

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

EMMETT TILL'S DAY IN COURT

Sirs:

In spite of failure to secure a conviction in the Emmett Till case, the vigor with which the governor of Mississippi and the district attorney prosecuted the case is a step in the right direction ("Emmett Till's Day in Court," LIFE, Oct. 3). Ellsworth Faris in his course on criminology at the University of Chicago used to say that the most important thing about trial is that it publicly condemns the action as wrong. This trial has told the world that *if* these two white men had killed this Negro boy, it *would* have been wrong.

LEWIS S. C. SMYTHE

Lexington, Ky.

Sirs:

By saying that "Mississippians refuse[d] to convict white men of killing a Negro boy," and by referring to the situation as a matter of "Mississippi prejudice," you have caused serious reflections upon the sacred American principle of trial by jury as administered by a sovereign state of the union. The most prejudiced people in that Sumner, Miss. courtroom were not the local people, but the delegation of northern reporters.

JOHN TRASK JR.

Davidson College
Davidson, N.C.

Sirs:

Maybe the Emmett Till case will convince "smart alecky" Negroes to stay in the North where such things as the attack and murder of Mrs. Bryant are condoned. We do not want them in the South and will not have them even if it means drastic measures.

MRS. SARAH WHITE

Memphis, Tenn.

Sirs:

I read your article "Emmett Till's Day in Court" with growing horror. My one question is: Why wasn't even one of the 19,500 Negroes registered? Just what are the requirements for registration in Tallahatchie County, Miss.?

LORE T. DAVIDSON

Tuckahoe, N.Y.

•The Mississippi Legislature requires that persons registering to vote be able to read and write and be able to "interpret" the U.S. Constitution to the satisfaction of the county's circuit court clerk. Few Negroes even try to register.—ED.

REDS' MARK ON HOLY MAN'S FACE

Sirs:

The ordeal of Bishop Ferroni ("Communism's Mark on a Holy Man's Face," LIFE, Oct. 3) is indeed an eloquent commentary on the U.S. Air Force's incredible "training school for PWs." Spiritual courage alone can triumph when physical resources are decimated