

SHRIVER ANSWERS HIS CRITICS

IN TESTIMONY GIVEN BY Sargent Shriver before the House Committee on Education and Labor, the Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity, said in part:

"Let me make my position unmistakably clear. When I became Director of OEO, I took an oath—a simple oath to defend this country against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

"I consider those who would mock our laws, shatter our peace, burn our homes and kill our people to be enemies of our country. To promote, encourage, tolerate or excuse violence is against every intention I have had, against every action I have taken since I came to Washington in 1961.

"The programs of the War on Poverty and the countless people who have volunteered or are employed to carry them out are squarely on the side of law and order...

"In the 27 cities that have had riots this summer, there are 12,128 persons who are direct employees of OEO funded agencies. Most of

them neighborhood workers, health aides, clerical staff, community organizers, live in or near the ghetto neighborhoods in which the riots occurred."

In these 27 cities, a total of 6,733 persons were arrested. In the same 27 cities, six of the 12,128 paid poverty workers were arrested. To date, none of the six has come to trial and none has been convicted.

"In 27 cities, the total estimated damage to buildings in the ghettos is \$273,652,800. OEO pays the rent on 491 facilities in these 27 cities. Not a single one was burned. Not a single one was looted. And the total damage was confined to a few broken plate glass windows."

Why? Because like buildings displaying the Red Cross in time of war, the people recognized that these facilities were among the few places where they could find refuge and aid. In Detroit alone, 3,783 persons were arrested.

"There are 1,547 paid anti-poverty workers in that city but not a single one is under arrest."

Summing up the results of the six weeks of hearings that have been held on the Fiscal 1968 poverty legislation, Mr. Shriver noted that of the 64 witnesses who had addressed themselves to the question of whether there should be an Office of Economic Opportunity, only one had called for the elimination of the agency.

"In conclusion," Mr. Shriver declared, "I want to say a word about ghettos. Right away we think of a city slum. But there is another kind of ghetto—an interior ghetto of the mind where we seal off parts of democracy that don't suit us, where we box off our oblig-

ations to justice and shut out our commitments to fairness."

This ghetto of the mind is no less stinking and rotten than the ghetto of the city. Right now, all of us have ghettos to get out of. The sooner we begin, the sooner this country can become what

its founders meant it to be.

"In truth, the War on Poverty is not being fought for the poor. It is for all Americans—because all Americans stand to gain by it. Not just with peace in our cities, but also peace in our hearts."