

**STATEMENT OF BRAILEY ODHAM, PRESIDENT, ORANGE COUNTY
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY, INC., ORLANDO, FLA.**

Mr. ODHAM. I appreciate and more than you know I have appreciated and enjoyed today the fine work that this committee is doing in trying to get at the root problem of poverty and how to deal with the explosive situation that does exist in America.

My interest, in addition to a general interest in America, is in the community action program in Orange County, Orlando, Fla.

Last week Dr. Douglass of Rollins College was brought here at the invitation of Congressman Guernsey and testified to this committee many things which I think are untrue, and I felt that it was my responsibility as president of that committee to give you the honest picture in Orange County.

First of all, Orlando is a conservative area and I think that Congressman Guernsey truly reflects a political attitude of our community.

The OEO is not an outstanding success in Orange County in the sense that it does not have the support of the power structure or some of the organizations like the dental society and the medical society, and we do have critics.

We have one fellow named Jake Braswell who is a professional griper and I have brought with me a copy of an editorial that appeared on TV.

It shows just how unreasonable some of these people can be.

We have a good Headstart program. I was glad to hear today the testimony about Headstart. We have 600 children. I have heard much testimony about the need for additional funds.

We could have handled 3,600 children in a full-time Headstart program. We have 650 in a summer Headstart program in addition to our full-year program.

We did get one of the summer youth employment programs just recently for the city of Orlando. It is employing 125 youths. One month after the mayor asked our local committee for help, the regional office in Orlando had funded the program for \$73,000 and the program was in effect within 30 days after the little incident there that brought attention from the city that maybe they had better look out to the Negro community and get a program underway and it was funded through the Orlando office in 30 days.

It is for a small amount. I think it should have been for as many as 500, but hearing here today how little is being done for Detroit and some of the other areas, it has given me a better understanding of just how big and broad this program really is.

We do not have in our community the cooperation of the dental society which presents somewhat of a problem. They are a conservative organization, but I did hear some comment here today about the one-third poverty people and one-third of our board is from the poverty area, the Negro citizens, and I want to go on record as saying they are the bright spot in our whole board organization and in our whole community program as far as I am concerned.

They are very interested in the problem. They have an intimate knowledge of the conditions in the neighborhoods, of the poverty conditions, and they have made a great contribution to our program.