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White House Task Force on Education

INTERVIEW WITH MR. ARTHUR B. WRIGLEY, REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE, MANPOWER
DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAM, DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION,
DEAP - MAY 12, 1965

Function:

Mr. Wrigley stated that his function, until recently, has been limited to the MDTA and ARA programs. However, he is expecting further decentralization of the Vocational Education program in the near future. He expects a GS-15 supervisor over the entire VoEd program and four subject matter specialists in the four basic categories of VoEd. The first man has come on board but he is currently using him primarily on the MDTA program. He also has one other MDTA representative, which makes for a total of three people for the New York region.

His function with respect to the MDTA program is that of reviewing the educational features of proposed occupational training programs that have been initiated by local employment services. The local employment service determines placement needs that can't be filled, the existence of unemployed persons who (with training) may fill the gap, the number to be trained, the occupations, and the kinds of skills and applicants needed. The local employment service also is responsible for selecting people for training; including testing, screening, counseling, etc. The local proposal is sent to the State Department of Employment Security and the State Division of VoEd. These determine where the training job can be done most economically and effectively. The institution then prepares a curriculum, identifies the need for equipment, supplies, space, etc. The package is then reviewed at a joint session at which four parties are represented: the two State Agencies of Vocational Education and Employment Security, and the Labor Department's Bureau of Employment Security; and the OE's MDTA representative.

Approvals at this level are not questioned in Washington, but are made conditional on availability of funds. The Labor Department finally determines at what point funds are available to permit a project to begin. The project cannot begin until the local OE representative gives the authority to the State.

Mr. Wrigley was very proud of the results achieved by the program. He indicated that over 70% of those who completed training have been successfully placed in employment and that a very high percentage of people who start complete their training.

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ARA problems are handled on an almost identical basis as the MDTA program, except that the money comes from a different source. These are a very small part of the whole.

Mr. Wrigley indicated that his relationships with the Commissioner's Representative are cordial, but that the latter provides only minor housekeeping services. Similarly, the DHEW Regional Director has only minor impact on his role. There is limited priority to participating in occasional meetings to keep other DHEW Field Representatives posted on what is going on.

Problems and Recommendations:

Mr. Wrigley stated that his big problem is that the workload is more than he can handle. There is a tremendous push to get programs underway quickly. While he is authorized to have one more position filled, he has not been able to get one. He must rely entirely on recruiting at the central office level to help fill the position.

Another problem he cited was the reliance on the Department of Labor for the funding. He felt that things would be smoother if the money could come directly to DHEW. Delays in releasing funds now have sometimes caused difficulties because of the loss of facilities, teachers, etc., while waiting for funds to come through.

He also said that there is inadequate control over where the money for disadvantaged persons is going out of the total pool, including supplemental and demonstration projects, on-the-job training, etc. He feels that there should be an over-all review of how the money is distributed to make sure it is going where it can do the most good.

cc: Mr. Ink
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