humanitarian concern, we are confident that you would want to make such an apology.

I would appreciate hearing from you on this matter if you find it possible.

Yours for the Cause of Freedom,

[signed] Martin L. King Jr.
Martin Luther King, Jr., President
The Southern Christian Leadership Conference

TLS. PHTPG-MoIT.

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Papers Project

From Jacob K. Javits

21 April 1960

In the midst of a months-long filibuster over a bill that would eventually become the Civil Rights Act of 1960, SCLC urged passage of "a strong, clear-cut provision for federal referees or registrars" to protect voting rights in the South. In the telegram SCLC stated that "time has run out when watered-down or hamstrung proposals, claiming to remedy violations of Negro voting rights... can be considered progress." Senator Javits (R-NY) replies below.

Rev. M. L. King, Jr., President
The Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Inc.
208 Auburn Ave., N.E.
Atlanta, Georgia

Dear Rev. King:

Thank you for your recent communication regarding Senate action on civil rights legislation. On April 8, 1960, after eight weeks of debate, the Senate passed H.R. 8601, the Civil Rights Act of 1960. This bill now goes back to the House of


Representatives, where early action on the amendments made by the Senate is expected.\footnote{The Senate made sixteen amendments to the bill the House passed in March. The House of Representatives further amended the bill prior to passing it on 21 April. The \textit{New York Times} reported that southern representatives "won minor victories" as they successfully changed sections that affected school desegregation (Russell Baker, "Senate Votes Rights Bill, 71-18, after 8-Week Fight; House Approval Is Likely: Dirksen Also Hailed for Role—Referee Plan Is the Key," \textit{New York Times}, 9 April 1960). President Eisenhower signed the Civil Rights Act of 1960 on 6 May.}

I have attached a memorandum showing the provisions in the bill as passed by the Senate.\footnote{Javits attached a five-item summary of the Civil Rights Act of 1960 (H.R. 8601) that included provisions to make "hate bombings" a federal crime, to make voting records available for inspection for twenty-two months, and to appoint "voting referees" to register people who had been denied the right to vote because of their race. In his summary, Javits also wrote that the act would permit "the Federal Government to provide schooling for children of members of the Armed Services, where local schools are closed to avoid compliance with the Supreme Court's decree against segregation" ("Summary of major provisions of Civil Rights Act of 1960," 8 April 1960).} However, the bill omitted a number of provisions which I felt were necessary in any civil rights bill in order to comprise meaningful and effective legislation. Among the important provisions which were omitted were those for assistance by the Federal Government to school desegregation and statutory authority for a Commission to seek to eliminate discrimination in employment by government contractors, both requested by the President. Also omitted were other proposals which I had urged, including measures to give power to the Attorney General to bring civil injunction cases for the protection of civil rights, elimination of the poll tax, and making lynching a federal crime.

I shall continue the fight in the next Congress for meaningful legislation which would fulfill our solemn obligation to make the constitutional guarantees of equal protection under the laws a reality to every individual, regardless of race, religion, color or national origin. You may be sure of my unstinting support for measures which will assure these rights to all our citizens.

Thank you for letting me have the benefit of your views on this vital national issue.

Sincerely,

\[signed\] J. Javits

Jacob K. Javits, U.S.S.

JKJ:ml

Enclosure

TLS. MLKP-MBU: Box 28A.