

NEW SOUTH

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**The Southern Regional Council
1944-1964**

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Introduction

THE SOUTHERN REGIONAL COUNCIL was formed during the closing years of World War II by Southerners who wanted at home better practise of the ideals for which that most terrible of wars was being fought abroad. These leaders, Negro and white, came together voluntarily, without coercion, without rancor, to try to do something about problems arising from culture and history that crippled this southern land and people they loved.

That was 20 years ago. The spirit of that beginning is recalled in the reprinting here of the three documents involved with the founding of the Southern Regional Council, and in articles about them. History and development of the Council is indicated in the two other documents included in this issue of *New South*.

A group of Negro leaders wrote the first document, The Durham Conference Statement. It stated first their belief that "compulsory segregation" is unjust, and the specifics of reform they considered the most important for political and civil rights, jobs, education, agriculture, military service, social welfare, and health.

A group of white leaders met in response, and adopted an Atlanta Conference Statement which in sum agreed with the Durham Statement, and pronounced its objectives just. At Richmond, a committee from both these groups was empowered to organize a Southern Regional Council, and did so, incorporating it with the following set out as its reason for existence:

... For the improvement of economic, civic and racial conditions in the South in all efforts toward regional and racial development; to attain through research and action programs the ideals and practises of equal opportunity for all peoples in the region; to reduce race tension, the basis of racial tension, racial misunderstanding and racial distrust; to develop and integrate leadership in the South on new levels of regional development and fellowship; and to cooperate with local, state and regional agencies on all levels in the attainment of the desired objectives.

The early documents were conceived with an obvious awareness of a new opportunity for the South. The hope then was to solve simultaneously a whole set of social problems of which race was merely the most notorious. Failure during the years since then to make the most of this new chance has centered around southern reluctance to undo racial injustices, and as a consequence, race emerged, stark and alone, as the number-one problem. It had to be solved before the other problems could be finally solved, and the other problems had to be viewed in relation to solving it.

Awareness of this by the Southern Regional Council as far back as 1951 is indicated in the document, *The South and the Future*. And its fullest implications are stated in the final document, a Statement of Views adopted by the Executive Committee of the Southern Regional Council in the fateful late days of 1963.

This final document came at a time when racial strife had spread—or been acknowledged—across America. In all the land, there had come awareness of the need for racial rapprochement, something beyond court orders or negotiation pres-

sured by demonstrations or legislation or other forms of coercion, necessary though these remained. The demand was for the mutual understanding and respect that is the real basis for human cooperation.

Toward this, the founding spirit of the Southern Regional Council has much to offer. Despite the discouragements of the past 20 years, that spirit is still alive. Progress has come. Though most of it had to be imposed upon the South, growing numbers of Southerners of both races found the courage to fight for and support each new change. Because of them, and a new atmosphere they have been crucial in creating in all but perhaps two states, once more there seems to be for the South one of those times of great opportunity—this time to lead the nation.

It is therefore appropriate to recall the original vision that founded the Southern Regional Council—a vision of a great and growing body of concerned Southerners of both races, led by all the best minds from their midst, cooperating creatively for the betterment of all aspects of southern life.

So in this issue of *New South*, we look back to the beginnings of a work that is not yet done, and to a spirit which seems more than ever necessary. We look back, and we look forward in the only way possible at this stage of the work, and at this time in history—with rededication.

PAT WATTERS

Director of Information

A Basis for Interracial Cooperation and Development in the South*

A STATEMENT BY SOUTHERN NEGROES

THE WAR HAS SHARPENED the issue of Negro-white relations in the United States, and particularly in the South. A result has been increased racial tensions, fears, and aggressions, and an opening up of the basic questions of racial segregation and discrimination, Negro minority rights, and democratic freedom, as they apply practically in Negro-white relations in the South. These issues are acute and threaten to become even more serious as they increasingly block, through the deeper fears aroused, common sense consideration for even elementary improvements in Negro status, and the welfare of the country as a whole.

With these problems in mind, we, a group of southern Negroes, realizing that the situation calls for both candor and wisdom, and in the belief that we voice the sentiments of many of the Negroes of the Nation as well as the South, take this means of recording our considered views of the issues before us.

- (1) Our Nation is engaged in a world-wide struggle, the success of which, both in arms and ideals, is paramount and demands our first loyalty.
- (2) Our loyalty does not, in our view, preclude consideration now of problems and situations that handicap the working out of internal improvements in race relations essential to our full contribution to the war effort, and of the inevitable problems of post-war reconstruction, especially in the South where we reside.
- (3) The South, with its twenty-five million people, one-third of whom are Negroes, presents a unique situation, not only because of the size of the Negro population but because of the legal and customary patterns of race relations which are invariably and universally associated with racial discriminations. We recognize the strength and age of these patterns.

We are fundamentally opposed to the principle and practice of compulsory segregation in our American society, whether of races or classes or creeds; however, we regard it as both sensible and timely to address ourselves now to the current problems of racial discrimination and neglect, and to ways in which we may cooperate in the advancement of programs aimed at the sound improvement of race relations within the democratic framework.

- (4) We regard it as unfortunate that the simple efforts to correct obvious social and economic injustices continue, with such considerable popular support, to be interpreted as the predatory ambition of irresponsible Negroes to invade the privacy of family life.
- (5) We have the courage and faith to believe, however, that it is possible to evolve in the South a way of life, consistent with the principles for which we as a Nation are fighting throughout the world, that will free us all, white and Negro alike, from want, and from throttling fears.

*Statement of Negro leaders attending Southern Conference on Race Relations, Durham, N. C., October 20, 1942.

POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

1. We regard the ballot as a safeguard of democracy. Any discrimination against citizens in the exercise of the voting privilege, on account of race or poverty, is detrimental to the freedom of these citizens and to the integrity of the State. We therefore record ourselves as urging now:

- a. The abolition of the poll tax as a prerequisite to voting.
- b. The abolition of the white primary.
- c. The abolition of all forms of discriminatory practices, evasions of the law, and intimidations of citizens seeking to exercise their right of franchise.

2. Exclusion of Negroes from jury service because of race has been repeatedly declared unconstitutional. This practice we believe can and should be discontinued now.

3. a. Civil rights include personal security against abuses of police power by white officers of the law. These abuses, which include wanton killings, and almost routine beatings of Negroes, whether they be guilty or innocent of an offense, should be stopped now, not only out of regard for the safety of Negroes, but of common respect for the dignity and fundamental purpose of the law.

b. It is the opinion of this group that the employment of Negro police will enlist the full support of Negro citizens in control of lawless elements of their own group.

4. In the public carriers and terminals, where segregation of the races is currently made mandatory by law as well as by established custom, it is the duty of Negro and white citizens to insist that these provisions be equal in kind and quality and in character of maintenance.

5. Although there has been, over the years, a decline in lynchings, the practice is still current in some areas of the South, and substantially, even if indirectly, defended by resistance to Federal legislation designed to discourage the practice. We ask that the States discourage this fascistic expression by effective enforcement of present or of new laws against this crime by apprehending and punishing parties participating in this lawlessness.

If the States are unable, or unwilling to do this, we urge the support of all American citizens who believe in law and order in securing Federal legislation against lynching.

6. The interests and securities of Negroes are involved directly in many programs of social planning and administration; in the emergency rationing, wage and rent control programs. We urge the use of qualified Negroes on these boards, both as a means of intelligent representation and a realistic aid to the functioning of these bodies.

INDUSTRY AND LABOR

Continuing opposition to the employment of Negroes in certain industries appears to proceed from (1) the outdated notions of an economy of scarcity, inherited from an industrial age when participation in the productive enterprises was a highly competitive privilege; (2) the effects of enemy propaganda designed to immobilize a large number of potentially productive workers in the American war effort; (3) the age-old prejudices from an era when the economic system required a labor surplus which competed bitterly within its own ranks for the privilege of work; (4) the established custom of reserving technical processes to certain racial groups; and (5) craft monopolies which have restricted many technical skills to a few workers.

