

May 23, 1969.

Mr. Ron Sneed, Pres.
N A A C P Student Chapter
Ferris State College
Big Rapids, Mich.

Dear Ron,

I hope you won't feel I am too informal in calling you Ron, but I have a son about your age in Michigan State, and feel "Mr. Sneed" a little stiff.

What I am writing you about is an article in our local paper "The Muskegon Chronicle", describing the campaign you and Jerry Nielson are starting to "Live and Work Together", after the series of tragic clashes between black and white students on your campus.

Good for you!! From the sound of the article I gathered the idea may have come from Jerry Nielson as the new Student Government President.

7 But I most warmly want to congratulate you on your big-heartedness in accepting his idea for reconciliation, especially after reading in the paper the day before of how you had been unjustly arrested when you were only trying to achieve peace. I could appreciate how you felt when you said "The whites can have this school": after all that I am especially impressed with your acceptance of this offer of friendship and constructive program towards working things out together. We need all the peacemakers we can get in this country right now and I pray God will give you the courage and strength to stick it out as the leader of the black students in this peacemaking effort.

I recently heard an interesting comment by a missionary to the Congo back here on furlough. In addition to his high praise for the young educated leaders of Africa coming out of the mission schools, he said black missionaries

3 from the U.S. to the Congo found
much to their surprise, that after
the first few hours of instant
rapport because of the color of their
skins, they felt enormous differ-
ences, because more important
than their skin color, was their
culture, & they found they were
Americans, not Africans.

So I do not feel the answer
lies in separateness, but in the
learning to live together. College
students get so many brickbats and
so much criticism, I had to write
and commend you.

Take courage, and God bless
you both and your fine effort.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Edwin Happer