

August 17, 1926.

Confidential.

Dr. Douglas S. Freeman,
The News Leader,
Richmond, Virginia.

My dear Douglas:

I am returning herewith the letter which you sent me. The proposed visit to Williamsburg on September 26th has really concerned me because I knew that publicity would have to come of it and that there would be a number of people inclined to criticize.

You understand, however, that I never invited the Klan to come to Williamsburg. One day a leader of the Klan from Richmond came in and said, "We are going to hold a meeting in Williamsburg one Sunday in the fall, and we are going to present you with a flag. You will not refuse to take a flag, will you?" I stated, "Of course, I can not refuse to accept a flag of the United States," and that is my position, that I cannot refuse to accept a flag of the United States.

It may interest you to know that he came just two days after the Gibbons Club of this College, made up of Catholic students, had held a meeting and held mass, and I had been invited to a dinner and made a speech at their dinner. I think the leader was inclined to think that I was leaning towards Catholics.

I note in the letter of your friend that he speaks of John Purcell's candidacy. I voted for John in the primary and in the general election. I have voted for many Catholics in Richmond.

Candidly, I do not see how, as President of the College, I could refuse to let the Gibbons Club meet here, and I do not see how I could refuse to go to their dinner, which, by the way, I enjoyed. On the other hand, I do not see how I could refuse to accept a flag of the United States presented to this College by a group of citizens. I am afraid that these citizens sometimes do not take the right attitude towards others. I am afraid that they do not exercise Christian forbearance. I am afraid that they have forgotten the Declaration of Independence which claims that we are endowed by our Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and they have forgotten the first Amendment to the Constitution, as our Catholic friend says. Our Virginia Bill of Rights, Section 1 and Section 16, particularly provides for us the duty to practice all forbearance, love, and charity towards each other. As a matter of fact, I am greatly concerned over intolerance.

Dr. Douglas E. Freeman, 8/17/26.

When the Gibbons Club held mass at William and Mary, it was done under the auspices of the Knights of Columbus. Now, when another order desires to present a flag there seems to be a desire to protest.

How we are going to bring it about I do not know, but in this country we must have regard for differences of views, and when we have something that we believe in thoroughly, we must not abuse people for holding contrary views, but we must use every opportunity to persuade them to a new point of view and persuade them of the right. Boycott, abuse, intolerance, or cruel treatment are all contrary to the foundations of our government, and are not the things upon which to rely.

I confess to you confidentially that I am in a quandary about this matter, but I see no way out but that if the Klan does come here on September 26th and presents us with a flag to accept it. If that comes about, however, I think that I shall write a carefully prepared speech and send it to you on the day after the event takes place. That is not going to remove criticism because there are people who are intolerant and take the wrong point of view.

This institution, as a state institution, must recognize all factions of our citizenship, certainly among the white people, and we must not attempt to run this institution in the interests of any one faction, or of any one sect, creed, or organization.

I hope very much, however, that your paper will be able to keep from presenting any letters pro and con, but that is for you to decide, and I do not, of course, make this as a request.

Appreciating your interest and good will, and the
shown in me in sending this letter to me from the
am

Sincerely yours,

President.

THE NEWS LEADER

RICHMOND, VA.

Every Afternoon Except Sunday.

More Daily Circulation Than Any Other Paper in Virginia.

August 19, 1926

Dr. J. A. C. Chandler
College of William and Mary
Williamsburg, Virginia

Dear Dr. Chandler:

I am very much obliged for yours of August 17th and understand the difficulty in which you find yourself. I think your solution probably is the best one--to make a plain statement in behalf of free speech ^{and} tolerance at the time of the receipt of the flag. Of course we shall be glad to print the statement in full.

Faithfully yours,



D. S. Freeman

DSF-b

September 20, 1926.

Mr. George B. Zehmer,
University, Virginia.

My dear Zehmer:

Your letter of September 13th has just been received. I appreciate the spirit in which you have written.

I know that I am receiving considerable criticism. The whole problem has worried me very much, and I will explain the whole situation to you some time when I see you. In the mean time, I want to say this, that I have not in any sense committed myself to the Klan. I know that there has been severe criticism, but I was put in a very awkward position of having it said that I would not accept an American flag. I cannot refuse an American flag offered by people who come as American citizens. I have had the Sons of Italy to come here, who, I believe, made a donation to Monticello. They made a donation here to the Bellini room and unveiled the Bellini tablet. I have had the Gibbons Club, made up of Catholic students, to have a celebration here, and the Knights of Columbus were with them.