Our collective judgment regarding industrial opportunities for Negroes may be summarized as follows:

1. The only tenable basis of economic survival and development for Negroes is inclusion in unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled branches of work in the industries or occupations of the region to the extent that they are equally capable. Circumstances will vary so as to make impossible and impracticable any exact numerical balance, but the principles enunciated by the President's Fair Employment Practices Committee are regarded by us as sound and economically essential.
2. There should be the same pay for the same work.
3. Negro workers should seek opportunities for collective bargaining and security through membership in labor organizations. Since there can be no security for white workers if Negroes are unorganized and vice versa, labor unions of white workers should seek the organization of Negro workers, on a fair and equal basis.
4. We deplore the practice of those labor unions which bar Negroes from membership, or otherwise discriminate against them, since such unions are working against the best interest of the labor movement. We hold that only those labor unions which admit Negroes to membership and participation on a fair and democratic basis should be eligible for the benefits of the National Labor Relations Board, Railway Labor Act, State Labor Relations Acts, and other protective labor legislation.
5. It is the duty of local, state, and federal agencies to insist upon and enforce provisions for the industrial training of Negroes equal in quality and kind with that of other citizens. We believe, further, that Negroes should have equal opportunity in training programs carried on by industries and by labor organizations.
6. We urge Negro representation on regional organizations concerned with the welfare of workers.
7. We regard the wage-and-job-freezing order of the War Manpower Commission as holding the seeds of a distinct disadvantage to Negroes and other marginal workers. Most of these workers are now employed in the lowest-income job brackets. The "freeze" order can remove the opportunity for economic advancement. There is as yet no assurance that under existing circumstances the War Manpower Commission can deal more equitably by the Negro in the future than it has in the past.
8. We are convinced that the South's economic and cultural development can be accelerated by increasing the purchasing power and skills of Negro workers.

SERVICE OCCUPATIONS

Any realistic estimate of the occupational situation of Negroes supports the view that Negroes will be employed in greatest proportions for a long time in service occupations. We see, however, possibilities of making of these fields scientifically guided areas in which training and organization will play a greater part in bringing about results mutually beneficial to employer and employee. We believe that greater service will be rendered and greater good will be engendered in the service fields if the following principles are observed:

1. More thorough training should be provided workers who plan to enter the service field, but the reward of the job and treatment on the job should be such as to make the workers feel that their training is justified. Opportunity should be given the service worker to advance through the opening up of additional opportunities.
2. A wholesome environment, living accommodations, food, uniforms, and rest rooms, all of an approved standard, should be provided service workers.

3. Opportunity should be given the service worker to live, after his stipulated hours of work, as an individual undisturbed in his private life by the whims and caprices of his employers.
4. In view of the strides made by labor in general, while the service worker's lot has remained about the same, service workers should be organized into unions with recognized affiliations.*
5. Service workers should be included in the provisions for old age insurance, unemployment compensation, workmen's compensation, the wage and hour act, and other benefits of Social Security legally provided to workers of other categories.

We believe that these provisions will help to insure some intelligent service and wholesome loyalty (which will improve both the quality of labor and personal relations) in service occupations.

EDUCATION

As equal opportunity for all citizens is the very foundation of the democratic faith, and of the Christian ethic which gave birth to the ideal of democratic living, it is imperative that every measure possible be taken to insure an equality of education to Negroes, and, indeed to all underprivileged peoples.

1. Basic to improvement in Negro education are better schools, which involve expenditures by States of considerably more funds for the Negro schools. This group believes that a minimum requirement now is (a) equalization of salaries of white and Negro teachers on the basis of equal preparation and experience; (b) an expanded school building program for Negro schools designed to overcome the present racial disparity in physical facilities, this program to begin as soon as building materials are available; (c) revision of the school program in terms of the social setting, vocational needs, and marginal cultural characteristics of the Negro children; and (d) the same length of school term for all children in local communities. Our growing knowledge of the effect of environment upon the intelligence and social adjustment of children, in fact leads us to believe that to insure equality of educational opportunity it is not enough to provide for the underprivileged child, of whatever race, the same opportunities provided for those on superior levels of familial, social, and economic life. We feel it a function of Government to assure equalization far beyond the mere expenditure of equivalent funds for salaries and the like.

2. The education of Negroes in the South has reached the point at which there is increased demand for graduate and professional training. This group believes that this training should be made available equally for white and Negro eligible students in terms defined by the United States Supreme Court in the decision on the case of *Gaines versus the University of Missouri*.

3. Where it is established that States cannot sustain the added cost of equalization, Federal funds should be made available to overcome the differentials between white and Negro facilities and between southern and national standards.

4. It is the belief of this group that the special problems of Negro education make demands for intelligent and sympathetic representation of these problems on school boards by qualified persons of the Negro race.

*In the present hysteria of many housewives who are losing poorly paid servants to better paying war industries, it seems desirable to emphasize that this proposal bears no relation to the fantastic and probably Axis inspired rumors of so-called "Eleanor Clubs."

5. The education of Negro youth can be measurably aided by the use of Negro enforcement officers of truancy and compulsory education laws.

AGRICULTURE

The South is the most rural section of the Nation, and Negroes, who constitute 33% of its population, are responsible for an important share of the agricultural production on southern farms.

We recognize that the South is economically handicapped and that many of its disabilities are deeply rooted in agricultural maladjustments. To win the war, there is need for increased production of food, fibre, and fats. In the present organization of agriculture, Negroes are a large part of the sharecropper and tenant group and a great majority of the rural Negro workers are in this class. Circumstances deny the Negro farmer sufficient opportunity to make his full contribution as a citizen. We suggest the following measures as means of increasing the production of the area, raising the status and spirits of Negro farmers, and of improving the region's contribution to the total war effort.

1. Establishment of sufficient safeguards in the system of tenancy to promote the development of land and home ownership and more security on the land, by:
 - a. Written contracts
 - b. Longer lease terms
 - c. Higher farm wages for day laborers
 - d. Balanced farm programs, including food and feed crops for present tenants and day laborers.
2. Adequate Federal assistance to Negro farmers should be provided on an equitable basis. The war effort can be materially aided if adequate provisions are made now for the interpretation of governmental policies to rural Negroes.
3. The equitable distribution of funds for teaching agriculture in the Negro land grant colleges to provide agricultural research and experimentation for Negro farmers.
4. The appointment of qualified Negroes to governmental planning and policy making bodies concerned with the common farmer, and the membership of Negro farmers in general farmers' organizations and economic cooperatives, to provide appropriate representation and to secure maximum benefits to our common wealth.

MILITARY SERVICE

We recognize and welcome the obligation of every citizen to share in the military defense of the nation and we seek, along with the privilege of offering our lives, the opportunity of other citizens of full participation in all branches of the military service, and of advancement in responsibility and rank according to ability.

Negro soldiers, in line of military duty and in training in the South, encounter particularly acute racial problems in transportation and in recreation and leave areas. They are frequently mistreated by the police. We regard these problems as unnecessary and destructive to morale.

SOCIAL WELFARE AND HEALTH

1. We believe that some of the more acute problems of Negro health, family and personal disorganization are a reflection of deficiencies in economic opportunity, but

that social and health services for Negroes will continue to be necessary in considerable amounts even with improvement of their economic status. As a means of reducing the mortality and public contagion resulting from inadequacies of medical attention and health knowledge, this group believes that minimum health measures for Negroes would include the following:

- a. Mandatory provisions that a proportion of the facilities in all public hospitals be available for Negro patients;
- b. That Negro doctors be either included on the staff for services to Negro patients, according to their special qualifications, or permitted as practitioners the same privilege and courtesy as other practitioners in the public hospitals;
- c. That Negro public health nurses and social workers be more extensively used in both public and private organizations.

2. We advocate the extension of slum clearance and erection of low-cost housing as a general as well as special group advantage. The Federal government has set an excellent precedent here with results that offer much promise for the future.

It is a wicked notion that the struggle of the Negro for citizenship is a struggle against the best interests of the Nation. To urge such a doctrine, as many are doing, is to preach disunity and to deny the most elementary principles of American life and government.

The effect of the war has been to make the Negro, in a sense, the symbol and protagonist of every other minority in America and in the world at large. Local issues in the South, while admittedly holding many practical difficulties, must be met wisely and courageously if this Nation is to become a significant political entity in a new international world. The correction of these problems is not only a moral matter, but a practical necessity in winning the war and in winning the peace. Herein rests the chance to reveal our greatest weakness or our greatest strength.

[Signed]

GORDON B. HANCOCK
F. D. PATTERSON
BENJAMIN E. MAYS
ERNEST DELPIT
RUFUS E. CLEMENT
HORACE MANN BOND

JAMES E. JACKSON
WM. M. COOPER
P. B. YOUNG
CHAS. S. JOHNSON
Chairman Sub-Editorial
Committee

IN ATTENDANCE AT SOUTHERN RACE RELATIONS CONFERENCE

A complete list of those attending the Southern Conference on Race Relations held at the North Carolina College for Negroes, Durham, October 20th, is as follows:

DR. CHAS. S. JOHNSON, Director, Department of Social Sciences, Fisk University, Nashville, Tenn.

DEAN R. O'HARA LANIER, Hampton Institute, Hampton, Va.

