

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C.

April 5, 1967

Dear Mr. President:

In 1965 the Office of Economic Opportunity operated extensive Head Start programs in Mississippi under the sponsorship of a group called the Child Development Group of Mississippi. Their operations were carried on in such a haphazard and what I thought was an unlawful manner that I requested Senator Hayden to send investigators from the Senate Appropriations Committee to Mississippi, which he did. Based on their report, and on the report filed later by the auditors of O.E.O., there was some \$500,000 questioned or unaccounted for. The Appropriations Committee at my suggestion adopted an amendment requiring the Director, before additional funds could be allowed to any group, personally to certify that he was satisfied the parties were capable of handling the funds.

In the year 1966, through the same channels I presented additional proof of lax and perhaps unlawful operations, which was verified in part by the auditors of O.E.O., and in September, 1966 Director Shriver denied the CDGM any further funds and issued a rather strong statement giving the reasons, which I attach hereto.

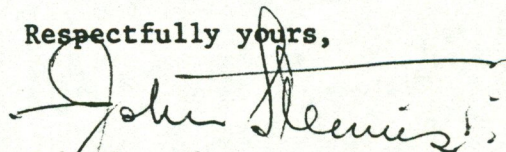
In early 1967, without any material change in the personnel of this CDGM group, Director Shriver reinstated this group and allotted additional funds to them, and they are now beginning to operate.

As a part of this new operation, Director Shriver is setting up four of these new units under CDGM to operate in my home county -- Kemper County. I took this matter up with him personally some five or six weeks ago and requested that he not permit this group to operate in Kemper County, but that I had no objection to some well managed Head Start program under local responsible leadership operating in my home county. Later I wrote him a letter protesting the opening up of these Head Start programs under CDGM in my home county and he has failed to answer my letter.

I am satisfied, Mr. President, that the opening up of these units in Kemper County through the CDGM is intended as a direct affront to me and I accept it as such, and therefore request that you forbid O.E.O. to operate these units through CDGM in my home county. We have other groups in the State that are operating Head Start programs in a reputable way, and this protest does not extend to them.

I will thank you for seeing that this matter has early attention.

Respectfully yours,



John Stennis
United States Senator

The President
The White House
Washington, D. C.