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W. Buchanan to President Hilbun, 8 February 1963

William Buchanan

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This is a verbatim copy of Mr. Buchanan's letter to Mr. Hilbun.

February 8, 1956

President Ben F. Hilbun
Mississippi State College

Dear President Hilbun:

Like Dr. King at Ole Miss I have been disturbed by the events of the past year in Mississippi, particularly

1. The Board of Trustees' speaker screening order
2. The ensuing successful efforts on your part to prevent Hodding Carter from addressing our chapter of the American Association of University Professors
3. The introduction into the legislature of a bill which apparently would make it a crime for a teacher of government (or anyone else) to criticize any official or policy of state government
4. Chancellor Williams' apparently successful efforts to prevent a minister of the Gospel from discussing music and religion with students at the University
5. The statement by a trustee which we heard this morning to the effect that "while everyone has a right to think what he pleases, we have the right to know what an employee thinks and the right not to hire him if we do not approve of it."

When ministers are prevented from speaking to students, and editors from speaking to faculty members, and when trustees feel they must screen not only our speakers but our thoughts, it appears to me that a college cannot perform its functions as an institution of higher learning.

Therefore before the law is passed which might make the expression of these sentiments a criminal act, I wish to submit my resignation, effective as of the termination of my present contract.

With personal good will, and with regret at terminating on this note what has otherwise been a happy and rewarding experience at State College, I am

Yours sincerely,

/s/ W. Buchanan

William Buchanan
Assistant Professor

cc: Professor John K. Bettersworth
Chairman, History & Government Dept.

The Commercial Appeal
The Birmingham News
The Greenville Democrat-Times