DR. H. L. McCROREY, President, Johnson C. Smith University, Charlotte, N. C.

DR. L. F. PALMER, Executive Secretary, Virginia State Teachers Association, Newport News, Va.

O. M. PHARR, Principal, Unity High School, South Carolina.

REV. J. A. VALENTINE, D.D., Durham, N. C.

DR. GORDON B. HANCOCK, Department of Sociology, Virginia Union University, Richmond, Va.

DEAN MOSES S. BELTON, Johnson C. Smith University, Charlotte, N. C.

WILLIAM M. COOPER, Director of Extension Work, Hampton Institute, Va.

ASBURY HOWARD, representing Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers (CIO), Bessemer, Ala.

DR. JOHN M. GANDY, President-Emeritus, Virginia State College, Petersburg, Va.

L. H. FOSTER, Treasurer-Business Manager, and Acting President, Virginia State College, Petersburg, Va.

PRESIDENT J. B. WATSON, A. and M. College, Pine Bluff, Ark.

CLARENCE A. LAWS, Executive Secretary, New Orleans Urban League, New Orleans, La.

DON A. DAVIS, Comptroller, Hampton Institute, Chairman Executive Committee, National Negro Business League, Hampton, Va.

REV. H. B. BUTLER, President, Baptist State Convention, Hartsville, S. C.

PROF. J. B. BLANTON, Principal, Voorhees N. and I. School, Denmark, S. C.

WILLIAM Y. BELL, Executive Secretary, Atlanta Urban League, Atlanta, Ga.

J. A. BACOATS, Vice President, Benedict College, Columbia, S. C.

MRS. R. E. CLAY, Bristol, Tenn.

FORRESTER B. WASHINGTON, Director, School of Social Work, Atlanta, Ga.

JESSE O. THOMAS, Staff Assistant, War Bonds and Stamps, Washington, D. C.

JAMES T. TAYLOR, Dean of Men, North Carolina College, Durham, N. C.

DR. AND MRS. J. G. STUART, Columbia, S. C.

ROBERT A. SPICELY, Director, Commercial Dietetics, Tuskegee Institute, Ala.

C. C. SPAULDING, President, North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Co., and Mechanics and Farmers Bank, Durham, N. C.

MRS. ANDREW W. SIMPKINS, Social Worker, Columbia, S. C.

DR. JAMES E. SHEPARD, President, North Carolina College, Durham, N. C.

REV. J. ALVIN RUSSELL, D.D., President, St. Paul's Polytechnic Institute, Lawrenceville, Va.

G. D. ROGERS, President, Central Life Insurance Company, Tampa, Fla.

DR. F. D. PATTERSON, President, Tuskegee Institute, Tuskegee Institute, Ala.

ROSCOE C. MITCHELL, Associated Negro Press Representative, Richmond, Va.

JOHN W. MITCHELL, State Agent, A. and T. College, Greensboro, N. C.

DR. BENJ. E. MAYS, President, Morehouse College, Atlanta, Ga.

JAMES G. MARTIN, JR., Business Agent and Financial Secretary, Carpenters' Local No. 544, Baltimore, Md.

DR. HORACE MANN BOND, President, Fort Valley State College, Fort Valley, Ga.

THEODORE MALLORY, Secretary-Treasurer, United Transport Service Employees of

America, Member International Executive Board, Atlanta, Ga.

DR. AND MRS. D. K. JENKINS, Columbia, S. C.

DR. LUTHER P. JACKSON, Chairman of the Department of History, Virginia State College, Petersburg, Va.

EDGAR P. HOLT, Vice President, Southern Negro Youth Congress, Birmingham, Ala.

WALTER J. HUGHES, M.D., State Board of Health, Raleigh, N. C.

JAMES E. JACKSON, Executive Secretary, Southern Negro Youth Congress, Birmingham, Ala.

J. W. HOLLY, President, Georgia Normal College, Albany, Ga.

K. W. GREEN, Dean, State A. and M. College, Orangeburg, S. C.

ERNEST DELPIT, President and Business Manager, Carpenters' Local, New Orleans, La. (A. F. of L.).

G. HAMILTON FRANCIS, M.D., Speaker House of Delegates, National Medical Association, Norfolk, Va.

REV. JOHN E. CULMER, Rector, Episcopal Church, Miami, Fla.

DR. ROBERT P. DANIEL, President, Shaw University, Raleigh, N. C.

A. B. COOKE, Business Agent, Local No. 815, Carpenters, Columbia, S. C.

DR. RUFUS E. CLEMENT, President, Atlanta University, Atlanta, Ga.

D. G. GARLAND, Representative, American Federation of Labor, Winston-Salem, N. C.

MAJ. W. M. WHITEHEAD, Principal School for the Handicapped, Newport News, Va.

D. W. BYRD, M.D., Chairman, Health Commission, National Medical Association, Norfolk, Va.

C. H. BYNUM, Field Secretary Commission on Interracial Cooperation, Dallas, Texas.

DR. CHARLOTTE HAWKINS BROWN, President, Palmer Memorial Institute, Sedalia, N. C.

P. B. YOUNG, Editor-Publisher, Journal and Guide, Norfolk, Va.

EDWARD MASON, representing Dining Car Cooks and Waiters, Houston, Texas.

REPRESENTED BY LETTER

C. A. SCOTT, Publisher Atlanta Daily World, and Scott Chain of Weekly Newspapers, Atlanta, Ga.

CARTER WESLEY, Editor-Publisher, The Informer, Dallas Express and New Orleans Sentinel, Houston, Texas.

MRS. ZELLAR R. BOOTHE, Oklahoma City, Okla.

DEAN V. E. DANIEL, Wiley College, Marshall, Texas.

CLAUDE A. BARNETT, Director, Associated Negro Press, Chicago, Ill.

Others who sent Telegrams endorsing the Conference were:

DR. J. R. E. LEE, President, Florida A. and M. College, Tallahassee, Fla.

ATTY. J. LEONARD LEWIS, Jacksonville, Fla.

ATTY. J. R. BOOKER, Little Rock, Ark.

MRS. ORA BROWN STOKES, Washington, D. C.

PRESIDENT H. L. TRIGG, Elizabeth City State Teachers College, Elizabeth City, N. C.

PRESIDENT DAVID D. JONES, Bennett College, Greensboro, N. C.

MRS. H. L. McCROREY, Charlotte, N. C.

DR. W. A. FOUNTAIN, President, Morris Brown College, Atlanta, Ga.

BISHOP B. J. KING, Atlanta, Ga.

PRESIDENT JAS. BRAWLEY, Clark University, Atlanta, Ga.

PRESIDENT W. J. HALE, Tennessee A. and I. College, Nashville, Tenn.

DR. MARY BRANCH, President, Tillotston College, Austin, Texas.

DR. L. H. BELL, Mississippi State College, Alcorn, Miss.

WILEY A. HALL, Executive Secretary, Urban League, Richmond, Va.

DR. J. M. ELLISON, President, Virginia Union University, Richmond, Va.

M. F. WHITAKER, President, South Carolina State College, Orangeburg, S. C.

Statement of Conference of White Southerners on Race Relations*

Atlanta, Georgia

April 8, 1943

IN OCTOBER, 1942, a representative group of Southern Negro leaders met in Durham, N. C., and issued a statement in which they addressed themselves "to the current problems of racial discrimination and neglect, and to ways in which we may cooperate in the advancement of programs aimed at the sound improvement of race relations, within the democratic framework."

Their statement is so frank and courageous, or free from any suggestion of threat and ultimatum, and at the same time shows such good will, that we gladly agree to cooperate.

We do not attempt to make here anything like a complete reply to the questions raised nor to offer solutions for all the vexing problems. We hope, however, to point the pathway for future cooperative efforts and to give assurance of our sincere good will and desire to cooperate in any sound program aimed at the improvement of race relations.

These Negro leaders rightly placed emphasis in their statement on discrimination in the administration of our laws on purely racial grounds. We are sensitive to this charge and admit that it is essentially just. From the Potomac to the Rio Grande there are some ten million Negroes. While all citizens are governed by the same laws, it is recognized that Negroes have little voice in the making and enforcement of the laws under which they must live. They are largely dependent upon the will of the majority group for the safety of life and property, education and health, and their general economic condition. This is a violation of the spirit of democracy. No Southerner can logically dispute the fact that the Negro, as an American citizen, is entitled to his civil rights and economic opportunities.

