

2-10-1948

## Senator Stennis Civil Rights Correspondence B01F05L10

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsjunction.msstate.edu/jcs-civil-rights-correspondence>

---

### Preferred Citation

[Title], John C. Stennis Collection. Mississippi Political Collections, Mississippi State University Libraries.

This Letter is brought to you for free and open access by the John C. Stennis Digital Collections at Scholars Junction. It has been accepted for inclusion in Civil Rights Correspondence by an authorized administrator of Scholars Junction. For more information, please contact [scholcomm@msstate.libanswers.com](mailto:scholcomm@msstate.libanswers.com).

## CLASS OF SERVICE

This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.

WESTERN  
UNIONJOSEPH L. EGAN  
PRESIDENT

1201

## SYMBOLS

DL = Day Letter

NL = Night Letter

LC = Deferred Cable

NLT = Cable Night Letter

Ship Radiogram

The filing time shown in the date line on telegrams and day letters is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination.

WZ125 PD=JACKSON MISS 10 1130A

HON JOHN C STENNIS=

US SENATOR SENATE OFFICE BLDG=

1948 FEB 10 PM 12 54  
H4

CONSIDERABLE UNFAVORABLE SPECULATION UNINFORMED OF COURSE AS  
TO YOUR POSITION PRESENT CONTROVERSY. BELIEVE IT EMINENTLY  
DESIRABLE THAT YOU BE PRESENT FOR THURSDAY'S MEETING IF  
POSSIBLE=

[REDACTED]

DOMESTIC SERVICE	
Check the class of service desired; otherwise this message will be sent as a full rate telegram	
FULL RATE TELEGRAM	SERIAL
DAY LETTER	NIGHT LETTER

# WESTERN UNION

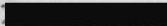
JOSEPH L. EGAN, PRESIDENT

1206

INTERNATIONAL SERVICE	
Check the class of service desired; otherwise this message will be sent at the full rate	
FULL RATE	DEFERRED
CODE	NIGHT LETTER

NO. WDS.-CL. OF SVC.	PD. OR COLL.	CASH NO.	CHARGE TO THE ACCOUNT OF	TIME FILED

Send the following message, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

  
Vicksburg, Miss.

*Handwritten signature*

Will arrive Jackson six A. M. Thursday. Regards.

John Stennis

U S S

**A NEW  
CURTIS  
SERVICE**

Telegraph your order for America's favorite magazines—HOLIDAY, 1 yr., \$5 • the Post, 1 yr., \$5 • LADIES' HOME JOURNAL, 1 yr., \$3. All prices U. S. only. No charge for wire. Pay Western Union clerk for subscription or when billed by publisher.

Publisher will, on subscriber's request, refund full amount paid for copies not previously mailed. Prices subject to change without notice.

C. WAYLAND BROOKS, ILL., CHAIRMAN

KENNETH S. WHERRY, NEBR.      CARL HAYDEN, ARIZ.  
BOURKE B. HICKENLOOPER, IOWA      THEODORE FRANCIS GREEN, R. I.  
WILLIAM F. KNOWLAND, CALIF.      BRIEN MC MAHON, CONN.  
HENRY CABOT LODGE, JR., MASS.      FRANCIS J. MYERS, PA.  
WILLIAM E. JENNER, IND.      JOHN C. STENNIS, MISS.  
JOHN W. BRICKER, OHIO  
IRVING M. IVES, N. Y.

ALBERT L. SEIDEL, CLERK

## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON  
RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

February 19, 1948

Honorable [REDACTED]  
Vicksburg, Mississippi

Dear Ed:

First, I want to thank you for your very timely telegram, which was a contributing factor in my decision to come to Mississippi. Next, I want to thank you for your usual generous and very helpful aid in working out various aspects of my talk. You really helped, as you always do.

