

October 14, 1966

ADDRESSEES: Editor, New York Times
Editor, Washington Evening Star
Editor, Washington Post

To the Editor:

A number of news stories have appeared concerning the formation of Mississippi Action for Progress, Inc., (MAP), an organization intended to establish Head Start programs in Mississippi. Some of them have been accurate; some of them, and most notably one in the New Republic, have been gross distortions of the truth. The following information represents an attempt to set the record straight.

- ITEM: MAP is not going to strip the Head Start programs which it operates of its community action function. Its by-laws specifically provide for county committees which will be formed from those participating in the programs in each county. These committees will have direct responsibility for program direction, policy recommendations and personnel supervision. It is MAP's deepest hope that within a very short time these committees can be spun off as independent units operated as CAP boards under separate financing and their own direction.
- ITEM: MAP's board will not be entirely handpicked by its first twelve members. Six additional directors will be elected by and from the counties in which MAP will operate Head Start programs. This too, is stipulated in the by-laws.
- ITEM: It is a lie to assert or imply that State NAACP members met secretly with Senator John Stennis prior to or after the MAP's formation. They have never done so. It is a lie to assert that the White House contacted Roy Wilkins who in turn contacted Aaron Henry to serve on the new board. The only contact was made between MAP's board members and OEO representatives. It is a lie to say that any White House assistance or Douglas Winn had any part to play in putting the MAP Board together. They did not. Winn played absolutely no role in contacting or convincing anyone on MAP's Board to serve.

(More)

COPY LIBRARY

- ITEM: It is a mistake to say that Owen Cooper and Aaron Henry were at any time co-chairmen of MAP. At MAP's first organizational meeting held on October 6, Cooper was elected chairman and Merrill Lindsey was elected Vice-Chairman.
- ITEM: Oliver Emmerich is not a Loyalist Democrat, but a long-time Republican, having backed Eisenhower in 1952 and '56 and Nixon in 1960. Several other Board members are not Democrats or Republicans, but Independents. On and on we go.
- ITEM: It is a misstatement to say that this Board is intended as a political vehicle of any kind. Owen Cooper has no intention of running for Governor in 1967. If anyone knows anything about Mississippi politics at THE NEW REPUBLIC he must know that service on a bi-racial committee of this sort would automatically destroy any white's political ambitions in Mississippi. Further, an item in the by-laws of MAP specifically states that no board member can run for any elective office, other than relatively inconsequential local ones such as school board.
- ITEM: It is standard language in all non-profit corporation charters to say that the charter need not be made public. Just as a charter also says that there will be no issuance of stock, etc., the charter itself is and was a matter of public record.
- MAP is a creation of its members. There have never been conversations, deals, or manipulations with or by any Mississippi official or any White House official in establishing the organization. In this case, I would suggest that final judgment on what MAP may do be suspended until it has a chance to function.

/s/ Hodding Carter, III
HODDING CARTER, III
Editor, Greenville Delta
Democrat-Times, and
Board Member of Mississippi
Action for Progress, Inc.