

discussion over the last few years with OEO, it would be the feeling that we would not want the Office of Economic Opportunity abandoned at this time, and the CAP or CAA agencies moved to the Department of HEW, notwithstanding, we feel HEW does a very good job in administering many of the programs we are involved in.

I think that we do feel, as Mr. McDermott has pointed out, that as these programs are tested, evaluated, and accepted on a limited basis in which they are now being implemented throughout the country, it will serve as an incentive for other counties and cities to pick up these same programs and make them part of their governmental fabric within their own communities.

At that time, it would appear that it would be desirable for those programs to be put in HEW which is—which have the structure of the traditional, if I may, Federal-State-local arrangement, rather than the innovative OEO program, which is somewhat a part from the local government and local body politic.

Mr. DELLENBACK. I am not, again, quite sure that I understand the “why.”

You indicate this extensive experience with HEW and with OEO. You do not feel this change should be accomplished at this time even though you ultimately subscribe to the concept of such spinoff or such movement over.

Why not at this particular time?

Mr. WARD. I don't think that we would say ever we would want OEO itself to be spun off into HEW, and it would be our observation at this time.

Mr. DELLENBACK. Why not?

Mr. WARD. Because we feel HEW would not be in a position to act in this coordinated mechanism in spite of the fact that we do have these joint convenor memorandums that the President has issued to try to coordinate various programs and functions which are administered by different agencies.

Mr. DELLENBACK. Which programs could not be so coordinated?

Mr. WARD. It would seem the neighborhood centers which have been developed—I think there are 14 of them this year—I believe that HUD is involved, I believe HEW is involved—I am not sure of the other Federal agencies. It seems that OEO has been able to act as a spark-plug, as a type of—I hate to use the word again—innovating group, which can bring them together. At least they have been designated that by Congress and by Executive orders, and it would appear this would be the time to give them more time and see how effective they are going to be in bringing this kind of program together.

Mr. DELLENBACK. You are talking now in terms of keeping OEO as a permanent agency, then?

Mr. WARD. At this time; yes, sir.

Mr. DELLENBACK. You think it should be indefinite in duration. You are not talking about the Office, the Office of Economic Opportunity ever terminating its operations but continuing indefinitely in the Government?

Mr. WARD. As long as poverty is facing us to the extent it is.

Mr. DELLENBACK. Assuming we have this as a smaller and smaller problem, but a permanent problem, you would recommend OEO be continued indefinitely?