

# Alamogordo Daily News Dec 1969 Jan 1970

## Cargo Says 'No' Again To CAA Bid

SANTA FE (AP) — Officials of the Otero County Community Action Agency met today with Gov. David Cargo in a last-ditch effort to save the local war on poverty program, which is scheduled to lose its federal funding at midnight.

Harold Martinez, director of the Otero County CAA, made several pleas to Cargo during the 2½ hour meeting, to designate the CAA in the county for

developed in the Alamogordo community as a result of the dispute between local officials and the Community Action Agency.

It was agreed there is a racial problem. But the Otero County people contended it developed as a result of the urban renewal program in Alamogordo, and not as a result of the CAA activities.

Cargo insisted throughout to-  
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day's meeting that the only real solution must be developed at the local level.

He said after the group had adopted Maloney's recommendation, that he would contact regional Office of Economic Opportunity officials in Austin, Tex., and determine if there were any alternatives available for temporary continuation of the program beyond today.

It is possible the regional office of the OEO could designate the Community Action Agency in Otero County. Regional OEO officials indicated this as a possibility in a recent letter to Cargo.

But state OEO director Rudy Baca contended a designation by the governor or by the regional OEO office is meaningless unless it is endorsed by the county commission.

"If the county commission doesn't want it, there is nothing we can do to override that decision," Baca said.

Martinez asked the governor to put it in writing that he supported the Otero County Community Action Agency, and make this support known to the regional OEO office and recognize the regional office's authority to designate the agency.

This Cargo declined to do.

There was some discussion of the need to salvage the Head Start program now under the direction of the local CAA.

Cargo suggested that it might be saved by placing it under direction of the Alamogordo public school system.

But Cargo stood fast on his earlier position, based on a legal opinion from Atty. Gen. James Maloney, that he has no authority under state law to make such a designation.

The problems with the program came to a head last fall when the Otero County Commission adopted a resolution withdrawing its designation of the county CAA. This had the effect of cutting off federal funding as of Dec. 31.

Maloney offered a temporary solution at today's meeting, which was accepted with some opposition from the Otero County group.

Maloney proposed that the Alamogordo City Commission, the Otero County Commission, the local CAA leaders and representatives from Operation SER, meet within 10 days to two weeks at the governor's request and attempt to work out a solution for continuation of the war on poverty programs in the county.

Operation SER (Service Employment and Redevelopment) is a part of the federal Jobs for Progress program. It conducts manpower training programs and provides technical assistance, primarily among the Spanish-American population of the Southwest.

Robert Barela of Albuquerque, state director for Operation SER, offered the services of his office in attempting to reach a solution. This offer included sponsorship of the program in Otero County, if the county commission will redesignate the program.

Martinez and David Ortega of Alamogordo expressed the belief time and again there was no hope that the county commission would redesignate the program or that the Alamogordo City Commission would lend any support to continuation of the program.

Cargo was critical of the CAA for engaging in partisan political activity, an allegation denied by Martinez.

And the governor said he felt a serious racial schism has de-

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