The race problem in any Southern community is complicated by our economic limitations. The factors which have kept the South a tributary section have also kept it poor and lacking in sufficient industry to develop and to provide enough jobs and enough public funds for every public need. Yet the only justification offered for those laws which have for their purpose the separation of the races is that they are intended to minister to the welfare and integrity of both races. There has been widespread and inexcusable discrimination in the administration of these laws. The white Southerner has an obligation to interest himself in the legitimate aspirations of the Negro. This means correcting the discrimination between the races in the allocation of school funds; in the number and quality of schools, and in the salaries of teachers. In public travel where the law demands a separation of the races, primary justice and a simple sense of fair play demand the facilities for safety, comfort, and health should be equal. The distribution of public utilities and public benefits, such as sewers, water, housing, street and sidewalk paving, playgrounds, public health, and hospital facilities should come to the Negro upon the basis of population and need.

It is recognized that there is often practical discrimination by some peace officers and in some courts in the treatment of Negro prisoners and in the abrogation of their

*Conference of White Southerners on Race Relations, Atlanta, Georgia, April 8, 1943.

civil rights. There is no such discrimination incorporated in the laws of any of the Southern states. False arrests, brutal beatings and other evils must be stopped.

In the economic field, unquestionably procedures should be undertaken to establish fully the right to receive equal pay for equal work. To do otherwise works a wrong to our entire economic life and to our self respect. With so large a proportion of our wage-earning population belonging to the minority race, if we cannot plan for a well-trained, well-employed, and prosperous Negro population, the economic future of the South is hopeless.

Most of the Negroes in the South are on farms and in rural communities. Failure to provide for them all the facilities for improving agricultural practices through schools, county agents, and supervision holds back all of the South. Fair wages, longer tenures of leases, and increased opportunities for farm ownership are also necessary.

All men who believe in justice, who love peace, and who believe in the meaning of this country are under the necessity of working together to draw off from the body of human society the poison of racial antagonism. This is one of the disruptive forces which unless checked will ultimately disturb and threaten the stability of the nation. Either to deny or to ignore the increased tension between the white and the colored races would be a gesture of insincerity.

That there are acute and intricate problems associated with two races living side by side in the South cannot be denied. But these problems can be solved and will ultimately disappear if they are brought out into an atmosphere of justice and good will. If we approach them with contempt in one group and with resentment in the other group, then we work on hopeless terms. The solution of these problems can be found only in men of both races who are known to be men of determined good will. The ultimate solution will be found in evolutionary methods and not in ill-founded revolutionary movements which promise immediate solutions.

We agree with the Durham Conference that it is "unfortunate that the simple efforts to correct obvious social and economic injustices continue, with such considerable popular support, to be interpreted as the predatory ambition of irresponsible Negroes to invade the privacy of family life." We agree also that "it is a wicked notion that the struggle by the Negro for citizenship is a struggle against the best interests of the nation. To urge such a doctrine, as many are doing, is to preach disunity, and to deny the most elementary principles of American life and government."

It is futile to imagine or to assert that the problem will solve itself. The need is for a positive program arrived at in an atmosphere of understanding, cooperation and a mutual respect.

[Signed]

THEODORE F. ADAMS, Richmond, Va.

H. A. ALEXANDER, Atlanta, Ga.

JOHN M. ALEXANDER, Fayetteville, N. C.

MRS. JESSIE DANIEL AMES, Atlanta, Ga.

J. H. ANDERSON, Knoxville, Tenn.

MRS. ROSCOE T. ANTHONY, Palm Beach, Fla.

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MISS FANNIE BAME, Augusta, Ga.

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Resolutions of the Collaboration Committee*

Richmond, Virginia

June 16, 1943

THIS IS A DAY OF GREAT DIFFERENCES, strong feelings, and epochal conflicts throughout the world. Yet the world's greatest need and hope is to find common ground for universal action and balanced harmony among all peoples. Manifestly, such a goal must be reached through cooperative approximation to the largest measure of agreement in line with the largest number of values and the largest number of people.

We face, therefore, the double crisis of standing firm for the conservation and preservation of human rights; yet to seek these ends by the way of peace and planning rather than by conflict and revolution.

In America, and particularly in the South, we face the problem of readjustments to meet the demands of present and post-war conditions with reference to the Negro and the future development of a great region of the Nation. This, exclusive of the war, is the great crisis of the South and Nation.

This is the problem of two great peoples caught up in the midst of transition between the powerful heritage of the past and the mighty pull of the future. For here is the white South, a *great* people often doing little things and good people doing *bad* things. And here is the Negro South, caught as always between the upper and nether millstones of conflicting forces and also paying the price of extraordinary transition from level to level of cultural achievement, and needing plenty of understanding and cooperation. And here is the white South inexorably conditioned by cultural complexes, suffering terribly, too, and needing sympathy and help as few peoples have ever needed in the annals of man. And, even more important, the two, white South and black South, are part and parcel of the Nation, whose people need scarcely less than the two regional peoples the sense of time and wisdom.

The war has sharpened the issue of Negro-white relations in the United States, and particularly in the South. A result has been increased racial tensions, fears, and aggressions, and an opening up of the basic questions of racial segregation and discrimination, Negro minority rights, and democratic freedom, as they apply practically in Negro-white relations in the South. These issues are acute and threaten to become even more serious as they increasingly block, through the deeper fears aroused, common sense consideration for even elementary improvements in Negro status and the welfare of the country as a whole.

This is a rare challenge to the leadership of the South: to the white leadership to find new ways of cooperation and to justify increased confidence of the Negro leadership in the white South; to the Negro leadership, to sense the difficulties involved and to meet increasing demands, without slowing down their essential efforts.

As evidence of the promise of this leadership, two recent Southern conferences on race relations, one at Durham, under the auspices of Negro leadership, and one in Atlanta, under the auspices of white leadership, have blazed new trails. As a follow-up of these and with the above problems and backgrounds in mind, we, a group of Southern whites and Negroes, representing both the Durham and Atlanta groups,

*Joint committee of representatives of the Durham and Atlanta Conferences.

meeting as a collaboration committee at Richmond, Virginia, June 16, 1943, and following the general trend of the Atlanta group, urge the general adoption of the Durham statement entitled "A Basis for Interracial Cooperation and Development in the South," which has had extraordinary nation-wide endorsement.

The framers of this covenant, realizing that the situation calls for both candor and wisdom, have included adequate and searching analysis of the principal issues involved, duly interpreted in their proper perspective. The problems so featured include political and civil rights, industry and labor, service occupations, education, agriculture, military service, social welfare and health.

In the area of political and civil rights: the essential problems featured were those of franchise and the ballot, jury service, personal security, services in public carriers, the elimination of violence within and without the law, the elimination of lynching, and the employment of an increasingly larger number of Negroes in the public service.

In the area of work opportunities: the increased training for all skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled labor, and opportunity for employment; the readaptation of labor union policies both for the best interests of Negroes and labor unions; the problems of dual standards of pay; support of, but guarding against discrimination in, local, state, and federal procedures; special problems of service workers and standards of living.

In the area of education: equalized opportunities in all aspects but especially including institutions of higher learning, professional training, and equal salaries.

In the area of agriculture: adequate opportunity for the Negro farmer, including a sound system of tenancy, adequate state and federal assistance, increased opportunity for farm ownership, fair farm wages, and the wider employment of Negro farm and home agents.

In the area of military service: along with the obligation to serve, the opportunity for full participation and advancement in the war activities and a continuing better adjustment of unsatisfactory situations.

In the area of social welfare and health: adequate provisions for safe-guarding the public health, for training physicians and nurses, and for their employment. Also, the erection of low-cost housing and other facilities for improving community life.

We recognize now the importance of affirmative action, without which we shall fall far short of our hopes and possibilities. To this end, we direct that the continuing committee, as appointed by the two groups now consolidated in this larger collaboration committee, be charged with the responsibility for working out methods and practical means of approach. We urge especially that efforts be begun to prepare the post-war world for a wise and successful reception of our returning soldiers and to prepare both our soldiers and the people for attitudes and procedures adequate to carry the great load of post-war needs. In all these, we urge the public to a new sense of the meaning of these needs as they accord with our professed principles of Christianity and democracy.

Signed: Charlotte Hawkins Brown
Virginius Dabney
A. W. Dent
William G. Gehri
Archdeacon B. W. Harris
S. S. Morris
Josephine Wilkins
Howard W. Odum, Chairman

Writing a 'New Charter of Southern Race Relations'

As recalled by GORDON B. HANCOCK

WHEN I RELEASED to the Associated Negro Press in 1941 an article titled "Interracial Hypertension," little did it appear that there was being set in motion a chain of events that was to eventuate in the Southern Regional Council.

