

pulpits of the land. An example of the passion that this case has generated was indicated to me in Youngstown a few weeks ago, when I attended services at a prominent church, and heard the well-educated minister of the congregation state that: "we Negroes lynch too easily and we must learn to resist with everything in our power if we would put a stop to this barbarous custom".

It is a well-known fact that the Negroes in Mississippi have formed an underground, and are determined to protect themselves by methods that, if used, can only lead to further terror and bloodshed.



On the other hand, a frightening power has been built in Mississippi by the anti-desegregation White Citizens Councils, and their principal method is one of economic terrorism. These Councils are fanning out throughout the South, and they have created a climate of fear and terrorism that holds the entire area in a vise.

As a member of the White House Staff, I am sitting in the middle of this, and I have been accused of being cowardly for not bringing this situation to the attention of the Administration, and requesting the President to make some kind of observation on this unwholesome problem. My mail has been heavy and angry, and wherever I go, people have expressed disappointment that no word has come from the White House deploring this situation. I always point out, of course, that our Attorney General has followed this situation with interest and skill, and that he will act when and if Federal laws are violated. But this does not still the protestations. There is a clamor for some kind of statement from the White House that will indicate the Administration is aware of, and condemns with vigor, any kind of racist activity in the United States.

I feel the time has come when it might be advisable for Governor Adams or Vice President Nixon to invite to Washington a dozen of the prominent Negro leaders in the country and sit down and exchange views on this very dangerous problem. It will not be a matter of committing the Administration to anything, but it will be a demonstration for the whole country to see that the responsible leaders, white and Negro, have a deep concern about this situation and wish to sit down and talk about it intelligently and dispassionately. There is precedent for this kind of meeting, for in my lifetime it has happened several times with Presidents Hoover, Roosevelt and Truman. Meetings of this kind always have a steadying effect upon the Negro leaders, for they are able to go out through the country and assure the Negro citizens that the head of the country is concerned about their welfare and will exercise the prestige of his office to prevail upon all to exercise common sense and common decency in dealing with the situation.