

[TRANSCRIPT OF NEARLY ILLEGIBLE LETTER FROM BOB MOSES TO JAMES
FARMER (original is faded photocopy of a typescript letter)]

Council of
Federated
Organizations

1017 Lynch Street
(601)352-9605
Jackson, Mississippi 39203

March 2, 1964

Mr. James Farmer
Congress of Racial Equality
30 Park Road
New York, New York

Dear Jim:

I have with me a copy of a news release from the Washington Post regarding your statements to the press on the attempts to unseat the Mississippi delegations at the conventions this summer.

It is my feeling that the timing of this statement was premature, and, if I am not mistaken, a breach of our agreement to wait until a later date to announce this specific program. Also, the indications from the lead sentence and the headline ("CORE to Seek Convention Seats") is that this is exclusively a CORE project. Although the body of the article goes on to state that CORE is announcing that attempts will be made, and is, in fact, neutral as to exactly who is doing the organizing, the impression left with the reader is that unquestionably CORE is.

On the other hand, a recent article in Newsweek magazine states that SNCC is moving on Mississippi this summer and while it also doesn't say that SNCC is the only organization involved in the project, the impression left is that the summer project is a SNCC project.

In both cases, it is the errors of omission, the partial truths, which make an otherwise accurate and useful press release inaccurate and confusing to many people in and outside of Mississippi.

It may be that it is best for all press releases of the organizations to go their merry way, regardless of fact, pretenending the other organizations don't exist in the Mississippi operation. While that would be the easy way out for the public relations staffs, it is the hard way for the Negro people of Mississippi who are in desperate need of a united front to give them psychological courage to face an overwhelming adversary. There can be no Hattieburg's, Canton's, Greenwood's, Jackson's, in Mississippi, if the people are forced to divide their loyalties between opposing programs of Civil Rights organizations.

We recognize that individual persons, groups and organizations have and will continue to retain their loyalties to their specific Civil Rights organizations; still, it is possible to all work together on the same program. But if the national organizations insist on releasing press statements which give the impression that the entire program is their own, then that will inexorably lead to cynicism and demoralization of the staff which must work very closely together in the field, and, as you well know, keep a constant tension to avoid making any slips. Under such tedious conditions it is impossible to carry an extra tension of Civil Rights interorganizational politics.

I hope that at our March 15 COFO meeting in Jackson, we can further discuss this matter, and draw up some guide lines for all future releases. As a press statement will be issued following our conference, I feel it is imperative that your public relations staff also be represented at the conference.

I look forward to seeing you on March 15.

Freedom,
[signed: Bob hello Moses]

Mr. Robert Moses

cc: Mr. James Forman

RM/na