

Dear Jack:

It is with a great deal of pleasure that I take this opportunity to once again say "Hello!", and at the same time to reinform you that I still look forward to your paper each week. It would be more appropriate to say that it is more in the nature of a weekly news letter up here. There has been several times when your editorials have been of a great deal of value in helping me to inform a few ignorant people.

Of course what I am referring to mostly is this segregation question. And to touch lightly on that subject for a moment I will inform you of a few experiences that a southerner faces in the north.

To begin with I think that it is a great injustice to the young people of the north that they have been so misinformed all these many years as to what the situation is in the southern states, and I might add that a great majority of these start in the public schools. Here is a typical example of what I mean. Recently I came in contact with a girl who is a high school senior, one of the first questions she asked when she discovered I was from the south was this (and very repulsive to say the least), "Mr. Surles, why are the negroes so mistreated in the south, why aren't they given an equal chance with the rest of the people?" Now Jack, that is a question that I have been asked before and one which brings out the venom in me.

To say that I have an answer to the above question is saying it mildly. In the first place the person who generally ask this question is completely misinformed that it is pitiful. Another observation that I have made is that generally speaking these people are of recent foreign origin, perhaps two generations or less. They have a very poor conception of our American history and what it stands for, and this I think can be traced partially to the way of the so-called progressive teaching today.

During the war Jack, I know that you lived around N. Y. C. long enough to see and realize that they have as much segregation here as we do down south. In my

daily travels I see it and realize that there are a lot of hypocrites in this world. I certainly have nothing against the negro, in the north or south. I feel that the pressure groups, both white and black are creating a monster that is indescribable.

Recently I came in contact with a colored married couple here on Long Island, in the course of my work. Since they seemed to be very intelligent and with a lot of common sense, I had in mind to pose a certain question to them. Before I had the opportunity the wife said, "Mr. Surles, aren't you from the south", my reply was "YES AND PROUD OF IT." I had no more than got the words out of my mouth when she ran over to where I was sitting and gave me a big hug and extended congratulations to me for my attitude. The conversation which followed made me still more proud of my southern heritage.

This colored woman informed me that she was born and raised around Winston-Salem, received her college education in N. C. and also became a registered nurse in the same state. Her husband — N. Y. born — was informed by her in my presence that colored college students were a dime-a-dozen in N. C. She stated that under no circumstances would she become a member of the National Association for colored people as she was convinced that it was a RED organization.

This same woman told me that she was informing all of her colored friends up here that they were grossly misinformed as to what the conditions are in the south. So you can quite readily see that it is indeed a small group who are causing a great deal of the trouble.

There have been times in these

past months when I (listening to this propaganda) have felt somewhat ill at ease or to put it more bluntly like a criminal, being from the south. In the past few weeks though I have been feeling a little better about the situation since some of our big publications have been telling a little of the opposite side. This past week the N. Y. Daily News brought out certain facts pertaining to State's Rights which I hope a lot of people digested. The theme was relative to the states not being given the right to prosecute communist — another recent decision by our astute Supreme Court. I sincerely hope that the people will realize that if the Supreme Court can destroy states rights in one thing that nothing else will be sacred insofar as the 48 states are concerned. I also hope the NAACP will realize this.

When you get down to the basic facts, this whole thing is a political football. In this both major parties are equally guilty, since we all know that the average politician is an opportunist. He will promise the world to get elected and after that he passes the "buck" for the remainder of the time in office.

I was wondering also if you had seen or heard of the survey that the New York Times made through the south a short time ago. Since I'm sure you know the paper, they put out a special edition a few weeks ago, eight pages to be exact. There was a so-called report from all the southern states. This was in conjunction with their regular Tuesday edition. When I read some of these reports I was wondering in several places where they got their information or who they were talking to.

But the piece of information

that I like best at this time was your report recently and the speech of the southern congressman who gave out with all of those statistics on the crime and health problem in certain areas of the nation. You were right insofar as any of that news getting in the N. Y. papers, or if it did — I did not

have the pleasure of reading it. Enough of this chattering Jack, and here is hoping that I will have the pleasure of seeing you again sometime in the near future. Give my best regards to your father and all the rest of the family.

Regards  
Gene Surles

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