

April 9, 1968

The Honorable Robert C. Byrd
The United States Senate
Washington, D. C. 20025

Dear Senator Byrd:

This letter is in response to the enclosed article found in the April 6, 1968, edition of the Charlotte Observer and an appeal to you, Senator Byrd, to continue in your opposition of this useless racial violence.

My opinions, and I believe the majority of white people in North Carolina, hold greatly with yours. I may even venture to say that the opinions of the employed Negro populace also coincide, for it appears that the working class of Negroes are not the ones who are causing so much of this trouble.

Mr. King was a creator of a volcanic-type violence who usually fled when his creation erupted. My question is why such a man is being given the honors of a martyr, saint, and savior of man. Why is a man like Mr. King treated with the respect of a holy man? Is he a "Christ of the Colored People"? I think not. I certainly would not honor any man — white or black — who led my people through the nation's streets, who succeeded in burning our homes, and terrorizing my people. What did he hope to gain? Black power? So what exactly is black power? Senator, you and I both know that the Negro American has as many rights as the white American. He can go to any place that you and I can go. As a white, there are many places that I would not be welcome by other whites because of a difference in class, but I certainly do not go parading through the streets, looting, killing, and demanding equal rights. And as far as freedom — what would become of you and me, Senator, if we broke into stores and carried off the proprietors' merchandise? Did Mr. King hope to put the Negro in the top positions of the nation...by violence? Do they not stop to realize that these positions — yours, for example — are attained only after years of working and struggling toward a goal? Does the Negro expect to walk into these positions with no education, no polishing, no experience? These things take time.

The Negro must stop and see that true equality will take years of work — not years of marching. And even then, there can never be true equality in any society, regardless of color. There is no Utopia. Society does not permit true equality even among the elite. It may not come in my life-time, but eventually, these problems could be solved in a peaceful end. It is evident to me that the trouble is caused by the Negro populace who are unemployed, Senator. It is not the working class of people who are disorderly, Senator. I attended college with Negroes, and believe me, those who are trying to better themselves are not the ones who are out rioting — they don't have time. I do not believe anyone could have prejudice toward the ones who are trying to learn and work and be broad minded. These Negroes have my profound respect. Therefore, Senator, make an appeal to these people to work their minds instead of their feet and their trigger finger!

Senator, I am twenty-one years old and engaged to be married. Right now the question comes to my mind as to whether I have the right to marry and bring children into a nation where it is not safe for a woman to be out alone, a nation whose people are buying and using weapons against each other, a nation filled with hate and war. I am a true American and proud to be an American. I am engaged to a United States Marine who has served his country well, who was wounded twice in Vietnam for you, for your children, your fellow Senators, and yes, even for Martin Luther King. The Negro race seems little concerned about this aspect. Suppose we bring home all our boys and send those to Vietnam who are so eager to see bloodshed. Believe me, they can see it there, Senator! I am proud to see my flag flying high — but not at half-staff for a man who makes a mockery of his country, and his God by professing to be a minister. In all this mass confusion of riots and bloodshed, it seems that our boys in Vietnam are forgotten. (The Vietnam news is now found inside the front page of our nation's newspapers.) No one has given our wounded and dead so much glory as Mr. King is receiving. This minute as I write to you, Mr. King's body is being paraded through the streets of Atlanta and the Negroes are marching throughout our nation. If they are truly interested in mourning, why are they not in their churches praying for his soul? Can you imagine how our boys must feel about this pitiful situation? A white soldier and a black soldier fight a war from the same rain-filled bunker for their people who are at home fighting a war with each other. Nauseating, isn't it?

Senator Byrd, this is election year, and I realize that all of you who are running for re-election will be trying to please the people. But never forget in the process, Senator, to remind your peers, there is a country at stake. Let us not fiddle while Washington burns! Our country is based on rule by the majority, but it seems to me that the minority have now taken the upper hand. The Negroes are making a farce of the Federal Government.

My appeal, indeed, my plea, is for you, Senator Byrd, to continue your opposition of such nonsensical violence and bloodshed. During this entire mess you are the only man in the Federal Government that I have heard who dared to "call a spade a spade." You are the only one who seems to side with the Vast majority of American people. Continued opposition will bring you continued support, I am confident. This is why I appeal to you. Please continue your opposition and try to persuade your fellows that Mr. King's way is not the right way for the good of the people — white or black. This violence must be stopped!

I am sending a copy of this letter to Governor Moore in the hope that he will quell future violence in the State of North Carolina, and I am also sending a copy to President Johnson. The American people will not stand for this stupidity to be carried out any longer. What will the President do when the whites take up arms? We are having a civil war, Senator! I truly feel that I speak the opinions of the majority. May God lead, guide, and direct you and the other leaders of the America that we love.

Sincerely yours,

Juanita S. Hilton

Juanita S. Hilton
P. O. Box 24
Conover, North Carolina 28613

Enclosure

cc Governor Dan K. Moore

President Johnson



'I'M NO ADMIRER'

Byrd: King Victim Of Own Violence

W A SHINGTON—(UPI) —

The man who would be leader of the Senate of the United States rose in the chamber Friday to describe Martin Luther King Jr. as a victim of his own violence.

A quiet Senate became hushed as Sen. Robert C. Byrd, D-W.Va., said, "I am no admirer of Dr. King. What I am saying is difficult to say and it may not be considered entirely in keeping with the views being expressed by many."

Byrd, No. 3 man in the Democratic leadership, hopes one day to perhaps succeed Sen. Mike Mansfield, D-Mont. He is now secretary of the Democratic conference and assistant whip.

Mansfield, covering his eyes with one hand, sat next to Byrd as he spoke.

Byrd, critical of King's activities in Memphis in recent speeches, said he regretted the assassination as much as any man in Congress. "I was shocked but I was not surprised.

"There is a lesson to be



Sen. Robert Byrd
... No. 3 In Senate

learned from events in Memphis: Mass protests, mass demonstrations and mass marches—labeled non-violent or otherwise—can only serve to cause unrest and disorder and to provoke violence and bloodshed.

"And in the end, those who advocate such methods often themselves become the victims of the forces they have set in motion. This is what happened to Dr. King.

"He usually spoke of non-violence. Yet violence, all too often, resulted from his actions and at the last he himself met a violent end."

Byrd noted King's opposition to a court injunction blocking a planned Memphis demonstration Monday and quoted King as saying, "We're not going to let any injunction turn us around."

"One cannot preach non-violence and advocate defiance of the law," Byrd said. He went on to quote the Bible on defying the law. He used to teach the Robert C. Byrd Bible class back in Crab Orchard, W.Va., where he was once a butcher and a member of the Ku Klux Klan.

"Dr. King's profession was that of a minister. But no man is required to be a member of the clergy to be able to read and to understand these simple passages from the scriptures."

A few days ago Byrd urged the federal government to seek an injunction to block King's planned "Poor People's March" on Washington.



*Hesman
Relation*

April 17, 1968

Miss Juanita S. Hilton
P. O. Box 24
Conover, North Carolina 28613

Dear Miss Hilton:

Thank you for sending me a copy of your letter to Senator Robert C. Byrd with regard to the outbreaks of violence which followed the death of Dr. Martin Luther King.

I appreciate having your views, and assure you that State Government will remain ready to assist local authorities, as necessary, in suppressing violence in North Carolina.

My best wishes to you for all happiness in your forthcoming marriage.

Sincerely,

Dan Moore

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