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Marshall, Burke **Files on Civil Rights in Alabama, 1962-1964**

Biography:

A 1951 graduate of Yale Law School, Burke Marshall served as Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights in the United States Department of Justice from 1961 to 1965. In this capacity he was involved in, and present during, a number of racial crises in Alabama including the 1963 demonstrations in Birmingham and the desegregation of the University of Alabama.

Scope and Content:

This collection contains correspondence, memoranda, notes, FBI reports, newspaper clippings, and other material generated by or collected by Burke Marshall during his service as U. S. Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights. Covering the period 1961 to 1965, the material relates to civil rights activities in Alabama.

Size: linear feet/foot (3 boxes)

Source: John F. Kennedy Library of NARS

Restrictions: Standard preservation and copyright restrictions.

Guide Prepared By: Robert G. Corley (February 1982) and Gigi Gowdy (October 2001)

File Number:

Description:

300.1.1

Alabama File: Correspondence, April-December 1962
(32 pages).

Includes letters discussing racial matters from local civic leaders including James A. Head, E.L. Holland, Lucius Pitts, and Powers McLeod and Norman Jimerson of the Alabama Council on Human Relations.

300.1.2

Alabama File: Correspondence, January 1963 (24 pages).

Includes correspondence from David Vann, Virginia Durr, and Oscar W. Adams, Jr.

300.1.3 Alabama File: Correspondence, February-April 1963 (52 pages).

File contains additional material on racial and political matters in Birmingham, especially the mayoral race between Eugene "Bull" Connor and Albert Boutwell.

300.1.4 Alabama File: Correspondence, May 1963 (35 pages).

This file contains correspondence from Birmingham leaders regarding to Burke Marshall's presence in the city during a great portion of the month. The most interesting item is a report on a meeting of the "United Americans for Conservative Government" sent to Marshall by Abe Berkowitz, a local attorney instrumental in changing the city's form of government.

300.1.5 Alabama File: Correspondence, June 1963 (47 pages).

Materials on both Birmingham and desegregation of the University of Alabama including a memo from E.L. Holland expressing pessimism about the situation is in this file.

300.1.6 Alabama File: Correspondence, July-September 1963 (29 pages).

Most of the correspondence in this file regards events occurring in this period, i.e. desegregation of schools and the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church bombing.

300.1.7 Alabama File: Correspondence, October-November, 1963 (48 pages).

File contains additional correspondence from Abe Berkowitz and E.L. Holland.

300.1.8 Alabama File: Correspondence, December 1963-May 1964 (40 pages).

This file contains a copy of the *Birmingham News* clipping "Any Contempt Action Left to US Court (re

Wallace' placing National Guards around schools in Tuskegee and Mobile); a letter to Robert Kennedy from C.G. Gomillion (re: President Johnson's consideration of McDonald Gallion to the Interstate Commerce Commission). There is also a script from the "Voice of America" (re: opening of the American National Bank) and several copies of a letter from Kennedy to Mayor Boutwell (re: statements in the *Birmingham News* on his recent trip to Washington).

300.1.9 Alabama File: Correspondence, June-September 1964 (55 pages).

A significant portion of this file deals with the efforts of Oscar W. Hyde, then president of the American National Bank, to obtain federal accounts.

300.1.10 Alabama File: Memoranda, January 1962-May 1963 and undated (85 pages).

This file mostly concerns the developing racial problems in Birmingham in 1962 and the demonstrations and settlements in May 1963.

300.1.11 Alabama File: Memoranda, June 1963-January 1964 and undated (74 pages).

The focus of this file is on the continuing unrest in Birmingham relating to the desegregation of the public schools and the bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church.

300.1.12 Alabama File: Memoranda, the University of Alabama, November 1962-May 21, 1964 (105 pages).

This file contains memos relating to the federal governments plan in response to Governor Wallace' threat to "stand in the school-house door" to prevent desegregation of the University. Most interesting is a transcript of a meeting between Wallace and Robert Kennedy in Montgomery.

300.1.13 Alabama File: Presidential Briefing Paper, Birmingham Crisis, September 1963 (84 pages).

Contained in this file are materials prepared for President Kennedy in the wake of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church bombing. It includes a confidential assessment by area religious leaders; a promotional brochure for the Community Affairs Committee; articles about the city and the bombing written by James Reston of the *New York Times* and Mary McGrory of the *Washington Star*. There are also statements prepared by Birmingham government and civic leaders for their meeting with the President in late September included in the file.

300.2.1 Alabama File: Alabama Notebook, May 21-June 6, 1963 (93 pages).

The materials in this file deal with telephone calls made by Cabinet officers and Administration officials to business leaders who either had business connections or owned businesses in the state. The purpose of these calls was to request that these business leaders pressure Governor Wallace not to create confrontation at the University of Alabama.

