

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE

20 WEST 40th STREET, NEW YORK 18, N. Y.

Longacre 3-6890

December 2, 1955

Dear Fred:

Thanks for sending me copy of your excellent and very accurate memorandum to Maxwell Rabb.

The situation is fully as dangerous as you indicate. I think that in large measure this is due to the feeling in certain Southern circles that the Federal Government either doesn't choose or does not dare to express itself in condemnation of the types of oppression now being visited upon great numbers of non-white citizens.

The events of the past few months have brought forth in one form or another this expression of frightened and frustrated opinion: "Why can't our Federal Government say something or do something to protect the rights of American citizens here at home while every day it is making pronouncements on the rights of those citizens abroad?"

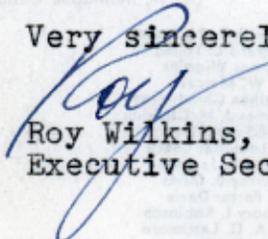
A variation is: "We are for free elections everywhere in the world except in the Southern states of America."

I might add that from a number of sources (some of which are not radical or irresponsible) the NAACP is being criticized for being "too legal." We are being told that the other side is stopping at nothing, while we proceed according to legal technicalities. Believe me, there is considerable support from hitherto fairly conservative areas of opinion for what may be termed a "strike back" action, whether it is legal or not, or whether it is productive of anything except blind retaliation.

It is my considered opinion that quite beyond the question of whether an Administration word or act will win or lose votes is the question of keeping peace and order, of averting what could be an ugly racial conflict.

Kind personal regards.

Very sincerely yours,


Roy Wilkins,
Executive Secretary.



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