

1-13-1970

Correspondence, John C. Stennis, January 13-February 3, 1970

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.

MANUFACTURERS OF

COTTONSEED AND SOYBEAN PRODUCTS
GREENWOOD, MISSISSIPPI 38930

PHONE

PRESIDENT & GENERAL MANAGER

January 13, 1970

Senator John C. Stennis
Senate Office Building
Washington, D. C.

Dear John:

This statement is prepared to register indignation and concern and express cross section feeling of the majority of citizens affected under the high court order for total integration.

It is fine that you are holding these area meetings over the state of Mississippi. The matter of total integration is of grave concern and vital to the economy of all citizens of Mississippi and under the present court orders and rules from HEW it will unquestionably mean that eventually a vast majority of the white public schools will be destroyed. It is regrettable that we have a President that will permit such occurrences to any selected segment of our nation. He is the Commander in Chief of the Army and should have final say on unjustified regulations that are saddled on selected citizens of only a small segment of the country. Every American is entitled to the same rights and privileges. It is true he has made an appeal to the court to delay the timing of enforcement of the court order but as of today any relief is pretty dark. Was the appeal strong enough? My interpretation of the civil rights laws enacted by Congress was in a simple statement that each citizen of our country would have full human rights, job opportunities and participation in all segments of our living activities. Now comes the radical court justice's order that total integration must prevail in a selected area of the nation and specifically this takes action against the state you represent, that is Mississippi, and in the issuance of this order of total integration and with the rules set up by HEW to carry out the court order an additional burden of busing is included.

There is no more logic in such a regulation than there would be to equalize the population in the state of South Dakota, and other states substantially free of a negro population, by massive movement into these areas to elevate and more nearly equalize the ratio of the races in these areas. I submit this is a flagrant violation of a citizens right not to send his children to some school of their choice. Total integration will simply mean the burden of operating the public schools eventually will be largely in the hands of the Federal government for the negro race will demand that the children be bused to school out of the area in

MANUFACTURERS OF

PHONE

COTTONSEED AND SOYBEAN PRODUCTS

GREENWOOD, MISSISSIPPI 38930

PRESIDENT & GENERAL MANAGER

January 13, 1970

Page 2

which they live. Citizens of Mississippi, with the burden of building schools for their children to have a choice to attend, will not long permit school tax assessment for the operation of public schools their children do not attend. As the total integration order progresses the Washington representative reports that after the first week approximately 80% of the normal school attendance prevailed in the areas that had come under court order but this overall percentage does not truly reflect just what is happening to the white children in attendance at the public schools and my thinking, so that all the people of the nation will know just what is happening under this radical court order, is the attendance by races should be reported to the public throughout the nation with each progress report of integration in compliance with the court order and just what is happening. Already there are many communities and towns in the Southland that do not have a single white student in their public school system. These children have been carried to other areas where they would be accepted that have less number of the negro race than they have in their area. Particularly some area schools have been closed and as a result all the negro students were bused into the little villages and school boards have seen fit to turn the entire school that had been in existence for many years over to the negro students in the heart of the villages. I am sure if HEW wants to keep up with this that they are already aware of the fact of what is happening but it looks like HEW and the radical court groups are hell bent on total integration slanted to the negro race with no regard for the majority race as to what they would like to do toward giving their children the type of education and environment they would like to be brought up under.

It is certainly out of my jurisdiction to make direct suggestions of needful things to do but we have in and with you fine representation in Washington that should come up with some kind of group plan to approach the President with for the necessary relief. There should be some out to keeping radical members of our higher court from issuing radical court orders to affect only a selected area of the nation. Higher court rulings should cover the entire nation, not simply to violate the rights of only a small segment of citizens. If total integration is to prevail certainly transfer privileges should be extended to any student to attend the school of his choice without busing privileges. We are at the vital crossroads for a definite direction and stand to take.

In Mississippi I subscribe to the philosophy of [REDACTED], a top negro leader of the state and editor of the Jackson Advocate newspaper, an advocate of moderation, tolerance and understanding between both races in advancing integration on a sensible and orderly basis. Forced total integration will never be fully submitted to.

MANUFACTURERS OF

COTTONSEED AND SOYBEAN PRODUCTS

GREENWOOD, MISSISSIPPI 38930

PRESIDENT & GENERAL MANAGER

January 13, 1970

Page 3

I do not subscribe to the policies and philosophy of Mayor Charles Evers of Fayette who advocates boycotts in every manner to try to force some of the radical court orders to be carried out. The effectiveness of any boycott will come only through militant groups and threats of violence to anyone who violates the boycott rules. Militant expansion has gone as far as it should go in this country for it only extends into more vicious militant thinking and develops further into revolutionists such as the Black Panther groups that are unquestionably out to eventually try to overthrow the government, destroy our police system with disregard of all laws except those that would expand their thinking and movement. Segments of the government and courts have far too long condoned and extended the cloak of protection to these radical groups. There is hardly any organized group among the colored race that does not condone militant attitudes and with the growth of these militant groups this promotes and extends into the revolutionary area. Certainly much thought should be given in Congress to curtail entirely the activities of these militant violent and revolutionary activities that will only serve to weaken our great nation. Continued militant attitudes will only serve to create more hatred between the races, whereas friendly cooperative understanding and working together by members of both races will help attain any satisfactory level of integration.

