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AN OPEN LETTER
TO SENATOR WILLIAM E. JENNER
SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D. C.

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May 23, 1955

Senator William E. Jenner
Senate Office Building
Washington, D. C.

My dear Senator Jenner:

I thank you very much for your kind letter of May 9th. In the second paragraph of your letter you made two very significant statements upon which I wish to comment.

First, "Reverend, it is my opinion - born out by observation over the years - that movements such as described in this article always, by their violence, negate their effectiveness and destroy themselves". Senator Jenner, coming from a 110% American as you have the reputation of being, and from a man who is as active as you are against subversion, sabotage and unAmerican activities, this statement is almost tragic.

Of course you do not say so, but the implication is clear to anyone who is observant, discerning and has the ability to analyze the American trend and the attitude of the most of our so-called 110% Americans under the leadership of Senator Joseph McCarthy. The implication is, as long as hoodlums, such as the Klu Klux Klan, the Blackshirts, the Followers of Gerald L. K. Smith, the damnable Citizens' Council of Mississippi, and all such hate organizations terrorize, victimize and slaughter only Negroes, the best policy of dealing with them is to ignore them and let them slaughter, rape and terrorize Negroes and other minorities until "by their violence, they negate their own effectiveness, and destroy themselves".

I wish so very much that you could have been with me at the Olympic Hotel in Seattle, Washington in December, 1946 and could have seen Bishop Martin Niemoeller cry like a baby, and heard him say: "Oh, if the decent, respectable people of Germany had stood up against Hitler when he first started his violence, brutality and slaughter against the Jews, the history of the world would be entirely different from what it is tonight. But, because they were Jews, a small minority in Germany, the decent, respectable people said: "Oh, they are just Jews that he is terrorizing, and by his own violence, Hitler will negate his own effectiveness and destroy himself". He did just that, but before he was destroyed, over three million (3,000,000) Jews were slaughtered; the world was plunged into the most destructive and disastrous slaughter of mankind that had ever been recorded in the annals of history; and we are spending over 50 billions annually in an effort to bring the world back to sensibility and normality.

It is indeed difficult for me to understand how some of our 110% Americans in the Republican Party can stand by and see their fellow men terrorized, butchered and slaughtered as the Negro has been for the last 75 years and take no effective steps to bring an end to these terrible atrocities and awful iniquities.

If Abraham Lincoln had taken that attitude, we would not have a United States as we know it today. But Lincoln and the founders of the Republican Party did not leave the damnable slave holders free to "run their own courses and negate their effectiveness and destroy themselves". Lincoln and the founders of our great party, from every hilltop, plain and valley of this majestic land, spoke out like claps of thunder and stated that: "This nation cannot long endure half slave and half free". He constantly stated that "slavery is wrong and if I ever get a chance to hit it, I will hit it a blow". As a result of that courageous, philanthropic and humanitarian stand on the part of Lincoln and the founders of the Republican Party, we have United States today which is the pride of the world. But, everywhere, through out the world where the leadership was too timid, evasive and hypocritical to stand up for a government of the people, by the people and for the people, their dynasties are now falling; which is evidenced by the attitude of the liberty loving, democracy seeking people everywhere toward the imperialistic England, France, Holland Belgium.

Senator Jenner, men of good will who know history, if for no other reason than in self-defense, must stand up as Lincoln and the Founders of the Republican Party did and make our preaching of "Government of the people, for the people and by the people" a reality and not just some high sounding words.
An Anti-Lynching Bill has been kicked around in the Congress on the foot of political maneuverings for over 50 years, and these 110% Americans have fiddled while over three thousand (3000) human beings have been slaughtered on the altar of race prejudice. The most tragic thing about it is the men who say they are followers of Lincoln have been too evasive, timid and shy to take any definite stand to stop that slaughter and make the practice of democracy a reality. This indifference, don’t carlessness and unconcern is only because the people who are lynched, terrorized and brutalized are Negroes; and as long as they are Negroes, the attitude seems to be universal as you stated in your letter. They will "negate their own effectiveness and destroy themselves” as long as you do not take any definite steps to oppose their brutality and stop their barbarity.

