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Correspondence: August 30, 1960, Letter to Reverend Robert John Gisler - Jacksonville Ministerial Alliance from Florida House Representative Stallings

George B. Stallings Jr.

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FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

TALLAHASSEE

*File - Legation
Stallings*

GEORGE B. STALLINGS, JR.
REPRESENTATIVE, DUVAL COUNTY
409 LAW EXCHANGE BUILDING
JACKSONVILLE 2, FLORIDA

August 30, 1960

COMMITTEES:
PUBLIC HEALTH, VICE-CHAIRMAN
COUNTY GOVERNMENT
EDUCATION—HIGHER LEARNING
ELECTIONS
INSURANCE
JUDICIARY D
PUBLIC WELFARE

Rev. Robert John Gisler
Jacksonville Ministerial Alliance
226 Laura Street
Jacksonville 2, Florida

Dear Sir:

This letter is in answer to your invitation by telephone yesterday asking me to participate on a committee of local citizens, called for the specific purpose of appointing a bi-racial committee to allegedly solve the tense racial situation that has developed in Jacksonville. First, I must refuse to accept the invitation.

To preface my reasons for refusal I will point out several basic and well-known truths which have been held for years by the responsible citizens of the South, namely: that integration of the white and colored races in any area of community life stimulates strife and thus militates against the peace and good order of the community; that integration destructively affects the safety, health, morals, peace and general welfare of the community and that it should be resisted to the full extent of the law.

Jacksonville now has a serious problem of racial tension. To solve the problem, one must first seek the cause of it and then proceed to apply the remedy to the root of the matter. The cause of our particular problem is the attempt on the part of Communist-inspired organizations (headed by NAACP and CORE) to force integration upon the people of the South in all areas of community life. Many of these organizations are headed by notorious Communist-fronters. At present they are using "sit-in" demonstrations to achieve their goal. By the use of semantics, such demonstrations are falsely labeled as "peaceful" and "non-violent". In reality they are flagrant and wanton examples of trespass upon the rights of private property.

The recent racial strife in Jacksonville is an evil that has its origin in the race-mixing organizations of the Negro Race. The "sit-in" demonstrations are calculated efforts to

force integration upon the community by means of lawless acts masquerading under false labels of respectability.

In the face of such well-known facts, the Ministerial Alliance favors the appointment of a bi-racial committee to formulate a solution to the problem. The leader of the NAACP Youth Council, among others, has been invited to serve on the committee which has been called to appoint the bi-racial committee. Under the circumstances, there is absolutely no justification for the appointment of a bi-racial committee. To place members of the Negro Race (who, for the most part, are NAACP leaders) on a committee of this sort is nothing short of an endorsement and recognition of the very organization that is the root and branch of the evil that the committee would be attempting to cure.

In Florida, any bi-racial committee is doomed to failure from the outset. It is completely inconsistent to attempt to solve an unjustifiable, illegal situation by the creation of a bi-racial committee whose actions would be to condone the illegality of the "sit-ins" and to cloak such demonstrations with the garments of respectability.

The Jacksonville situation has resulted from the initial breaking of law by members of Negro race-mixing organizations. The solution to lawlessness is the strict enforcement of the broken law. It can not be solved by the formation of bi-racial committees to justify the breaking of such laws, using false premises and dogmas as a basis. Too many ministers are promoting integration on the false assumption that it is a moral issue. The problem confronting Jacksonville to-day is one that is strictly legal. The solution lies in the strict enforcement of law and in loyal adherence to the established principles of constitutional government.

The Legislature has done its duty by enacting laws to give protection to the owners of private property from unlawful trespasses and encroachments upon it. It is the duty of local merchants and citizens to invoke the existing trespass laws of Florida against all violators. Any surrender on their part to the insidious demands of the race-mixers will only inflame an already-bad situation and give rise to increased violence in the community.

For the above reasons I deplore the appointment of a bi-racial committee and decline the invitation to serve on the committee which will appoint it.

Sincerely yours,

signature redacted

George B. Stallings, Jr.

GBS,jr/fs