

P.O. Box 109
Meridian, Mississippi
February 18, 1960

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

Dear Mr. Stennis:

I am writing you regarding pending Civil Rights legislation. We, the Negroes in Mississippi want to be first class citizens, and share the same responsibility in creating clean government as other people who are American citizens. We, the Mississippi Negroes are tired of the whole world looking down on Mississippi as the number one "Lynch State" in America, and the state with less than 4% of its potential 497,000 Negroes over 21 years of age qualified to vote.

The state of Mississippi is marked with the kidnapped-lynching of Mack Charles Parker, Negro, accused of the rape of a white woman in Pearl River County, Poplarville, Mississippi. No one has been brought to the bar of justice, although the F.B.I. report was submitted to state and county officials which was labeled by one official as, "Hear Say".

The case involving eight white boys of Corinth, Mississippi who went out and deliberately murdered one innocent Negro boy and wounded another with a shot gun blast may be compared with the case of Tupelo, Mississippi where three Negroes wrongly and willfully stabbed three white men. In this case no one was killed. One white boy was given one year for the murder of the Negro boy and the wounding of another. By contrast all three of the Negro boys in the Tupelo, Mississippi case were sentenced without trial to terms ranging from 20 years to life in prison. This mirrors a reflection around the world that the officials in charge of justice in these cases in the state of Mississippi are without honor, and proves conclusively that Mississippi have dual standards of justice based on race.

It is a matter of record that it is as hard for a Negro to get a fair trial in Mississippi as it is for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. The record will also prove that it is equally as hard for Negroes to register and vote in the majority of Mississippi's 82 counties.

We want to be free. We want the truth to be known about the Negro in Mississippi. All Negroes are entitled to equal justice, many of whom are afraid to voice their sentiments because of economic reprisals sinfully heaped upon them by their white employers. They are afraid to speak the convictions of their souls because of the hate virus spread by the White Citizens Council and similar organizations.

May we impress upon you, Mr. Stennis that America cannot maintain its great heritage with its citizens half free and half slaves. In the words of Abraham Lincoln, we will all be one or all be the other. Those of us who believe in justice must band ourselves together and make our democracy a reality if we hope to win the uncommitted people of the world whom we need on our side in the struggle to remain a free nation.

Therefore, we call upon you to support the Civil Rights needed to protect and safeguard the rights of Negroes including an Anti-Lynching Bill.

Very truly yours,

MISSISSIPPI STATE CONFERENCE NAACP

C.R. Darden, President