The article was read by Mrs. Jessie Daniel Ames of Texas and Atlanta, who became somewhat alarmed at the tenor of the article, for set forth therein were certain disturbing facts about the racial tensions that were everywhere apparent. The Old South was making sure that the Negro would not indulge hopes of liberation at the close of World War II, as at the close of World War I, when he was sadly disillusioned by an outbreak of anti-Negro feeling that fairly swept the South.

Mrs. Ames, who was an official of the old Commission on Interracial Cooperation, wrote that she would like to discuss the whole matter with me, and offered to come to Richmond for the conference. She arrived a few days later in Richmond, registered at a hotel, and met with me at the colored YWCA, where we spent the greater part of an afternoon discussing "Interracial Hypertension." Our discussion hinged about a belief that a statement by Negroes themselves about what they expected of the post-war South and nation would help clarify matters and afford a new basis of interracial cooperation. Mrs. Ames further assured me that if I could get a group of leading Negroes of the South into a conference to make a statement to the white South, she would get a group of whites to consider our proposals. We agreed, and with this agreement, she went home and I went about the task of getting together a group of Negro leaders of the South.

I went to Norfolk to talk over the general plan with the late Dr. P. B. Young, and he immediately saw its possibilities. We accordingly met with two or three others on the campus of Virginia Union University, where I was teaching at the time. We decided to organize a Virginia committee which would act as host to the proposed conference. We later met and formed this host committee with Dr. Young as chairman.

Then arose the question of where we would meet. Richmond, Durham, and Atlanta were proposed as meeting places for our proposed conference. We agreed to meet at Durham, on October 20, 1942. Then arose the more vexing question of who should be invited. Most of the committee were in favor of inviting some of the leaders from the North, but a few of us contended that this would doom our meeting and our general plan, for Southerners would dismiss our statement summarily with the observation that it was drafted by northern "agitators." These few of us contended that ours should be a statement of Negro Southerners to white Southerners, and in the end our view prevailed.

But our choice brought down upon our heads the "curse" of some of our northern brethren, who evidently doubted the ability and manhood of their southern brethren. The flood-gates of criticism and disparagement were loosed against our proposed Durham Conference. As elected director of the conference, the burden of the suspicions and calumnies and harsh criticisms were leveled at me in the assurance that if confidence in me could be destroyed the whole enterprise would come to naught. The opposition failed to destroy the conference, for of the 75 invited, 65 attended, and most of the others were heard from by letter or telegram of approbation.

So determined were some of the enemies, that spies were dispatched to Durham to report whatever might serve their purpose of destruction. Those who met at Durham that eventful day not only wrought mightily in making the Southern Regional Council possible; they saved the director from "utter destruction" at the hands of those bent on destroying the Durham Conference, and all because southern Negroes dared to stand upon their own feet and make their own statement to the white South.

The Virginia Committee had voted unanimously that the writer should make the opening statement at Durham. That statement could easily have thrown things out of joint and thrown our meeting to the wolves. On the morning of October 20, there was an atmosphere of tenseness and anxiety.

The hour struck and we were in the middle of the now famous Durham Conference. Happily the opening statement seemingly relieved the tension, and upon its conclusion everybody seemed to be in harmony and full accord. My closing words were: "The sponsors of this conference may not have fashioned the most well-wrought conference imaginable, but what they did was at a tremendous sacrifice; for none of them had time and means to give as the cause demanded, but they did the best they could. We have brought to you a conference that is absolutely unfettered and unintimidated. There are no secret commitments, no secret understanding, no dotted lines, no secret financial underwritings. May God help us on this historic occasion to acquit ourselves like men."

This left the conference in a "let's go" mood, and from then on things moved. Although we had hoped to complete the conference statement within the day, Dr. B. E. Mays was among the first to contend that our opportunity was so great that we ought to take our time and make a statement commensurate with the possibilities of the occasion. A committee headed by the late Dr. Charles S. Johnson was sent on to Atlanta for the final drafting and the Durham Statement as it finally appeared is the work of this committee.

When the Durham Statement appeared, it stirred the South. Mrs. Ames made good her promise to rally the white leadership of the South, for in a relatively short time, a meeting of whites was called in Atlanta. The Durham Statement was the basis of discussion, and it was agreed that the white South would go along with the Negro South in finding ways and means of constructive cooperation and in

finding a common denominator of constructive action in the improvement of race relations.

The Durham Statement enumerated a minimum of what the Negro wanted and the white South had accepted this minimum as a basis of cooperation, and this was the beginning of the dawn of a new day in the South: for it quickened a new impulse in the Old South and stirred the inspiration of Negroes.

With the conferees of the Durham and Atlanta meetings in virtual agreement, it remained to have representatives of the two conferences meet in a common session, which was called at Richmond June 16, 1943. Again the writer was chosen as director and to make the opening statement. (This matter of being elected director without "visible" means of "directing" and of making opening statements where the chance of saying "wrong things" was such a possibility, was becoming a serious matter fraught with Herculean tasks and great anxieties.)

According to plans, the Collaboration Conference was duly convened. Besides the representatives of the Durham and Atlanta meetings, there was an audience made up of those who had become interested in the tone of the other meetings. In his opening statement the writer stressed the crisis that had arisen in the South's Negro leadership: that the time was at hand when that leadership would be strangled or strengthened. The statement was largely a plea for a racial cooperation that took into account the ever-expanding ambitions of the Negroes who were more and more forced to appeal to law with their just demands. The case of teachers' salaries was given as evidence. Why could not the interracialists gain equalization of salaries instead of its being a matter of litigation? The argument ran that if Negro leadership, through interracial cooperation could not produce results, it was of no effect and would be discredited by Negroes themselves. It was further pointed out that the-time-is-not-ripe-yet attitude of so many white interracialists was obsolete and had to go.

Upon the conclusion of the opening statement one white clergyman arose and cold-watered the opening statement, and there was general confusion. It was at this critical moment that Dr. Howard W. Odum entered the picture and showed himself to be a moral and intellectual giant.

Dr. Odum was quick to see the wisdom and justice of the Negro's contention, in seeking to save southern Negro leadership, about to be sacrificed upon the altar of reaction. He depicted with dramatic power and eloquence the pathetic plight of his beloved South, caught in the cross-currents of crucial circumstances that foisted upon a great people momentous decisions which it would be tragic to evade. He pointed out with touching pathos that the situation could eventuate in a great triumph if the whites and Negroes of the South faced up to it like men, but he was equally poignant as he suggested the price of evasion and indecision.

Almost as if by magic under the spell that Dr. Odum had cast upon the conference there was a transformation in the spirit of those present and the conference became dynamic with hope and courage. It is safe to say that without Dr. Odum's

masterly presentation and his prestige, his statesmanship, and his willingness to move forward and upward, the day would have been lost and with it the great opportunity to bless the great cause of race relations, and most certainly there would not have been a Southern Regional Council, which the late Dr. Charles Johnson called "a new beginning on a higher level." The moral stature of Dr. Odum was silhouetted against this critical occasion, and his moral and intellectual dimensions stood out in bold relief.

In reflecting upon that eventful day Dr. Odum wrote me: "Early that morning we realized that the Negroes had their top-flight leaders present and that most of the southern white leaders had defaulted; and when your magnificent address on the crisis of Negro leadership had been rebuked by Dr. Jones as going 'too far' and he lectured them in somewhat the old southern way, it became clear that there was a crisis." Dr. Young, presiding officer of the meeting had this to say: "Dr. Odum saved the day and the Richmond meeting from being a failure."

Representatives of the Durham Conference and from the Atlanta Conference and the Collaboration Meeting were sent on to Atlanta where the Southern Regional Council was organized. The history of the achievement of the Council is a vindication of what those southern Negro leaders saw in dim outline in Durham, October 20, 1942.

Great causes sometimes are delicately poised upon some slender event. And so great movements are often poised upon the behavior of individuals committed to serving the present age, their calling to fulfill.

One such individual is Mrs. Jessie Daniel Ames, who first saw the possibility in a meeting of white and Negro leaders to write a new charter of race relations, for the old charter written in paternalism had become obsolete. Without a Jessie Daniel Ames, and her vision and promise of white cooperation, there would not have been a Durham Conference.

The late Dr. P. B. Young who presided at both the Durham and Richmond meetings proved himself a great leader and without his great influence and that of his great newspaper, the *Journal and Guide*, which was our spokesman in those days when the enemies of the movement were seeking our lives, we could not have carried on and the Durham Conference would never have come to pass. Modesty forbids my saying that without a Gordon B. Hancock as "director" to absorb the terrible punishment meted out by foes of the Durham Conference there would not have been a Durham Conference. The burdens of suspicions and derision and calumnies fell with greatest weight upon him.

