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## Silver Praised, Assailed

Ed Williams

T. H. Scarbrough

S. H. Long

Kenneth Holditch

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# Letters To Our Readers— Silver Praised, Assailed For Mississippi Attack

To The Commercial Appeal:

As a former University of Mississippi student, I read with more than passing interest the comments of Dr. James Silver before the Southern Historical Association, and the comments on these comments and on Dr. Silver by Bradley Lawrence, Ole Miss student body vice president.

Mr. Lawrence is apparently the official voice of the Ole Miss student government, since he was represented as speaking in his capacity as vice president of the student body.

According to the first report, Dr. Silver stated. (1) that Mississippi is a "closed society" which has for over a hundred years demanded a conformity of thought on the racial question; (2) that Mississippi politicians apparently aren't aware that Mississippians "once stood firm against nullification and secession;" (3) that the main concern of Mississippians is "white supremacy . . . rationalized by a professed adherence to state rights;" (4) that President Kennedy performed his constitutional obligation in assuring the entry of Negro student James Meredith into Ole Miss; (5) that Mississippi has erected

is interesting in that it does not even attempt to refute a single statement made by Dr. Silver. Instead, Mr. Lawrence indulges in limpid name-calling and mild character assassination. Apparently, he feels that if you can't refute a statement convincingly, the next best thing is to attempt to discredit the person who made the statement.

ED WILLIAMS  
Hornersville, Mo.

## Go Elsewhere

To The Commercial Appeal:

Thank you for carrying the highlights of Dr. James W. Silver's address before the Southern Historical Association at Asheville, N. C. Had you not done so, we "negative," "defensive" Mississippians probably would never have known that we have such a deep thinker here in our "totalitarian" midst.

For Dr. Silver's information we're for change, but not for the type change advocated by people like Dr. Silver.

I suggest that since Dr. Silver is so dissatisfied with our "closed" "totalitarian" society, that he seek employment across the boundaries of this great state.

I further suggest that the

tyranny so that at a later day the people have had to revolt and take over again.

Mr. Silver, I think, is just another of those over ambitious people, who has known for a long time that to hold the South up in a bad light is the surest way to a Pulitzer Prize, fame and fortune.

S. H. LONG  
Tupelo, Miss.

## 'Loud, Windy Voice'

To The Commercial Appeal:

It is never surprising to hear that Dr. John Silver of the University of Mississippi has once again expounded at length on some controversial matter. As long as I have had any contact with Ole Miss—even before I was a graduate student there and could see him operate first hand — I have been aware of a loud and windy voice emanating from the otherwise reserved and scholarly atmosphere of Oxford.

What is surprising in his latest outflow of Senecan bombast (at Asheville, N. C.) is the fact that he makes against the State of Mississippi a charge of which his very academic life for the past 28 years is an open and obvious refutation. As long as integration has been a really public issue in the

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a totalitarian society, which has eliminated the ordinary processes through which change can come.

Those points are the gist of the Silver statement. Now, Mr. Lawrence's statement, as reported in The Commercial Appeal: (1) Dr. Silver has a closed mind; (2) Dr. Silver is "bitter because he has been unable to convince the young people of Mississippi to accept his theories of centralized government and racial integration;" (3) Dr. Silver "believes that those who do not agree with him are ignorant."

Mr. Lawrence's "rebuttal"

trustees of Mississippi's institutions of higher learning take a closer look at the men who stand before our boys and girls at their most impressionable age.

T. H. SCARBROUGH  
Water Valley, Miss.

### 'Far, Far Left'

To The Commercial Appeal:  
Professor Silver's assertions that all Mississippi and all Mississippians are in intellectual and political thralldom; that we are held in bound by outmoded concepts and provincial ideas, as to the rigidity of the Constitution as written, and as to the moral values of yes-

United States, Dr. Silver has loud and long proclaimed himself to be of the minority at the university. He would seemingly imply that he has the monopoly in our state on "moderation," that he is, as it were, the only thinker among hundreds of thousands of benighted Mississippians.

Integration is not involved here. Readily do I admit that my home state has done things of which I am ashamed. She has, for example, within the past week elected an incompetent man to office on the basis of his having "stood up" for her, which he did not, in any defini-

tions by ap board?

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## Voting Negroes Taken To Task

To The Commercial Appeal:  
"This is an open letter to the Negroes of the Memphis community. "How long wilt thou sleep O sluggard?" How long will you be kept in darkness because you are too indifferent, lackadaisical, indolent, lazy and uninterested to examine pending issues that affect you.

This letter was prompted by the results of the recent election along with other observations that happen from time to time. According to the election results, the person supported by the large Negro wards for mayor was also supported by the known segregationists.

Could you both be looking for the same thing in a candidate? Also in these words this mayor candidate got twice as many votes as the lone Negro candidate who was running for an office among nine other candidates. This Negro candidate was qualified by any standard and even had the backing of The Commercial Appeal. Was he not voted for by you because he was a Negro—you didn't know his name was on the ballot, or were you too lazy to bend your back and push the lever by his name. Who's keeping who oppressed? I ask. Maybe our neighbors, Misters Barnett and Johnson don't really need to worry about the Negro's use of the ballot—if Memphis is an example.

So I beg you, Negro Memphis, to busy yourselves and find out who is running for office; what the pressing issues are, and what the past record of the individual is as far as honesty and integrity go.

However I recognize that

stitution as written and as to the moral values of yesterday, are not surprising to me.

I have judged already from his past utterances and actions that he is of the far, far left.

I have tried to consider his statements and the positions which he has taken on issues, vital to Mississippi, in a calm and considerate way and at best I can only say that I cannot understand these positions.

If I could hazard a guess as to the why and the wherefore of Silver's thoughts and actions, I would conclude that he has led a cloistered and protected life on the campus of one or another university. That he has never come face to face with reality. That his only contact with sustained endeavor has been to read and theorize.

I wonder what contact he has had with the Negro element. Has he ever worked them or worked with them? Has he ever tried to soldier them? Has he ever tested their ability to run their own affairs without help and supervision?

I am afraid that he is hypnotized by the voluble rhetoric of a few communist-inspired Negroes, who for the sake of turmoil and division and for what money it will bring them are urging for the Negro strides that he is hardly prepared to take.

When he says that we are provincial and are held in bounds by convention (political conformity, etc.), what he presents as an indictment may be after all a commendation.

The history of other countries (which should be known to Silver) where uninhibited authority has been vested in one or a few men has always resulted in oppression and

having stood up for what, which he did not, in any definition of the term, do or even try to do. She has thereby endorsed the administration of the past four years which has been one of the most misguided, the most incompetent, and the most embarrassingly facile of any in history.

But what to me is even more distressing, even more to be abhorred, is a tendency among men on both sides of the current great national question to air the state's dirty linens in public. And in this group, I rank Dr. John Silver of the University of Mississippi as one of the worst offenders and, more specifically, as the man who of all the shouters and ranters has done least to try to alleviate the problems which have in the past and no doubt will in the present offer him a public platform from which to vent his spleen against a state he has seen fit to inhabit for almost three decades.

DR. KENNETH HOLDITCH  
C.B.C.  
Memphis.

## Rebuke Is Seen

To The Commercial Appeal:

One aspect of the recent election that deserves comment is the almost total ineffectiveness of the white Citizens Council. One would have thought, judging the solemnity of their pronouncements and their outpouring of letters to editors that they were numerous and influential. It is heartening to see that they are neither. Perhaps now they will fold their tent and leave this community to work out its social problems in an atmosphere more conducive to mutual understanding.

GEORGE W. GRIDER  
417 South Prescott, Memphis

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