Chairman PERKINS. Do you feel that these programs more or less have served as a stabilizer to prevent rioting?

Mr. ROTHMAN. I would say they have, sir. Unfortunately, as we have said in our testimony, we have not reached down far enough. I think it is only as we reach really into the hard core of poverty in our ghettos can we really begin to develop the stable factors in the community that will eliminate the elements that are rioting.

I think we have to recognize that we are touching a lot of people but not nearly enough.

Chairman PERKINS. Mr. Biemiller, I notice you have made a strong pitch to keep the CAP program within the OEO and keep the programs all under one tent, so to speak.

Do you feel strongly that that is necessary?

Mr. BIEMILLER. Yes, and for the various reasons we have outlined in our testimony, we think it is essential that there be one focal point in the Government for the war on poverty. Obviously, we would expect the OEO to continue as it has been doing, that is, to utilize other agencies of government in the program.

I think, by and large, it has done this rather intelligently, but I repeat we feel very strongly there must be one focal point and that is the OEO.

Chairman PERKINS. I am well aware of the way in which it operates. There has been criticism from some groups, but just assume the OEO were transferred to the Department of HEW as proposed in the opportunity crusade.

How do you visualize the poor would be affected?

Mr. ROTHMAN. We feel that in the first place there would be no special pleader for the poor in the councils of government; that is, no department, no agency, no single unit that had the special responsibility.

HEW does a good job in this area, Labor does a good job, Agriculture does a good job but they have broad responsibilities. They have to serve the Nation as a whole and this makes sense, but we feel that the poor need a special pleader.

Secondly, we say that once these programs go into existing agencies, then they have to compete for budget, for staff, for the ear of the administration with other agencies that are ongoing which may not have the urgency in terms of meeting the needs of the poor.

We feel that because of this there has got to be one focal point in government that will direct its attention solely to the problems of the poor and do all it can to meet these problems.

Chairman PERKINS. Do you feel that OEO and the CAP programs as presently constituted are making progress to the extent possible up to the present time and has experience been gained where more progress will be made if given the opportunity to remain in existence?

Mr. ROTHMAN. Yes, sir. I think one of the things we have to recognize is the newness of the agency. It is not quite 3 years old, actually, in terms of its operational life, and we have to recognize that they have been in a sense a trial-and-error agency in the sense there has been no guideline laid down in the area in which they have been working.

Although this does not mean a lot of things have not been done in the antipoverty field because there have been.