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Bill to James, 9 October 1962

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Kansas State University

Manhattan, Kansas

Department of History, Political Science, and Philosophy
Eisenhower Hall

October 9, 1962

Dear James:

Thank you for the carbon copy of your letter to Betty; I had been trying to extract some sense out of the AAUP resolution; your letter made it a little clearer. Still, it has all the aspects of powerless faculties everywhere: at the moment of crisis, pass a resolution suggesting that students not cheat on examinations and obey the honor code.

Meredith seems to be quite a man; just heard over the radio his condemnation of the government's policy of segregating the troops in Mississippi and his reiteration of not being a possession of the NAACP. I think he may save the state of Mississippi yet, in spite of the natives' determination to wreck the Magnolia kingdom.

The only news I've had from Carbone are some newspaper clippings before the riot: one stating that the University of Mississippi hospital was opening a new psychiatric wing, and another clipping about a Mississippi mule.

Now from the sublime to the ridiculous: what's the situation in the history department. I realize that you are not exactly a member of the "in" group, and are, fortuitously, on leave for the year. But is there a department? Did department members sign the AAUP resolution? Is Marquette really telling Meredith "that in a hundred years, it really won't make any difference?"

News from Kansas is indeed mild compared to news from Dixie. Under auspices of that remarkable Ford Foundation, I've procured Richard Shryock (formerly of Johns Hopkins but now librarian of the American Philosophical Society) for the fall semester, and Frank Freidel for the spring semester -- for a few days of visitation. By the time I'm through, the list of "consultants" is going to look like the Claiborne lecture series of a few memorable years ago.

At the moment, plan to go to Miami; naturally assume you will be there and can give me a few moments of your presidential time.

Are you sure that the Carrier house is too small for my family? There were a few moments last week when I was sure that J.D. was only "an educator" and "a political babe in the woods". Now it seems that he has the best of all possible worlds: the federal world, the state world, and the darling of the faculty and the student body.

Kansas State University

? Milton!

I was about prepared to get on my white charger and come down to save the situation, but J.D. seemed to have crawled out of the last ditch. Guess Vergil was right: "they also serve who only stand and wait", and the Chancellor can utter not only the immortal words, "Ole Miss will prevail", but can be for God, mother, state, country, and two sets of flags.

By the way, heard two "southern" jokes the other day: after an ancient historian had finished his lecture on the Medes and the Persians before the U.D.C., an attractive southern gentle lady complimented him on his speech and expressed her great interest, because her mother was a Mead. And then there is that separate but equal volume of Who's Who, entitled "Who Dat?"

Best regards to the family; keep the shotgun handy. Bill.

You know, Marvin Black is truly a remarkable public relations man. The death of Faulkner and others has made Oxford, Mississippi, a household term, and the campus "where everybody speaks" one of the best known in the world.

Now from the sublime to the ridiculous: what's the situation in the history department. I realize that you are not exactly a member of the "in" group, and are, fortuitously, on leave for the year. But is there a department? Did department members sign the AACP resolution? Is it really really telling Meredith "that in a hundred years, it really won't make any difference?"

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