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## Letters to the Editor

Tom Harvey

Author Unknown

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STAFF WRITERS: Mike Biggs, Ed Horn, Chris Green, Carol Jones, Peggy Bynum, Cheryl Bobbitt, Brenda Rush, Wes Sebren, Dolores Smith, Donna Wilson.

Mississippi 11/14/63

## Letters to the editor

### Closed society?

Dear Sir:

Dr. James Silver recently addressed the Southern Historical Association to the effect that Mississippi has long been and is now a closed society. The duty of every loyal Mississippian and of every person truly concerned for the welfare of this University is to prove that characterization of us to be false.

Dr. Silver has handed us by his own words a very simple means of contradicting him. We may absolutely and dramatically show him false by ignoring him - by failing to contest his right to say what he pleases without fear of reprisal.

A trap is laid. Dr. Silver tempts us. Think of his frustration, and that of our critics everywhere, if we do not succumb. Sincerely,  
Tom Harvey

### Dr. Silver again

Dear Sir:

In view of the fact that the Seminar History class in which I am enrolled will not meet for two weeks, I am writing you as an individual. It is my belief that most, probably all, of this class of Dr. Silver's feel as I do--- that to suggest removing Dr. Silver from his position at Ole Miss will prove to the hilt just what he has been saying about the closed society in our state.

Do not misunderstand me. I am one of this class which has disagreed with Dr. Silver with perhaps more vigor than anyone, and it is my opinion that most of the class disagree with at least a portion of his opinions. But we do believe that we are not children who have to be protected from listening to professors with whom we disagree, and certainly in Dr. Silver's class no one is prevented from expressing his opinion and disagreeing with the instructor.

I am much more concerned about classes--- I have one--- in which the instructor lectures with no opportunity for discussion or questioning by students, and in which the opinions of the instructor are given didactically and these must be accepted as correct if a student wishes to pass the course.

Continued

### Dr. Silver again

If Ole Miss and the state of Mississippi take the position that a professor must be silenced if his views are unpopular we are in worse shape than even our worst enemies wish. Students at Ole Miss have a right to hear what dissidents say and they are mature enough to decide what they believe.

For a Congressman to suggest by innuendo that Dr. Silver is teaching "foreign ideologies" is a vicious libel on a professor who knows his subject (history) thoroughly and who has chosen to remain at Ole Miss when hundreds of other professors have left because of the attitude of Mississippi politicians who have not the slightest conception of the meaning of freedom of speech and freedom of ideas.

Sincerely,