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HARVARD'S RESPONSIBILITY IN MISSISSIPPI

The Harvard Crimson  
Cambridge, Mass.  
Dear Editor,

The April 30 and May 5, 1964, issues of the Crimson carry a debate on what might happen in Mississippi this summer and who holds responsibility for the outcome.

We maintain that the President and Fellows of Harvard University, and Harvard University as an institution, must bear heavy responsibility for what has happened and will happen in Mississippi.

Harvard University, through its holdings, plays an important role in the dominant economic, social and political institutions of Mississippi. Let's see how.

According to reports filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, for 1961, the President and Fellows of Harvard College are the largest stockholder in Middle South Utilities, Inc. Furthermore, Paul C. Cabot, Treasurer of the University, is Chairman of the State Street Investment Corp., which is the third largest stockholder in Middle South, according to the same report. Again, Thomas D. Cabot, Overseer of the University, is a member of the Advisory Board of Massachusetts Investors Trust, which is the second largest stockholder in Middle South. These three entities control 4.5 percent of the outstanding stock of Middle South. In a corporation with outstanding shares amounting to almost 19 million, this is a formidable voting block. What is Middle South Utilities? It is a holding company.

Among the operating companies wholly-owned by Middle South is the Mississippi Power and Light Company, which sells electric power to the Western half of Mississippi. Thus, Harvard University as an institution, and through at least two members of its ruling body, is intimately involved in the economy of Mississippi. What does that involvement imply?

We can show that Harvard University, through Mississippi Power and Light, is closely connected to the largest banks, the White Citizens' Council, and the Democratic Party of Mississippi, which are the dominant economic, social and political institutions of Mississippi.

Electric power and finance capital form the keystone of industrialization, with which Mississippi is most concerned today. Mississippi Power and Light is the largest producer of electric power in Mississippi. Electric power is fundamental to commerce and industry. Deposit Guaranty Bank and Trust Company of Jackson and the First National Bank of Jackson are the two largest banks in the State of Mississippi. You cannot do business in the state without dealing, directly or indirectly with one of the two banks. Therefore, Harvard's connections with Mississippi electric power and finance capital will reveal its strong hand in the Mississippi Way of Life.

The White Citizens' Council, through its connections in political and economic structures dominates the prevailing social policies throughout the state. We will show that electric power and finance capital play a leading role in the White Citizens' Council of Mississippi. Harvard is involved in the White Citizens' Council's work through its connections with Mississippi electric power and finance capital.

The overwhelmingly dominant political machinery in Mississippi is the Mississippi Democratic Party. We will show that electric power, finance capital and the White Citizens' Council dominate the Democratic Party. Harvard plays an important role in Mississippi politics through its ties with Mississippi electric power, finance capital and the White Citizens' Council.

We will try to show that because of Harvard University's important role in Mississippi affairs, the University must bear part of the responsibility for the way of life there. The University must face the fact that it has an important say in the future of Mississippi and will bear responsibility for how that future unfolds.

Now let's look at Harvard's connections in Mississippi.

First, R. B. Wilson of Jackson, Miss., is a member of the Board of Directors of Middle South Utilities, whose largest stockholder is Harvard University. Mr. Wilson is also President and a member of the Board of Directors of Mississippi Power and Light, which is wholly-owned by Middle South Utilities. In addition, Mr. Wilson is a member of the Board of Directors of the Deposit Guaranty Bank and Trust Company of Jackson, the largest bank in the state of Mississippi.

Then there is Wm. P. McMullen, who is a Director of Mississippi Power and Light. Mr. McMullen is also Chairman, Chief Executive Officer, a Director and important stockholder of Deposit Guaranty Bank and Trust Company. Furthermore, Mr. McMullen occupies a seat on the Board of Directors of the Jackson White Citizens' Council.

Another member of the Board of Directors of Mississippi Power and Light is Robert M. Hearin, who is President, Director and member of the Advisory Committee of the First National Bank of Jackson, and controls the second largest percentage of outstanding stock of First National Bank. Mr. Hearin is a past president of the Jackson Chamber of Commerce and now a Director of the United States Chamber of Commerce. In addition he is a colonel on the official staff of Mississippi Governor Paul B. Johnson.