Senator Jenner, the police department, the fire department and the decent people of a community do not sit idly by and let an arsonist who is burning down the community run free until "by his own violence, he negate his effectiveness and destroy himself". But, on the contrary, the police department, the fire department and the decent, respectable people of the community unite and apprehend the arsonist and put him behind bars in self defense.

The hoodlum, nazi-like element in our society who burn down the Negroes’ hopes and aspirations for justice, fair play and equality is just as truly a sick, insane, demomicatic arsonist as the man who sets fire to a community. It is the indespensible, inescapable duty of you, and every congressman, senator and legislator to do all that it is in your power by enacting into law suitable measures to stop such arsonists who are burning down every principle upon which this government was founded as it is the duty of the police department, the fire department and every other decent citizen in a community to apprehend and confine behind bars anyone who goes out in violation of all laws, respectability and sense of decency and burns down a city.

About 28 years ago, the damnable plague of kidnapping gripped the throats of America. But because their victims were white, these same so-called 110% Americans, who had refused for 50 years to take any stand against lynching, poll tax, and for fair employment practices, rose up over night and passed an Anti-Kidnapping Bill to bring an end to that damnable scourge, which was a disgrace to America.

I am not so blind that I cannot see, nor am I so unappreciative that I am not grateful for the fact that in recent years much has been done by public pressure to bring an end to these awful atrocities, terrible iniquities and inhumanity to humanity. Lynching has been reduced to a minimum. In a few sections of our nation "Mr. Jim Crow" is on his way to the cemetery. But, I regret to state that all of this progress has been made by sentiment generated outside of the legislative Branch of our great government. The C.I.O., the A.F. of L., the National Council of Christians and Jews, the Southern Society for Human Welfare, the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States, the National Y.W.C. and Y.M.C., the Movements and a multiplicity of other democracy loving, liberty seeking organizations have stood up like men and women and condemned segregation, race prejudice, discrimination, jim crowism, terror, violence and inhumanity to humanity as being incompatible with the Christian religion, a contradiction of the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights and the Constitution of the United States; and a repudiation of the Sermon on the Mount and a sin against God and man. All of this has been done while the "Old Guard" reactionary element in the Republican Party, under the leadership of Senator Joseph McCarthy, slept in the bed with the Dixiecrats, under the sheets of hypocrisy, under the blankets of duplicity and fiddled with the race haters while the Negroes’ hopes for justice, fair play and equality burned on the altar of race prejudice and the throne of filibusters. All that has been done, was done outside the greatest legislative body in the world.

The Supreme Court has done a magnificent job to make the government of the people, for the people and by the people a reality. President Eisenhower, by Christian leadership and a sincere regard for the rights of all citizens, has done more by executive order and Christian leadership to drive "Mr. Jim Crow" from Washington, the Armed Forces and the Federal Government in less than 3 short years than all the presidents combined since Lincoln. But to my very serious regret, sorrow and agony, the Senate of the U. S. has not passed a single piece of legislation aimed at bringing an end to these awful atrocities and terrible iniquities that are heaped upon the Negroes and have been for over 50 years. Worse than that, they have been too timid, evasive, unconcerned and hypocritical to take any definite action to see to it that the laws which are already on the Status Books are enforced. The "Old Guard" element, under the leadership of Senator McCarthy, has been more concerned about getting along with the Dixiecrats and looking for some communist activities, which may or may not exist, then they have been about protecting the rights and guaranteeing the safety of all American citizens.

Please understand me Senator Jenner. I am just as bitterly against the communist, totalitarian, atheistic ideologies as you, Senator McCarthy, or anyone else in Ameri-
c ancen. Everything that can be done to keep their ideologies from spreading over this, the greatest nation that has ever been devised, I am willing and ready to do it, I will defend this majestic form of government with my influence, my property and my life. But I differ with the Dixiecrats and the "Old Guard" wing of the Republican Party; for while their attention seems to be focused on just communistic activities, which may or may not exist, my hatred for unamericanism does not stop with just my hatred, destation and dislike of the communist without, but I am just as bitterly against the nazi-like hoodlums, Dixiecrats and reactionaries within our nation who think that democracy should only work for a favored few whose faces happen to be white. It is my firm belief and unswervable conviction that democracy must be made to work for all or it will eventually not work for any.

