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August 31, 1961

Diocese of Alabama  
521 North 20th Street  
Birmingham 3, Alabama

The Reverend John B. Morris  
Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity  
Room 200  
5 Forsyth Street, N. W.  
Atlanta 3, Georgia

Dear Mr. Morris:

Your letters of August 30th are before us.

We want right away to tell you that we are not at all in sympathy with the methods and the procedures being followed by your society.

While you and your group seem to want to cause irritation and disharmony, we are trying to follow procedures of mediation and understanding.

Feeling as we do about your methods, and thoroughly disapproving of your plan to bring here a bus filled with your group, we cannot do anything about arranging a meeting for you in Birmingham. You say you would intend this to be a meeting "strictly on a private basis", but we see no chance that this could be, in view of your advance notice and publicity.

Furthermore, we would suggest that you notice certain laws that have very recently been passed in Alabama, which your proposed plan would flagrantly break. The laws we refer to are those recently written which deal with the deliberate creation of disharmony and disturbance by planned and pre-announced moves calculated to cause breach of the peace through the breaking of local laws. We understand that at least one such law has gone into effect just within the past ten days. Your plans have been so widely publicized that there would be no question but that you would come under the above mentioned laws.

If you do come here purposely to break the laws of the state of Alabama you can expect no help from us, as we believe the best approach to today's situation is through lawful and orderly processes.

We are sending a copy of this letter to all the clergy in the Birmingham area so that they may know how we feel about your proposed visit and meeting, but of course they are free to make their own decisions in such matters.

Sincerely yours,

Bishop of Alabama  
(Signed by the Rt. Rev. C. C. Carpenter)

Bishop Coadjutor of Alabama  
(Signed by the Rt. Rev. G. M. Murray)