The Vice President and Secretary of Mississippi Power and Light is Alex Rogers, who was also appointed By Governor Johnson as a colonel on his official staff.

The Public Information Director for Mississippi Power and Light is Alex McKeigny, who holds a seat on the Board of Directors of the Jackson Citizens' Council.

Thus, we can see already Harvard's connections with electric power, finance capital, the White Citizens' Council and the Mississippi Democratic Party.

Let's explore this further.

A scoreboard of Directors of Deposit Guaranty Bank and Trust Company would read the following way. On the Deposit Guaranty Board there is one member who sits on the Board of Middle South Utilities (principal stockholder, Harvard University). There are two Deposit Guaranty Board members who sit on the Board of Mississippi Power and Light (wholly owned by Middle South Utilities). There are five Deposit Guaranty Board members who sit on the Board of Directors of the Jackson White Citizens' Council. And there are two Deposit Guaranty Board members who are colonels on Governor Johnson's staff.

A similar scoreboard for the First National Bank would read this way. One First National Board member is on the Board of the Jackson White Citizens' Council. And four First National Board members are colonels on the Governor's staff.

We have seen above that Harvard has important connections with the White Citizens' Council and the Mississippi Democratic Party through the Board of Mississippi Power and Light. It's important to understand what the White Citizens' Council and Democratic Party of Mississippi believe and stand for.

In the North, White Citizens' Council supporters may talk about States Rights and Constitutional government. But in Mississippi it sounds much different. And its main purposes are to prevent Negroes from voting, to maintain white supremacy and racial segregation in all phases of life, and to squash any semblance of Negro or Negro and white organization which is concerned with making changes in the Mississippi pattern of life. The White Citizens' Councils principal techniques are economic intimidation and political control of the state.

Following is a statement from Mississippi Governor Vardaman in 1907, which the White Citizens' Council includes in its standard literature packet available from the Greenwood headquarters of the Council:

"The Negro should never have been trusted with the ballot. He is different from the white man. He is congenitally unqualified to exercise the most responsible duty of citizenship. He is physically, mentally, morally, racially and eternally the white man's inferior. There is nothing in the history of his race, nothing in his individual character, nothing in his achievements of the past nor his promise for the future which entitles him to stand side by side with the white man at the ballot box...

"We must repeal the Fifteenth and modify the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. Then we shall be able in our legislation

to recognize the Negro's racial peculiarities, and make laws to fit them. This would leave the matter precisely as was intended by the father of the Republic."

At a Harrison County White Citizens' Council banquet on May 2, 1964, Master of Ceremonies Raymond Butler ended his remarks with the following statement: "Throughout the pages of history there is only one third class race which has been treated like a second class race and complained about it--and that race is the American Nigger."

Mr. Butler introduced several important Mississippians who had attended the banquet. Most prominent among them was the Chairman of the State Democratic Executive Committee, Bidwell Adam. Mr. Adam is also Chairman of the Harrison County Democratic Executive Committee.

Mr. Butler also introduced the Sheriff of Harrison County, the President of the Gulfport Port Authority and state representative Jim True, a Council member.

The guest speaker at the banquet was Gen. Edwin A. Walker, who was introduced by Medford Evans. Mr. Evans, who holds a Ph.D. from Yale University, is a Consultant to the Citizens' Councils of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina. Mr. Evans is Secretary of the Louisiana States Rights Party, Coordinator of the John Birch Society and was Consultant to General Edwin A. Walker at the Senate Preparedness Sub-Committee hearings when Gen. Walker was recalled from Germany.

Mr. Evans said of the White Citizens' Councils:

"It is the only organization which recognizes...that the key to world revolution, in which we are involved against the revolutionaries, is the racial issue. People are increasingly aware of this due to the racial extremists and our Ambassador of Intelligence in the North: Governor Wallace."

Of General Walker, Evans said:

"The most important individual in the United States is Gen. Edwin A. Walker."

