

COPY

2812 Lydia St.,
Jacksonville, Fla.,
May 4, 1949

The Honorable Harry Botts,
House Chambers,
Tallahassee, Fla.

Dear Mr. Botts:

As a native Floridian, white and a Democrat, interested in the progress of our state and its educational institutions, I was deeply concerned at reading in the Florida Times-Union of May 4, that your committee to investigate communism, proposed to use as a measuring rod of the loyalty of the teaching staffs of our college and universities, their statement as to whether or not they had ever "expressed themselves as being against any Florida racial segregation laws."

The issue in this seems to me, not that of racial segregation, but the much more fundamental problem of whether or not we can continue the process of orderly, legal changes in our laws and government that has been going on for more than one hundred and fifty years and which was planned for by the framers of the Constitution of the United States. We have our Bill of Rights because the people were not satisfied with the constitution. They expressed their opinions freely and their leaders made those changes which have been so vital to our democracy. Had those people, and their leaders, been - even by implication - subject to discrimination because of their opinions those changes could never have been made. You or I may not agree as to the wisdom of a certain law, but, though obeying that law while it is in effect, you or I may attempt by peaceful means to change it.

It seems to me that to imply, as the report of the questionnaire certainly does, that that portion of our leadership engaged in teaching in the Universities cannot express opinions on existing laws is to invite the kind of disaster we all want to avoid. This kind of activity - in my opinion - is much more dangerous to our form of government than a few communists, who cannot accomplish much in a country where people are really free.

Yours truly,

Laura Nozear
(Mrs. R. L. Rozeaf)

Same letter sent to the persons on the attached
list.

May 6, 1949 L.

May 5, 1949

Mr. Joe Higdon
605 West Ashley Street
Jacksonville, Florida

Dear Mr. Higdon:

I have just been advised by Mrs. Lucille G Coleman, president of the General Alumni Association of the Florida A and M College, of the plans of the Executive Committee of the Association to call a special meeting in Jacksonville, Florida, Saturday afternoon, at 2 o'clock, at the Clara White Mission, to discuss the actions recently taken by the legislative committee on communistic activities in Florida colleges.

I am sure that much good can come of such a meeting and we here at Florida A and M College can be greatly helped by having your thinking on such vital matters as are now confronting us. For this reason I have accepted Mrs. Coleman's invitation and am writing to assure you that I expect to be present and I would be pleased indeed to have the opportunity of seeing you and talking with you on this occasion.

Sincerely yours,

Wm. H. Gray, Jr.

WHG:acbb

CONFERENCE - LEGISLATIVE ACTION

M. Chestnut
Sam Solomon

- P ✓ 1. Mrs. Lucille G. Coleman - 1146 West 30th Street, Jacksonville
- P ✓ 2. Mr. G. W. Conoly - A. and M. College
- P ✓ 3. Mr. C. M. Speed, Lincoln High School, West Brevard Street, Tallahassee
- P ✓ 4. Mr. Willie Smith - 601 West Ashley Street, Jacksonville
- ✓ 5. Mr. Joe Higdon - 605 West Ashley Street, Jacksonville
- P ✓ 6. Miss Eartha M. M. White - 613 West Ashley Street, Jacksonville
- P ✓ 7. Atty. D. W. Perkins - Masonic Temple, Broad Street, Jacksonville
Res. 949 West Beaver Street, "
- ✓ 8. Bishop J. A. Gregg - Edward Waters College
- P ✓ 9. President A. J. White - Edward Waters College
- P ✓ 10. President R. V. Moore - Bethune-Cookman College
- ✓ 11. Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune - Bethune-Cookman College
- ✓ 12. President J. N. Tilley, Florida Normal College
- ✓ 13. Mr. George W. Ingram - P. O. Box 2348 - Daytona Beach
- ✓ 14. Mr. Wm. B. Stewart - Industrial High School, 11th Street & Division Ave., W.P.B.
- A ✓ 15. Atty. Leonard Lewis - 105 East Union Street, Jacksonville
- ✓ 16. Mr. James H. Lewis - 105 East Union Street, Jacksonville
- ✓ 17. Atty. L. E. Thomas - 1035 Northwest Second Avenue, Miami
- W ✓ 18. Mr. G. D. Rogers, Sr., 1416 North Boulevard, Tampa
- ✓ 19. Mr. C. Blythe Andrews - P. O. Box 2619, Tampa
- ✓ 20. Mr. James Jackson - Tampa Bulletin, Tampa
- ✓ 21. Mr. Z. L. Riley - 573 West Church, Orlando
22. Dr. I. P. Davis - 1036 Northwest Second Avenue, Miami
23. Mr. Milton P. Rooks - 1135 Pierce Street, Clearwater
- ✓ 24. Mr. Harry T. Moore - Box 4, Mims, Fla.
- W ✓ 25. Dr. H. D. Goode - Pensacola