How far will Congress let the higher courts go before enacting some law to prevent rulings that are so damaging to our nations economy? Certainly if nine members of a high court can overhaul the Constitution that we have so long lived under, then the Congress that created this higher court has the power to overhaul the court in a manner that human rights violation will not long prevail in one selected section of our nation without affecting the entire nation. The necessary urging for Congress to act will only come by strong appeal from our leader, the President of this great nation.

The nation's number one problem is the Vietnam war and how to bring same to some kind of honorable settlement. You in your high position as Chairman of the Armed Services Commission have backed the President in his plan of withdrawal from the Vietnam war and a vast majority of the people over the Southland have also supported the plan. Your support and that of your constituents has been most helpful to the President. We in the six states that are being discriminated against over the balance of the nation should have full cooperation from our leader that we depend on to bring to an end such discriminatory violations

MANUFACTURERS OF

PHONE

COTTONSEED AND SOYBEAN PRODUCTS
GREENWOOD, MISSISSIPPI 38930

PRESIDENT & GENERAL MANAGER

January 13, 1970
Page 4

of ones human and civil rights in one selected area. Let me urge some uniform appeal be made by all affected representation of the area that has been singled out for the court order for total integration with all outside representation that can be mustered to join with you to make the needful appeal to the President for relief. If nothing else, Congress should set some retirement age for Supreme Court Justices to retire with benefits. Senility should not be tolerated in our higher courts and the members should be selected from across the nation so that all areas would be equally represented on the court bench. A few members of the court are long past their retirement age and should be retired with benefits that will encourage them to leave the court without serving through their entire senile life. It is unthinkable that nine men can interpret the Constitution so as to set the destiny course of two hundred million people. Nine heads simply do not have the capacity for enough brains for this tremendous job.

The enclosed ad is a full page carried by NAACP Mississippi Emergency Relief, Dept. N3, Box 121, Radio City Station, New York, N. Y. 10019 in the New Yorker magazine and certainly is a further slander toward our great state and the initial statement is misleading.

Respectfully and sincerely yours,

:nh

Enclosure

PS-If you can think of any other people that should have a copy of this statement I will be happy to send it to them in any area of the South that will be helpful.

29-c Jan

JOHN C. STERNIS, MISS., CHAIRMAN

RICHARD B. RUSSELL, GA.
STUART SYMINGTON, MO.
HENRY M. JACKSON, WASH.
SAM J. ERVIN, JR., N.C.
HOWARD W. CANNON, NEV.
STEPHEN M. YOUNG, OHIO
DANIEL K. INOUE, HAWAII
THOMAS J. MCINTYRE, N.H.
HARRY F. BYRD, JR., VA.

MARGARET CHASE SMITH, MAINE
STROM THURMOND, S.C.
JOHN G. TOWER, TEX.
PETER H. DOMINICK, COLO.
GEORGE MURPHY, CALIF.
EDWARD W. BROOKE, MASS.
BARRY GOLDWATER, ARIZ.
RICHARD S. SCHWEIKER, PA.

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

T. EDWARD BRASWELL, JR., CHIEF OF STAFF

February 3, 1970

[REDACTED]

Chairman of the Board and Executive Vice President
Yazoo Valley Oil Mill, Inc.
Greenwood, Mississippi 38930

Dear [REDACTED]:

I have held your valued letter of January thirteenth here at my desk for reply and I regret the delay in my response, but I have been most impressed with the points you made and I have read and re-read your letter several times.

[REDACTED], let me say at the outset that you and I are in firm agreement on all points which you discussed in your letter. I think it is a shame and a disgrace that the Supreme Court has just taken charge of our Public School System in a number of cases. I think you are already familiar with many of the efforts which I have made to try to get the President and the Attorney General to help in giving us some relief. I am sure you will recall that last Fall, the Attorney General requested District Courts to grant our schools in the Southern District additional time and the Court agreed to that request as well as the Fifth Circuit. This action was taken by the Attorney General after I had had a good many conferences with Attorney General Mitchell, Secretary Finch, and other top officials of the Government. In spite of all of that, however, the case was appealed to the Supreme Court and the Supreme Court ruled against us.

I just mention this as one of many examples of efforts I have made along with others, with some success in trying to get relief, only to have the Supreme Court block us at virtually every turn.

Also, I know you are familiar with the amendment I have offered and fought for here in the Senate trying to preserve freedom of choice, and other amendments which would assist in the problem.

COPY

February 3, 1970

Page 2.

We are scheduled to consider the Education Act in the Senate later this week and I have already prepared additional amendments and our Southern group of Senators have chosen my amendment as the principal amendment we will push for. I enclose, herewith, a copy of two of the amendments - one of which is almost identical to the state law now in effect in the State of New York.

I certainly share your concern about this problem and I will continue to do everything I can to help solve it. It is certainly very difficult indeed to see our public schools and our people treated in this way.

I certainly agree with your sentiments about the advertisement which appeared in the New Yorker magazine. This is a perfect example of the libel and slander directed against our state in the South in all too many cases. I will certainly continue to try to get the true picture across.

Again my thanks for your letter and with warm regards and best wishes, I am

Your friend,

John Stennis
United States Senator

JS/cr

enclosures (2)