During his speech, Gen. Walker noted that half the proceeds of the banquet would be sent to Governor Wallace's Presidential primary campaigns.

How does the Citizens' Council operate?

A voter registration drive and boycott of white merchants in Canton this year was met with large numbers of arrests of civil rights workers and local citizens and with economic reprisals against Canton's Negro residents. The State Senator

and two State Representatives from Madison County (in which Canton is located) are White Citizens' Council members. They sponsored bills making the distribution of literature concerning the boycott a crime. The white political and economic domination should be contrasted with the population figures: Madison County has 9,267 whites and 23,630 Negroes, according to the 1960 U.S. Census.

The Canton Citizens' Council distributed an open letter to whites in Canton, calling for their support against Negro efforts to change their way of life.

Here are excerpts from that letter:

"Dear Fellow White Citizens:

"...THE WHITE CITIZENS OF CANTON MUST BE UNIFIED IN ORDER TO SAVE CANTON FROM MASS CONFUSION LEADING TO RACE MIXING. Organization is the key to victory!

"The Canton Citizens Council is the gathering place for those white men and women who are determined to keep the white people in all governmental positions and in complete control of our way of life...

"Thank you for your support and continued effort to keep Canton, Madison County and Mississippi in the hands of white men and women.

Sincerely,  
Our Noble President"

We have seen some of the approaches of the White Citizens' Councils with which Harvard University is involved. Now let's look at the position of the Mississippi Democratic Party with which Harvard University is involved.

The Mississippi Democratic Party dominates the politics of Mississippi. The Republicans have only one member in the State Legislature and none in the Executive branch or among the Congressional and Senatorial delegations. And the White Citizens' Councils dominate the Mississippi Democratic Party.

First, let's look at the platform of the Mississippi Democratic Party, adopted in Convention, June 30, 1960:

"We believe in the segregation of the races and are unalterably opposed to repeal or modification of the segregation laws of this State, and we condemn integration and the practice of non-segregation. We unalterably oppose any and all efforts to repeal the miscegenation laws. We believe in the doctrine of interposition as defined in the appropriate resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Mississippi at its regular session of 1956...

"We believe in the separation of the races in the universities and colleges, in the public schools, in public transportation, in public parks, in public playgrounds, and in all spheres of activity where experience has shown that it is for the best interest of both races that such separation be observed."

August 16, 1960, the State Democratic Party, meeting in Jackson, adopted the following measures in response to the 1960 National Democratic Convention held in Los Angeles, California:

"That we reject and oppose the platforms of both National parties and their candidates. That we reaffirm and readopt the Platform and principles of the Democratic Party of Mississippi adopted in Convention Assembled in the City of Jackson, Mississippi, on the 30th day of June, 1960."

Another important measure of the Mississippi Democratic Party is the campaign literature of Paul Johnson's 1963 race for Governor. Johnson's campaign themes focused on maintaining white supremacy through a one-party system, segregation in Mississippi forever and bury the Republican Party once and for all.

Here is an excerpt from the standard leaflet which could be obtained from Johnson headquarters during the campaign:

"A DIVISION OF CONSERVATIVE MISSISSIPPIANS INTO TWO POLITICAL CAMPS...WOULD GIVE THE BALANCE OF POWER TO OUR MINORITY GROUP. This would be the end of our way of life in Mississippi and the peace, tranquillity, law and order we now enjoy in all of our communities would soon come to an awesome end.

"To have Mississippi Democratic nominees and Republican nominees running for every public office...municipal, county and state...every four years...would constitute an unnecessary nuisance and would bring to Mississippi the same political evils and dangers that now beset such states as Illinois, New York, Michigan, Pennsylvania and California...

"If you've already had enough of politics for 1963, then help stamp out Republicanism on November 5. Let's bury these Republican 'upstarts' so deep under good, solid Mississippi Democratic votes that it will be the year 2000 before you hear of Republican candidates for Mississippi offices again!

