Baker updates King and Abernathy on plans for a conference to assess the state of the student movement and to coordinate desegregation efforts. She reports on a conversation she had with Glenn Smiley and Douglas Moore, who "agreed that the meeting should be youth centered, and that the adults attending would serve in an advisory capacity, and should mutually agree to 'speak only when asked to do so.'"

TO: Dr. Martin L. King, Jr. and Rev. Ralph D. Abernathy
FROM: Miss Ella J. Baker
RE: Student Conference, April 15-17

The following developments have taken place in connection with the student conference on Non-Violent Resistance to Segregation, to be held at Shaw University, Raleigh, N.C., April 15-17:

I. VISIT TO RALEIGH-DURHAM

Last Wednesday evening, March 16, I went to Raleigh-Durham to consummate agreements on holding the student conference at Shaw University. By a favorable [coincidence?], Glenn Smiley arrived in Durham about the same time as I did, and I was able to discuss in some detail, the conference plans with him and Rev. Douglas Moore, simultaneously.

They agreed that the meeting should be youth centered, and that the adults attending would serve in an advisory capacity, and should mutually agree to "speak only when asked to do so". However, to avoid any conflicting points of view among adults, it is hoped that we might meet for a couple of hours prior to the opening session of the conference. I am mentioning this at this point, so that those of us who are planning to attend might schedule ourselves to arrive by noon of Friday, April 15.

I spoke with President [William R.] Strassmer, his administrative assistant, Mr. [D. H.] Keck, Dr. Grady W. Davis, Dean of the School of Religion, and Mr. [Harvey] Alexander, the Business Manager, regarding housing and eating facilities. Although Shaw University will only be able to accommodate about 40 students, the Dean of St. Augustine College, and the student leadership were pledged to cooperate on housing.

In addition, the YMCA is only 2 blocks away from Shaw campus, and with the combined facilities of Shaw—St. Augustine, and the 'Y', ample housing can be provided.

1. For more on the conference, see King, "Statement to the Press at the Beginning of the Youth Leadership Conference," 15 April 1960, pp. 426-427 in this volume.
2. In addition to making arrangements for a conference on nonviolence in March, FOR field secretary Glenn Smiley had been in the state consulting with sit-in protesters and sympathizers (Smiley, To Members and Friends of FOR in North and South Carolina, 24 February 1960).
3. Prezell R. Robinson was the dean of St. Augustine College.
II. CONFERENCE COST:

a. Housing — $1.00 per night

b. Meals — $4.30 for six (6) meals (Supper, Friday night, three meals Saturday, and breakfast and lunch, Sunday)

c. Transportation — The details of the transportation costs will have to be worked out, and will be based on bus fares from Raleigh to the various cities from which representatives are expected. I expect to have this completed by the end of the week.

III. PROMOTION AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

1. Pledges of cooperation have been volunteered by FOR, CORE, and the Southeaster Regional Office of the American Friends Service Committee. This cooperation will include financial assistance, I understand, from both CORE and FOR, and probably from AFSC. The details of this will be determined after the total promotional cost has been estimated.

2. Contact with students. In addition to mail from our office, CORE has agreed to send out material for us, and Rev. Douglas Moore will personally visit the key areas in North Carolina to stimulate both youth delegations to the conference, and possible adult delegations to attend the Saturday evening mass meeting.

3. Mass Meeting — The Memorial Auditorium has been secured for a public mass meeting to be held Saturday evening, April 16. This meeting will be co-sponsored by SCLC and the Raleigh Citizens Association, of which Dr. Grady W. Davis is executive secretary. The Citizens Association negotiated the arrangement, and when Dr. Davis returns to Raleigh, this week-end, he and Rev. Moore will follow through on getting out the necessary placards and leaflets.

Dr. Martin L. King, Jr. will be principle speaker, and other freedom fighters, and key student leaders will share the mass meeting program. Weekly news releases have been sent to the weekly and daily papers, and will continue to be sent.

IV. PROGRAM

Program details have not been completed, but the following suggestions are under consideration:


Assistant Dean: Rev. Douglas E. Moore

SCHEDULE

FRIDAY

7:30 P.M. KEYNOTE SESSION

SATURDAY

Morning Workshop

Afternoon Workshop

On 21 March South African police in the black township of Sharpeville killed more than sixty peaceful protesters who had been demonstrating against pass laws, which required blacks to carry identification. The incident sparked a massive outbreak of strikes, demonstrations, and riots in South Africa and focused international criticism on the apartheid regime. In a telegram sent the following day, Claude Barnett, head of the Associated Negro Press (ANP), requested that King wire him a "brief reaction to slaughter by police troops and planes of [Negroes] in South Africa conducting peaceful mass demonstration against restrictive law." Barnett queried, "Is there a lesson for USA where protests are also in progress?" He released excerpts of the following draft over the ANP wire on 28 March.¹

MR. CLAUDE BARNETT
ASSOCIATED NEGRO PRESS
3531 SOUTH PARKWAY
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

THE RECENT MASS MURDER OF AFRICANS ENGAGED IN ★ [the] PEACEFUL PROTEST AGAINST RESTRICTIVE LAW IS A TRAGIC AND SHAMEFUL EXPRESSION