300.2.2 Alabama File: Alabama Notebook, Richard N. Countiss File, May 1963 (58 pages).

This file contains further information on individuals called by the Administration officials to oppose Wallace's actions at the University of Alabama. Countiss was the Justice Department coordinator for the project.

300.2.3 Alabama File: Alabama Notebook, Richard N. Countiss File, May 1963 (106 pages).

Continuation of the above file

300.2.4 Alabama File: Auburn University December 10, 1963-January 6, 1964 (47 pages).

This file relates to the preparations for possible violence at Auburn surrounding the admission of the University's first black student under court order for the winter quarter of 1964.

300.2.5 Alabama File: Birmingham Community Affairs Committee, July 1963 (42 pages).

This file contains a descriptive booklet and membership lists for the biracial Community Affairs Committee.

300.2.6 Alabama File: Dallas County Grand Jury, November 1963 and undated (86 pages).

This file contains telegrams and correspondence relating to an investigation by the Dallas County Grand Jury into alleged misconduct on the part of Justice Department attorneys in the county. The investigation was apparently prompted by Martin Luther King's use of a car rented by a Justice Department attorney, but the scope of the probe went much further. The investigation was postponed following the death of President Kennedy and it is unclear whether it was later reactivated.

300.2.7 Alabama File: Equal Employment in Birmingham (Memo), December 1963 (77 pages).

Materials gathered by the Justice Department on such matters as federal deposits in Birmingham banks and employment data on federal contractors in the city are kept in this file.

300.2.8 Alabama File: Equal Employment in Birmingham, (Memo), December 1963 (78 pages).

This file is a continuation of the above file with additional information on negotiations with a number of large employers in the area with regards to black employment and the upgrading of jobs for blacks.

300.2.9 Alabama File: Equal Employment in Birmingham, Supporting Data, December 1963 and undated (55 pages).

Additional information relating to firms and employment in the Birmingham area is contained in this file.

300.2.10 Alabama File: FBI Reports, University of Alabama, December 12, 1962-May 31, 1963 (27 pages).

The file contains a typescript of an address by Governor Wallace in which he briefly reports to the state

on his meeting with Robert Kennedy and an FBI report on President Rose's determination to keep the Klan off the University's campus when it was desegregated.

- 300.3.1 Alabama File: Royall-Blaik Mission to Birmingham, October 1963-March 1964 (106 pages).

This file contains drafts of reports and correspondence regarding the presidential mission of Earl H. Blaik and Kenneth; C. Royall to Birmingham following the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church bombing. These drafts reflect the difficulty in which Blaik and Royall had in expressing their views of the situation in such a way as not to appear as intrusive outsiders on one hand, nor public relations spokesmen for the city on the other.

- 300.3.2 Alabama File: Royall-Blaik Mission to Birmingham, March 1964 (58 pages).

The final report on their mission sent to Robert Kennedy is in this file.

- 300.3.3 Alabama File: News Clippings, November 12, 1962-April 30, 1963 (52 pages).

This file contains clippings of editorials and news stories relating to racial matters, the Wallace inaugural, and a meeting between Robert Kennedy and Wallace.

- 300.3.4 Alabama File: News Clippings, May 1-October 20, 1963 (54 pages).

Additional clippings on desegregation of the University of Alabama, the Birmingham demonstrations, and racial violence is contained in this file.

- 300.3.5 Alabama File: Maps, 1963 and undated (22 pages).

This file contains street maps for Auburn Birmingham, and Tuscaloosa.

- 300.3.6 School File: Alabama, February 3-14, 1964 (37 pages).

Federal court orders and memo relating to the desegregation of schools and Governor Wallace' defiance in Macon County are kept in this file.

300.3.7 Oberdorfer File on Southern Business, Correspondence and Miscellany, June 2, 1963-February 11, 1964 and undated (117 pages).

File contains correspondence and memos on efforts to obtain voluntary assistance from businessmen, especially those involved in public accommodations in public facilities in the South. Louis Oberdorfer, a Birmingham native and the Assistant Attorney General, Tax Division, was in charge of this project.

300.3.8 Oberdorfer File on Southern Business, Memoranda to the Attorney General, June 7-28, 1963 (53 pages).

Memos on the racial practices of Southern businesses and the success of Administrations efforts to encourage voluntary desegregation are in this file.

300.3.9 Oberdorfer File on Southern Business, Memoranda to the Attorney General, July 1-29, 1963 (48 pages).

This is a continuation of the above file. Coverage was expanded to include school desegregation.

300.3.10 Oberdorfer File on Southern Business, Memoranda to the Attorney General, August-October 1963 (54 pages).

A continuation of memos on desegregation activity in the South

300.3.11 Oberdorfer File on Southern Business, Memoranda to the Attorney General, November 13, 1963-July 15, 1964 (49 pages).

File contains further memos on desegregation.