

3994 ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ACT AMENDMENTS OF 1967

Rights and duties to OEO and to the Consortium are ill-defined and widely varying.

Thus, the CAPCom is in the position of having the most poorly defined role in the CAP system. This seems to have worked to the detriment of its effective functioning.

d. Consortium

The Consortium's duties, which are volunteered by the Consortium, tend to be viewed by reservation-located elements in the system as rights of the Consortium rather than duties. The perception of the Consortium's role by the reservation elements, is often confused and ambiguous. Thus the Consortium is frequently asked to do things which it would rather not, and not asked to do what it would gladly do.

The CAP structure, as a unit, does not appear to be directionally oriented—does not seem to have common goals, nor a shared understanding of how to proceed jointly. We find the roots of this in two areas: in the nature of the application—which does not require directional orientation, and in the present mode of operation, which seems not to permit it. Since OEO does not require mutual action by the diverse elements of the system on critical issues, the natural tendency is for those in ascendancy at any point to simply assert their unilateral dominance.

In addition to this lack of integration in implementation, programs are not designed to be self-maintaining. Should OEO funds be withdrawn, the components would collapse immediately. An integrated program is not inherently self-maintaining, but only an integrated program can be made self-maintaining. The characteristics and the advantages of self-maintaining programs will be discussed in a subsequent section.

C. TENDENCIES IN INDIAN CAP DEVELOPMENT

In late 1964 and early 1965, representatives from OEO visited the six reservations studied, among others, bringing with them the promise of the possibility of alleviating the effects of poverty, and the proffered hope of eliminating poverty itself.

Prior to these visits, members of an Indian Task Force had been working together in Washington to lay down guidelines for bringing Indians into the War on Poverty program. The crux of the matter lay, as they saw it, in whether Indians have the ability to identify their own problems and needs and to determine for themselves what ought to be done. The assessment by the Task Force was that Indians, in fact, are capable of this.

On this basis, Drs. Robert Roessel and Forest Gerard visited sixteen Indian reservations. They spoke to the tribal councils, to interest them in the possibility and potentialities of defining their own needs and setting up their own programs. The responses of the tribal councils varied more in the quickness of their replies than in expression of interest: All sixteen tribes developed and submitted proposals.

These proposals, in many cases, were rejected or returned by OEO because they requested funding for programs that were not within the legal purview of OEO, or which were not practicable in the light of fiscal realities, or for some other undisclosed reason. The return of these proposals strained relations between Indian tribal councils and the Task Force, which had to return to the reservations and explain that tribal councils could have those programs they wanted, but within certain limits.

A major problem involved the "realism" of proposals: asking for enough money, but not too much (e.g., Tesuque Pueblo put together a well-conceived million-dollar program package for about three hundred people). The acceptance, by the tribal councils, of the need for "realism" was, in fact, acceptance of OEO guidelines for definition of the situation. The problems of poverty and potential programs were, thus, conceptually limited.

Proposals for components for the first year of operation, submitted by the six reservations following this initial experience, were heavily oriented toward education and toward juveniles. The components funded by OEO increased this orientation by accepting a higher percentage of education than non-education component proposals.

In the first year the chief issues raised by CAP components were: how big would the OEO program become, and who would control it. On each reservation