26. Mr. W. E. Combs - 1531 Northwest First Place, Miami R
27. Mr. G. L. Porter - Lincoln High School, West Brevard Street, Tallahassee R
28. Mr. G. W. Perkins - Gibbs High School, St. Petersburg
29. Dr. C. C. Starke - Deland
30. Mr. C. H. Henry - Grand Master, Grand Lodge of Masons, Quincy, Fla.
31. Mr. W. R. Robinson - Fort Pierce
- W 32. Mrs. Mayme Williams - Booker T. Washington High School, 1200 North 6th Avenue, Miami
33. Mr. E. Ruebindoff Jones - 137 Florida Avenue, Miami
34. Mr. B. L. Goines - Grand Chancellor, Knights of Pythias, Box 2073, Jacksonville
- P 35. Mrs. Hattie I. James - 1718 Myrtle Avenue, Jacksonville
- P 36. Mr. Albert Bethune - P. O. Box 326, Daytona Beach
- P 37. Mrs. Sarah Lark - 1463 West 21st Street, Jacksonville
38. Mrs. Inez Alston Boyer - Tampa, 1611 Lamarr Ave.
- P 39. Mr. Edward Davis, 502 W. Broadway, Ocala
40. Dr. Von D. Mizell - 1422 Northwest 6th Street, Ft. Lauderdale
) at present he is enrolled at the Howard Medical School
41. Mr. Spady, S.D., Career High, DeKay Beach
42. Mrs. E. P. Jones - Edward Waters College
- P 42. Mrs. Viola T. Hill - 626 West Washington Street, Orlando
- P 43. Rev. K. D. Britt - 1345 West 6th Street, Jacksonville
- P 44. Rev. Wesley Jones, Mt. Zion A. M. E. Church, Jacksonville R.P.
- P 45. Mrs. F. A. Ponder - 1313 5th Avenue, South, St. Petersburg
46. Dr. C. E. Hampton - 803 Magnolia Street, Ocala
- P 47. Mr. John A. Diaz - 233 Northwest 9th Street, Miami

Buzgo
Jackson, Tex

Mrs. J. E. Wms
Mrs. Walter Brown
Art Rott Gray

Spike Wadsworth
Pres. Fla. Nat'l
Alumni

Rev. Fair
Daytona

Orlando
W AACP

Mrs. Hills by

Sp

STATEMENT OF PRESIDENT GRAY TO LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE
TO INVESTIGATE COMMUNISTIC ACTIVITIES IN FLORIDA
INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING

Wednesday Evening
May 11, 1949
7:30 P. M.

I think that Dr. Miller and Dr. Campbell have both raised the only question that I might have concerning this situation and any suggestion I might have to make.

After all, I am sure you realize that we definitely wish to cooperate and we are going to cooperate with you. And if there is any information that you want at the college, we would certainly try to get it for you. Of course, on the matter of this particular questionnaire, as was indicated to you last night, the question of segregation is one that was quite alarming to our faculty. At the present time, we have been trying to make some advances in trying to bring into the state people who are able and qualified. We are very careful in selecting our faculty because of this very problem...positive learning and try to guide them into utilizing to a maximum the opportunities which are available to our people and minimize the barriers that may be present.

