

2-18-1948

Correspondence, John C. Stennis, February 18-26, 1948

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

ALBERT L. SEIDEL, CLERK

February 18, 1948

Civil Rights Committee

██████████
McComb, Mississippi

Dear ████████:

It was certainly a pleasure and a help to me to get to see you in Jackson, and I wish that there had been further time for us to discuss the matter that you had on your mind, which I think is a splendid idea, and that something must be done along this line of proper publicity for the South.

I have been here less than ninety days but am more and more impressed with the fact that we have largely failed to get our side of the case and our evidence before the people of the North, the East and the West. This matter has been presented to them as a question of right and wrong. We of the South have been pictured as being on the wrong side. This has led them to erroneous conclusions and it is not altogether their fault. We must tell and re-tell our side of the case and show them that it is not a question of right and wrong, but a serious, practical problem that we are dealing with regarding a question that is as old as the human races. As it is now, every magazine article, every newspaper column, and even every column of the religious periodicals of that area present the other side of the matter and we have no publicity which shows the absolute necessity of our position, and that it is a practical problem that we have to deal with. In other words, we must have a voice of the South, that can and will tell and re-tell our story effectively and sincerely. Until this is done in a serious and sincere vein, and over and over again, I am satisfied that they will not understand our problem and will therefore misunderstand our position.

I am more and more convinced that I should devote a considerable part of my time while in the United States Senate toward trying to get our side of the case before the people. For this reason I accepted an invitation this morning to be one of four Senators to discuss the FEPC Bill in a round table over the air for February 27th on a network that will cover New England, New York and Pennsylvania and that area. I plan to work in what I have to say with the idea of getting the South's real position before the people.

I hope that you will follow up your thought of developing something along this line as a part of the political movement in the

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ALBERT L. SEIDEL, CLERK

COMMITTEE ON
RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

February 18, 1948 - #2

South. I believe that you can and will be making a fine contribution. I am convinced that we are fighting a losing battle in the forum of public opinion throughout the nation, unless we get our problem and our cause better understood.

If I can help in any way, let me know. I certainly trust that you will continue to give this your thought and that you will perfect your plans.

With very best wishes, I am

Your friend,

U. S. S.

JCS:eh

McComb Enterprise-Journal

SINCE 1889

"The One Newspaper in the World Most Interested in this Community"

MCCOMB, MISS.

February 20, 1948

Editor and Publisher

FEB 23 1948

Senator John C. Stennis
Washington, D.C.

Dear John:

Thank you for your letter of today's mail. I appreciate what you have to say and believe that you and I see eye to eye on this proposition.

There is the statesman-like approach and the demagogic approach to this racial issue and no permanent attainment can come out of the latter. With the statesman-like approach the problems will be solved. Time, of course, is essential but time is essential in any problem.

What you say about the South getting a black eye in the press and on the radio, outside Dixie is certainly true. Overcoming this proposition is a decided problem. And it is as you say about others not being able to envision the practical side of the difficulties which confront us.

Enclosed is a copy of an editorial recently appearing in The Enterprise-Journal which I believe you will find of interest. I recently circulated the Mississippi legislature with reprints of this editorial.

I am strong for segregation as are the rest of our people but I am firm in the opinion that discriminations within segregation must be removed. Removing discrimination will neutralize the enthusiasm outside for the abolition of segregation. It is also my opinion that the Negro leadership of the South is desirous of cooperating with white leadership in these problems. They know that improvements must be slow and I am convinced that Negroes will be happy to work with the white leaders of our state on a long range program.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely, your friend,

Dear [redacted]
1. Thanks for letter.
2. Fine Editorial

[redacted signature]
[redacted name]

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ALBERT L. SEIDEL, CLERK

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

February 26, 1948

Civil Rights

Mr. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
McComb, Mississippi

Dear [REDACTED]:

Thank you very much for your letter of February 20th enclosing editorial from The Enterprise-Journal. I certainly enjoyed this fine editorial and the good logic it contains.

We are facing a hard and bitter fight on these questions during the next few weeks. We will win or lose on a very close vote.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

U. S. S.

JCS:eh