I was very much impressed with the meeting in Jackson and the calm determination and serious atmosphere prevailing. It seems to me that the movement has already made a contribution and has helped the cause here, and I think that with a man of calm judgment and sincere purposes, such as Governor Wright, directing it there is a good chance to stay on a sound basis and help the cause in the future. It still seems very uncertain to me as to what will happen here with reference to some of those bills, but I really do not think the F.E.P.C. Bill has a chance to pass at this session. This is a continuing fight from year to year, and the South is faced with the necessity of launching an effective, affirmative program of her own.

It would be interesting to you to see the different lines of thought here from the different Senators on economic matters, and I think the recasting of Party lines is much more likely to occur along economic lines than based on racial matters. Most of the Democrats from the South, the conservatives, now see more or less eye to eye with the conservative Republicans as to the fundamental structure of our government. On the other hand, we have extreme liberals, or radicals, in both the Democratic and the Republican Parties who want to change our Government into a more centralized form and have a regulated economy with socialized medicine and a host of other things.

This racial matter is going to vex us for years to come, and our best approach to it, I believe, is to be able to have a reasonable showing to make to the other areas that we, the white race, in the South are in good faith in trying to deal with the negro and give him some chance to develop. Some do not agree with this, but I think it is a step that we must take and thus keep this legislation from passing. I do not fear the negro himself as I do the paid agitators and organizers who will come in and try to stir the negroes up.



Hon. [REDACTED], Feb. 19, 1948

Page Two

Too, I feel that we should start a definite, organized plan to get our side of the case before the people in other areas of the country, as this racial matter has been sold them on a false issue of right and wrong, with us on the wrong side of the question as pictured to them, and it is not altogether their fault that they have convicted us in their minds. We ought to have something in the nature of the "Voice of the South" to offset the propaganda which constantly comes from these organized pressure groups who make their living by stirring up discontent.

Please convey my regards to our mutual friends there, including Mr. Cashman and your father and Everett and the others.

You might be interested to know that I have accepted an invitation from a radio chain that covers New England and New York and Pennsylvania for a round table discussion broadcast on Friday night, February 27th, on the F.E.P.C. with our friend, Senator Ives, as one of my adversaries. I do not know who his partner will be, but Senator Ellender will be with me in the opposition. I was becoming rather fond of Ives personally, but was greatly jarred when I learned that he was the author of the F.E.P.C. Bill. I suppose I know as little about Brooklyn and the Bronx as he does about the South. I understand that this broadcast will not be in the South, but if by any chance the plans should be changed, I will let you know.

Take care of yourself and come to see me when you can.  
With best wishes, I am

Your friend,

U. S. S.

JCS:vm

LAW OFFICES

VICKSBURG, MISSISSIPPI

JACKSON OFFICE:

JACKSON 110, MISS.

FEBRUARY 24, 1948

Hon. John C. Stennis,  
United States Senator,  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator:

I enjoyed reading your letter of February 19. I shall undertake to find your round table discussion on Friday night, February 27. Perhaps I can reach it over short wave.

One of the most disturbing aspects to me in relation to the race problem is that unless positive, intelligent leadership is grasped by men of integrity and principle, there is great danger of the South being faced with a series of disorders, occasioned and led by demagogues and opportunists. Wise, calm counsel under capable leadership is the only answer, in my judgment. The people of the South would be stigmatized again with the Clan as it was in the '20's. Such can only create bitterness in the North and East and a resultant determination to make us conform to what they believe to be the necessities of the moral issues.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am

Yours sincerely,

ELB:cb

*Speech*

1. *Handwritten*  
*from your letter*  
2. *Am going to*  
*make a*  
*copy of report*  
*speech*

C. WAYLAND BROOKS, ILL., CHAIRMAN

KENNETH S. WHERRY, NEBR.

CARL HAYDEN, ARIZ.

BOURKE B. HICKENLOOPER, IOWA

THEODORE FRANCIS GREEN, R. I.

WILLIAM F. KNOWLAND, CALIF.

BRIEN MC MAHON, CONN.

HENRY CABOT LODGE, JR., MASS.

FRANCIS J. MYERS, PA.

WILLIAM E. JENNER, IND.

JOHN C. STENNIS, MISS.

