

October 10, 1962

Handwritten signature

Hon. Robert Kennedy
Attorney General of the United States
Washington, D. C.

Mr. Kennedy:

I have observed with amazement bordering on disbelief that the Kennedy politics can be so all-consuming as to lead this nation to the very brink of disaster.

I refer not only to the inexcusable failure to take any kind of effective action while Cuba is being sovietized, but in double measure to the fact that with callous disregard for state sovereignty, you will appease the Red-ridden NAACP and left-wing minority groups to the extent of invading a sovereign state with more troops than we currently have in Laos and West Berlin combined.

I fully realize that the action you took in Mississippi was done with a pious tongue-in-cheek excuse that federal laws must be enforced. The fallacy of this is that in Albany, Georgia, you encouraged the breach of laws by Martin Luther King and his fanatical followers, and you condemned efforts to enforce laws against their lawless acts.

Just over a year ago you also encouraged and actively participated in a conspiracy to break state laws when the so-called "freedom riders" came South under your virtual sponsorship.

I have waited for you in your zeal to enforce the law, to take some action, or even to publicly condemn, the nightly acts of Harlemites as they carry on a reign of terror and jungle lawlessness, even to the extent of assaulting and beating uniformed officers of the law.

Washington has become a darkened city in more than one aspect. Nowhere in America is assaults, rapes, murder, mugging, thievery and assorted high crimes and misdemeanors more prevalent. This is due to the mewling approach to black-skinned criminal elements, and the soft-headed handling of minority offenders when apprehended.

I'm sure it is a source of great family pride that the actions of the Kennedy administration in Mississippi, won the unstinting approval of:

The Communist Party of America.

M. L. King and Company.

Castro

The Kremlin bosses who have promised to bury us and are letting us dig our own grave.

I'm equally sure it bothers you not at all that so many sound thinking Americans, in the Congress and out, loudly condemn and tremble for the future of America as you romp merrily on your reckless way to a Police State in America.

I am not given to the writing of fan mail, and this marks my first letter of protest to any official.

I witnessed, as a state officer, the actions of U. S. Marshalls in Montgomery, and I know from first-hand observation that it was their own reckless use of tear gas against peacefully assembled onlookers, that set off what just missed being a large and bloody riot. This was averted and the Marshalls saved from bodily harm, by decisive action of State officers, particularly uniformed Highway Patrolmen, and by county and city officers. Later the National Guard of Alabama secured the peace.

In these things I do not blame the Marshalls. I found them to be mostly good Americans who were pushed into a situation for which they had no stomach. They were largely untrained in any type of police action and certainly not in riot control. It is the most elemental truth of police work that one uniformed man is worth ten or more not in uniform.

It must be assumed that you are familiar with the announced goals and the history of Communism in America. If this is true, you are aware that John Pepper, Alias Pepper, one of the earlier Soviet agents to operate in America, wrote in 1921 a handbook for communism. In that blueprint, he announced the plan and the approach for bringing America into the Soviet camp. It consisted largely of using minority groups, principally the Negroes in the South, to achieve these ends. He mentioned the use of Negro ministers as the most potent weapon in their arsenal, noting that the Negro was an emotional and basically religious person, who would follow such leadership.

In the past 40 years, we have traveled more than two-thirds of the road charted by Pepper. When we traverse that other short distance, then we will be Sovietized within the meaning of Pepper's outline.

Mr. Kennedy, you are leading us pell-mell along the remainder of that road. You had better read the sign posts before it is too late to turn back.

As a Democrat, I watched with admiration, even though with a great deal of apprehension, the masterful strokes as you and your brother, The President, hacked ruthlessly through obstacle after obstacle on your way to power in 1960. We have been treated to the same show of brute power in the ~~Massachusetts~~ in your home state; we have seen it used in the Congress and in the Federal Courts, and we have seen the culmination of this brute power in Mississippi.

With it all, I recall promises made by you and by The President during the campaign, that you would never send federal troops into the South to enforce desegregation. You were critical of the actions of the Republican regime in Little Rock.

I'm sure your advisers have told you correctly that your actions have lost the Southern vote for the Democratic Party. Without this vote in 1960, the Democratic Party could not have come to power.

Since you carried almost all of the pivotal states wherein the minority vote was a factor, how do you expect to make political gains by keeping only a part of what you had and losing much of what has up to now been considered "safe" Democratic votes?

I am most amazed of all by the fact that just today the news was that James Merideth had criticized the Army for not using Negro troops on patrol in Mississippi. By nightfall, that error had been corrected. In other words, you felt the whiplash of this unstable Negro troublemaker and you quickly prostrated your self and the nation again in keeping with these demands.

It would seem that pride, at least, would dictate otherwise. How ungrateful can Merideth and his kind be? When the first family has led in the prostitution of the majority to the will of a few dark-skinned dictators, how then can he howl for more?

In theory, this nation is mine as much as it is that of any man. I always have, and will continue, to stand for justice to all men regardless of color or racial background. These rights do not extend to me in forcing my personal association upon others. It does not extend to me in forcing subjection of the majority to my personal whims.

The might of federal force -- awesome as it may be -- will never make right that which is basically and constitutionally wrong. Nor will that might be sufficient in forcing integration of the races against the will of people who will not accept it. A measure of token desegregation can be forced at any given point with troops backed by huge outlays of taxpayers funds. But you are fighting windmills and trying to sweep back the tide with a broom.

The tragedy of it all is that hatreds which did not exist are being burned into the souls of men of good will. These people are of the same stock as those who defied tyranny at the Boston Tea Party; who fought the Redcoats at Lexington and before that, Wrested the Magna Carta from King John.

Can politics be so important? Can honor mean so little? Will federal might directed with vindictive zeal against a great section of the United States, result in the perpetuation of the party in power?

Pose these questions to the Harvard brain trust, but your answer will come from history.

A disgusted American

Edwin Strickland
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