In conclusion let it be said that it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that if all southern white leadership had gone along with the Council and its program, and if the many so-called liberals had been real liberals as a few have been, the South would have been spared the travail of the hour!

Dr. Hancock, a resident of Richmond, Va., is a Life Fellow of the Southern Regional Council.

An Answer When Negro Southerners Spoke

As recalled by JOSEPHINE WILKINS

IT WAS A WINTER EVENING in early 1943. Jessie Daniel Ames had asked me to have dinner with her and we were sitting at a small table just inside the Peach-tree entrance of the Piedmont Hotel in Atlanta. There was an atmosphere about the dinner that led me to stop abruptly and say, "Ames, we aren't just having dinner together. There's something more—out with it."

She smiled, and began to talk of the conference of southern Negroes recently held in Durham, North Carolina. She spoke of the vicious attack made on its leaders prior to the conference by the northern Negro press, and said she had pledged that if they went ahead with the conference there would be a following meeting of white Southerners to consider the statement they planned to issue. She said she wanted me to help her with it as she was frequently out of the city but would ask for no commitment until I was familiar with the whole background, and she pulled from her briefcase a thick folder to be taken with me following the dinner.

Mrs. Ames was field secretary for the old Commission on Interracial Cooperation which had its headquarters in Atlanta. The nation was at war, and the Commission's director, Dr. Will Alexander, had entered government service in Washington, leaving Mrs. Ames more or less in charge. We had become close friends in the League of Women Voters where I had just completed several terms as state president and she as a member of its board.

When I reached home that evening I opened the folder. It contained a quantity of correspondence and press clippings, chronologically filed and stapled to the folder with a long metal brace. First was a letter from Mrs. Ames to that stately gentleman, Dr. Gordon B. Hancock, then Dean at Virginia Union University in Richmond. Mrs. Ames wrote of having long read his column syndicated by the Associated Negro Press and that she was particularly interested in a recent one in which he said that perhaps the time had come when the Negroes themselves should draw up a charter. (President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill had had their rendezvous at sea and drafted the Atlantic Charter with its declaration on interdependence and the four freedoms.) The letter asked Dr. Hancock to enlarge his idea in an article for *Southern Frontier*, issued monthly by the Commission. I read on and came across a letter acknowledging the article.

His suggestion had appealed to her at the time, she wrote, and now "I am impelled to make a suggestion to you which I want you to consider. But, first, I must explain both my position on and my concern in the racial situation: I want Negroes to get as much recognition as citizens—full fledged—as possible; I want

them to hold as much of the gains made in this field as possible after the war. It is at this latter point that my concern arises. Unless southern white people agree that this gain must be preserved, I am afraid of the future for southern Negroes. . . . Now and for the duration is our opportunity to convince the white South that the obvious minima of citizenship must be accorded for enduring peace, as well as for successful war."

I read on, interested. "White and Negro leaders of the South should agree on ultimate goals, immediate objectives and strategy. When we have done this, we can work both jointly and separately in carrying out our purposes. We should include in our program in the economic field, industry, agriculture and domestic service; in the educational field, salaries, equipment, free and equal educational advantages on all levels; in the field of civil rights, unrestricted franchise, equality before the courts, petty and state; in the social field, health and hospitalization, parks, playgrounds and housing. . . .

"This is my suggestion. Could you and two or three other Negro leaders from the deep South invite into conference a dozen others not dependent upon the Federal Government for their living and discuss the problems as you see them and come to some general agreement on what you want white people to do to help. Then later invite a small number of southern white persons, men and women, to join with you in working out the strategy to be followed.

"You may think that we ought or would want to sit in at the first conference. If you do, I would say that in my judgment we should not. . . . Any other procedure would in my opinion leave the whole plan open to attack by members of your race on the grounds that "Bourbon" white people of the South were already planning to re-enslave Negroes. An additional advantage would accrue by excluding white people until you had worked out your program: the white South would know what southern Negroes want and what they would expect to get in cooperation with the white South. . . ."

She ended her letter with, "I think there is value in this idea. It is unimportant whether or not you accept the plan as it is outlined here. But it is important that something be planned and begun now. The initiative should be taken by southern Negroes. I can promise you cooperation from southern white people."

I laid down the folder, my thoughts caught up in events following World War I, the revival of the Klan, the disillusionment of the Negro; and now he was again in the uniform of his country and already there were rumblings of similar after-war reaction. I read on, absorbed, well into the morning.

Carbons of letters followed one after the other: Dr. Hancock's conference with P. B. Young, of the *Norfolk Journal & Guide*, regarding the suggestion made by Mrs. Ames; copy of a letter sent by Dr. Hancock to a number of leading Negroes of the South polling their reaction to "a suggestion made by an interested white southerner" and quoting at length from Mrs. Ames' letter; his account of their enthusiastic response; meetings of Virginia Negroes and their invitation to some

three score Negro Southerners to meet in Durham to formulate a charter for Negro citizens of the South; again their enthusiastic response.

Next followed numerous clippings from the northern Negro press, vicious attacks made on this move by Negro Southerners, and heaped in particular on the head of Dr. Hancock whom they sarcastically called "the gloomy Dean." One could not read these accounts without paying high and lasting tribute to this man and to all those who in the face of such criticism went ahead and brought forth that historic Durham Statement. No longer could the white South claim that it could speak for what the Negro Southerner wanted; he for the first time had spoken for himself.

The job at hand was response from the white South. A carefully chosen list of Atlanta men was prepared and on request of Bishop Arthur J. Moore, of the Methodist Church, they met for dinner in one of the small conference rooms on the second floor of the Piedmont Hotel; and this was followed by two other such meetings. The first one I shall never forget, the tension at one point as each man sat obviously fearful he might be singled out to head the southwide meeting of white Southerners which was under consideration. But when the decision to undertake it ultimately came, there was agreement that its call should carry the signature of each of the group. Bishop Moore consented to have the replies come to him at his home address.

There were 13 men, their signatures to the call placed alphabetically: C. H. Gillman (Regional Director, CIO); George L. Googe (Regional Director, AFL); M. Ashby Jones (Minister); Ryland Knight (Minister, 2nd Ponce de Leon Baptist Church); David Marx (Rabbi, The Temple); Arthur J. Moore (Bishop, the Methodist Church); Ralph McGill (Editor, *Atlanta Constitution*); Stuart R. Oglesby (Minister, Central Presbyterian Church); Gerald P. O'Hara (Bishop, Catholic Church); Dean S. Paden (President, King Hardware Co.); J. McDowell Richards (President, Columbia Theological Seminary); John Moore Walker (Bishop, Protestant Episcopal Church); and Goodrich C. White (President, Emory University).

Then came the attacks, this time by letter and more subtle and less personal than those made on the Negro meeting: "meddlers and carpetbaggers from the North who are stirring up this trouble" . . . "not the approach to the Negro question" . . . "bound to do more harm than good" . . . "approve of what you are trying to do but disagree strongly with the way you are going about it" . . . "there is no disposition on the part of the businessmen of this state" . . . "postpone until the war is over" . . . "the thousands of white boys in the armed forces would not appreciate any effort by any group," etc, etc.

The meeting was held in Atlanta on April 8, again at the Piedmont Hotel, on the mezzanine where the cocktail lounge is now located. Invitations had gone to a carefully prepared list of approximately 300 white Southerners, equally balanced between representatives of religion, business, education, etc. One hundred fifteen

from ten states attended and wide response from others expressed interest and a desire to cooperate.

A draft of a statement responding to the Durham Statement had been prepared in advance and was offered at the morning session. During the discussion a small group of businessmen at the far end of the room fought first to keep any statement from being issued, then to get it postponed. Finally a committee was appointed to meet during lunch and bring in a recommendation on the matter. We met in a small room adjoining the main one. And the high point of the day came there, when Bishop Moore rose, with the weight of his body and prestige, and looking directly at a man across the table, in substance said: "Mr. Smith, businessmen in equal number with others were invited to this meeting. They had the opportunity to attend. They chose not to come. The meeting is in process. I for one am unwilling to wait longer on the businessmen. And I say to you, Mr. Smith, the businessmen may be missing the boat!" That settled the matter. The statement was approved that afternoon, signed by practically all, and given to the press. Other names added by wire and mail brought the total number of signers to 292.

The Atlanta meeting of white Southerners had authorized the appointment of a Collaboration Committee to meet with a similar committee of Negroes from the Durham meeting, and Ralph McGill, who had chaired the Atlanta meeting, was asked to appoint it. These two committees met together in Richmond at St. Paul's Church on June 16. P. B. Young, from the Durham group, presided.

