

STATEMENT OF C. MAURICE WEIDEMEYER FOR THE U. S. SENATE COMMITTEE
ON COMMERCE

TUESDAY, JULY 16, 1963

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is C. Maurice Weidemeyer, I am a lawyer of Annapolis, Maryland, a member of the Maryland House of Delegates from Anne Arundel County.

I wish to state that I am unalterably opposed to the passage of Senate Bill 1732, and I am also opposed to passage of any public accommodations law whether by County, Municipality, State or Federal Government. The so-called public accommodations laws do not accommodate the public generally. They accommodate only a small minority of the public. The vast majority of the public, in my opinion, have their own desires and their own likes and dislikes and wish to choose their associates, i. e., the persons with whom they socialize and the persons with whom they wish to associate in the conducting of business.

In my opinion, it has always been an inherent, basic, and fundamental right of all free men in a free society to associate themselves, socially and commercially with persons of their own choosing.

It has often been said by proponents of measures like this that public accommodations bills are bills to guarantee freedom. I think that the approach is wrong. They should be called freedom depriving bills. The bills give an unwarranted freedom to a small minority while denying to the vast majority of our citizens and business men a very basic freedom, namely, that of associating and doing business with persons of his own choosing. The argument that because a State or Government authority has licensed a person to do business, that they should be able to regulate every facet of his thinking and conduct is something foreign to the American system of government and cannot help but lead to eventual socialism, dictatorship, and complete control by the government of every act, thought and deed of every individual citizen. The privileges and accommodations which the proponents of this measure contend are denied to negro citizens are not denied to them at all, because they have the same opportunity go into business and to conduct a hotel or restaurant or other types of businesses, just as much as any other citizens who have previously done so.

I have said many times, and I say it to you sincerely, that if the NAACP, the CORE and the other ultra liberal organizations, who are daily harassing and pestering the American people, would spend their money and effort on promoting the welfare of the colored race by assisting them into getting into business where they could cater to their own people, they would be accomplishing something. For years, the NAACP and CORE and others have been collecting \$1.00 and \$2.00 dues from people all over the United States and spending the money principally in agitation of the white race which neither gained respect nor promoted the negro economically. I would suggest to them that if they wanted to organize a hotel corporation or any other business corporation, and if they could not sell stock at \$25.00 or \$100 a share, that they sell more shares at \$1.00 or \$2.00 per share and spend their money to better use than by giving it to the NAACP and CORE and other organizations.

The idea that people are helping themselves and promoting themselves by demanding that others furnish them and give them that which they could obtain for themselves is a false idea of promotion of that individual. Rights and privileges of association are obtained only through accomplishment and mutual respect.

Certainly, nothing is furthered or improved by an insistent demand that people be taken in and accepted under circumstances where they have not as yet earned that respect, and no law, whether of the Federal, State, County or Municipal government, attempting to force association of people, can be successful under such forced conditions. Certainly someone and some group in the process are bound to wind up with receiving more contempt and ill feeling than with respect.

I disagree also with those persons who would attempt to portray the present disturbances in this country as spontaneous outbreaks. I cannot be lead to believe that the colored people of Cambridge would conduct themselves in the vicious manner in which they have, if they had not been engineered, guided and inspired and financed by outside influences and capital. It would seem to me that it would be the wiser thing for this Committee to consider the travelling in inter-state commerce of persons like Martin Luther King and others whose sole purpose in going from state to state is to create dissension, confusion and unrest, and deliberately going in areas where the colored people have been very well satisfied and whipping them up into a fervid heat of passion and hate for the white race.

I say to this Committee, quite sincerely, that if the purpose of this Committee is to promote the welfare of the colored race, that it is going about it in the wrong way. Certainly, the attempt to promote the negro race of less than twenty million people in the United States against the will and wishes of the majority of the remaining 160 million cannot do anything more than swell in the breasts of the vast majority of the American people a deep feeling of resentment and contempt and it is obvious upon reflection that such a condition in this United States has not improved race relations.

It has often and falsely, I think, been said that it is necessary that we pass public accommodations laws in the United States so as to impress foreign nations, and naturally the question arises to me: what nations are we trying to impress? Are they the nations that we have been continually financing and do we have to ruin our whole civilization and our mode of living in order to try to create an impression? I believe that a careful look at and a survey of many of the nations whom we think we have to impress, would only serve to convince us of the utter futility of such an attempt. Those nations, many of them, have century old customs, prejudices and feelings which would never be changed even though the United States did a somersault and acrobated itself into ruination and oblivion.

There was a time when the Communist conspiracy talked in terms of worldwide revolution. That attitude on the part of some Communist nations has now changed to a policy of slowly degrading and demoralizing the United States as one of the main capitalist nations and with further attempts to harass and ruin us economically. I believe, with other great and prominent men, that the Communist conspiracy to wreck the United States is certainly being overjoyed at the almost fanatical attempts being made by many organizations to ruin this great country and that the Communists are well up in many of these movements of agitation for public accommodations.

As a Democrat, I sincerely regret the actions and statements of the President and his brother, the Attorney General, because I realize that if they continue and persist in their course of conduct to promote the negro population without regard to

the wishes of the vast majority of white citizenry in this country, that neither have they promoted themselves politically nor have they advanced the well being of the United States as a whole.

It may well be that my remarks here today will go unheeded and that men in high places cognizant of the voting power of certain groups, will continue in this false move until confronted at the polls by an overwrought voting populace, who will be so angry and disturbed that many of the present day office holders will be defeated at the polls. In conclusion, let me say that I hope that the United States Senate will not approve any public accommodations law and will not attempt to hamstring the American businessmen and cram such a bill down the throats of the American people. It would be the wiser and safer thing to do to have the people of the U.S. express themselves at the polls in matters of this nature.