"We do not have to belong to and participate in an integrated national party, which tolerates in its ranks radical leftists like Governor Nelson Rockefeller and Senator Jacob Javits of New York and 'Black Monday' Earl Warren, in order to cast Mississippi's electoral votes for a true conservative. We do not have to make an 'accomodation' with liberals, and we do not have to compromise our principles, in order to make our electoral votes count for freedom.

"Let's...bury forever these 'overnight' Republicans who would like to divide our State and hand it over to a minority group."

So we can see the themes of one-party rule and white supremacy coming through Johnson's campaign. And we can see the overlap of principles between the Mississippi Democratic Party and the White Citizens' Councils.

Now let's look at how the White Citizens' Council exerts control over the State Legislature, which is strictly a Democratic Party affair.

Of the 122 members of the House of Representatives in the 1964-68 Legislature, at least 20 are known to belong to the White Citizens' Councils, including House Speaker Walter Sillers. Six of the 20 are on the State Executive Committee of the White Citizens' Council.

In the Senate at least 10 of the 53 members are known to belong to the White Citizens' Councils, including President pro-tem George Yarbrough, who is on the Citizens' Councils' State Executive Committee.

In the 1960-64 Legislature the line-up was slightly different. There were 140 members of the House and 22 of them were known to be Citizens' Council members. And there were 49 Senators, of whom 12 were Citizens' Council members.

Another measure of Citizens' Council legislative strength is placement of Council members on committees which control key legislation.

Of the seven members on the very important Senate Rules Committee, three are known to belong to the Citizens' Councils. Of the 14 members of the House Rules Committee, four are known to be members of the Council.

On the House Ways and Means Committee, nine of the 33 members are known to be Council members. In the Senate, Council members hold at least four of the 13 seats on the Oil and Gas Committee, including Chairman and Vice Chairman. In the comparable House committee, called Conservation of Minerals and Natural Resources, eight of the 29 members are Council members, including the chairman.

Another measure of Citizens' Council importance in the Mississippi Democratic Party is Executive appointments. We've already mentioned the Governor's official staff of colonels. Colonels receive their appointments because of their support for the gubernatorial candidate during the campaign. Therefore, an analysis of the colonel staff should give some indication of where Johnson's support came from and to whom he owed political debts.

We find that Paul Johnson appointed fourteen members of the Jackson White Citizens' Council (13 of them Board members) to his colonel staff. He also appointed eight members of the State Executive Committee of the White Citizens' Councils to his colonel staff.

The State Sovereignty Commission is another place where Executive appointments are very important. The Commission, which is supported by state tax money, has been the official segregation watchdog agency of the State since 1956. Its body for the 1964-68 session has not yet been chosen, but we know that at least seven of its 13 members for the 1960-64 session were members of the White Citizens' Councils.

Until the fight on the civil rights bill began last summer, the Commission had been channeling state funds every year to the Citizens' Councils in Mississippi. Now the money is used to fight the civil rights bill. The State Legislature which had donated more than 10 thousand dollars to the Washington anti-civil rights lobby, recently appropriated another fifty thousand dollars of state funds for the same purpose.

So we can see how the White Citizens' Council dominates the Executive and Legislative branches of the State Government of Mississippi. And we have seen what the White Citizens' Councils believe and stand for.

We have seen how the two leading banks and the leading electric power company, which are crucial to commerce and industry, play major roles in the Citizens' Council.

We have seen the major role electric power, finance capital and the White Citizens' Council play in the Mississippi Democratic Party.

And we started off by showing the important place Harvard University, through Middle South and Mississippi Power and Light, has in the electric power-finance capital-Citizens' Council-Democratic Party setup.

Harvard must see its responsibility. Negroes are killed, beaten and run out of the state for being Negroes. Negroes have no recourse at the polls, in court, at the police station or in the classrooms.

Harvard cannot disclaim responsibility for the "goings-on down there." With its political, economic and social roots in the state, it could wield tremendous pressure to change Mississippi. The economic and political structures could not last long if Harvard applied its weight against their foundations.

But Mississippi is a profitable business enterprise. We wonder whether education is only incidental to the Board of Trustees of Harvard University.

There is much to be done. And time is running out.

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