JOHN W. BRICKER, OHIO

IRVING M. IVES, N. Y.

## United States Senate

ALBERT L. SEIDEL, CLERK

### COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

February 23, 1948

Honorable [REDACTED]  
First National Bank Building  
Vicksburg, Mississippi

My dear [REDACTED]:

Your letter of February 18th has been received and is deeply appreciated.

I regret exceedingly to see Congressman Whittington leave the Congress, as I think he is one of the most able men in either branch. I want to learn what I can about flood control and shall certainly be interested in taking advantage of the invitation of General Crawford; however, as yet his invitation has not been received. If the proposed trip is at a time that I can in any way get off, I shall certainly accept. But it would have to be, I think, at a time beyond the current session of this Congress, which is expected now to last until July.

I appreciate your inquiry as to the Washington reaction to Mississippi's position on the Civil Rights bills, and your comment that Governor Wright is extremely anxious that Mississippi avoid the charge and also the appearance of demagoguery. I appreciate his position on this, and that is one point that I have consistently made in my discussions here since the day of his original statement, that is, that Governor Wright is not an extremist and does not indulge in extravagant statements but is very sincere and in earnest and has a lot of determination. It seems to me that he has handled himself splendidly and has certainly not left me with the impression of being a demagogue or having that sort of approach.

Due to a combination of reasons, going back over the years, it is hard for these protests coming from the South to make a deep impression here. Then the reaction here to the Conference of Governors in Florida was distinctly to cool the matter off. For a good long while around the Senate Chamber, Jim Eastland, Senator Johnston of South Carolina and I were the only ones who talked about the matter in a serious vein. But the attendance and report of the meeting held in Jackson on February 12th seemed to impress them some up here. And I have a feeling that the Southern Senators have been getting some strong reports from back home in their own states. But, still, it is my impression that these reports are not coming to them very strongly as yet. Frankly, that's the picture here right now. When I last talked with them, men like Senator Overton



Hon. [REDACTED]

-2-

February 23, 1948

and Senator George had not been so well impressed, and as late as Saturday Senator Byrd came out with a statement advising caution and delay.

This committee of Southern Governors is meeting here today and a conference has been called with them for tomorrow morning. I am going to attend and by the time it is over, I shall be in position to give you a further report. I wish that Fielding had consented to serve on that committee, because I think he would have made a good impression here and his sincerity and determination would have been convincing and quite effective. Of course, I do not think there will be any direct promises made to this committee for any relief, but it will put us in a better moral position later and the impression those Governors make here will also have some final weight later.

I think the thing that is pressing down hardest right now on these Southern Senators is the very thing that is pressing heavily on my mind and that is the outcome of the fight that is to be made this spring to pass these laws. We must have help and we must have it before Convention time and before platform writing time. We must have help in the nature of votes on the Floor of the Senate to keep cloture from being invoked. My opinion is that that is the only reason Senator Byrd is advising caution and delay right now. He thinks that if he advises a bolt from the Party now he will not be in position when those bills come up to ask for help from the Western Democrats.

I feel that the reforming or recasting of Party lines should be along the principle of States' Rights and sound economic policy rather than the so-called racial matter.

I shall write you again after the conference with the Governors and of course you will understand that this letter is in confidence.

Again thanking you and with very best wishes, I am

Your friend,

U. S. S.

JCS:vm



C. WAYLAND BROOKS, ILL., CHAIRMAN  
KENNETH S. WHERRY, NEBR. CARL HAYDEN, ARIZ.  
BOURKE B. HICKENLOOPER, IOWA THEODORE FRANCIS GREEN, R. I.  
WILLIAM F. KNOWLAND, CALIF. BRIEN MC MAHON, CONN.  
HENRY CABOT LODGE, JR., MASS. FRANCIS J. MYERS, PA.  
WILLIAM E. JENNER, IND. JOHN C. STENNIS, MISS.  
JOHN W. BRICKER, OHIO  
IRVING M. IVES, N. Y.

