

20 WEST 40th STREET

New York 18, N. Y.

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WALTER WHITE
Executive Secretary

HENRY LEE MOON
Director of Public Relations

February 17, 1949

FOR RELEASE:

IWO DENIES MISUSE
OF INGRAM FUNDS

February 17, 1949

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The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People today released the following correspondence between Nathan Witt, 9 East 40th Street, attorney for the International Workers Order, and Thurgood Marshall, NAACP special counsel, 20 West 40th Street:

PRESSMAN, WITT & CAMMER

9 East 40th Street
New York 16, N.Y.

February 15, 1949

Thurgood Marshall, Esq.
Special Counsel, National Association
for the Advancement of Colored People
20 West 40th Street
New York, New York

Dear Mr. Marshall:

We are general counsel to the International Workers Order and are writing you concerning the story which appeared in The New York Times for February 12, headed "Fund Misuse Laid to Workers Order". This story purported to be based on a press conference which you held on February 11 at the offices of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Although other news accounts of this conference have not yet come to our attention, we are sure that in the normal course other newspapers have carried and may carry similar stories, and we are therefore anxious that the true facts be made available to you and to the public.

In essence, the story in The New York Times was to the effect that the International Workers Order had misused funds intended for the defense of Mrs. Rosa Lee Ingram and had "exploited" two of her children, Charles and James, "by having them make personal appearance at numerous mass meetings where money was raised". The necessary implication is that money was raised for the legal defense of Mrs. Ingram but was not used for that purpose.

The fact is that the International Workers Order has never purported nor represented itself as raising funds for Mrs. Ingram's legal defense, and any statement to the contrary is incorrect and can not be supported. We realize of course that any such effort would have been an intrusion on a function which has been entrusted to your organization.

What the International Workers Order has done in connection with the raising of funds in this matter has been done solely in connection with the Ingram Children's Education and Welfare Fund, which is described in the attached brochure. You will note that this brochure solicits funds to be used only for the purpose of being used for the education of two of the Ingram children, Charles and James, under the auspices of a Board of Trustees composed of 11

PRESSMAN, WITT & CAMMER

Thurgood Marshall, Esq.

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well-known and responsible Negro and white citizens. At all meetings conducted for the purpose of raising money for this purpose, whether or not such meetings were attended by the children, it has always been made clear that the money was being raised only for the Ingram Children's Education and Welfare Fund.

We are also sending you herewith the latest audit, dated November 1, 1948, which has been made of this Fund. You will note that the total amount collected as of that time was \$1,518.80, the total amount expended \$641.94, and that the balance was \$876.86. Since this audit was made, there has been an expenditure of \$30 a week for the care of the children. You will also note from this audit that much the greater part of the moneys collected by the Fund has been collected from lodges of the International Workers Order.

We are glad to make this audit available to you in the same way as it has been made available to all interested parties in the past and in the same way that it is available at all times to members of the general public.

You will also be interested in knowing that the Ingram family approved the setting up of this Fund and has at all times been kept informed of the activities of the Fund and of the steps which have been taken in connection with the education and welfare of the two children.

We are sure that you will agree that the only conclusion which can fairly be reached from this material is that the Ingram Children's Education and Welfare Fund has raised money only for the education of the children and has spent money only for that purpose.

In view of these facts, we believe that you will want to take such steps as are necessary to correct the impression created by the story in The New York Times (and perhaps elsewhere) that there has been any misuse of funds in connection with this matter.

Very truly yours,

Pressman, Witt & Cammer

By Nathan Witt

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE

20 WEST 40TH STREET, NEW YORK 18, N.Y.

Longacre 3-6890

February 16, 1949

Nathan Witt, Esq.
Pressman, Witt & Cammer
9 E. 40th Street
New York 16, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Witt:

Allow me to thank you for your letter of February 15th in which you clarify the role of the International Workers Order in relation

to the Ingram case. We are glad to have your assurance that the IWO has not represented itself as an organization authorized to collect funds for the legal defense of Mrs. Rosa Lee Ingram and her two teenage sons imprisoned with her for the self-defense slaying of a white neighbor. As you know, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is the sole organization authorized to handle the legal aspects of this case.

We are further pleased to receive your assurance that funds raised by the IWO in connection with this case have not been misused and are set aside as an Ingram Children's Education and Welfare Fund in accordance with your enclosed literature and auditor's report.

Very truly yours,

TM:GS
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Thurgood Marshall
Special Counsel