This is a state institution, and while I know I have been put in a very awkward position I have no right to discriminate between different organizations in this state. I have never been put into such a quandary before in my life, but it would be impossible for me to say to men who are American citizens that I cannot receive a flag.

As to whether the Klan has done unworthy things or not I do not know. That they exercise secrecy in their operations is undoubtedly so, but this is the case with a number of important organizations, for example, the Knights of Columbus. It is a grave question as to whether the main principles of democracy, if there are to be incriminations and re-incriminations of groups of citizens, will not be greatly strained. My hope is to see if we can't get better feeling in the minds of our people towards each other.

I assure you that I appreciate the spirit in which you wrote.

Sincerely,

President.

UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA
DIVISION OF EXTENSION
UNIVERSITY, VIRGINIA

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

September 23, 1926.

Dr. J. A. C. Chandler, President,
Williamsburg, Va.

My dear Dr. Chandler;

I appreciate very much your courteous and careful reply to my letter of September 18.

I can readily understand that the situation relative to the Klan and the flag is embarrassing. I don't know that I can say anything that will express my position more clearly than my former letter. It just happened to be a matter on which I feel very strongly, and I wished to express to you personally and in the interest of the College my feelings about it.

I certainly appreciate the kind way in which you received my expression.

Very sincerely yours,



GEORGE B. ZEHMER

GBZ:S

September 24, 1926

Dr. Douglas Freeman,
The News-Leader,
Richmond, Va.

Dear Douglas:

I am sending you herewith a copy of the speech which I expect to give here on Sunday, in connection with the flag which the Ku Klux Klan is to present to the College. This, of course, is for release on Monday, September 27.

I do not know whether I have touched the point or not. May I say to you personally that this matter has given me great concern. There are a number of people who are opposed to the Klan that I find to be absolutely intolerant, and who have not seen the point of view that I have tried to maintain with them - that this is a State institution and I have maintained here an absolute attitude of freedom of thought and religion and have preached also over and over again the fundamental doctrines as I see them of our government. Sometime after this is all over I want to talk with you.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

JACO*A

President.

THE NEWS LEADER

RICHMOND, VA.

Every Afternoon Except Sunday.

More Daily Circulation Than Any Other Paper in Virginia.

September 27, 1926.

Dr. J. A. C. Chandler,
College of William and Mary,
Williamsburg, Virginia.

Dear Dr. Chandler:

We handled the Associated Press summary of your speech to the Ku Klux Klan. I think you handled the whole thing exceedingly well and I hope no ill effects to the college are going to result. The only question is whether people will have sense enough to see the point of your speech.

Faithfully yours,



DSF-c

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September 28, 1926

President Chandler
College of William & Mary
Williamsburg, Virginia

My dear Dr. Chandler:

Congratulations on your Ku Klux Klan
speech!

I feared that the generosity of the Klan
had put you in an embarrassing dilemma. Had you
refused their offer you would have been open to the
charge of intolerance of the intolerant. Accepting
it might appear like sympathy with the intolerant.
You handled the situation admirably. I wished that
the Klan could have kept its unclean hands off the
college, but I believe that you have done something
which will be remembered by future generations with
great satisfaction. I congratulate you.

Very sincerely yours,

George P. Phenix

GPP/D

Continued success to you!

FLOYD J. BERL
1303 MARKET STREET
WILMINGTON, DEL.

Mr. J. A. Chandler.
William & Mary College.
Williamsburg Va.

September 30, 1926.

Dear Sir.

In looking over one of the local papers last night, I noticed an article, in which the name of my alma mater was prominently mentioned. Of course I read it immediately. Afterwards I was sorry that I had seen it. The article was pertaining to a ceremony to be held on the William and Mary campus, celebrating the presentation of an American flag to the college, by the Ku Klux Klan.

No doubt you had a very good reason for your action in this matter. However to

me it was quite a blow. An explanation of why, a so thoroughly American institution, should accept such a gift from an organization that is so un-American, would certainly relieve my mind in this affair. I am anxious to know where I am wrong. With much appreciation for what ever you might choose to do for me in this regard & with every good wish towards you I am

very truly yours
Floyd Berl.

September 30, 1926

Dr. Douglas Freeman,
The News-Leader,
Richmond, Va.

Dear Douglas:

I thank you for your letter of September 27.

As you know from previous letters written
you, I have been greatly worried over this whole
problem.

I was hoping that in your wisdom you would
have found some way to make an editorial comment which
might be helpful, and I hope yet as these things
develop, some day you will be able to write an editorial
on religious freedom and tolerance and the principles
of the Virginia Bill of Rights, which will bring in
my position, but this, of course, I am leaving
entirely to you. However, you know that had I de-
clined to accept this flag it would have been, in
itself, an act on my part of intolerance. I have
tried pretty faithfully to live up to an attitude to
all men of the principles of the Virginia Bill of
Rights in my own life.

