

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ACT AMENDMENTS OF 1967 2647

The Community Service Foundation was founded in 1940 by Mr. Willis T. Spivey as a philanthropic organization devoted to helping underprivileged people. The Community Action Fund and the Migrant Legal Services were established with OEO concurrence, apparently for the purpose of engaging in the antipoverty program.

The American Friends Service Committee received two grants from OEO—one in October 1965 for \$98,685 and the other in November 1966 for \$133,985. Both grants were for 1 year and were for assistance to migrants in 10 east coast States including Florida.

ALLEGATIONS OF POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

The allegations of political activities are to the effect that CAF, using Federal funds, conducted voter registration drives in the spring and fall of 1966, and two CAF employees acted as deputy voting registrars in Palm Beach County; that the number of Democratic voters registered by these CAF employees was out of proportion to the number of Republican voters registered; and that CAF employees transported voters to the polls.

The allegations, in general, are contained in three articles in the Fort Lauderdale News (December 21, 22, 23, 1966) by Howard Van Smith, whom Mr. Rogers suggested that we interview to obtain information in support of the allegations.

We interviewed Mr. Smith on January 6 and 9, 1967. In support of his statement concerning political activities by CAF employees, Mr. Smith gave us copies of the three articles which he had written, but he had no further documentary evidence. He furnished us the names of persons, as indicated below, who were said to have personal knowledge of political activities of CAF employees.

Specific allegations made by Mr. Smith and the results of our investigation of these allegations are summarized below.

CAF employees acted as deputy voting registrars

Mr. Smith said that two CAF employees—Mr. Leonard Smith and Miss Margaret Taylor—were appointed as deputy voting registrars in Palm Beach County and thus were able to go into the fields, clinics, and camps and register migrant workers "on the spot" and that no other Florida county had appointed CAF employees as deputy voting registrars.

Horace Beasley, Supervisor of Elections for Palm Beach County, confirmed that two CAF employees were appointed as deputy voting registrars, but he identified them as Leonard Smith appointed in September 1966 and Mrs. Myrtle Walker appointed in February 1966 (rather than Margaret Taylor). Mr. Beasley said that the only specific requirement that a person must meet to serve as a deputy is to be a resident of the county and that he determines by interview whether a person is qualified to serve in this capacity.

Number of Democratic voters registered by CAF employees was out of proportion to number of Republican voters registered

One of the newspaper articles written by Howard Van Smith stated that Leonard Smith of CAF registered 1,700 voters with a ratio of 44 Democrats to 1 Republican. During our interview, Mr. Van Smith said that he had been told by Mr. "Red" Simon, an employee of the Florida State Employment Service, that Leonard Smith of CAF had explained his disproportionate registration of Democrats to Republicans by saying that the CAF employees explained to the registrants what the Democrats had done for them and what the Republicans had done. Mr. Van Smith also said that Mrs. Frances Harper, a nurse employed by the Palm Beach County Welfare Department, and another nurse who preferred not to be identified had heard Leonard Smith of CAF discussing politics with migrant workers to an excessive degree.

In an interview on January 31, 1967, "Red" Simon corroborated the statement attributed to him by Mr. Smith, but said that he had not heard CAF employees advise farm workers to register as Democrats.

Mrs. Frances Harper told us that she had worked in the same room at Belle Glade in which Leonard Smith of CAF had registered voters but that she had not heard Leonard Smith or anyone else attempting to influence the party selection of registrants. Mrs. Harper told us also that she had been called by Howard Van Smith but that she had declined to talk to him.

Both Dr. Thomas P. Hardeman and Richard F. Wiggins, then president (since resigned) and program director, respectively, of CAF, stated that they had no knowledge that CAF employees attempted to influence migrant workers to register as Democrats.