swear in the next few days. I will be very happy to meet with the official board to
discuss this call in detail on Wednesday evening, November 25. If this date is ac-
ceptable to you, Mr. Collier, Mr. Reese, and Dr. King, Sr., I would appreciate your
letting me know immediately.

With every good wish, I am

Yours in the Cause of Christ,
Martin Luther King, Jr.

cc: Mr. Robert J. Collier
Mr. J. H. Reese
Dr. M. L. King, Sr.

MLK:mlb

TLc. MLKP-MBU: Box 24.

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Papers Project

To William P. Rogers

[19 November 1959]

[Montgomery, Ala.]

King lauds Attorney General Rogers for advocating the integration of a Huntsville,
Alabama, elementary school that excluded the children of black military personnel. 1
Acting Assistant Attorney General Joseph M. F. Ryan thanked King on Rogers's behalf. 2 The Huntsville schools remained segregated until 1963.

ATTORNEY GENERAL WILLIAM P. ROGERS
THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C.

MAY I COMMEND YOU FOR YOUR FORTHRIGHT STAND FOR INTEGRATED
SCHOOLING AT THE ARMY'S REDSTONE MISSLE CENTER IN ALABAMA. IT IS CERT-

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1. At a news conference, Rogers claimed that because the school was built with federal funds the
"Negro youngsters on the base should be permitted to go to that school" ("Rogers Says Steps Planned
to Lift Redstone Race Bars," Montgomery Advertiser, 19 November 1959). Objecting to Rogers's state-
ments, Governor John Patterson told the press that he found it "inconceivable that the federal gov-
ernment would go so far as to jeopardize its missile program at such a time of national peril" ("Gov-
Rogers (1913–2001), born in Norfolk, New York, received an A.B. (1934) from Colgate University
and an LL.B. (1937) from Cornell University. Rogers became deputy attorney general in 1953 and
was named attorney general after Herbert Brownell resigned in October 1957. While in private prac-
tice, Rogers successfully represented King before the U.S. Supreme Court in New York Times v. Sullivan
2. Ryan to King, 24 November 1959.
TAINLY UNJUSTIFIABLE FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL TO BE ORDERED AROUND VARIOUS STATIONS AND THEN CONFRONT A DENIAL OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR THEIR CHILDREN ON THE BASES. I STRONGLY IMPLORE YOU AND THE MILITARY AUTHORITIES TO FOLLOW THROUGH WITH THE INTEGRATION OF SCHOOLS AT REDSTONE CENTER. A RETREAT AT THIS POINT WOULD ONLY CONFIRM STATE OFFICIALS IN THEIR UNDEMOCRATIC DEFIANCE OF THE LAW AND MAKE THEM MORE DETERMINED IN THEIR RESISTANCE. IT WILL ALSO MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR THOSE MODERATE WHITES IN THE SOUTH WHO ARE WILLING TO JOIN WITH NEGRO LEADERS IN WORKING TOWARD PEACEFUL COMPLIANCE WITH THE SUPREME COURT’S DECISION OUTLAWINGS SEGREGATION IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., PRESIDENT
SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Draft, Resignation from Dexter Avenue Baptist Church

[29 November 1959]
[Montgomery, Ala.]

King announced his resignation following Sunday services at Dexter and may have used this handwritten draft to frame his remarks. According to a news account, after King spoke three elderly women stood up in protest and looked about “to see if others would join them.” Twelve parishioners eventually rose to demonstrate. One man explained: “We weren’t just going to give him up without some kind of a fight. But we were not against him, we just wanted to show our regret.”

A little more than five years ago I accepted the patorate of this Church. We started out at that moment on a great and creative spiritual venture. You responded to my program with a cooperative spirit that could hardly be duplicated anywhere. At that time my only desire was to serve the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church to the best of my ability.

Little did I know when I came to Dexter that in a few months a movement would commence in Montgomery that would change the course of my life forever. But history always preserves for itself unpredictable. [end] still has its unpredictable