Senator Jenner, for 30 odd years, I have been as loyal, faithful and true to the principles upon which the Republican Party was founded as it is possible for a human being to be. Both times when you and Senator Capehart ran for the Senate, I campaigned as gallantly, heroically and devotedly for your election as anyone in Indiana.

For over 12 years I have stood in a Democratic stronghold like the "Rock of Gibraltar" against all kinds of inducements, enticements and offers of high considerations from the Democratic Party who have offered me everything but Lake Michigan to desert the Republican Party and line up with the crooked, corrupt and underworld supported Democrats. I have turned down all of those inducements and remained loyal, faithful and true to the Republican Party without any consideration, whatsoever, from them. Notwithstanding the fact that I pastor one of the largest and the most influential churches in Lake County, I also have about ten times the following out of my church as I have in it. Notwithstanding the further fact that I am not a "Yes Suh, Boss", "Uncle Tom" political demagogue with my hands out to politicians, nor one who sells his votes and those of his people to the highest bidder. But, on the contrary, during the 30 odd years I have worked with the Republican Party, I have never accepted one red copper cent for anything that I have done from any politician to maintain government of the people, for the people and by the people. I contribute annually to the Republican campaign fund to aid and assist the party of Lincoln to stay in power and operate the government.

I am not pleading now for any personal consideration, but there are some conditions going on in Mississippi and through out the South against my people, against this nation and against the principles upon which this government was founded, which are destined to destroy this nation if something concrete and definite is not done to let the Ku Klux Klan element of our nation know that this is a nation of all the people, for all the people regardless of their race, color or creed.

I am kindly requesting you and Senator Capehart to demand of the Senate that there be a federal investigation of the demoral Citizens' Council of Mississippi which is only a carbon copy of the Ku Klux Klan that is organized to threaten, intimidate and terrorize by violence, murder and slaughter all Negroes who stand up and advocate obedience to and the carrying out of the Supreme Court's decision against racial segregation in the public schools.

Secondly, you truthfully stated: "Our Negro citizens have made a magnificent record in their reliance on dignity and faith in the laws and in their fellow citizens. That statement is truer than you think. We have paid every price tag that has been put on justice, equality and democracy. We have defied the forests, tunnelled the mountains, tilled the soil. We have fought as heroically and as gallantly and as courageously in every war in which the Stars and Stripes have been engaged, from State Street, Boston where Crispus Attucks fell and mingled his blood with the founders of this nation, to the Korean Conflict. During all that long and perilous journey on the road of race prejudice, on the hilles of discrimination, in the alleys of segregation and in the dens of Jim Crowism, we have remained and shall remain loyal, faithful and true to the Stars and Stripes. We have never produced an Aaron Burr, Charles Lee, John Wilkes Booth, nor an Alger Hiss.

With that record of loyalty, devotion and patriotism, it is exceedingly difficult for me to understand how such Republican senators as you, Senator McCarthy and several others who are supposed to be followers of Lincoln can raise as much sand as you do about fellow travelers, saboteurs, communistic activities in government and un-American activities on the outside and do not raise your voice against southern governors, congressman and senators who have torn the preamble to the Declaration of Independence out, which says: "We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal and are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." So far as the "Negro is concerned, they have torn the Bill of Rights out of the Constitution and are now seeking to destroy the effectiveness of the Supreme Court. They have, in many instances, passed laws to circumvent, ignore and disregard the decision of the Supreme Court against segregation, in the public schools. They have now organized
to terrorize, victimize, intimidate and slaughter all law abiding citizens who take their stand with the Supreme Court and advocate government of all the people, for all the people and by all the people. For verification of these facts you only need to read an article in the March 22nd issue of Look Magazine entitled: "A Wave of Error Threatens the South" by Mr. Hodding Carter, and the article in the May 26th issue of Jet Magazine entitled: "Mississippi Gunmen take Life of Militant Negro Minister". I am enclosing a copy of the May 26th issue of the Jet Magazine in which you will find this article on Page 8.