ALBERT L. SEIDEL, CLERK

## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON  
RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

March 9, 1948

Honorable [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Vicksburg, Mississippi

Dear Ed:

Thanks so much for your letter of February 24th.  
Your words are most encouraging and I greatly appreciate having  
your views on these matters of legislation.

I am going to send you a copy of my first speech  
as soon as I can get some from the press.

With kindest personal regards and best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

U. S. S.

JCS:RVM

*Speech mailed  
3/15/48  
L. L. -*

C. WAYLAND BROOKS, ILL., CHAIRMAN  
KENNETH S. WHERRY, NEBR. CARL HAYDEN, ARIZ.  
BOURKE B. HICKENLOOPER, IOWA THEODORE FRANCIS GREEN, R. I.  
WILLIAM F. KNOWLAND, CALIF. BRIEN MC MAHON, CONN.  
HENRY CABOT LODGE, JR., MASS. FRANCIS J. MYERS, PA.  
WILLIAM E. JENNER, IND. JOHN C. STENNIS, MISS.  
JOHN W. BRICKER, OHIO  
IRVING M. IVES, N. Y.

ALBERT L. SEIDEL, CLERK

## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON  
RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

February 25, 1948

Honorable [REDACTED]  
Attorney at Law  
Vicksburg, Mississippi

Dear [REDACTED]:

With further reference to the situation here regarding the reports from the South, things have picked up a great deal within the last few days. The visit from the Governors of the South stirred up a great deal of interest and a great deal of talk. I was with them in two of their conferences, and particularly with some of them in Senator McClellan's office. They reported a great deal of interest and agitation on the part of the people in their home states. Of course Senator McGrath did not give them any satisfaction at all, but I think their visit here was well worthwhile for the benefit of the record and also for the comment that it caused.

Today I had lunch with Senator Russell, Senator Byrd, Senator Holland from Florida, and Senator Johnston from South Carolina. The talk was fast and firm. Senator Byrd said that the people had become so aroused in Virginia that they had to have restraints. He told us of the Governor's message to the Virginia Legislature which is scheduled for tomorrow. Their plan is to form the Virginia Democratic Party, elect their own electors as free agents. This will make it possible for the home people and the county officers in Virginia to remain loyal to the Democratic Party and at the same time select electors that will be free agents to join with the others in supporting the national ticket or not, as they may see fit. I have heard some talk here of President Truman being shelved as the Democratic nominee.

We are greatly concerned here about the passage of these bills during the spring months. The Republicans tell us here that they are on the spot, having been put there by President Truman, and must go down the line and vote for cloture and also for the bills. That part looks very dark now. As I understand the situation in the South generally, I believe that the only thing that could stop the threatened revolt is the defeat of these bills and also the having out of any pledge to pass them at later sessions of the Congress.

Governor Wright has held things on a dignified plane and this has helped the cause greatly.



C. WAYLAND BROOKS, ILL., CHAIRMAN

KENNETH S. WHERRY, NEBR.

CARL HAYDEN, ARIZ.

BOURKE B. HICKENLOOPER, IOWA

THEODORE FRANCIS GREEN, R. I.

WILLIAM F. KNOWLAND, CALIF.

BRIEN MC MAHON, CONN.

HENRY CABOT LODGE, JR., MASS.

FRANCIS J. MYERS, PA.

WILLIAM E. JENNER, IND.

JOHN C. STENNIS, MISS.

JOHN W. BRICKER, OHIO

IRVING M. IVES, N. Y.

## United States Senate

ALBERT L. SEIDEL, CLERK

COMMITTEE ON  
RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

Hon. [REDACTED]  
Feb. 25, 1948 - #2

I have discussed this matter of letting the people vote on some preliminary phase of this plan and everyone thinks that it would greatly strengthen the cause. Of course this would have to be decided by each state, but I am firm in the opinion that it would greatly help the cause to have the people of Mississippi pass on some phase of the plan by popular ballot. The officials of the Democratic Party here cannot help but look at the unbroken line of huge votes in their favor every four years from nearly all of the southern states, every year since the Civil War. A new vote from the people to the contrary would have powerful consequences here in my opinion.

