punished acts of violence and unchecked lawlessness is a fertile seed-bed for the complete break down of law and order.6

That is why, Mayor Morgan, we urgently ask you to determine at once and let us know what concrete steps have been taken by Police officials to apprehend and punish those who on June 29 attempted to bomb, for the second time, the Bethel Baptist Church.

May we look forward to your immediate reply.

Yours very truly,
[signed] Martin L. King, Jr.7
Rev. Martin L. King, Jr.
President
MLK:ab

TLSr. ABBP-AB.

6. Two days after King wrote this letter, a pair of homes in the “Dynamite Hill” section of Birmingham were bombed. A group of African-American residents attacked two white men found at the scene; the two, along with a third man they named, were later arrested and indicted (Emory O. Jackson, "Angry Citizens Beat Two Men Following Dynamitings," Alabama Tribune, 19 July 1958).

7. King’s name is signed here by Ella Baker, who likely drafted this letter (Baker, Interview by Eugene P. Walker, 4 September 1974).

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Papers Project

To A. Philip Randolph

18 July 1958
Montgomery, Ala.

On 9 July Randolph solicited King’s opinion of a letter to the president, which had been drafted by Rustin and Levison to serve as a follow-up to the 23 June White House meeting.1 King agrees that the letter, calling for a White House conference on school desegregation, should be signed by the four black leaders who met with Eisenhower.2

1. For draft see Randolph, Granger, Wilkins, and King to Eisenhower, 9 July 1958; see also Rustin to King, 14 July 1958.

2. In a 19 August reply, Randolph informed King that he and Granger had decided it most convenient for Randolph to write Eisenhower individually, which he had done on 1 August. Randolph’s letter to Eisenhower contained much the same wording as the 9 July draft, but he added that any conference on integration “could not conceivably include persons who are determined to thwart and frustrate the law,” arguing that “to invite them to the White House to challenge the Fourteenth Amendment and the Supreme Court decision would be politically and socially grotesque.” Rocco Siciliano replied on Eisenhower’s behalf, conveying the president’s belief that “this is not an appropriate time” for a White House conference on school desegregation (Siciliano to Randolph, 4 September 1958).
Mr. A. Philip Randolph
217 W. 125th Street
New York 27, New York

Dear Brother Randolph:

Thanks for your very kind letter of July 9th with enclosed statement to be submitted to the President concerning the suggested White House conference.

First, let me say that I am very much impressed with the statement and I think it should be submitted to the President as soon as possible. I would suggest that you get the consent of Lester [Granger] and Roy [Wilkins] and then proceed.

I have just heard from Lester concerning an idea that he has with reference to a follow up of our conference with the President. I think it is a good idea and if you have not discussed it with him, I hope you will find time to do so.

I am also impressed with the idea of having a public forum concerning the White House conference. This, I think, would be very helpful. It would give us an opportunity to clear up many false impressions that have gotten out concerning the conference, and will also give us an opportunity to touch many other vital issues.

I plan to leave the city tomorrow for a brief vacation in Mexico. However, I will be back in Montgomery around the 3rd of August. Almost any time after that, I will be free to meet with the three of you in New York. Please discuss this with Roy and Lester and contact me concerning the results. I will be sending my itinerary to Bayard and Stanley and they will know where to contact me in Mexico.

With warm personal regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

[signed] Martin L. King, Jr, p

Martin Luther King, Jr.

MLKp

TLSr. APRC-DLC.

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9. King refers to a 7 July memorandum from Granger that suggested that, having demonstrated their "discretion" to Eisenhower, the black leaders might "dig a little more deeply" and meet with a presidential advisor "in a completely confidential session."

4. In his 9 July letter to King, Randolph had suggested that the four leaders "hold a sort of panel forum in Harlem or some convenient city, and tell the public the whole story of the conference... to dissipate much of the pessimism and cynicism being expressed through the Negro press about the conference." However, in his 19 August letter to King, Randolph indicated that neither Wilkins nor Granger were "enthused about the public forum suggestion," and the matter was dropped.