NESTLY ARE LOOKING TO YOU FOR LEADERSHIP AND GUIDANCE IN THIS PERIOD OF INEVITABLE SOCIAL CHANGE.

MR. PRESIDENT, WE URGE YOU TO GIVE DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP TO THE CONFUSED CITIZENS OF THE SOUTH AND THE NATION IN THIS CRITICAL HOUR. WE IMPLORE YOU TO ENUNCIATE WHETHER IN THE NORTH OR SOUTH AN EISENHOWER DOCTRINE FOR DEMOCRACY AT HOME.

IN THE ABSENCE OF SOME EARLY AND EFFECTIVE REMEDIAL ACTION, WE SHALL HAVE NO MORAL CHOICE, BUT TO LEAD A PILGRIMAGE OF PRAYER TO WASHINGTON. IF YOU, OUR PRESIDENT CANNOT COME SOUTH TO RELIEVE OUR HARRASSED PEOPLE, WE SHALL HAVE TO LEAD OUR PEOPLE TO YOU IN THE CAPITOL IN ORDER TO CALL THE NATIONS ATTENTION TO THE VIOLENCE AND ORGANIZED TERROR DIRECTED TOWARD MAN WOMEN AND CHILDREN WHO MERELY SEEK FREEDOM AND FIRST CLASS CITIZENSHIP OF GOODWILL FROM ACROSS THE NATION WILL UNDOUBTEDLY JOIN IN SUCH A PILGRIMAGE FOR FREEDOM AND HUMAN DIGNITY.⁶

MR. PRESIDENT, WE PRAYERFULLY URGE YOU TO GIVE EARLY AND SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO THE TWO REQUESTS WE HAVE MADE IN THIS LETTER, FOR THE VIOLENCE OUR PEOPLE FACE BY DAY AND IN THE DARK OF EACH NIGHT, MAKES IT IMPERATIVE THAT WE HEAR FROM YOU AT YOUR EARLIEST CONVENIENCE. PLEASE REPLY THE REV MARTIN LUTHER KING 530-C SOUTH UNION MONTGOMERY ALA.

RESPECTFULLY YOURS
REV MARTIN L. KING, MONTGOMERY, ALA.
REV F. L. SHUTTLESWORTH BIRMINGHAM, ALA.,
REV C. K. STEELE, TALLAHASSEE, FLA.,
REV T. J. JEMISON, BATON ROUGE, LA.,
REV A. L. DAVIS JR, NEW ORLEANS LA.,
FOR: THE SOUTHERN NEGRO LEADERS CONFERENCE.

PWSr. WCFO-KAbE: GF 124-A.

⁶ A typescript of this telegram shows the sentence ending after "first class citizenship"; another sentence then begins with "People of goodwill . . ." The word "people" and the period preceding it may have been lost in transmission.
Vice-President Richard Nixon
Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Nixon:

One month has passed since we urged you to make a trip into the South similar to the one you made in Europe on behalf of the Hungarian refugees. At that time we urged you to examine the violence directed toward Negroes in the South who merely ask for justice and freedom under law and to report your findings to the President and to the Nation.

We are sorry that you have not seen fit to answer our telegram.

Meantime, we note that you have been chosen to represent the United States government at the gold coast Independence Celebration March 6th, when that first Negro country in Africa receives its freedom from colonial domination.

We are convinced that you will better be able to represent America's defense of justice and freedom at the celebration, if prior to your leaving for Africa on March 6th, you arrange for the fact-finding trip we have proposed into the South.

In any event, we urge you to make such a trip at your earliest convenience.

May we hear from you as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Rev. M. L. King, Montgomery, Ala.
Rev. F. L. Shuttlesworth, Birmingham, Ala.
Rev. T. J. Jemison, Baton Rouge, La.
Rev. C. K. Steele, Tallahassee, Fla.
For: Southern Negro Leaders Conference

TWc. BRP-DLC.

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1. Conference members also sent telegrams to congressional leaders requesting that they schedule hearings in the South in connection with the proposed civil rights legislation (King to Emanuel Celler and Thomas C. Hennings, Jr., 14 February 1957). Additionally, the group wired Attorney General Herbert Brownell requesting a meeting between black leaders and southern district attorneys to discuss the implementation of federal desegregation rulings (King to Brownell, 14 February 1957).