The opening address was made by Dr. Hancock who pointed out dramatically the importance of the day and made a ringing appeal to the white South for a more advanced policy toward the Negroes of the South. Unfortunately, Dr. Hancock was followed by an elderly white minister who in the paternalistic manner of the old South cautioned slowness, just what the Negroes feared, and a pall fell over them. But the caution served to rally the whites and Dr. Howard W. Odum, of the University of North Carolina, rose and coming to his full height reversed the tone of the meeting.

Discussion continued throughout the day. The conference ended with a Richmond Statement and with a bi-racial Continuation Committee created and charged with the responsibility of determining ways and means for the white and Negro South to work together toward implementing the Durham Statement. Still there was a certain anxiety among the Negroes, as expressed by Dr. Hancock a few days later when he wrote, "I still wonder if we are going to be left with a conference in our laps. I hope not and I pray not but if our white friends are going to be over-cautious we are not going to accomplish much."

The success of these three meetings now drew to the movement the full support of Dr. Will Alexander, director of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation, who was still with the war effort in Washington, and Dr. Odum, then president of the Commission. They, together with Dr. Charles S. Johnson, president of Fisk

University, who headed the editorial committee for the Durham Statement, threw their wide influence behind the movement. These three had a long record of joint work in the South and were frequently referred to in warm admiration, and sometimes otherwise, as "The Trinity."

Interest was revived by them in an idea that had lain dormant for a number of years, and I found myself meanwhile recalling a sequence of events: a letter written by Dr. Odum back in the spring of 1938 in which he referred to the possible formation of a "southern regional council with representatives from each of the southern states;" an evening with him around that time when he unfolded a large sheet of paper headed "Southern Regional Council" and showed me a diagram of the South's major problems; and his near-bitterness on feeling blocked in furthering the idea when the president of his university became head of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare formed unexpectedly that fall. It was this idea that was now brought forward again and developed.

Thus when the Continuation Committee appointed at Richmond met at Atlanta University on August 4, Dr. Odum was elected chairman of the meeting, and a proposal was brought in to set up a southwide council with broad scope. Following a day-long discussion, the proposal was approved and a resolution establishing the organization now known as the Southern Regional Council was adopted. The Continuation Committee was made its nucleus.

A charter was applied for by Dr. Rufus Clement, president of Atlanta University, Dr. Charles Johnson, Ralph McGill, Bishop Moore, and Dr. Odum. The charter was granted on January 6, 1944. A charter meeting was held at Atlanta University on February 16-17, and just prior to its opening the Commission on Interracial Cooperation met and merged the Commission with the newly formed Council. All those who had participated in the Durham-Atlanta-Richmond meetings, together with members of the old Commission, were made charter members. Bishop Moore was elected president and when he could not serve, Dr. Odum was elected. A board and an executive committee were chosen, and Dr. Guy B. Johnson and Dr. Ira DeA. Reid were made staff directors. The Southern Regional Council was launched!

"Great causes," as Dr. Hancock has aptly said, "sometimes are delicately poised upon some slender event." Nineteen hundred sixty-four marks the 20th anniversary of the Southern Regional Council. When its quarter-century arrives a few years from now, how better could we observe the occasion than by having a fully documented history of the Council's origin and the time out of which it came, prepared and ready for publication. In Tryon, North Carolina, in Mrs. Ames' library, are a dozen or more folders—their contents carefully classified and chronologically filed—that record this eventful period. It was truly a meaningful one for the South.

Miss Wilkins, a resident of Athens, Ga., is a vice president of the Southern Regional Council.

The South of the Future

A Statement of Policy and Aims of the Southern Regional Council

December 12, 1951

EIGHT YEARS AGO, the Southern Regional Council was born out of the conscience and high resolve of a democratic nation at war. Today, in another period of international tension, we are faced with a renewed challenge to provide leadership and direction in a troubled region. It is essential that we assess clearly and wisely the role that the Southern Regional Council is to perform in this critical time.

We do not believe in the exclusive validity of any single approach or any single organization. There is not only room, but a desperate need for a wide variety of programs concerned with broadening democracy through legal, economic, legislative, religious, and educational means. Moreover, such programs are needed on all levels—national, regional, state, and local. Every group, like every individual, should chart its course with due regard for the special contribution it is fitted to make.

The role appropriate to the Southern Regional Council is evident in its origin and make-up. The Council's main asset is and has always been the people of the South who understand and want the full practice of democracy, and who at the same time know intimately the old evils that burden the South, and their causes. From such people is the Council's membership drawn. They have wanted a regional organization, not out of any provincial desire to separate the South's problems from the nation's, but out of the conviction that such an organization has unique advantages. It can express the best and often neglected elements of Southern thought and conscience; it can serve as a convincing demonstration of Southerners working together as fellow citizens without regard to race; and it can tap local resources and initiative often inaccessible to agencies outside the region.

The Council seeks to be a practical organization, emphasizing working solutions rather than spectacular pronouncements. Indeed, that philosophy is basic to an organization which hopes to open closed minds and substitute reason for prejudice.

The Council, by its very nature, is not a "mass pressure" organization. The number of persons in the South who are able and willing to reject the taboos on interracial effort in their own communities is growing, but it has not yet reached mass proportions. Meanwhile, the Council's membership can function effectively as enlightened citizens acting through the civic life of their communities in behalf of our common principles. Their methods are the established ones of conference, factfinding, and persuasion.

The Council takes no part in political activity. However, it can and does consult with public agencies and officials and makes its influence felt for truly representative government.

The council's functions may be briefly summed up as follows:

To serve as a meeting ground for citizens of all races, occupations, and religious persuasions.

To present the facts about the region, and their implications, through newspapers, radio, magazines, pamphlets, and other public media.

To counteract appeals to prejudice and violence by demagogues, professional bigots, and hate organizations.

To provide a program adaptable to local need in both the relatively backward and the relatively advanced areas of the South.

To translate appropriate research findings from universities and other centers to the practical situations with which the action program will be concerned.

To give special emphasis to the development of leadership among promising young Southerners of all races.

To convene, by interest group, key persons in the various fields of Southern life, so that steps to genuine integration may be representatively agreed upon.

To stimulate local initiative to work for local solutions in full democracy, so that legislation and judicial rulings may be translated into justice for the individual in his everyday life.

The basic machinery necessary to enable the Council to work effectively at these tasks is: (1) trained, competent, professional persons of both races working in each Southern state as agents of improvement in public life; and (2) staff in a central office of the Council to direct and service the field people.

The declared purpose of the Southern Regional Council is "to attain through research and action the ideals and practices of equal opportunity for all peoples in the region." This objective has lost none of its timeliness since it was first adopted. Although the past eight years have brought notable progress in the South, the job remaining is a vast one, and the pressures of national and international events demand an even speedier advance. Many of our institutions continue to make unfair and unwarranted distinctions between citizens solely on the basis of race. Outmoded traditions, unjustified fears, and ancient prejudices continue to exact a heavy toll on the unity, productiveness, and integrity of our society.

It is the ultimate hope and aim of the Council that it may help in bringing solution to regional problems that transcend the question of race — problems economic, social, ethical, which affect impartially people of all races. But, for the present, the unique liability under which the South labors arises out of an unreasoning racial disharmony. The first task of informed and conscientious Southerners is to strive to create here the atmosphere in which artificial distinctions and discriminations based upon race will no longer persist. Only when that goal has been attained will the energies of enlightened men be fully released for the great task of realizing all our potential resources, natural and human.

The south of the future, toward which our efforts are directed, is a South freed of stultifying inheritances from the past. It is a South where the measure of a man will be his ability, not his race; where a common citizenship will work in democratic understanding for the common good; where all who labor will be rewarded in proportion to their skill and achievement; where all can feel confident of personal safety and equality before the law; where there will exist no double standard in housing, health, education, or other public services; where segregation will be recognized as a cruel and needless penalty on the human spirit, and will no longer be imposed; where, above all, every individual will enjoy a full share of dignity and self-respect, in recognition of his creation in the image of God.

Equal opportunity, truly defined, includes all this and more. We have no illusion that it can be realized in the South quickly or easily or perfectly. Nor do we imagine that the Southern Regional Council can play more than a modest but creditable part toward its achievement. Yet it is the ideal toward which we strive and, short of which, we have a duty to remain dissatisfied. For it is nothing less than the American ideal.

A Statement of Views

By the Executive Committee of the Southern Regional Council

December 30, 1963

I. THREE CENTURIES OF MORAL CRISIS

THE SOUTH'S HISTORY for centuries has been intertwined with the travail of racial unrest and injustice. This injustice has been condoned and shared by the other sections of the United States and, indeed, has been part of the common practice of the European-American world. There is nowhere we can turn that the infection of racial prejudice and discrimination has not spread.

