

11-16-1955

Correspondence, John C. Stennis, November 16-21, 1955

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED], County Service Officer

Purvis, Mississippi

November 16-1955

Hon; John C. Stennis, M.C.
United States Senate
Washington D.C.

Dear Senator Stennis:

Knowing that you love your State and Nation, and are one of Mississippi's sons of which she has a right to be proud, and that your heart and mind has the welfare of this nation always in view, it is necessary that I pass on to you the information that I have collected in the past several years that concerns the well being of our Armed Forces.

The Supreme Court Of The United States in handing down their school decision of May 1954 quoted psychological reasons for the basis of their decisions, and stated that any other decision would hurt the Id or Ego of the minority races.

All military leaders know that "morale" of their troops is of the first importance, and a good soldier has to be thoroughly convinced that he is a member of the best military organization on earth and the best Army then he has the "Esprit de corps" that makes him the best fighting man on earth.

I have in the past three years contacted a great many professional soldiers who had made the Armed Forces a career, but who had left the Services and returned to private life, and on questioning them I found two reasons for this decision, first the fact that they no longer had the right to serve with their own color, and that they would rather abandon their career rather than serve where they had no free choice.

These men would not tell you or any one connected with the Government this fact while they were in the service, but would rather quietly drop out of the services, and return to civil life.

The second reason was that the top grade Sergeants advised me that they were put to doing menial work that degraded their rank and length of service and were subject to ridicule by men of short service, such as sweeping streets.

God gave man only one power and that is free choice, and any one that would take that right away from a man has made him a slave.

With ever best wish, I remain

Your friend
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] County Service Officer

Purvis, Mississippi

November 19-1955

Hon: John C. Stennis
United States Senate
DeKalb Mississippi:

Dear Senator Stennis;

I am enclosing a review of a book "Civil Rights Revolution" by [REDACTED], and if you are looking for information concerning the condition of this nation, it appears to be a good source of just that.

I am ordering a couple copies of this book and if you would care to have one I would be glad to send you one.

I contacted some of the retired Master Sergeants here and they are still reluctant to discuss racial issues in the service as they are still on the retired list, but they would discuss these problems with you in person, and they stated that in foreign countries that an enlisted white man soon learned to keep his wife away from Military Service Clubs unless he would let some drunken negro try to dance with her or insult her.

No Southern White man wants a Negro for a boss, or one to dance with his wife or Girl Friend.

The Supreme Court on May 17, 1954 stated that the Negro's ego would be harmed by not getting first class consideration, what about the White man's ego, and for what reason are we drafting men into the Armed Forces is it to defend this Nation or to serve as a testing laboratory for mixing races.

With ever best wish

Your friend
[REDACTED]

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United States Senate

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DeKalb, Mississippi
November 21, 1955

[REDACTED]
County Service Officer
Lamar County Service Center
Purvis, Mississippi

Dear Friend [REDACTED]:

My visit to Purvis last week was a wonderful experience for me and I deeply appreciate the warm welcome and reception given me by you and other friends in Lamar County.

Let me also acknowledge your letters of November 16 and 19, and you were very kind to take time out to give me the benefit of your thinking and suggestions. Along with you, I am greatly concerned with the situation as to integration in our Armed Forces. In fact, I took this matter up by letter with Secretary of Defense Wilson some weeks ago. He has thus far declined to respond by letter, but he has offered to talk with me about it. I plan to confer with him personally on my return to Washington. You may be sure that this serious problem will continue to have my attention. I wish there were a chance this morning to write you more at length, but I am having to leave the office in just a few minutes for another week of speaking rounds.

With best wishes, I am

Your friend,

John Stennis
United States Senator

JS:hy

Enclosure