abolish the OEO and set up another coordinating agency. We would like to see the OEO maintained and strengthened, to do the job it is doing, and the job the Congress wants it to do, that the Opportunity Crusade wants done, we feel, can be done better with the OEO than without it.

Now it would seem not too much point, to us, to disband. I don't think that is what you mean.

Mr. DELLENBACK. No, H.R. 10682 does not do that.

Mrs. BENSON. I know.

Mr. DELLENBACK. It sees drawbacks in the preamble, and seeks to improve that. As you are aware, it seeks to bring the private sector of the economy much more deeply into this war on poverty. I was very interested in reading, myself, in the newspaper, within the last