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Correspondence, John C. Stennis, May 13-16, 1963

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JOHN STENNIS

Card out
May 13, 1963

Senator John C. Stennis
U. S. Senate
Washington, D. C.

Dear John:

While I am deeply alarmed and deplore the Cuban situation, am glad that your committee has pointed out and warned the people of its seriously dangerous threat to the United States, the South American Countries, and this entire Hemisphere.

While ^{the} this warning is late--it is not too late if our country will take proper action the situation calls for and rid Cuba of Castro, Russians and armament installations designed for use in attack on the United States, South America and other points in this Hemisphere.

"Strict surveillance" without action to remove and prevent the menacing threat is not enough. What good will it do to see and know what is taking place if we sit idly by and permit it to continue and grow more menacing without taking any action to prevent it?

I hope your committee and the Congress will demand that proper steps be taken at once to protect this country and the countries of this Hemisphere from this deadly threat to our existence.

There is another deadly threat with which we are confronted here at home and throughout the South, which if not removed may prove disastrous to the peace and harmony throughout the nation: It is the backing and encourage of negro agitators to stage mass movements of negroes in the South (it will soon be in the North also) under the guise of "Freedom of Peaceful Non-Violent Assembly", but in fact designed to bring about friction and ill will between the races, and to promote and incite riots, violence and bloodshed, in order to achieve inflammatory publicity for the purpose of advancing the personal, political and financial interests of the agitators and their communist backers.

Everyone knows that these mass movements staged by Martin Luther King, Gregory, the NAACP and other agitators, can be stopped by word from the President and Attorney General. If these two highest officers of the United States are sincere in their desire to prevent riots, disorder, violence, bloodshed and death, all they have to do is direct these people to desist in such movements which have proved, whether intended so to do or not, that they will and do incite riots, disorder, violence, bloodshed and death, and say to them what they say to the white people of

*Copy -
1. Unpublished
2. Copy of Board
3. I put in
new version
J.T.V.
Schedule?*

page #2.

the South, viz., No physical resistance, no violence, no demonstrations, resort to the Courts - there is the proper forum to adjudicate your differences.

Until the President and Attorney General take such action the flames of racial hatred and prejudice, riots, violence, bloodshed, death and disorder, will continue to be fanned by these agitators, and our country will be in an upheaval of disorder and lawlessness.

Until these two highest officers of our government forget their personal and political interests and place the welfare of our nation and its people above party political interests, any recurrence of violence in Birmingham or elsewhere in the United States, rests upon their shoulders. It is their responsibility and they cannot evade it, no matter what force they may use or excuse they may give.

Don't you think an appeal to these gentlemen by a group of Senators--not all from the South--might persuade them to try this method rather than resort to the armed forces of the country and invade another state at a great expense to the people and a worsening of a situation which can so easily be settled and calm brought to a turbulent sea of strife and disorder?

With personal regards and best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours, *friend,*

P. S. The U. S. Army may force obedience to its might and power, but cannot remove the resentment of those so forced--it will only intensify that resentment.

The President may invade and occupy a state or states with federal troops and win the battles staged by Martin Luther King and other agitators, but he cannot win the war of Peaceful cooperation between the races in that manner. Therefore, if it is orderly procedure and peaceful cooperation that he wants the Courts are the proper forums--not the armed forces of the federal government.

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

May 16, 1963

[REDACTED]
Rosedale, Mississippi

Dear [REDACTED]:

This will acknowledge your letter of May 13th, and I deeply appreciate your reference to our Preparedness Interim Report on Cuba, filed here last week.

As you understand, this was not a full or complete report and dealt with that phase of our hearings on our intelligence. Further, I thought it was highly desirable to have a unanimous report, if possible. And the unanimity turned out to be a strong factor here, where it was well received. Enclosed is a copy of this Report, and you will note that it was signed by all members of the Preparedness Subcommittee: Senators Symington, Jackson, Thurmond, Saltonstall, Margaret Chase Smith, Goldwater, and myself. I am also taking the liberty of enclosing you a marked copy of the Record for last Thursday, containing my remarks on the Senate floor in presentation of this Interim Report. Our Subcommittee is continuing its hearings and we expect to file further reports and to make recommendations. Of course, this is going to be difficult.

In my weekly telecast this week, I also discussed the Cuban crisis and my personal position on Cuba. This Report from Washington will be carried by all Mississippi Stations this weekend, and I enclose copy of the regularly scheduled times the program is carried.

Walter, I have also carefully read every single word of your observations and comments in regard to the situation and developments in Birmingham and elsewhere in connection with the mass "non-violent" agitator movement, which you have certainly described and analyzed correctly. I certainly share your deep concern and appreciate the timely points and observations you make, and I expect to discuss your suggestions with some of my colleagues.

With appreciation and with warm good wishes, I

am

Your friend,

John Stennis
United States Senator

JS/cl
Enc.