

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

January 4, 1965

Miss Judy F. Richardson
133 Franklin Street
Tarrytown, New York

Dear Miss Richardson:

I greatly appreciate your letter urging me to support the "Fairness Resolution" which would prevent the Mississippi Representatives from taking their seats in Congress until the legal dispute is resolved over their right to be seated.

I share your concern about the terrible violence in Mississippi, the systematic exclusion of the Negroes from registering or voting and the undoubtedly illegal exclusion of the Freedom Democratic Party candidates from the ballot in the recent Congressional election.

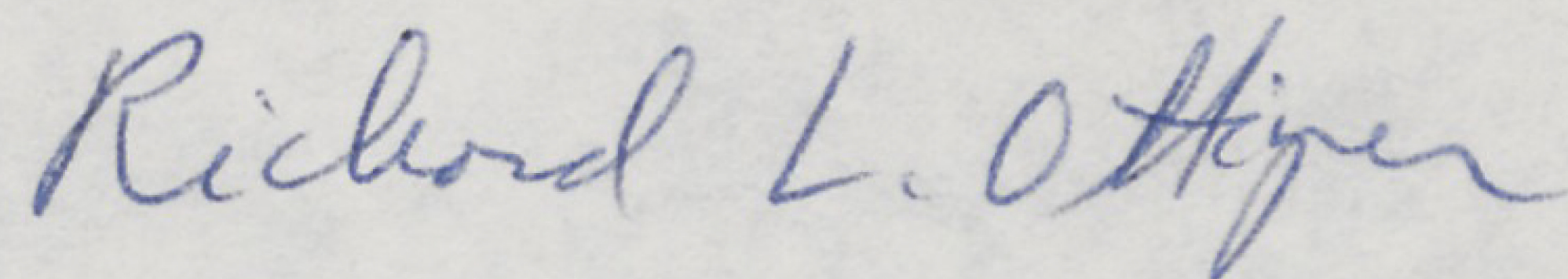
I am worried too, however, about making a move so drastic as to ~~maybe~~ exclude the State of Mississippi entirely from representation in the House. This is really the equivalent of kicking the State out of the Union. The retaliatory reaction from other southern states equally guilty of discrimination is likely to be very harmful to the prospects of getting through Congress important legislation of great significance to the Country and in particular to the Civil Rights movement. In the past we have had support from many southern members for such legislation as MEDICARE, the Poverty Program and educational measures. The leadership of the House of Representatives and the Administration, including our most significant Civil Rights Champion, Vice-President Humphrey, are not supporting the Fairness Resolution for this reason.

Miss Judy F. Richardson

I have not yet made up my mind how I will vote on this resolution when it comes up. I realize the resolution may be a very effective means of forcing southern compliance with the Constitution and that the legal road may be a much longer and more difficult one. It is only fair to tell you however, that I am concerned about the possible counter-effects as I have described them above.

I will take your views into serious consideration in reaching my decision on this matter. I certainly appreciate your writing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard L. Ottinger". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

