

Oaks District Association President Tom Garmon opposes CPAC; stands with Hattiesburg Historic Neighborhood Assn.

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height="253"]http://www.mississippimedianetwork.com/wp-content/Video/Public-Hearings/6.29.2012/garmon_delgado.flv[/FMP]

Tom Garmon, editor of this news site and described his bi-racial association's objections to the CPAC redistricting plan. Mr. Garmon went on to give his personal support to the bi-racial plan developed by Councilman Naylor and Council Vice President Dave Ware.

Garmon, speaking as a citizen, referred to the CPAC plan as the "NAACPAC" plan, criticizing the CPAC plan as not being bi-racially inclusive or even involving any members of the Hattiesburg Historic Oaks District, who it affects the most. NAACP is a solid force behind this CPAC plan, and the supporters of the plan have been unwilling to budge with regard to the historic, racially diverse, communities of interest that presently lay within Ward 4.

Several of the members of the African-American community have told the Patriot that the current NAACP leadership is "outdated". The Forrest County NAACP and Mr. Clarence McGee have drawn sharp criticism from Charles Evers, brother of slain Civil Rights Leader Medger Evers. An excerpt of the interview can be seen below or you can read the entire interview [here](#).

—BEGIN EXCERPT—

...But when Clarence McGee, who heads the NAACP in Hattiesburg,

*sat down for **60 Minutes** with a Pickering supporter, Charles Evers, brother of murdered civil rights leader Medgar Evers, the NAACP president got an earful:*

Charles Evers: You know, maybe you don't know, you know that Charles Pickering is a man helped us to break the Ku Klux Klan. Did you know that?

Clarence McGee: I heard that statement made.

Charles Evers: I mean, I know that. Do you know that?

Clarence McGee: I don't know that.

Charles Evers: I know that. Do you know about the young black man that was accused of robbing the young white woman. You know about that?

Clarence McGee: Nope.

Charles Evers: So Charles Pickering took the case. Came to trial and won the case and the young man became free.

Clarence McGee: I don't know about that.

Charles Evers: But did you also know that Charles Pickering is the man who helped integrate his churches. You know about that?

Clarence McGee: No.

Charles Evers: Well, you don't know a thing about Charles Pickering.

Then McGee brought up the cross burning case and the strong pressure Pickering put on prosecutors to cut back Daniel Swan's sentence. Says McGee, "I would say he overstepped his bounds. He might be somewhat intimidating. These kinds of things disturb me."

But Pickering remains proud of his record, and of his state,

for working to heal historic racial wounds.

Says Pickering, "Mississippi's made tremendous progress. And I feel like I've been a part of that progress. And I'm glad to have been a part of that progress. And I think it's extremely unfortunate any time anyone, black or white, uses race to divide us and polarize us."

—END EXCERPT—

EDITORIAL,

I asked Mr. Clarence McGee, in the company of his wife and a few others, to help me understand why the school board was unwilling to work with the council on a budget when the appointees could be declined re appointment by the city council. Mrs. McGee turned to me as said, "Do you know who you remind me of?" She continued, "You remind me of a poll worker that kept asking me questions and wouldn't let me vote." The sadness of the memory was my reflection in her eye. I simply asked a question, and suddenly I am perceived as a racist poll worker.

I didn't know what to say. I felt hurt for a moment, but the guilt of that emotion gave way to a better understanding of the humiliation she, and others, suffered in her lifetime, the level of injustice she has seen. The Reverend Charles Bartley once said "If we perceive it to be true, then it is a reality to those who perceive it." While it is hard to argue with that logic, I hope it exists only in an older generation. I certainly don't feel this sentiment with my generation; but at any rate, it is very challenging for bi-racial cooperation to exist with people who hold these deep seeded perceptions and are in positions of power. Living in the past will not move us into the future.

The inherent challenge for many civil rights leaders is to set aside the great injustice of discrimination and attempt to be fair and reasonable, without being retributory in nature. I

have wondered what Martin Luther King or Medger Evers would say if they were here today?

Tom Garmon, Editor