“Dr. King Asks Non-Violence In Little Rock School Crisis”

26 September 1957
Atlanta, Ga.

Responding to events in Little Rock, King sent a telegram offering advice to local minister Roland Smith and Daisy Bates, president of the Arkansas NAACP and advisor to the Little Rock Nine. The text of the telegram, which appeared in the Atlanta Daily World, is printed below.

“Urge the people of Little Rock to adhere rigorously to a way of non-violence at this time. I know this is difficult advice at a time when you are being terrorized, stoned, and threatened by ruthless mobs. But non-violence is the only way to a lasting solution of the problem.

“You must meet physical force with soul force. You have no alternative but to continue the struggle for integrated schools, but do it with a thorough commitment to Christian principles. If the white mobs of Little Rock choose to be un-Christian and disgracefully barbaric in their acts, you must continue to be Christian and dignified in yours.

“History is on your side. World opinion is with you. The moral conscience of millions of white Americans is with you. Keep struggling with this faith and the tragic midnight of anarchy and mob rule which encompasses your city at this time will be transformed into the glowing daybreak of freedom and justice.”

PD. Atlanta Daily World, 26 September 1957.

1. For further discussion of this communication see King to Smiley, 24 October 1957, pp. 290–291 in this volume. The actual telegram has not been located.

“Advice for Living”

October 1957
Chicago, Ill.

Question: Why did God make Jesus white, when the majority of peoples in the world are non-white?

Answer: The color of Jesus’ skin is of little or no consequence. The whiteness or blackness of one’s skin is a biological quality which has nothing to do with the intrinsic value of the personality. The significance of Jesus lay, not in His color, but in His unique God-consciousness and His willingness to surrender His will to God’s will. He was the Son of God, not because of His external biological make-