

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI  
CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA 33124

OFFICE OF  
THE PRESIDENT

December 2, 1970

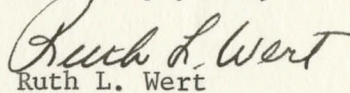
Mrs. John O. Brown  
1001 NW 54th Street  
Miami, Florida 33127

Dear Mrs. Brown:

Before leaving the city last weekend, President Stanford reminded me that he wanted you to have the enclosed letter concerning the ban he placed on the playing of "Dixie" by the University of Miami Band at its public ceremonies.

As you can see, this letter was sent to all students attending the University.

Sincerely yours,



Ruth L. Wert

Assistant to the President

cml  
enclosure



UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI  
CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA 33124

September 25, 1968

OFFICE OF  
THE PRESIDENT

Letter to the Student Body:

Some of you have expressed to me directly your concern over my decision that the University of Miami henceforth would not utilize in its public ceremonies Confederate symbols which are so offensive to one of our minority groups. I am glad to use The Hurricane as a medium to explain to you my own thinking regarding these symbols.

As a genuine Southerner, one whose family goes back three hundred years into the history of the South, I pride myself on the nobler aspects of my Southern heritage--a dignity, a courtesy, a civility, a mannerly approach, all of which denote a respect for the individual. I confess that Southerners have not always lived up to this heritage, but at least the tradition is there.

No individual or group requested me not to play Dixie. Yet it is this very aspect of my Southern heritage that persuades me to believe that it is not honorable to force upon a minority group the symbols of the Confederacy which, rightly or wrongly, have become so distasteful to them, symbols which are associated in their minds with slavery, discrimination, and the degradation of human personality, all conditions that are at complete variance with that part of my Southern heritage which I prize so highly.

When I arrived at the University of Miami over six years ago I discovered that the University of Miami, certainly by no stretch of the imagination a Deep South institution (attracting students last year from forty nine states and seventy foreign countries) had developed a curious attachment to the Confederate flag and Dixie. I asked the members of one fraternity and the cheerleaders to dispense with the use of the Confederate flag at football games. They agreed not to display it any longer.

I have been concerned about the continuing use of Dixie, particularly at a time when we are making an effort to bring more Negro students to the campus and into the mainstream of American society. I believe that the generous, magnanimous attitude for the majority to take here at the University is to dispense with the remaining symbol which is so repulsive to them. I once questioned an outstanding Negro leader of our community as to why Negroes were so sensitive about Confederate symbols. He responded by saying: "The symbols of the Confederacy evoke in us the same feelings that the Swastika or the Horst Wessel Song conjure up to the Jew."

I take a dim view of both the Southerner and the "Ersatz-Southerner," a Southerner not by birth, but by recent conversion, who embrace the Confederate symbols as an anachronistic expression of their racial prejudices.



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For me the history of the South is pure pathos. I am saddened when I think of the suffering which this region has endured--the horrifying cost of The War, the twelve-year occupation by "foreign troops," the subsequent economic vassalage to the rest of the nation. I am equally saddened when I think of the plight of the Negro citizens as they sought to survive in the strictly segregated society of the South. Without condoning the baser associations which Confederate symbols bring to the minds of our Negro citizens, these symbols do have for me some finer connotations--heroism, gallantry, devotion. I am loath to see them become mired in acrimonious controversy.

We at the University can afford to practice noblesse oblige, "the obligation of honorable and generous behavior associated with high rank or birth." Here I use the phrase, born in a feudalistic society, in the way Ortega, the Spanish philosopher, used it. Members of a University community do occupy a "high rank." They should constitute a caste of intellect and character, which prompts us to practice honorable and generous behavior in our dealings with each other and our fellow man.

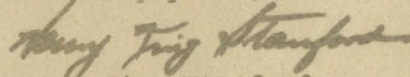
As Ortega says, ". . . the select man, the excellent man is urged, by interior necessity, to appeal from himself to some standard beyond himself, superior to himself, whose service he freely accepts . . . . Nobility is defined by the demands it makes on us--by obligations, not by rights." A person has a right to play Dixie, but is it within the bounds of taste, honor, nobility to play it under the circumstances?

I am proud of the magnificent contribution the Band of the Hour makes to school spirit. I am distressed to learn of the indignities the Band suffered at the hands of boorish elements in last Friday night's crowd. However, I am confident that the Band will continue to invigorate every public occasion by its stirring performances of the Alma Mater and the Fight Song, songs which carry no offense, but weld us all together in a bond of pride and spirit.

I am always glad for students to express their convictions to me freely and strongly. It is in the best University tradition for them to do so. I hope that the atmosphere here will always be conducive to this kind of exchange between students and the University President.

Now let's wreck Tech!

Sincerely yours,



Henry King Stanford  
President