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Letter, John C. Stennis to John W. Gardner, May 4, 1967

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United States Senate

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May 4, 1967

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Honorable John W. Gardner
Secretary
Department of Health, Education
and Welfare
Washington, D. C.

Dear Secretary Gardner:

Last March, when Commissioner Howe issued the revised guidelines applicable to the schools in the South for the 1966-67 school year, he stated that:

"They do not deal with the sometime even more difficult racial problems in our large cities or other districts which have not maintained formally established separate schools for white and Negro students. Title VI clearly applies to discrimination in these cases, but its precise application in any particular case cannot easily be predicted. Members of the Office of Education staff are now in several major cities in the North gathering data for analysis to determine what types of practices other than maintenance of a dual school system constitute discrimination prohibited by Title VI."

I am deeply interested in the results of this study and I would appreciate it if you would provide me with a complete report of the findings of the Office of Education and any proposals that may have been developed for dealing with this problem.

I would be grateful if you would also furnish me the following information as well:

1. What percentage of the white students are attending predominately white schools, and what percentage of the Negro students are attending predominately Negro schools in each of the fifty states and the District of Columbia, during the current school year, and what were the comparable figures for the preceding year?
2. What kind of reports are schools outside the South required to submit to the Office of Education to establish or maintain their eligibility to receive federal assistance? How often must these reports be made? What is the practice and procedure for review and verification of these reports?

3. How many and which schools outside the South have had their funds denied, deferred, or terminated under the Civil Rights Act of 1964? How many and which schools outside the South have been required to make changes in their administration or operation to avoid a cut-off of funds under the Civil Rights Act? Are there any schools outside the South which are not in compliance with the Civil Rights Act? Are there any schools outside the South which do not meet the requirements of the same guidelines which are applied to schools within the South? If so, how many and which ones? Are there any schools outside the South with an all-white or an all-Negro enrollment? Are there any schools outside the South with an all-white or an all-Negro faculty? If so how many and which ones?

4. How large is the present staff of the Office of Education? How many of this number, in the field or in Washington, devote their time primarily to enforcement of the Civil Rights Act in the South, and how many to states outside the South? How much larger staff and what additional appropriation would be needed to give the same degree of attention to schools outside the South as is now given to Southern Schools?

Sincerely yours,

John Stennis
United States Senator

JS/mp