

Mississippi College has rendered a valuable service to the white race, and indirectly to all races, during the years of her life. I feel that her contribution would have been of a still higher order had this privilege been extended to all humanity without regard for color and race. It is even more urgent that the future be dedicated to the direct service to all mankind without regard for color and race. It seems very probable that in the near future our state institutions of higher education are going to be compelled by law to admit negroes. If this occurs, Mississippi College will be standing out as a poor exception or be compelled to enter via the back door. It would be far better for Mississippi College to be a leader, especially in a humanitarian program of this kind. Mississippi College cannot afford to be on the wrong side of a moral question. I gravely fear the sentiment expressed in your letter is not going to stand the test of time.

It is quite possible that my viewpoint is a minority one at present, although I believe there are far more people holding it than is generally supposed. If that is the case I predict within a few years a rising tide of public sentiment will demand a review of the position. It is perhaps now later than we think.

I represent no one. The above are my personal views. I express them because they seem to be the accumulated experience of mankind. They are not original with me. I have often been mistaken in the past. It is possible I am in error here.

To you, personally, and all those connected with the responsibility of directing Mississippi College, I tender my very best wishes.

Sincerely yours,  
/s/ Tom

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE  
FOUNDED 1826  
CLINTON, MISSISSIPPI

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

December 13, 1954

Dear Tom:

Your letter of September 9 was duly re-

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ceived and at the time only casually read. It came during the opening of college which is a very busy period, as you well know. Then, too, the enrolment in Mississippi College continues to rise, requiring much thought and planning to meet the demands made upon us. Lately I have re-read your letter more carefully and now feel that it deserves an answer, even though you said none was expected.

Rest assured, Tom, that your letters have given no personal offense, nor do I question the sincerity of your convictions and belief on an ancient and stubborn problem. We are fortunate that we live in a country where differences of opinion can be held and expressed on controversial issues that arise. I am in agreement with the great Frenchman who said in substance, "I do not agree with a thing you say, but I would contend to the death for you to say it." And on the age-old question of what is the proper relationship between the white and Negro races in this country, we are as far apart as the poles of the earth in our basic philosophy.

It is being argued with a good deal of heat at present that not to admit Negroes to white schools is violative of the spirit of the Declaration of Independence and the Fundamental Law of the Land. Since when did this become so? The authors and framers of these great documents by word and deed were squarely on the other side of the question. Also, the profound lawyers and jurists that have adorned the bench of the highest court in the land up until the recent decision were squarely and unequivocally on the other side of the issue.

It is being argued also with even greater heat that it is unchristian to segregate the white and Negro races. It is contended that the races should be permitted to mix freely in public and private. Again we demur and call for the chapter and the verse of the Bible. The whole tenor of the Scriptures is against mixed marriages and the pollution of the blood of distinct and separate races. The upward climb of mankind has been made through the thought

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and labors of the dominant races in the various areas of the world. History is not so much the record of the events of nations as a whole as it is the chronicle of the contributed civilizations of the superior races. O, you say there is no superior race or person! Then again you deny the whole tenor of the Scriptures and throw into the wastebasket the parable of the talents whose significant truth is verified daily before our very eyes. Communism, as you well know, is based upon Karl Marx's doctrine of internationalism and the classless society and the obliteration of all national and racial distinctions and the final amalgamation of all races. The early Christians in their zeal, actuated by a noble sentiment, as you will remember, tried an experiment of having everything in common and it would not work, even though they were of the same mind and purpose.

It is our abiding conviction that every race, like every individual, has a distinct mission to fulfill. Like individuals, some races have five talents, some three, some one, each according to its several ability. It is the responsibility of each race to find its place and under God to work out its manifest destiny. The negro race, though one of the oldest, has never built a worthy civilization. Their talent seems to lie in another direction.

Our forefathers who crossed an unknown ocean and cleared an unbroken forest and displaced the primitive people found here were not seeking a place for the amalgamation of the white and black races. Rather were they interested in building an asylum where the oppressed could come and live their own lives in peace under God and worship Him according to the dictates of conscience. However dimly may have been the vision they remained steadfast in their purpose and marched steadily toward their worthy goal. The part our great country has played in the tremendous events of the last forty years is familiar to all who read and think. Through her wealth of material resources and her moral and spiritual strength, she has retarded the enslavement of

mankind and prevented the destruction of existing civilizations. This she has done without any desire for power or the hope of reward. She has been traveling toward her fore-ordained destiny.

As you know, Tom, the tendency is toward mass movements with little thought for the individual. The "One World" idea with a one-world government is a popular thought today. This is a beautiful dream but void of any possibility of reality. Racial differences and affinities and antagonism cannot be ignored. Any proposition to efface national and racial borders is not the conclusion of sound reason and good judgment.

Then there are also increasing numbers that would merge all religious denominations into one corpulent body. This would not deepen conviction and belief nor make for spiritual health and strength but would rather tend to weakness and slovenness and a decrease in initiative and interest. To take the position that positive religious belief is a matter of little consequence, that one creed or one denomination is as good as another does not favor a militant and aggressive Christianity, but rather encourages a lazy indifference to the Truth.

The Mississippi River better fulfills its mission when kept within its banks. To destroy its levees would broaden its waters but without control. The most fruitful Christian is the one who believes something definite and is willing to contend earnestly for it. The best world citizen also is the one whose patriotism has been rooted first in the soil of his own state and community. Some water, to be sure, is found scattered over the landed areas of the earth, but the great body of it is contained in the rivers, and seas, and oceans. Some grass is found on the mountain side, but most of it is on the plains. Likewise there are bits of truth around the fringes and at the extremities of many issues, but the great mass of it is found in the golden mean. It pays to operate where the bulk of the truth lies.

Much is being said currently about giving the legislature the authority to abolish the

public school system. Actually, the Supreme Court did that in its recent decision. The governor and legislature are asking only for permission to remove the debris in order to start all over again. These elected officials are citizens, too, and are as much interested in the welfare of Mississippi as any one else. If we cannot trust our elected officers, then representative government which has contributed so richly to our national greatness has gone with the wind and may the Lord have mercy upon us. Certainly the legislature will not abolish the public schools unless it becomes the alternative with the integration of the white and Negro races. There are some things dearer than life itself. Otherwise our soldiers and sailors and airmen in our generation have died in vain.

Until your September letter, Tom, I had strongly felt that your sojourn in New England, where a similar problem faced our Yankee cousins centuries ago and which they solved by passing it on to our section for value received, had influenced your views and that a few years of fine living in the land of your nativity might improve your thinking on this all-important matter. While recent events have dimmed that hope, still we have not despaired altogether; for we are reminded by another that "As long as the lamp holds out to burn, The vilest sinner may return."

As ever your friend,  
D. M. Nelson, President

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