

February 28, 1956

Personal and Confidential

Mr. James R. Caskie
925 Church Street
Lynchburg, Virginia

Mr. Homer A. Holt
Post Office Box 553
Charleston, West Virginia

Dear Jim and Rocky:

I have just had a conference with John Stump and Edward Ellis, two of our very best law students.

Our law student body belongs to an association of such student bodies that comprises all the standard law schools of this circuit (West Virginia, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina). It seems probable that at the meeting this April one of our boys will be elected president. If so, Washington and Lee would be the normal host in the spring of 1957.

It happens that there will probably be two or three Negroes in the convention. There will be no social features that involve the mixing of the races with the possible exception of a convention banquet. Since the meeting last year was with the University of South Carolina and the meeting this year is with Duke, and since Negroes were in attendance at both conferences and there was no suggestion of incident or unfavorable publicity, I am inclined to think that I should give these boys the green light.

It seems to me that if we are to withdraw ourselves from relations with other colleges which admit Negroes, we shall soon be in a rather isolated spot so far as all intercollegiate contacts are concerned.

I felt that I should report this matter to you two gentlemen just in case either one of you held a view that differs from mine. Our boys are rather anxious to know and I hope that you will give this matter early attention.

With kindest personal regards always, I am

Cordially yours,

JAMES R. CASKIE
E. MARSHALL FROST
FRANK G. DAVIDSON, JR.
JAMES O. WATTS, JR.
ROBERT C. WATTS, JR.
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March 1, 1956

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Dr. Francis P. Gaines, President
Washington & Lee University
Lexington, Virginia

Dear Frank:

I have your letter of February 28th in reference to the suggestion that the Student Association of Standard Law Schools of our section will probably want to meet at Washington & Lee in 1957, and the problems due to the fact that there will probably be a very few negroes in the convention. I note there will be no social features except possibly a convention banquet.

As much as I regret it, I do not see under present conditions how we can possibly avoid at times the necessity of mingling with some of the other race. I hope, however, it can be limited to a minimum so as to cause as little offense as possible, and in this case, particularly, since there will be no social features and it is probable that the banquet will not be held on the University campus, I feel that we should raise no question. In fact, I think our situation might be worse if we did raise any question and cause any discussion. I think we will have to face the "facts of life", which, unfortunately, the United States Supreme Court failed to do, I think, in the segregation case, and do the best we can with it.

We mix with negroes in many places now of necessity, and I think it would be a mistake to make an issue of a situation such as we would have for the meeting above referred to.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely,

JRC.MC

Copy to: Mr. Homer A. Holt
Box 553
Charleston, West Virginia

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March 1, 1956

Personal and Confidential

Dr. Francis P. Gaines, President
Washington and Lee University
Lexington, Virginia

Dear Frank:

I have your letter of February 28 to Jim Caskie and me about the Law School Association.

Though I think that Washington and Lee is entitled to maintain its own policies of admission, I do not believe it would be good policy for our Law School to isolate itself from all other law schools just because some of them might have different standards of admission.

If one of our boys is elected president of the Association, and the Association's meeting is to be held at Washington and Lee in the spring of 1957, I am sure the program will move along without any unpleasant incidents.

Yours sincerely,



Homer A. Holt

h/d

cc:

Mr. James R. Caskie
925 Church Street
Lynchburg, Virginia