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December 10, 1964

To the Editor of the Gazette:

The Gazette for Tuesday, December 8, reports a speech by Acting Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach. Several remarks from this speech should be challenged, not to say ~~execrated~~ execrated.

1. Katzenbach said that one of the reasons for Southern acceptance of the Civil Rights Act may well be the government's restraint in using federal force. "If there had been greater federal civil rights involvement in the past few years ... this mood of acceptance might never have been generated."

This statement is probably accurate, but the question is, what is being "accepted" by the Southerners? The answer is, at most tokenism: three Negro children in a school here, a Kress's lunch counter integrated there. Even Mississippi is beginning to practice the lesson that more "progressive" areas of the South have learned: tokenism doesn't really change things and makes it possible to delay any real integration indefinitely.

Voter registrars in the Deep South still use every trick of the law to keep would-be Negro voters from registering. There are areas of these states where it is still too dangerous for a Negro even to attempt to register. And because the poll tax still holds for local elections, even the Negro registration that does occur is hardly a threat. Naturally the South "accepts" this situation.

2. What does he mean when he says "the South accepts"? Aren't Negroes Southerners, too? Do they accept ~~this situation~~ this situation?

3. Katzenbach said that the FBI ~~is~~ "cannot provide bodyguards, cops on the beat, or enforcement of every state and federal law. The FBI is not a national police force and I know of no one who believes that it should be."

This statement is a distortion. There are federal laws protecting the right to vote, and the FBI has the legal power to arrest on the spot anyone interfering with a citizen's exercise of this right. Yet the FBI has been known to watch ("investigate") would-be voters being beaten up in front of the court house.

"Federal interference" and "national police force" sound like dirty words, but

the laws permitting federal interference are designed to cope with even dirtier facts: intimidation, harassment, murder of Negro citizens of the South. (Negroes in the South, even in Mississippi, are American citizens, and are entitled to the rights defined in the Constitution of the United States.) ~~W. J. Katzenbach~~ Katzenbach chooses to align his Department on the side of dirty facts rather than dirty words, and thus the most subversive Americans of all, the segregationists, are given aid and comfort.

*Nancy Bowles Ellin*  
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*Evenings and Sunday*

# KALAMAZOO GAZETTE

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FIRESIDE 5-3511



December 14, 1964

Mrs. Nancy B. Ellin  
209 Elm Street  
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007

Dear Mrs. Ellin:

Thank you for the letter for our Voice of the People column. Perhaps you are unaware that we have a maximum limitation of 300 words for letters appearing in this column. I am sure you can understand the reason, available space and our desire to give as many readers as possible the opportunity to express their opinions.

I tried to reach you by telephone but received no answer, so we are returning your letter with the hope that you will make the necessary deletions to come within the 300-word limit.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Don Williams".

Don Williams  
Editorial Writer

KALAMAZOO GAZETTE