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NEWS

Southern Christian Leadership Conference

Martin Luther King Jr., *President*

Junius Griffin, *Director of Public Relations*

FOR RELEASE: IMMEDIATE

DR. KING ANNOUNCES NEW CIVIL RIGHTS ACTION

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. has announced a dramatic new action program to make the nation "face the fact that the Negro is powerless and that it is absolutely necessary for him to amass political and economic power to reach his legitimate goals."

He warned that the white backlash and public criticism will never stop the Civil Rights Movement. "Our Movement is the most militant and most effective in contemporary struggles." Dr. King said after meeting in Atlanta last week with top advisers of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

He called for non-violent demonstrations across the land to demand massive political, economic and educational measures for Negroes and all other poor people.

SCLC is organizing an urgent program to:

1. unite all concerned groups to organize the poor "to reform society in order to realize economic and social justice." This includes demands to pass the A. Phillip Randolph Freedom Budget, with a guaranteed annual income and spending of many billions of dollars a year to raise the economic level of all poor people to American standards of dignity and prosperity. The Freedom Budget also provides for proper minimum wages, public works and medical care for all.

2. seek meaningful training and education programs for all youth to give them the opportunity denied them by their impoverished environments. These must begin

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on a massive scale for Negro youth.

3. work for the "political reformation of the South" where racism is not only increasing but spreading over the entire nation. Negroes must participate in the political and social life in proportion to their numbers, North and South.

Dr. King further said that though the expense of the Freedom Budget and other programs might conflict with the war budget, this "is not an argument for postponing racial justice--it is an argument for ending the war."

Dr. King declined to repudiate certain civil rights organizations, saying, "We are not interested in furthering any divisions in the Civil Rights Movement, either with those who advocate less militancy or those who feel they are more militant. We stand confidently on our record of accomplishments and hope to convince all that the methods we advocate are the surest road to freedom and human dignity."

The SCLC President and Nobel Peace Prize winner added that "connotations of violence and separatism attached to the 'Black Power' slogan must be resolutely opposed" by SCLC. "The non-violent movement has never resorted to violence or separatism," he said. "We are justified, therefore, in reaffirming adherence to our founding principles on both moral and practical grounds."