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CARDED

SEPTEMBER 23, 1957

PRESIDENT DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER
WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

DEAR SIR:

THIS IS A LETTER CONCERNING INTEGRATION IN MY NATIVE STATE, ARKANSAS, AND IN THE STATE IN WHICH I NOW LIVE, TEXAS. I WROTE THE FIRST DRAFT OF THIS LETTER THIS MORNING AND IN THE COURSE OF TODAY'S INCIDENTS; I FIND IT NECESSARY TO REWRITE IT--WITH MORE "PUNCH".

I HAVE JUST LISTENED TO THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS TO THE NATION. UP UNTIL TODAY I WAS SATISFIED DISCUSSING THE ISSUES WITH NEIGHBORS AND FRIENDS; HOWEVER, TODAY I WISH TO BE HEARD BY THE EXECUTIVE BODY OF OUR NATION.

PRESIDENT EISENHOWER, YOU HAVE JUST SUCCEEDED IN POURING SALT IN AN ALREADY GAPING WOUND INFLICTED ON THE SOUTHERN PEOPLE. YOUR BACKGROUND FOR TODAY'S SPEECH WAS INDEED EFFECTIVE AND DRAMATIC; HOWEVER, I DOUBT IF YOUR TALK WILL EVER BE IN THE HISTORY BOOKS IN THE SAME CATEGORY WITH THE GETTYSBURG ADDRESS.

THE SOUTHERN PEOPLE OF OUR LAND HAVE A DIGNITY AND PRIDE THAT STANDS OUT AS IN NO OTHER PART OF THE NATION. I BELIEVE THE SUPREME COURT FIRST STEPPED ON THE TOES OF THE SOUTHERN PEOPLE BY AN INJUNCTION AGAINST GOVERNOR FAUBUS, WHO FORSAW THE VIOLENCE IN LITTLE ROCK.

IF THE JUDICIAL BODIES IN WASHINGTON MEAN TO SET THE LITTLE ROCK INCIDENT AS AN EXAMPLE TO THE REST OF THE SOUTHERN STATES----I SAY TO LOOK AGAIN! RECOUNT THE STEPS YOU HAVE TAKEN AGAIN!

ARE YOU INVITING MORE CONTEMPTIBLE PROPAGANDA FROM COMMUNIST COUNTRIES BY CALLING NATIONAL TROOPS INTO LITTLE ROCK? IN MY OPINION THE STATES RIGHTS HAVE BEEN SEIZED TO SHOW THE WORLD OUR READINESS TO ARMS IN THE EVENT OF ANY KIND OF VIOLENCE-----EVEN IF IT MEANS TURNING ON OUR OWN PEOPLE..HOW CAN OUR TROOPS PUT DOWN A CROWD OF THEIR OWN MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN?

IF THE CONGRESS AND THE PRESIDENCY WERE SO WORRIED ABOUT THE PRESTIGE AND DIGNITY OF OUR NATION IN WORLD AFFAIRS, AND IF THIS LITTLE ROCK INCIDENT SO DANGEROUSLY IMPERILS THE SAFETY OF OUR NATION----- WHY THEN WAS THE ARMED FORCES BUDGET SO DRASTICALLY REDUCED?

I QUESTION YOU, MR. PRESIDENT, ABOUT KNOWING THE FEELINGS OF THE PEOPLE OF THE SOUTHERN STATES. I SAY YOU DO NOT KNOW HOW CLOSELY YOU HAVE STRUCK IN THE HOMES OF THE SOUTHERN PEOPLE. YOU DO NOT KNOW HOW MANY TEMPERERS YOU HAVE STIRRED IN THE SOUTHERN STATES.

I, TOO, DEPLORE VIOLENCE, BUT I ALSO DEPLORE MY RIGHTS INFRINGED.

THE SOUTHERN PEOPLE WILL NOT ACCEPT "FORCE" ON INTEGRATION. I PREDICT THAT BY CALLING THE TROOPS TODAY-----YOU HAVE MERELY CAUSED LITTLE ROCK TO BECOME THE FIRST STEPPING STONE TO RACE RIOTS AND VIOLENCE NOT ONLY IN ARKANSAS, BUT THROUGHOUT THE SOUTHERN STATES.

YES, I BELIEVE THAT THE UNITED STATES IS A DEMOCRATIC NATION, BUT IN THIS CASE, WITHOUT DIPLOMACY IN THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNING BODY.

AFTER YOUR ADDRESS THE NATIONAL ANTHEM WAS PLAYED, AND FOR ONCE IN MY LIFE, I COULD NOT BE PROUD OF OLD GLORY UNFURLING IN THE BREEZE!

NO, I AM NOT PLEASED WITH YOU TONIGHT, MR. EISENHOWER; NOR DO I UPHOLD THE SUPREME COURT RULING IN LITTLE ROCK.

IF MY LETTER IS READ BY YOU, I HOPE YOU CAN UNDERSTAND WHAT I FEEL-----DISALLUSION, ANGER, PLUS EMOTION; AS I AM A MOTHER OF TWO SMALL DAUGHTERS, WHO IN THREE YEARS WILL BE ENTERING SCHOOL FOR THE FIRST TIME. THIS CRISIS EFFECTS ME AND MY CHILDREN. AS YOU WILL AGREE, MOST PEOPLE MEET THE PERSON WHOM THEY LATER MARRY IN SCHOOL. WHETHER IT BE HIGH SCHOOL OR COLLEGE IS OF LITTLE SIGNIFIGANCE, BUT SCHOOL NEVERTHELESS, IS THE MEETING PLACE. IF WE ALLOW INTEGRATION ON ALL LEVELS-----DOES THIS MEAN WE WILL HAVE TO ALLOW MIXED MARRIAGES?

MAY I OFFER SOME SUGGESTION IN CLOSING-----IN MY OPINION THE MOST DIPLOMATIC THING TO DO IN THE FACE OF INTEGRATION WOULD BE TO SET UP A VOTE IN THE SOUTHERN STATES AS TO WHETHER OR NOT OUR SCHOOLS SHOULD BE INTEGRATED. LET THE PEOPLE OF THE SOUTH DECIDE FOR THEMSELVES. ONE OF THE MOST PRECIOUS RIGHTS OF AMERICANS IS THE RIGHT TO VOTE. LET US SHOW THE OTHER COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD THAT THE SOUTHERN PEOPLE OF AMERICA CAN VOTE, ELECT, THEN LIVE BY "THEIR" DECISION.

GIVE THE NEGROS FREEDOM OF SPEECH, FREEDOM OF PRESS, ETC., BUT LET THERE BE PROVIDED ADEQUATE SEPARATE SCHOOLS FOR THEM.

THIS IS NOT AN ANONYMOUS LETTER. I WANT IT "READ". I WANT IT TO REACH THE HANDS FOR WHICH IT IS INTENDED. I DO NOT WISH IT THROWN IN THE WASTE BASKET. EXPECTING AN ANSWER FROM YOU.

SINCERELY,

MRS *Maxine G. Allison*

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