

7-22-1963

## Senator Stennis Civil Rights Correspondence B04F44L01

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## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

HARRY L. WINGATE, JR., CHIEF CLERK

7/22/63

Senator's comments to Eph - re possible statement in advance of  
the Sit-In here on August 28th --

Senator is considering possible statement, along following  
lines:

There has been a group crowding into my office earlier, demanding  
of my secretary that I see them, etc.

I will not see them at my regular office.

As a believer in the Constitution in that every citizen has a  
right to present any grievance, I will agree to see two or three of them in  
my small office I have over in the Capitol, if they present themselves in  
this way.

Of course I am opposed to all phases of the civil rights bill/.  
Most of the provisions are unconstitutional, and all are impractical. But I  
will see either one, or a Committee of one, two or three, representing the  
group from Mississippi, for them to present their views under those conditions.  
Otherwise, I will not see them at all.

suggested following:

Organized pressure groups representing and sponsored by NAACP, etc. for the  
sole purpose of forcing the Congress to enact civil rights legislation. Part of  
a mob. Will not see on this basis.

Any individual citizen from Mississippi, white or black, who sincerely believes  
he has a grievance -- I will be glad to see.

Senator was considering harm we might do to the South's cause for Southern  
Senators to refuse to see the group. But he wanted to lay down a principle to  
start with.

As far as any discussion of proposed civil rights legislation, Senator's  
position is well known and firm -- opposing to the limit.

Any bona fide citizen of Mississippi here for the purpose of seeing his  
Senators, I will see one, or a Committee of one to three, those representing  
Mississippians -- will see in my office in the Capitol.

And [redacted] mentioned fact that none of the previous group had been  
from Mississippi.

JB/11