For that reason, we exercise a great deal of care in the selection of personnel and that very fact makes us rather anxious that our personnel is able ...because people who do come to us have attained advanced degrees. There are only two hundred fifty Negroes in the country with doctor's degrees. We will have twenty-five of those persons at Florida A. and M. College this summer. That imposes upon us a responsibility of trying to make these people as secure as possible inasmuch as we do require of them certain basic restrictions that are in conflict with what academic people call "academic freedom." To us college people, that means something that permits the people to kick the president around and keep their jobs. But that brings us, of course, right face to face in the matter of...in the fact that we do not want to lose these people when we get them. It is a tough job. Their being close to the capitol and recognizing that we are a part of the state's program and they ask the question as to whether they have to express themselves against segregation. That, I think, has been of primary concern to us.

There are the other two questions which have been asked in the matter of invading their privacy in asking whether you are a member of a political party. Many regard this as a personal question which they should not be called upon to answer.

Certainly the oath is a very good one, but there are some who have religious purposes who feel that they should not sign the oath. We come to safeguarding certain freedoms which are characteristic of democracy. I do certainly personally feel that there would be no objection to answering the question, but it would be a question of the pertinency of the question to the object which we have in mind. Paul Robeson's statement to the contrary, I do not feel that you will find many Negroes in America who are concerned with Communism. I do want you to feel free to look in on us.

Statement of President Gray to Legislative Committee
to Investigate Communistic Activities in Florida
Institutions of Higher Learning--2

In your study you might want to analyze carefully the books and articles which might have been written by members of our staff. I think that that might be more pertinent than the books we teach from. Too frequently, and regretfully, the professors themselves have not read them. I don't think that faculty members should be held responsible for all the books that you might find in the library and that might happen to be on record. At the same time, I do think that you could hold a professor responsible for books that he might have written and not for what he has been quoted.

THIS SIDE OF CARD IS FOR ADDRESS



Senator Tom Connally: ch. of the
Senate Foreign Relations Com.
Washington DC

Date.

yr.

Dear Senator; Please send me a
copy of Dr Joe Thomas' speech to
Amend the North Atlantic
Treaty, until Belgium turn Belgian
Congo over to United Nations
name

address.

city

state

THIS SIDE OF CARD IS FOR ADDRESS



Senator Tom Connally, Jr.
Senate Foreign Relations Com.
Washington D.C.

Date

42.

Dear Senator :- Please Send me a
Copy of Dr. Joe Thomas' Speech to
Amend the North Atlantic Treaty
until Belgium turn Belgian
Congo over to United Nations

name

address

city

state

THOMAS, JOE T.

June 14, 1949

Dr. Joe T Thomas, Sr.
Newport News, Virginia

Dear Dr. Thomas:

We appreciate your letter of June 10, advising us of the availability of copies of the talk which you made before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. We are following through on your suggestion and requesting copies which may be distributed to members of our faculty and student body.

You are to be commended for the campaign which you are waging to free the natives of the Belgian Congo and I hope others may join with you in this effort.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

Wm. H. Gray, Jr.

WHE:acbb

Newport News Va
President of
Florida A & M College
Tallahassee Fla.

June 10-1949

Dear Sir:

On May 13-1949, I spoke before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee & requested that the speech be printed in the Record. The speech is now ready for distribution. I believe this recorded speech, should be in the library of every Negro College because it is an effort to free the 14 Million Slaves the Belgian Government is now holding in Belgian Congo in Africa. The speech is free for the asking & here is a post card on which is written just what I am sending to all the Negro Ministers so they can get the speech & can tell our folks about it.

Yours Truly,

Mrs. Briggs

Dr. J. E. Thomas Sr.

Enc. ~~OK~~