Sincerely yours,

JACC*A

President.

THE NEWS LEADER

RICHMOND, VA.

Every Afternoon Except Sunday.

More Daily Circulation Than Any Other Paper in Virginia.

October 5, 1926.

Dr. J. A. C. Chandler,
College of William and Mary,
Williamsburg, Virginia.

Dear Dr. Chandler:

Confidentially, I think it would be well for you, when next you are in Richmond, to have a talk with Mr. Bryan about the Ku Klux episode at William and Mary. He was distressed beyond words at what had happened and he was almost ready to send in his resignation as a member of the board. Perhaps you can clear up things somewhat if you talk with him. I have been grieved to see the reaction that has followed this affair.

Faithfully yours,

J. S. Brown

DSF-c

October 5, 1926.

Mr. Floyd Berl,
1303 Market Street,
Wilmington, Delaware.

My dear Berl:

I have your letter of September 30th, and I appreciate the spirit in which you wrote me.

I want you to know that in accepting a flag from the Ku Klux Klan I was greatly worried because I knew that the Klan was an irregular organization. I had never felt that I could discriminate between the Klan and other organizations, and I knew that I stood firmly for religious freedom, religious liberty, and other things, and it was a very hard problem put up to me indeed.

I am sending you a copy of the speech that I made so that you can see my point of view.

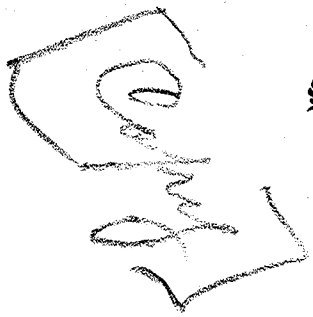
The Klan, of course, is organized under the laws of Virginia and exists as a legal organization. It is permitted to hold its parades and other things by law. I was not in a position to set myself up as greater than the law. I was, however, in a position to speak just exactly what I thought, and this I have said in the address which I am enclosing.

I knew that I was going to receive considerable criticism, but for me to be the judge and to say who was really American was absolutely out of the question. As you know, I have had the Sons of Italy to come here, and the Knights of Columbus have been here in connection with the Gibbons Club. None of them have ever been offensive to me, and the Klan came unmasked and in a dignified way.

It was very good of you to write me as you did.

Sincerely,

President.



Second Baptist Church

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

CARTER HELM JONES, PASTOR

[Oct. 13, 1926]

There appeared in the Richmond Times-Dispatch of September 27th a report that the Klan had presented a flag and flagpole to William and Mary College on the Sunday afternoon before, and had -- five thousand strong -- held a powwow there on the campus in which President Chandler participated, treating Grand Wizard Evans, who made the presentation address, with great consideration,-- the Grand Wizard using the occasion for Klan propoganda. The President is reported to have followed with a speech which in a very subtle way gave the Klan his official recognition and approval. This is the first time that I have heard of for years that any man of prominence has given the Klan such recognition. Many people will wonder what has come over us that the President of William and Mary should feel that he must align himself with this organization.

I have just recently returned from Norfolk, where a band of masked and robed men had carried away a Catholic priest, under cover of night and at the point of pistols, and after subjecting him to great indignities had thrown him down on the roadside. There seemed to be little doubt that this had been done by the local Klan. It has been frequently observed that following crimes committed by masked and robed bands in different parts of the country Klan leaders would appear immediately in the same neighborhood and either present a pocketbook to a preacher with full publicity, or present somebody with a flag. So frequently has this occurred that it has appeared to some of us to be one of their methods of diverting the attention of the public from these outrageous crimes that have so often been associated with the Klan and have borne such clear evidence of having originated with Klansmen.

I saw no account of any reference, either by Wizard Evans or President Chandler, to the crime that had been committed in Norfolk. This meeting at William and Mary seems to have been a splendid way of diverting the attention of the Norfolk community from that crime, and it is possible to conceive that the meeting was set up for that purpose. This makes all the more disappointing the participation in it, by the President, of William and Mary, which, because of its historical significance, is much more than Virginia's college. There have been no arrests in the case of the abduction of the priest in Norfolk, and, so far as I have heard, no protests from anybody in Virginia against the alignment of the President of William and Mary with the Klan. Both of these matters are keen disappointments to the friends of decency all over the country.

I wonder if anything could be done to correct the impression which these related incidents have created.