These are days of turmoil, but also of hope. Negro Southerners, and Negro Americans generally, in their long struggle against injustice have steadfastly rejected the self-defeating temptations of those who proclaim that Negroes should segregate themselves from whites behind their own wall of hatred; of those who have advocated organized violent reprisal against white men; and of those who by insidious teaching and tactics have urged Negro Americans to join the ranks of the world-wide Communist conspiracy against constitutional democracy. They have, on the contrary, held to their faith in American institutions and to the inextinguishable instinct of men to deal fairly and honorably with each other.

White Southerners have a much inferior record of loyalty to the principles of America and of the Judeo-Christian religion. They have been subverted in great numbers by bodies such as the Ku Klux Klan and the white Citizens Councils, which are a corruption of all that American ideals proclaim. Even worse, they have in yet larger numbers surrendered to those social and economic desires and conveniences which blunt the moral sensitivity of men and women toward their neighbors.

Today, however, white Southerners are manifesting a new and a quickened understanding of the political and economic dependence of the South's peoples on one another, and, above all, of their moral interdependence. Generations of white and Negro people have equally and together built this region, imparted to it what virtues and strengths it has, and made the South's positive contributions to the nation and to all mankind.

Out of affection for the South, and out of a belief in the sanctity of every individual as a child beloved of God, we suggest the following thoughts to the public in this year 1963, the centennial of several great events of American history and a year also of unprecedented anxiety and disorder and tragedy.

II. THE TWO LEADING ISSUES

The Southern Regional Council has always been committed to the achievement of the goal of justice for all, and the consequent elimination of discrimination and inequities through education, understanding, and cooperation at the local level and within each community and state. We believe that this is still the primary and most effective way. Surely, however, all must recognize that where there is a breakdown in this primary approach, resort will inevitably be had to legislation and demonstrations.

In the past, and most especially during the last 80 years or so, the South has deliberately created laws and public policies to keep its two races *apart* and to *discriminate* against its Negro citizens. At the same time, southern political leaders contended that law can never be used to bring the two races *together* or to *suppress discrimination*. They had thus effectively removed from Negro Southerners every

power and privilege of protest, except the privilege of leaving family and neighbors by moving to the North or West.

That we have progressed far in the years since World War II is evidenced by the fact that the present two issues of greatest urgency to our domestic strength and tranquility are the uses of law and public policy to undo the wrongs of the past, and the right and propriety of protest demonstrations to speed this process.

III. LAW IS THE SERVANT OF JUSTICE

As to the first issue, and while recommending that voluntary solutions to cure racial inequities should always be sought diligently by both white and Negro leaders, we think there is a clear necessity for legislative and executive actions by the local, state, and federal governments. We are not, in the South or in the country as a whole, starting from scratch; we have an enormous housecleaning and rebuilding job, and governmental power should be employed for this public service.

Under our system of federalism, most of the issues of civil rights and race relations could be settled by action of local and state governments. Only their failure to do so has caused the federal government to intervene and continues to make strong federal action necessary, because the condition of our Constitutional rights and of our race relations is a national burden and disgrace. In this connection, we take great encouragement from those federal court decisions and those state enactments which are ending to some extent the vicious and undemocratic apportionment of seats in our legislatures and in Congress; there is good reason to hope that, as urban centers of the South are accorded their fair representation, and government thereby becomes responsive to majority opinion and needs, a new and more responsible politics will grow up in the South.

The increase of federal concern and activity in recent years has done much good. America is a better land because of the brilliant thrust of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy's moral and political leading and because of President Johnson's resolve to "move forward to eliminate from this nation every trace of discrimination and oppression."

We need to recognize fully and clearly the two just demands of what is called the 'Negro revolt.' One is that there be an end *now* to all forms of institutionalized segregation and discrimination; on this there can be no viable compromise. The other is that affirmative measures be adopted to integrate Negroes and other minorities into free participation in the nation's public life and economy.

The federal government does not serve the public well when the help it offers, through either legislative or executive actions, is minimal; when it treats symptoms and not the problems; when it merely palliates disorders, leaving them to fester and to nag at the nerves of the people; or when it allows its money to be spent in ways that perpetuate or strengthen discrimination against the welfare or dignity of any class of citizens.

Again we indicate our belief that vital problems of race relations could be well settled by state and local communities. We commend those southern cities which in recent months have established effective bi-racial commissions and committees. We believe that the essence of good human relations lies in the search, within each community, for laws and practices mutually satisfying to all its residents. We believe that the South, and each community of it, and the nation to which they all belong, must take an interest in the welfare and the development of each individual, and that only as it does so will it itself prosper.

None of the issues of civil rights is likely to be solved fully while there exists,

throughout the population, the present wide differentials of educational opportunities, nor while unemployment is as large and menacing as it is and has been. We are gratified by the industrious, even imaginative, endeavors now underway or being discussed in several southern states to lift educational levels. But federal leadership in these intricately related fields of education and employment is a continuing necessity. The current rate of unemployment is not only an economic drag but frustrates even sincere governmental and private efforts to overcome racial discrimination. Job scarcity has become an omnipresent motive for demonstrations, and may predictably engender more and bitter protest.

We believe that the South, difficult as are its present problems and unhappy as its history has been, can, nevertheless, make a new social life that is richly humane, because it will have grown out of the honestly faced and concrete necessities of a common life. As today's immediate challenge is civil rights, so tomorrow's will be full integration. We are optimistic that a new South, born of struggle, will, with courage and intelligence, reshape its economic and educational practices as needed to integrate all its people into a society that serves the free and full development of each individual.

The means to this end is a thoroughly democratic, thoroughly responsible politics.

IV. AN HISTORIC OPPORTUNITY

There is no virtue *per se* in street demonstrations, but only the self-blinded fail to see the grandeur of the protest movement which since early 1960 has surged through the South.

Through this movement Negroes seek no rights or privileges for themselves alone. They seek only those belonging to all American citizens. A wise society would encourage and applaud this discontent with inferior status, especially as its end result is to make more secure the rights of all.

Demonstrations are a direct reaction to the failure or the laggardness of white leadership. The public leaders of the South have it in their power at any time to stop demonstrations by satisfying the demands of the federal Constitution, of justice and of religion.

We are little impressed by public opinion polls which reveal Negro bitterness or white prejudice. No informed and intelligent observer has ever doubted the existence of either. Bitterness and prejudice are now, as they have always been, the conditions against which the responsible institutions of American society — governments, churches, press, educational and professional institutions, business corporations — must contend and which they must rectify.

We commend those Negro and white citizens who, through lawful assembly, peaceful picketing, and other forms of orderly demonstrations have used the methods of democracy to advance human rights.

We commend their leaders, who have constantly taught that demonstrations must be non-violent, in spirit as well as in form.

We ask the nation's understanding of and compassion for those white Southerners who, because of the teaching and example of their civic leaders, perpetuate violence and spread malice. We would remind our fellow Southerners that, as the record clearly shows, the bombers, the killers, the haters never act except in areas where they are tolerated by official and community attitudes.

We come back, therefore, to the need for strengthening the leadership of the South. Because we believe profoundly in democracy, we think that democratization of southern public life is the pathway to strength. We believe that the greatest con-

tribution which Negro Southerners can make today to the national welfare and to their own is to register and to vote responsibly, and, together with white citizens, to establish truly representative government in the South.

The qualities which are exhibited in the protest demonstrations are qualities that deserve other outlets. Patience, forbearance, faith in human decency, reliance upon intellectual and moral power — these are qualities needed in politics, in the schools and universities, in the churches, in business, in all of our society. May this nation have the wisdom to draw strength from them.

SOUTH

Presidents of the Southern Regional Council:

1944-1945

HOWARD W. ODUM
Chapel Hill, N.C.

1952-1957

MARION A. WRIGHT
Linville Falls, N.C.

1946-1951

PAUL WILLIAMS
Richmond, Va.

1958-1963

JAMES M. DABBS
Mayesville, S. C.

1964-

JOHN H. WHEELER
Durham, N.C.

Chairmen of the Executive Committee of the Southern Regional Council:

1944-1952

CHARLES S. JOHNSON
Nashville, Tenn.

1954-1961

RUFUS E. CLEMENT
Atlanta, Ga.

(Note: There was no chairman during 1953.)

1961-1963

JOHN H. WHEELER
Durham, N.C.

Executive Directors of the Southern Regional Council:

1944-1947

GUY B. JOHNSON

1957-1961

HAROLD C. FLEMING

1947-1957

GEORGE S. MITCHELL

1961-

LESLIE W. DUNBAR