PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY

WHITE HOUSE

Latin America and the free world in general that we desire to be their friends Negro Americans continue to be assaulted by the Southern reactionaries. It is a fact in Alabama and the entire South that the decisions of the United States Supreme Court as well as rulings of the Interstate Commerce Commission regarding the equal treatment of Negro citizens are constantly being denied or circumvented. It is also well established that many Negro students have been beaten, cars burned, resulting in a complete breakdown of law and order in the
CITY OF MONTGOMERY  COUNTY MONTGOMERY ALABAMA
A THREAT TO OUR POSITION AS A DEMOCRATICALLY
GOVERNED NATION ABROAD PREVAILS AT THIS TIME
AND WE FEEL THAT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF
THE UNITED STATES HAS FAILED TO MAKE ANY PUBLIC
STATEMENT TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE EITHER CONDEMNING
OR UPHELDING THIS DIFFERENCE FOR AN IMPORTANT
SEGMENT OF THIS NATIVE CITIZENRY. WE STRONGLY BELIEVE
THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS A MORAL OBLIGATION AND A
LEGAL DUTY AS THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THIS NATION
TO SPEAK OUT AGAINST VIOLENCE. THE OFFICE OF THE
PRESIDENT CANNOT REMAIN SILENT ANY LONGER ON THIS
GRAVE CRISIS. IN VIEW OF ALL THESE TRAGIC DEVELOPMENTS

RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES GUARANTEED BY THE
CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES AS THEY SEEK TO
USE THE VARIOUS MODES OF INTERSTATE TRAVEL.
AND FINALLY THAT YOUR HIGH OFFICE MAKE A FIRM
AND UN-equivocal STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF THE RIGHT
OF FREE TRAVEL FOR ALL CITIZENS WITHOUT INTERFERENCE
BY ANY SEGMENT OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

EDWARD B. KING
IN ALABAMA THE PRESIDENT MUST NOW MORE THAN EVER
EXERCISE FIRM AND PRECISE LEADERSHIP IN THIS
MATTER OVER AND ABOVE THE GENERAL DIRECTION GIVEN
THE ATTORNEY GENERAL SWEEPING POWER TO QUOTE TAKE
ALL NECESSARY STEPS TO HANDLE THE SITUATION QUOTE
SPEAKING AS THE SOUTHWIDE SPOKESMAN FOR THE STUDENT
NON VIOLENT SIT IN MOVEMENT WE HEREBY REQUEST
THAT YOU THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES SPEAK TO
THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ON THE ISSUE THAT NEGRO AMERICANS
ARE IN FACT FIRST CLASS CITIZENS OF THIS NATION
THAT THEY ARE AS SUCH ENTITLED TO EXERCISE ALL
President cannot remain silent any longer on this grave crisis. In view of all these tragic developments

rights and privileges guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States as they seek to use the various modes of interstate travel. And finally that your high office give a firm and unequivocal statement in support of the right of free travel for all citizens without interference by any segment of the American people.

Edward B. King
JR.
Administrative Secretary of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee
197 S. Auburn Ave. N.
East Atlanta GA
Phone: 666-6666

Edward S. Connolly
530 S Union

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TELEGRAM

The recent outbreak of mob violence and the massive assault upon free-born American Negro students, who are first class citizens of the United States, as they traveled throughout the cities of the state of Alabama, as inter-state passengers on inter-state buses, is completely unjustifiable. At a time in the history of our great nation, when we are telling the people of Asia, Africa, Latin America and the free world in general that we desire to be their friends, Negro Americans continue to be assualted by the Southern reactionaries. It is a fact in Alabama, and in the entire South, that the decisions of the United States Supreme Court as well as rulings of the Inter-state Commerce Commission, regarding the equal treatment of Negro citizens are constantly being denied or circumvented. It is also well established that many Negro students have been beaten, cars burned, resulting in a complete break-down of law and order in the city of Montgomery, Alabama. A threat to our position as a democratically governed nation abroad prevails at this time and we feel that the office of the President of the United States has failed to make any public statement to the American people, either condemning or upholding this disrespect for an important segment of this nation's citizenry. We strongly believe that the President has a moral obligation and a legal duty as the Chief Executive of this nation, to speak out against violence. The office of the President cannot remain silent any longer on this grave crisis.

In view of all these tragic developments in Alabama, the President must now, more than ever, exercise firm and precise leadership in this, over an above the general direction given the Attorney General, sweeping power to: "Take all necessary steps to handle the situation".

Speaking as the South-wide spokesman for the student nonviolent sit-in movement, we hereby, request that you, the President of the United States, speak to the American people on the issue that Negro Americans
are in fact, first-class citizens of this nation; that they are as such, entitled to exercise all rights and privileges guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States as they seek to use the various modes of inter-state travel. And finally, that your high office issue a firm and unequivocal statement in support of the right of free travel for all citizens without interference by any segment of the American people.

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SIGNED BY:

EDWARD B. KING, JR.
Administrative Secretary
STUDENT NONVIOLENT COORDINATING COMMITTEE

May 23, 1961

SENT TO:

PRESIDENT, JOHN F. KENNEDY
White House
Washington, D. C.