Very sincerely,

Will W. Alexander

504 Atlantic Life Building

Richmond, Virginia

October 11, 1926

President J. A. C. Chandler,
The College of William and Mary,
Williamsburg, Virginia

My dear Dr. Chandler:-

I was surprised and disappointed to see the College of William and Mary associated with the Ku Klux Klan in connection with the presentation of a flag. Whatever its claims, the effect of the K.K.K. has been to intensify class and race feelings. Its methods seem to me so totally foreign to the traditions of law and just government that are associated with William and Mary that I cannot see the reason for this incident. What you may have said will be forgotten, but the thing that will be remembered is that the College has lent itself as a background of respectability for the propagation of the K.K.K.

Everyone who has spoken of the incident to me has mentioned it with sincere regret, and I am writing to you frankly as an alumnus, and well-wisher, because I have the welfare of the College at heart and because I am deeply conscious of the many splendid achievements of your administration.

With kind regards,

Sincerely yours,

Jackson Davis

October 12, 1926

Mr. Jackson Davis,
504 Atlantic Life Building,
Richmond, Virginia.

Dear Davis:

I have just received your letter of October 11, and am sending you a copy of the speeches made by Dr. Evans and myself upon the occasion of the presentation of the flag by the K. K. K.. I am sorry that you feel as you do and know that it will be very hard to explain to my friends why I accepted this flag. I went over the matter very carefully in my mind, for it was my feeling to say "No", but I could not bring myself to the point of being intolerant. I have allowed many other organizations to come here, and I did not feel I had a right to refuse this one and thus discriminate. This is a State institution and I could not find that I had a right to say that I would not accept an American flag. Dr. Phenix of Hampton wrote me in regard to this and I am sending you a carbon copy of the letter. I know that the things I have said will, of course, be forgotten, and that many people will say that the College "has lent itself as a background of respectability for propaganda for the K. K. K.". I told Dr. Goodwin a week before the flag was presented that as poor as I was, I would give a thousand dollars a year for five years not to have the presentation. It was the most embarrassing situation that I ever experienced. I hope that you will give me all the support you can even though you feel personally that it was a mistake, in order to overcome any bad impression that may have been produced. This is written to you personally and not for publication as I am not making public explanations, but since you have been such a close and active friend I feel that I should let you know how I feel myself.

With kindest regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

President.

JACOBS

corrected copy

October 18, 1926.

Mr. Thomas Kearney,
Union Club,
Fifth Avenue and Fifty-first Street,
New York City.

My dear Mr. Kearney:

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your letter of October 4th, and to say that I am glad that you are tolerant as I try to be. I believe that if you and I were to come face to face you would find that we did not differ so much after all.

My great desire is to educate the youth of this college through our School of Government in the fundamental principles which I so constantly advocate, so that a real spirit of tolerance and moderation and temperance can be secured.

I wish that everybody could read Jefferson's statute of religious liberty, passed by the Virginia Assembly in 1785, which statute declares that our civil rights have no dependence on our religious opinions, that, therefore, the prescribing of any citizen as unworthy of public confidence by laying upon him an incapacity of being called to offices of trust and emolument unless he professes or renounces this or that religious opinion is depriving him injuriously of those privileges and advantages to which, in common with his fellow citizens, he has a natural right. The Act proceeds to say that "all men should be free to profess and by argument to maintain their opinions in matters of religion, and that the same in no wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil capacities."

It is very hard to get our people to think this way. However, we hold to these facts as fundamental, and we are trying to teach them and to get our people to practice them.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely,

President.

DR. AMOS R. KOONTZ
1014 SAINT PAUL STREET
BALTIMORE, MD.

CONSULTATION HOURS 9 TO 10
AND BY APPOINTMENT

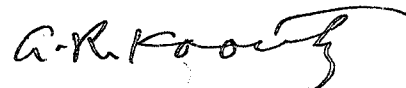
October 21, 1926

Dr. J.A.C. Chandler, President,
College of William and Mary,
Williamsburg, Va.

Dear Doctor Chandler:-

The recent Ku Klux Klan flag-
pole incident at the College caused much com-
ment in Baltimore. I am inclosing two clippings
from The Evening Sun, which you may already
have seen, but in case you haven't, I am sure
you will be interested in them.

Yours very truly,



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RICHMOND, VA.

October 22, 1926

President J. A. C. Chandler,
The College of William and Mary,
Williamsburg, Virginia

My dear Chandler:-

Your letter of the 12th was forwarded to me in Atlanta, and I appreciate what you tell me about the incident. I know you faced a difficult situation, and I wish, as Dr. Phenix says, "that the unclean hands of the Klan might have been kept off the College." Your address was excellent, and let us hope that the Klan may take it to heart, but I cannot be too optimistic about that.

