

9-19-1955

## Senator Stennis Civil Rights Correspondence B03F25L06

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Department of Justice  
Washington

September 19, 1955.

Honorable John Stennis  
United States Senate  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator:

This acknowledges your letter of September 7, 1955, concerning an assault reportedly committed upon three young white men from the State of Mississippi on June 4, 1955, in the District of Columbia by two colored men. Your letter requests information as to any investigation conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and as to this Department's plans for further action.

Our information, based upon the police reports, indicates that at or about 2:00 a.m. on June 4 as the young white men were walking north on Sixth Street, N. W., one of them bumped into one of the two young colored men proceeding in the opposite direction. An argument and fight ensued during which two of the white boys sustained stab wounds.

The circumstances involved in this matter so far as federal jurisdiction is concerned are quite similar to those reportedly involved in the recent killing of a young colored boy, Emmett Louis Till, in the State of Mississippi. Federal intervention in the Till case has been urged upon the Department in hundreds of letters and telegrams from almost every section of the country. However, the killing of Till and the stabbing of the white boys were the acts of private individuals. Each incident constituted an offense against the laws of the District of Columbia or of the State of Mississippi only, and neither represents a violation of the federal civil rights statute or any other federal statute. The Federal Bureau of Investigation, therefore, has conducted no investigation with respect to either of these matters, and no such investigation is contemplated in the future.)

We appreciate your interest in the case and if we can render any further service we shall be happy to do so.

Sincerely,

*Warren O'Neely III*

WARREN O'NEELY III  
Assistant Attorney General

