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MS-156: Integration Crisis in Little Rock, Arkansas Collection

Alexandra L. Dunn
Gettysburg College

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MS-156: Integration Crisis in Little Rock, Arkansas Collection

Description

This collection consists primarily of anti-integration propaganda circulated by the Little Rock, Arkansas Capital Citizens' Council (CCC) to Little Rock families, like the Carlands from 1957 to 1962. The contents include newsletters, booklets, business cards, and the police record of Daisy Bates, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People's (NAACP) Arkansas state president. The propaganda from the CCC provides deep insight into the strained race relations in Arkansas, but also throughout the South as the CCC included newspaper articles from states other than Arkansas. There are also newspaper clippings and photographs that Carland acquired over the years pertaining to interracial relations in the South. These items pay particular attention to the federal mandate to desegregate public schools and the subsequent decision to close public schools in Little Rock from 1958 to 1959.

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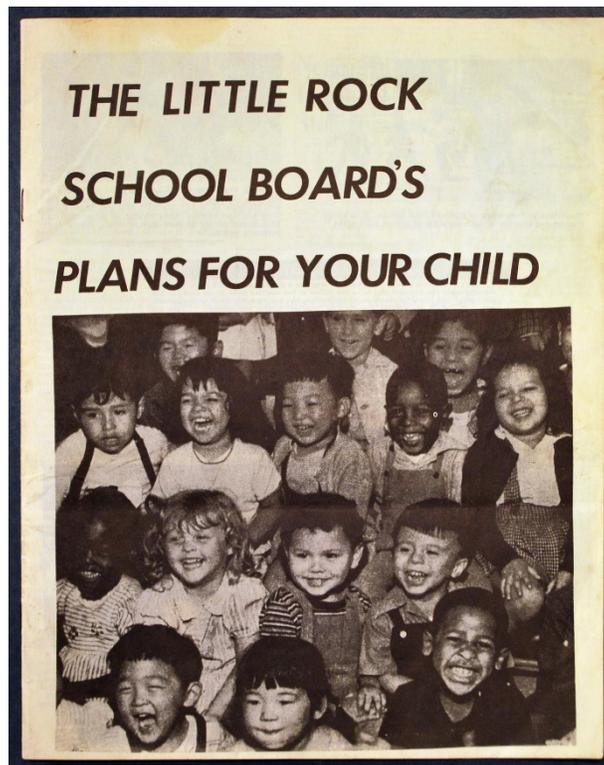
Keywords

Anti-Integration Propaganda, Little Rock, Little Rock Nine, Capital Citizens' Council, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, NAACP

Disciplines

African American Studies | History | Race, Ethnicity and Post-Colonial Studies | Social History | United States History

**Guide to the Integration Crisis in Little Rock,
Arkansas Collection**



**Gettysburg College, Musselman Library
Special Collections & College Archives**

**Processed by Alexandra L. Dunn
January 2014**

MS-156: Integration Crisis in Little Rock, Arkansas

(1 box, 0.22 cubic feet)

Processed by: Alexandra L. Dunn

January 2014

Inclusive Dates: 1957-1999

Bulk Dates: 1957-1962

Provenance

Musselman Library Special Collections and College Archives received the Integration Crisis in Little Rock, Arkansas Collection from John M. Carland in 2013. Additional items were added in 2017 from Carland.

Biography

As a white student in Little Rock in the 1950s and 1960s, John M. Carland lived through the desegregation crisis surrounding the Little Rock Nine. During the “Lost Year” (1958-1959) when public schools were closed to prevent integration, Carland found himself enrolled at T.J. Raney High School, an early version of a segregation academy, due to the remaining public schools being full and his family’s inability to pay for private school. Carland worked at the Complaint Desk for the Circulation Department of the *Arkansas Democrat* during his high school and college years from 1958-1964. He then graduated from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock with a degree in history and political science. He received his M.A. in political science from the City College of New York and his Ph.D. in history from the University of Toronto. He has taught history at the University of Kentucky and George Mason University. He joined the U.S. Army Center of Military History in 1985 where he became a subject matter expert on the combat history of the Vietnam War and in 2002, moved to the Office of the Historian, Department of State, where he focused on the higher conduct of the war and the negotiations to end United States participation. Carland’s publications include *The Colonial Office and Nigeria, 1898-1914*; *Combat Operations: Stemming the Tide, May 1965 to October 1966*; and two volumes of documentary histories in the *Foreign Relations of the United States* series covering January 1972 through January 1973; as well as numerous articles and reviews.¹