I shall be glad to keep you advised of any developments here and at the same time will appreciate hearing from you as to the situation in Mississippi.

With kind personal regards, I am

Your friend,

U. S. S.

JS:eh

LAW OFFICES

VICKSBURG, MISSISSIPPI

JACKSON OFFICE:

JACKSON 110, MISS.

Hon. John C. Stennis,  
United States Senator,  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator:

Acknowledgment is made of the receipt of your letter of February 25. It was very interesting to learn of the reaction of the Senators referred to in your letter. Of course, it is difficult to reduce to words the attitude of Mississippi citizens. I would say, from an overall standpoint, that for the past 40 days or more the people of Mississippi are generally conscious of the fact that their customs and, particularly, segregation are under an attack of serious proportions. They all blame President Truman. I do not believe the average citizen has thought very far beyond Truman himself as an individual and as President. In other words, they are not very cautious of the tremendous support that Truman has from the northern Democrats. They are outspoken in their revolt against Truman himself and any crowd which supports him. It is further my opinion that the great mass of people have been harboring this resentment for quite a long period of time and that they were ready and ripe to follow any leadership which indicated a course of action.

From this point on, I would say that there are possibly two large divisions of sentiment in Mississippi. The average man of smaller means and lesser education has already positively and definitely made up his mind against Mr. Truman. If his name is on the ballot as presidential candidate of the National Democratic Party they are going to go into the voting booths and vote for the Republican. This is rather hard to believe, but such is very definitely the sentiment in this area and the adjacent area in Louisiana, as far over as Monroe, Louisiana. The more intelligent voter, the businessman, etc., has for a long time been at odds with the Democratic party and a large number of these people had already concluded to vote Republican, irrespective of who the nominee of the Democratic party happened to be. Of course, this group is in the minority



Hon. John C. Stennis, - #2  
2/28/48

although it is becoming more and more articulate and positive in its views. The more intelligent voter is inclined to want to know more about where we are going and they are not too well informed about the situation in which we find ourselves. They are somewhat confused and they will need education along this line. In this respect, I might add that they are very intensely interested in the subject.

An organization is being rapidly developed in Mississippi to carry on a program of education and to finance the same. I believe that, without too much difficulty, the sum of around \$100,000 will be raised within the next two months.

I think there have been some who have been holding back from lending endorsement in Mississippi waiting to see how the tide was going to run. As a matter of fact, I know this to be true. It is rather significant that within the past week or ten days a number of these persons have now begun to join in publicly. The sentiment at the grass roots is very, very strong and is becoming increasingly apparent with each passing day. It is gradually convincing those office holders who have been biding their time and who have been somewhat weary of the movement.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,



ELB:cb

C. WAYLAND BROOKS, ILL., CHAIRMAN  
KENNETH S. WHERRY, NEBR. CARL HAYDEN, ARIZ.  
BOURKE B. HICKENLOOPER, IOWA THEODORE FRANCIS GREEN, R. I.  
WILLIAM F. KNOWLAND, CALIF. BRIEN MC MAHON, CONN.  
HENRY CABOT LODGE, JR., MASS. FRANCIS J. MYERS, PA.  
WILLIAM E. JENNER, IND. JOHN C. STENNIS, MISS.  
JOHN W. BRICKER, OHIO  
IRVING M. IVES, N. Y.

ALBERT L. SEIDEL, CLERK

## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON  
RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

March 3, 1948

*Civil Rights*

Honorable [REDACTED]  
Attorney-at-Law  
[REDACTED]  
Vicksburg, Mississippi

Dear Ed:

I certainly appreciated your good letter of February 28th. It would have been answered before now, but I was quite busy last week with my speech. Your letter proved very helpful in getting up the speech, of which I will send you a copy.

I am looking forward to my visit to State College this weekend and plan to be there all day Saturday.

Again thanking you for your good thought and with best wishes, I am

Sincerely your friend,

U. S. S.

JCS/11