

News from The President's
Office

P.O. BOX 109
MERIDIAN, MISSISSIPPI
APRIL 8, 1960

Dear Branch Officer:

The "famous school picture case" was tried in Lauderdale County court, Meridian, Mississippi Wednesday, March 30th. I was adequately and vigorously defended by attorneys R. Jess Brown of Vicksburg, Mississippi and A.P. Tureaud of New Orleans, Louisiana. However, for a Negro, especially the state president of the NAACP, to expect justice in a Meridian, Mississippi court, defended by two Negro attorneys before an all white jury is the same as expecting to see a full grown camel walk through the eye of your sewing needle. I was again fined fifty dollars (\$50.00) and cost of court. The appeal bond and the persons to sign same had been ready and on hand throughout the day. My case is now on appeal to the circuit court.

We would have been the most surprised people in the world if the courts had ruled on the truth in the case. No one could expect a fair trial from a coalition of white supremists and "Uncle Tom" or in a more specific term "Master Thomas", who is used to defraud and cheat helpless Negro children out of education needed to keep them up with the times in which we live. The policeman who testified in the case admitted that I was about 50 yards from the school when photo was taken. The gravity of the most deplorable situation here in Meridian is not what is happening to the president, it is the innocent and helpless children who are victims of circumstances. We have first hand information that numerous teachers are tired of being subjected to persecution by following instructions to sit in class rooms without being permitted to teach. They recognize this as mass enslavement of innocent children. This is a criminal act calculated to destroy initiative on the part of students, deny them the basic foundation needed in the field of education and cripple many of them for life. This should have a definite reaction on all of us who are fighters for freedom by stimulating us to greater action especially in the field of political action. There is absolutely no time for fumbling.

CLARENCE MITCHELL DAY

The Meridian Branch NAACP mass meeting with Clarence Mitchell as guest speaker will be held Sunday afternoon, April 24th at the First Union Baptist Church, 610 - 38th Avenue. We call upon all who will to join us in making this a meeting to be remembered with the hopes of stimulating the Negro to action in the field of Civil Rights.

Remember our Mother Of The Year campaign can be no bigger and no better than we make it. We have had several businesses within the past two or three days to commit themselves as sponsors. Mothers will be happy because of the courtesy that will be showered upon them in the form of gifts from various business establishments. Therefore, we are depending upon you to give some of your precious time to this effort. Remember to contact businesses, clubs, churches and individuals in this fund raising rally for freedom.

The student movement by Campbell College and Tougaloo College students who have organized to advise Negroes to stay away from downtown Jackson is hailed by people all over the United States as the best form of protest that the Negroes could make at this time. This was advocated for a

period of one week, but we anticipate this as being the beginning of a long struggle for equality of all public facilities. Therefore, we urge upon you when you are in the city of Jackson to cooperate fully with this movement. I have already talked with business people in Jackson who are beginning to gain new customers as a result of this movement. This could serve as a springboard for greater things to come.

On Thursday night, April 7th a brick and coca-cola bottle were thrown through my picture window which all but completely wrecked the window. My mother-in-law miraculously escaped being injured as pieces of glass fell in her lap while seated in the room. This is to be expected when you find an editor like the one of THE MERIDIAN STAR who make inflammatory statements, "Most Galveston, Texas downtown stores have opened integrated lunch counters in response to sit-down strikes by Negro hoodlums.

This is the state of Davy Crockett and the Alamo, the state of past heroism - and present knuckling under to the NAACP and CORE-inspired lawlessness.

There is only one kind of lunch counter at which the sit down strikers are entitled to sit - - the one at the jail or at the county road.

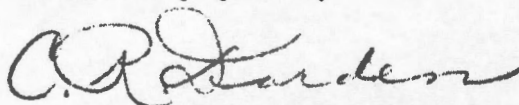
As deplorable as the lunch counter demonstrations are, they will likely boomerang against the integrationist cause.

We note that even former President ("civil rights") Harry Truman disapproves of such tactics. So will many law-abiding citizens of North and West.

Even many integrationists respect the right of a man or private business to control its own property.

In the long run the sit-down strikers will hurt the integrationist cause, even as lynchings hurt the Southern cause."

Sincerely yours,



C.R. Darden, President
MISS. STATE CONF. NAACP