¹ John M. Carland, *Combat Operations: Stemming the Tide, May 1965 to October 1966* (Washington D.C.: Center of Military History, 2000); John M. Carland, “How We Got There: Air Assault and the Emergence of the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), 1950–1965,” *The Land Warfare Papers* no. 43 (May 2003): ii, accessed February 3,

Scope and Content Notes

This collection consists primarily of anti-integration propaganda circulated by the Little Rock, Arkansas Capital Citizens' Council (CCC) to Little Rock families, like the Carlands from 1957 to 1962. The contents include newsletters, booklets, business cards, and the police record of Daisy Bates, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People's (NAACP) Arkansas state president. The propaganda from the CCC provides deep insight into the strained race relations in Arkansas, but also throughout the South as the CCC included newspaper articles from states other than Arkansas. There are also newspaper clippings and photographs that Carland acquired over the years pertaining to interracial relations in the South. These items pay particular attention to the federal mandate to desegregate public schools and the subsequent decision to close public schools in Little Rock from 1958 to 1959.

One of the photographs is a scanned and printed out copy, but the picture is still valuable to the essence of the collection. Two of the photographs can be identified as taken by photojournalist Will Counts: the one of Assistant Chief Gene Smith and the one of reporter Alex Wilson. John Carland provided notecards with either further commentary or explanation that have been included with each of their respective items in order to provide additional context. These notecards are especially helpful in regard to the photographs because in some of them, the notecards are the only source of identification. Other photographs remain unidentified. This collection can appear scattered and scant in regard to the depth and the quantity of material. Yet the racial bias and vitriolic language of the segregationists is evident in the propaganda they chose to disseminate. Carland's collection provides a valuable glimpse into the daily life of the average white family in Little Rock, Arkansas and the mindset of segregation advocates during this turbulent time period in American history.

Historical Note

Carland's high school career revolved around the integration crisis surrounding the Little Rock Nine and the "Lost Year" of 1958 to 1959. Little Rock Central High School was to be desegregated in 1957 as part of the School Board's plan to implement the Supreme Court's May 1954 ruling, *Brown v. Board of Education*, that segregating schools was unconstitutional. Instead, Arkansas state governor, Orval Faubus, gave into pressure and brought in the National Guard ostensibly to maintain the peace, but really intending to keep out the black students. Thus Faubus asserted that he had more power than the federal government and made Little Rock the center of national attention as the first big city to resist integration. It was this National Guard

and a frothing mob that kept out the “Little Rock Nine” or the nine black students who attempted to go to the supposedly integrated Central High. Thurgood Marshall came to Arkansas on behalf of the NAACP to ensure that *Brown v. Board of Education* was upheld in its entirety. Eventually, President Eisenhower federalized the Arkansas National Guard to remove them from Faubus’s control while also sending in the United States Army to restore order and patrol the school for the protection of the black students.²

Carland and his family frequently received anti-desegregation “hate mail” from such organizations as the Capital Citizens’ Council (CCC) which modeled itself after the White Citizens’ Council of Mississippi. The CCC focused its efforts on Little Rock Central High School and placing pressure on the School Board and NAACP officials, such as the NAACP’s Arkansas state president Daisy Bates.³ From 1958-1959, Governor Faubus closed public high schools in Little Rock in order to prevent integration creating the “Lost Year.” He then formed the Little Rock Private School Corporation whose sole purpose was to open white-only private schools, funded by the state and private donations, to replace the previously shut down public schools. This act left the white high school students of Little Rock with three options: enroll at a nearby county’s public school, enroll at a local private school, or enroll at one of the three private schools put in place by the Private School Corporation.⁴ John Carland was enrolled at one of Faubus’s new private schools: T.J. Raney High School for the year that it was in operation.

