

JUDGE ORDERS HALT TO OEO DISMANTLING

Says OEO Programs Cannot Be Abolished By Administration

A Washington, D.C. judge ordered a halt to the illegal break-up of OEO as currently being conducted by the administration appointee, Howard Phillips.

Judge William Jones said on April 11, that the administration could not abolish OEO programs, particularly community action agencies (CAAs), since it was clearly the intent of Congress that the War on Poverty should be continued.

He ordered Phillips to cease his phase-out activities immediately, saying that they were unauthorized by law, illegal and in excess of statutory authority. Judge Jones declared that only Congress could terminate the program, either by failing to supply funds or forbidding expenditures of further funds.

Michael C. Harper, Executive

Director for one of the two CAAs in Alaska, stated that this is a tremendously encouraging first step in this long battle to save community action.

"We must now see to it that Congress can appropriate a bill that will not be vetoed by President Nixon for funding of community action. What this action has done is simply bought us more time to organize and rally from the grassroots up so that, hopefully, Congress will react very soon," Harper commented.