Senator Jenner, it is much later than you think. The communist propaganda machine is spreading this terror, crime and violence to the four corners of the earth. If there is any group in America that should be called in before the Senate Investigation Committee, the Subcommittee, the Committee, the UnAmerican Activities Committee and every other committee which believes in justice, fair play and equality for all, the damnable Citizens' Council of Mississippi should. This terror, brutality and inhumanity to humanity is destroying the effectiveness of the billions we are spending around the earth trying to make friends with the Asians, Africans and the darker people of the earth who constitute two-thirds of the earth's population. It is just as true today as it was in Lincoln's day that "This nation cannot long endure half-slave and half-free".

On account of this duplicity the Republican Party lost control of the government for 20 years. Under the dynamic and Christian-like leadership of President Eisenhower, we won it back in 1952. We lost control of the Congress again in 1954. Do you realize that one of the fundamental reasons for the Republican's loss of popularity was first, the "Old Guard's" indifference to the cries of the Negro for relief from those awful iniquities and tenacious atrocities? There was a time when the Negro everywhere voted solidly with the Republican Party. That was when the party made some pretense of following the principles of Lincoln and the founders of the grand old party of liberty, fair play and equality for all. At that time victory for the party was always assured. But, under the leadership of the "Old Guard" element in the party, it deserted the principles upon which Lincoln founded the party, and lined up with the southern Dixiecrats, and fiddled while the Negroes' hopes and aspirations for freedom, justice and equality burned on "The Altar" of race prejudice and the throne of the filibuster. To get relief, many Negroes accepted the inducements of the New Deal, left the Republican Party and joined the Democrats. If they are to be brought back, the Republicans must get out of the bed with the Dixiecrats and go back to the principles of Lincoln and the founders of the party which was "Government of all the people, for all the people and by all the people", regardless to their race, color, creed or national origin. When this is done, the Negro and all independent, liberty-loving, democracy seeking people will join you and victory will always be assured.

The second fundamental reason for the Republican Party losing control of the government for 20 years and the repudiation of the Republican Congress by the people in 1954 was that their friendship with the Dixiecrats was so wholesome that they not only turned a deaf ear to the cries of "Negroes for relief from the horrors of segregation, discrimination, Jim Crowism, and race prejudice; but on account of Mr. Eisenhower's liberalism and desire to make democracy work for all and not just the favored few, they dragged their feet against his leadership. They not only dragged their feet against his leadership, but they seem to not have any concept whatsoever of teamwork. They do not seem to realize that the American people elected Dwight D. Eisenhower as president and not Joseph McCarthy, William Knowland, or any other reactionaries who believe that democracy should not work for all, but only the favored few whose faces happen to be white.

Senator Jenner, 1956 is an election year. If we are to elect a Republican President and regain control of Congress, you and other members of the "Old Guard" in the Republican Party must get out of the bed with the Dixiecrats and from between the sheets of duplicity and take a firm stand with Mr. Eisenhower for freedom, justice and equality for all mankind - not only in America, but everywhere.

So wholesome, refreshing and consoling is the association with the Dixiecrats to the reactionary, conservative "Old Guard" element of the Republican Party, that Congressman Mothusman of Michigan, a few years ago, advocated breaking loose from the liberal element in the Republican Party, uniting with the Dixiecrats and nominating Senator Taft as President. Senator Jenner, there and there alone is one of the basic reasons for the failure of the Republican Party to appeal to the democracy loving, liberty seeking people of this nation. If Mr. Hoffman or any other reactionary member of the Republican Party is so imbued and in love with the doctrines, ideals and ideologies of Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis, they should resign from the Republican Party and join the Dixiecrats. They should not, under any conditions, try to unite with the ideology of Lincoln and the founders of the Republican Party, with the slave holding, "Negro hating, Jew despising, Catholic detesting ideologies of Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis. I am sure that if it had been
possible for the immortal, humanitarian and philanthropic Emancipator to have heard that backward, anti-human, nazi-like suggestion coming from a Republican, he would have turned over in his grave.

So significant, pungent and fundamental is this matter to the issues which face us that I am making this an open letter and releasing it to the public.

With every good wish for your continued success, I am

Very truly yours,

L. K. Jackson,
"The Servant of the Lord's Servants"

LkJ/mm
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