In the collection, there is a scanned photograph of Carland’s friend Martha Sue Brown and others holding up signs stating “STOP.” STOP stood for “Stop This Outrageous Purge.” She and her compatriots were protesting the closing of the public schools and the firing of forty-four teachers who either supported integration or were seen being friendly with the Little Rock Nine. Due to public outcry of the purge, the three Private School Corporation schools running out of money, and federal district court ruling the closings as unconstitutional, the public schools were reopened and the segregationists began to lose support in the Little Rock area for the horrible reputation they were giving Arkansas that in turn hurt the economy.⁵

Two of the photographs in the collection were taken by Will Counts and some edit of them was printed in the *Arkansas Gazette* which is where John Carland worked in his high school and college years at the complaints’ desk for the Circulation Department. The photograph of then

² Ernest Dumas, “A Perspective of Central High,” in *A Life is More than a Moment* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999), 1-8; Robert S. McCord, “An Unexpected Crisis,” in *A Life is More than a Moment* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999), 9-28.

³ “Capital Citizens’ Council (CCC),” The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture, last modified December 12, 2011, accessed February 3, 2014, <http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?entryID=732>.

⁴ “T.J. Raney High School,” Little Rock School District, last modified August 2007, accessed February 10, 2014, <http://www.lrsd.org/content/raney>.

⁵ Robert S. McCord, “An Unexpected Crisis,” 9-28.

Assistant Chief Gene Smith halting marchers took place after the reopening of the schools. Two hundred and fifty people marched from the state capitol to Central High in order to keep the blacks out, but were stopped by Assistant Chief Smith and the police. Firemen turned the hoses on some of them and twenty-one people were arrested. It was the last of the large school-segregation rallies. Another photograph in the collection depicts a portion of the beating suffered by one of the four black reporters during one of the earlier protests when the National Guard was still employed to keep the black students out of Central High School. The reporter, Alex Wilson, was considered the top civil rights reporter for a chain of black newspapers called Defender Publications. Due to his work in Little Rock and in the South, he was promoted to the position of editor of the *Chicago Daily Defender* in 1959.⁶

Box 1

Series 1 – Newspaper Clippings

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------------------|---|
| 1-1 | not dated | “Shall the School Board Deprive Children of an Education Because They Oppose Race-Mixing?” editorial by the Capital Citizen’s Council |
| 1-2 | November 11, 1957 | “Interracial Dating is Disclosed” Article from the <i>Arkansas Democrat</i> |
| 1-3 | March 22, 1999
Oversize 1959 | Elizabeth P. Huckaby Obituary
<i>Rebel Rouser</i> Raney High School newspaper, Vols. 1, 2-13 |

Series 2 – Capital Citizens’ Council Propaganda

- | | | |
|-----------|------------------|--|
| 1-4 | not dated | “Brotherhood by Bayonet!” postmark on envelope |
| 1-5 | Spring 1958 | “Do We Want This Kind of Public Schools in Little Rock?”
Newsletter |
| 1-6 | Early 1958 | “The Night before Integration” Poem |
| 1-7 | July 28, 1959 | Capital Citizens’ Council Newsletter No. 3 |
| 1-8 | 1962 | “Conspiracy at Little Rock to Negro-ize Travelers Baseball Team”
Newsletter |
| 1-9 | 1957 | Daisy Bates’ Arrest Record with Commentary |
| 1-20 | 1961 | Capital Citizens’ Council Booklet |
| Oversized | January 22, 1958 | “Blossom May Wilt” editorial with envelope |

Series 3 – Photographs

⁶ Robert S. McCord, “An Unexpected Crisis,” 9-28; Will Counts, “Covering the Crisis,” in *A Life is More than a Moment* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999), 47-56.

- 1-11 N/A Unidentified Photograph of African American Protestors
- 1-12 September 23, 1957 Reporter Alex Wilson Attacked by Mob in front of Central High School
- 1-13 August 12, 1959 Chief of Police Gene Smith Stopping Marchers
- 1-14 June 1959 Women Protesting - Women's Emergency Committee (WEC) campaign in the fall of 1958 to re-open Little Rock schools

Series 4 – Miscellaneous

- 1-15 1957-1958 Propaganda Business Cards (4)
- 1-16 1958 "Stop" bumper sticker from the Women's Emergency Committee (WEC) campaign in the fall of 1958 to re-open Little Rock schools

Box 2 (Oversize)

- 2-1 January 22, 1958 "Blossom May Wilt" editorial with envelope
- 2-2 1959 *Rebel Rouser* Raney High School newspaper, Vols. 1, 2-13

For more information about Integration Crisis in Little Rock

President Dwight D. Eisenhower and Civil Rights : eyewitness accounts / by Terrence J. Roberts and Rocco C. Siciliano with introduction by Michael S. Mayer; The Eisenhower World Affairs Institute; 2000 E835 .P74 2000