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Thomas G. Abernethy, Jamie L. Whitten, Arthur Winstead, John Bell Williams, William M. Colmer, James O. Eastland, John C. Stennis to President John F. Kennedy, 28 September 1962;

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SEPTEMBER 28, 1962

THE PRESIDENT
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT:

THE HIGHEST STATE OF HEAT AND TENSION PREVAILS IN MISSISSIPPI. IT IS SPREADING TO OTHER STATES LIKE A FLAMING BRUSH FIRE. IT IS BROUGHT ABOUT BY ONE PERSON OSTENSIBLY TO GET AN EDUCATION. IT IS APPARENT THIS IS NOT HIS REAL OBJECTIVE. THIS IS OBVIOUS TO ALL. UNDER PREVAILING CIRCUMSTANCES AND THOSE THAT WILL FOLLOW FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE SCHOOL YEAR, PROBABLY MUCH LONGER, IT WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR EITHER THE SUBJECT APPLICANT OR THE 5,000 STUDENTS TO OBTAIN ANY EDUCATIONAL ADVANTAGES. WE RESPECTFULLY SUBMIT, MR. PRESIDENT, THE SUCCESSFUL REGISTRATION COULD NOT BE WORTH THE PRICE.

WE URGE YOU TO WITHDRAW SUCH TROOPS AS HAVE ALREADY BEEN DEPLOYED IN AND NEAR MEMPHIS AND TO SET AT REST ALL REPORTS AND RUMORS THAT OTHER TROOPS ARE TO FOLLOW. THE USE OF MILITARY FORCE IN A PREVIOUS INSTANCE WAS UNIVERSALLY REGRETTED AND DEPLORED. THE POWER TO SAVE HUMAN BLOOD, EVEN HUMAN LIVES, IS IN YOUR HANDS, MR. PRESIDENT. WE RESPECTFULLY APPEAL TO AND URGE YOU TO STOP THIS DEMONSTRATION OF FEDERAL MIGHT WHICH HAS MOVED THE PEOPLE OF OUR STATE AND IS NOW MOVING THOSE OF OTHER STATES TO THE HIGHEST DEGREE OF HEAT AND TENSION. A HOLOCAUST IS IN THE MAKING. YOU ARE THE ONLY PERSON WHO CAN STOP IT. THIS APPEAL IS MADE IN EARNEST. MR. PRESIDENT, THE OBJECTIVE COULD NOT BE WORTH THE PRICE. WE BESEECH YOU TO ACT BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE. RESPECTFULLY,

THOMAS G. ABERNETHY
JAMIE L. WHITTEN
ARTHUR WINSTEAD
JOHN BELL WILLIAMS
WILLIAM M. COLMER
JAMES O. EASTLAND
JOHN C. STENNIS
Members of Congress