

EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

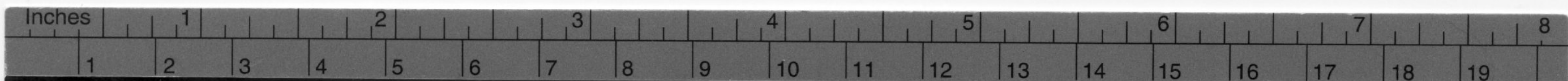
GREENVILLE, N. C. 27834

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

I want to continue to keep you informed regarding the racial situation on this campus. We met for the third time today with the same group of Black students who represent the organization known as SOUL. It is my understanding that about eighty of our ninety-five Black students are involved in this organization.

We made some progress, but I am not optimistic regarding the future. Much of the trouble seems to revolve around alleged racist attitudes among some members of the faculty and student body and the playing of "Dixie." Of course, there will not be an event until next football season when "Dixie" will be played, but the Black students are, nevertheless, very emotional about it. We are following the practice on other campuses in referring this to the Student Government Association. The students, in turn, are planning for a referendum on the subject. It is my prediction that the students will overwhelmingly vote for continuing the playing of this song, which will put the problem back where the Black students would have it anyway--in my hands. I, in turn, have already advised them that in spite of the emotionalism, it still remains a matter of censorship. Were I to bar this song, I believe the faculty would put up a serious challenge on the subject of censorship. This would mean, for the sake of argument, that we ban "Onward Christian Soldiers," "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," or any song wherein cause could be discovered. Insofar as I am concerned, and unless you instruct me to do otherwise, I am not going to issue any orders barring the playing of "Dixie." Frankly, I feel that Black students are encouraging its being played by making such an issue of it.

Insofar as the Confederate flag is concerned, I have told them that I have no objection of students hanging this flag on private property or carrying the flag in any way, waving it at football games or any other occasion that warrants it. I have stated, however, that in terms of state-supported buildings the North Carolina flag and the American flag are the only flags permitted,



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with the only exception being the stadium where the flags of visiting colleges are displayed along with ours. I feel that this is the practice followed in other schools throughout the State. I have received much criticism about not having the Confederate flag on our buildings from a few citizens and some members of the Legislature; but, here again, I believe the course I am following is the proper one.

I have been told by the protesting students that if "Dixie" is played, there will be some buildings burned. It is my understanding that verbal threats of this type are not in violation of North Carolina law, so the only recourse that I have is to increase our vigilance.

Any advice you may care to give will be greatly welcomed.

Best wishes,

Sincerely,

Leo W. Jenkins

LWJ:mhk

Enclosure

