

To Viva O. Sloan

1 October 1956  
[Montgomery, Ala.]

*In a 17 September letter Viva Sloan, an MIA supporter from West Virginia, asked King whether he considered Eisenhower or Stevenson "the safer or better leader as*

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*President . . . on the matter of desegregation." Believing that King knew "the feeling of the greater number of your people," Sloan promised to vote as he advised. King reports that he is "in a state of indecision." In other letters from the same period he indicated that "the Negro should be more of an independent voter . . . this would give him more bargaining power." He also explained that he was voting as a "private citizen" without taking a public stand, because the MIA received support from both Republicans and Democrats.<sup>1</sup>*

Miss Viva O. Sloan  
379 Baldwin Street  
Morgantown, West Virginia

Dear Miss Sloan:

Thanks for your very kind letter of September 17, making inquiry concerning the way the Negro will vote in the coming election. I am of the impression that the Negro voter will go largely for the Democratic Party. I haven't fully decided which candidate I will vote for. In the past I have always voted the Democratic ticket. At this point I am still in a state of indecision. Stevenson seems to be more forthright on the race question than Eisenhower, but the Democratic Party is so inexplicably bound to the South that it does leave doubt in the minds of those interested in civil rights. Let us all hope that the candidate most concerned with the welfare for all people of America will win the election.

Sincerely yours,  
M. L. King, Jr.,  
President

MLK:mlb

P.S. There has been nothing published from this office taken from letters received from sympathizers in our cause.<sup>2</sup>

TlC. MLKP-MBU: Box 65.

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1. King to E. F. Rodriguez, 19 September 1956; and King to Arnold Demille, October 1956.  
2. Sloan had asked if the MIA had distributed a newspaper article she had written about the protest.