

October 5, 1955

*Till case  
Christian Friends for  
Racial Equality*

Dear Mrs. Nightingale:

Thank you for your letter in behalf of the Christian Friends for Racial Equality. We regard the verdict in the Till case as shocking. However, we were not able to be active in the case at all. It was one completely in the hands of Mississippi authorities and had to be prosecuted by the county prosecutor, not by any private organization. Once accused persons are acquitted, you cannot appeal to a higher court to reverse the acquittal. If the men had been convicted their lawyers could have appealed for a new trial. Since it is not possible to place persons in jeopardy twice for the same crime, no appeal is possible on acquittal.

As for the kidnapping case, we are in the same position. It must be prepared and handled by the authorities of the county in which it occurred. The only way private organizations can get into such a case is to be invited by the prosecutor to have a special prosecutor work with him. In the absence of such an invitation (wholly impossible in this case in view of the Mississippi atmosphere) there is nothing a private organization can do on the case itself.

We are inviting financial support for the NAACP to enable us to carry on the long-range struggle against injustice in Mississippi and other parts of the South, particularly the denial of the right to vote. If your group should see fit to send a contribution on this basis it will be gratefully received.

Very sincerely yours,

ROY WILKINS  
Executive Secretary

Mrs. William Nightingale  
1127 - 18th North  
Seattle 2, Washington

RW:EJB

111

October 13, 1955

Attorney General Herbert Brownell  
Department of Justice  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

The Executive Boards of Locals 61, 64, 80, 85, 88, 150 and 165, representing 6500 members of the Joint Board Fur Dressers' & Dyers' Unions, affiliated with the Amalgamated Meat Cutters & Butcher Workmen of North America, A.F.L., have unanimously adopted a resolution calling upon the Department of Justice to intervene in the shocking murder of Emmett Till, a fourteen year old Negro boy in Sumner, Miss., to insure the punishment of the murderers.

In common with all decent-minded Americans, we have been shocked and outraged by the flagrant miscarriage of justice perpetrated in the Courts of Sumner, Miss. last month when the murderers of young Till were found not guilty. This brutal murder is part of a pattern of persecution and terror that has been unleashed in the State of Miss. against the Negro people in the wake of the historic Supreme Court decision for desegregation and education. It is clear to everyone that the campaign of terror symbolized by this latest outrage will continue unchecked unless the Federal Government asserts its proper jurisdiction and defends the civil rights and the very lives of Negro citizens of Miss.

We join our voices with every section of the labor movement in demanding that your office act, and act promptly, to secure the just punishment of the lynchers of Emmett Till and a halt to the acts of persecution and intimidation in the State of Miss.

Very truly yours,

George Merlo  
Recording Secretary

GM:rb  
ftul/1283  
cc: A.A.C.P. ✓  
A.F.C. & B.W. of N.A.

*Handwritten signature and notes:*  
The...  
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