Fellowship Com

Clerk 4P°

December 20, 1940

Dear Mr. Weaver: I am writing to invite you to serve as a member of the Fellowship Committee of the Julius Rosenwald Fund. I think you know our general plans and procedures in this field. We set aside each year $100,000 to be used in the award of fellowships to (a) Negroes and (b) white Southerners who are working on some problem distinctive to the South. We proceed very much after the fashion of the Guggenheim Foundation, that is, we accept formal applications for the fellowships up to a certain date each year - in our case January 5 -, and we then get as significant information as we can on all of the applicants, including appraisals from professors and other individuals who know them best. Out of the total applicants usually about two hundred stand out as conspicuous prospects. Fairly extensive digests of the proposals and qualifications of these two hundred are sent to the members of the Fellowship Committee. These members read and rate the applications, get such additional information as they may be able to, and then assemble for extensive discussion of the candidates. These discussions usually take place at two formal meetings of the Committee of one or two days each, the meetings being held usually early in March and early in April.

I have commented on this procedure so that you will understand the implications of our invitation. While we try to handle as much routine as possible in this office and thus give efficiency to the proceedings of the Committee, there is no getting around the fact that members of this Fellowship Committee give a great deal of personal time and thought to the work. Giving this very special aid to younger people in these two groups seems to us an unusually important means of creating future leadership. The members of the Fellowship Committee usually feel this so strongly themselves that they devote a great deal of attention to the effort to choose the most promising individuals who seem likely to benefit most by this kind of help.

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The other members of the Committee which you are invited to join are: Henry Allen Moe, Secretary of the Guggenheim Foundation, Raymond R. Paty, President of Birmingham-Southern College, Charles S. Johnson, Will W. Alexander, and the president of the Fund. Mr. George M. Reynolds, whom I think you know, is director of the fellowship division. He is in charge of the gathering of material and sits with the Committee though not as a voting member.

We all hope very much that, in spite of the time and effort required, you will consent to join this Committee. We believe that you have experiences and contacts that will bring a good deal of additional strength to our counsels.

Very truly yours,

ERE:JW

EDWIN R. EMBREE

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