I am taking the liberty of sending your address to Dr. Anson Phelps-Stokes, who wrote to me, expressing regret at the incident.

I am sorry I missed you when you called and hope to see you before long.

With all good wishes,

Cordially yours,

Jackson Davis

JD-W

* Only the address - not your letter -

October 25, 1926

Dr. A. R. Koontz,
1014 Saint Paul Street,
Baltimore,
Md.

My dear Dr. Koontz:

Your letter of October 21 and the newspaper clipping has been received, and I thank you very much for sending them to me.

The matter of the Ku Klux Klan has been very embarrassing to me, but I felt that as I had allowed many other organizations, among them being the Sons of Italy, Knights of Columbus, and various types of secret organizations, to come here, I could not refuse to accept a flag and pole from the K.K.K. without seeming guilty of intolerance.

You will probably be interested in the speech I delivered upon the occasion of the presentation of the flag and pole, and I am enclosing a copy.

Sincerely yours,

President.

JACC*E

Enc. 1

Lynchburg Va Sept 28/26

Dr J.A.C.Chandler;-

President William and Mary College;-

Dear Dr Chandler;-

The enclosed is clipped from first page, first column of Sen. Carter Glass' paper "The Lynchburg News" and is the only account of the interesting ceremonies of yesterday at W & M.

The unfairness and falseness of this article need not be commented on. It does injustice to the Klan and to you and to the College. It distorts an occasion to many thousands of people interested in the college and in the Klan. When prejudice, which the News so vehemently decries, leads papers to such conduct it sounds a low depth indeed.

Do not think from this that our people as a whole pay a great deal of attention to the News- it is too rancorous and frequently unfair to carry much weight now since Addison died .

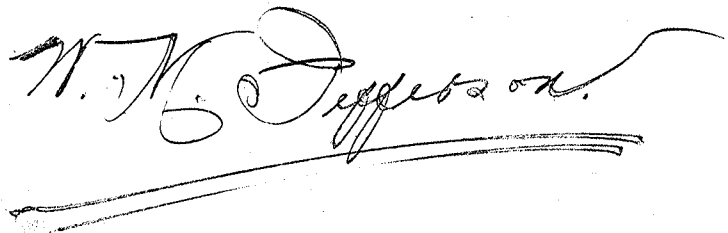
But we wish a protest could come from your College against such a distortion of the truth concerning a very significant and interesting affair as yesterday.

~~XX~~ This letter is strictly confidential except that you can use the information conveyed in any manner you please- for obvious reasons names and the letter itself must be confidential.

Yours &c

W.M.J.

/ PS

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "W. M. Jefferson", is written over a double horizontal line.

October 25, 1926

Mr. Jackson Davis,
608 Atlantic Life Building,
Richmond,
Va.

My dear Davis:

Your letters of the 24th have been
received, and I thank you very much for them.
I appreciate very much your writing to the Hon.
Lance G. B. Jones for me.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

President.

JAGG:W

Dear Mark
My pleasure

ROBERT ANDERSON POPE
36 WEST 44TH STREET
NEW YORK CITY

R. A. P.

March 29, 1927.

Mark Sullivan, Esq.,
Home Life Building,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mark:

A very dear and old friend of mine, Dr. J. A. C. Chandler, the President of the College of William and Mary, is anxious to meet you and asked me for a letter of introduction which I have already sent him.

I am sure that he will only take up something with you that the circumstances fully warrant and that is not unlikely to be of mutual advantage. He has made a most extraordinary success of his administration of the College of William and Mary, which when he took hold of it seemed to be gasping its last breath. Now it is a large, vigorous, successful college with high education standards and rapidly increasing resources. This result can be only attributed to Dr. Chandler's leadership. He has an intuitive political sense that enables him to get extraordinary co-operation from the State of Virginia. His ideals are such as we both are in hearty accord with, in evidence of which there is an amusing incident of his accepting a flag pole from the Ku Klux Klan of Virginia. In his acceptance speech he referred to the Klan's loyalty to the constitution and hence to the need of never discriminating against anyone because of race, creed or color, which was the ideal of the College as well as the nation itself.

I suggest that it would be worth your while to see him out of office and out of office hours, as you will be charmed with him and be glad of any time that you find you can spare for a conference.

I am delighted at the great success of your book "Our Times". You have certainly got out of what seemed to me a rather dry subject a vast amount of interest and entertainment and it holds one because of sustained interest as closely as a gripping novel.

Believe me, as always

Cordially yours,