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Re: Integration

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Haynesfield NURSERIES

SOUTH 4237

GROWERS OF HARDY NURSERY STOCK

BRISTOL, TENN.-VA.

MATERIAL ♦ LANDSCAPE PLANNING ♦ MAINTENANCE

October 25, 1957

The President
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

Recent editorials in syndicated columns and several recent news items expressing the opinions of certain members of the clergy and others, have suggested that the equitable way out of our present integration dilemma is to establish the principle of freedom of choice. To suggest that this principle has to be "established" seems ludicrous but the extreme interpretations of the courts make it seem necessary that the executive and the legislative branches of the government find a meeting ground if we are to save this country from dangerous divisions of loyalty. Many Southerners feel that they can no longer find justice under law, or the freedom to give their children the protections they deem vital so long as we are subject to the dictates of the Federal Government as now practiced. However one may feel about the issues he must still face the fact that there are two sides and that the Southern whites by far are under the greatest pressure and are therefore most likely to think of extreme measures to win some representation and respect for their view.

Mr. President, as an army man, you know how important Southerners have been in the defense of this country. I leave it to you to judge their proportionate worth in the armed forces both in officer personnel and in enlisted personnel. Surely these people cannot be all wrong nor can Herbert Brownell or William Rogers be all right. It is time the situation was cleared and the principle of freedom of choice established in the school issue.

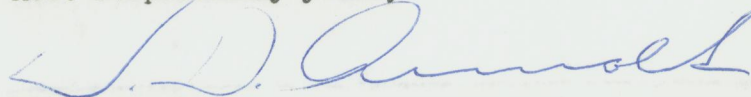
You, of course, are familiar with the idea that under freedom of choice there would be schools for Negroes who want to remain with their kind and for whites who feel the same way, and also schools for Negroes and whites who care to practice the doctrine of integration. This might conceivably inspire the construction of additional much needed school facilities--the only benefit I can envision emanating from integration.



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Since your leadership is needed for any legislative moves, I hope you will get something started while there is still time to salvage some of the dwindling friendship between Negro and white in the South.

Most respectfully yours,



W. D. Arnold

WDA:m