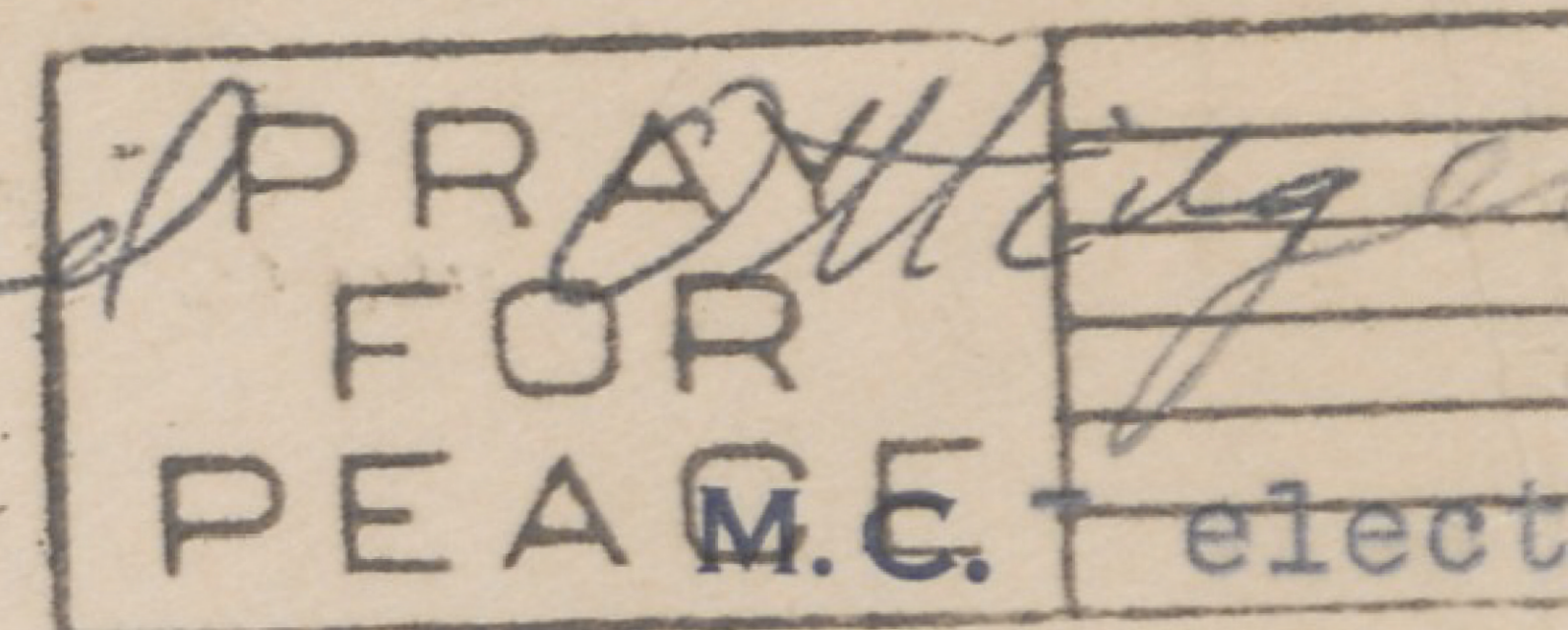
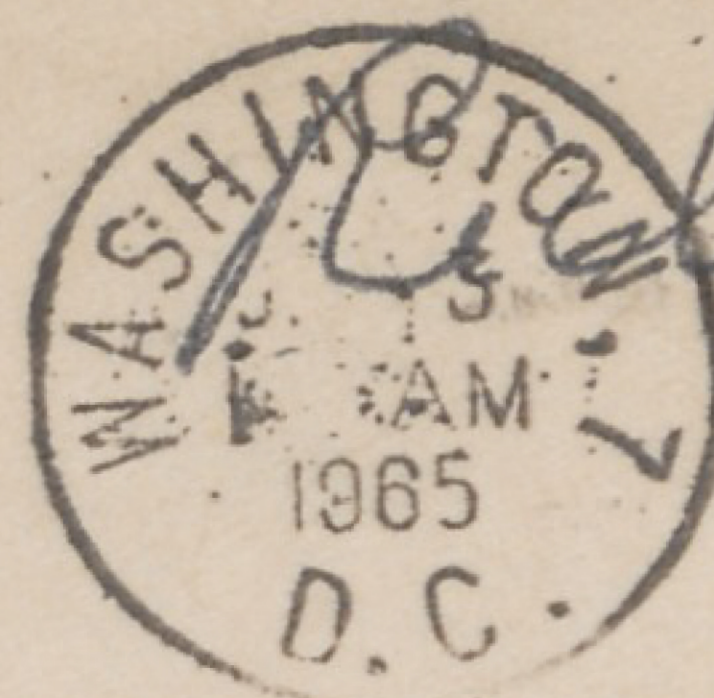
RICHARD L. OTTINGER
Member of Congress

RLO:djl

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

OFFICIAL BUSINESS



Miss Judy F. Richardson

~~133 Franklin Street~~

~~Tarrytown, New York~~

PLEASE FORWARD TO:

8 1/2 RAYMOND ST. N.W.

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