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FINANCIAL APPEAL, SEPTEMBER 6, 1960

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Twenty years ago in a classroom on /Tuskegee Institute's campus, that very learned and wise sociologist, Dr. Robert E. Park, when asked how long he thought it would take for American Negroes to become fully assimilated into American culture answered, just about twenty-five years. I looked at him in disbelief; the students laughed in unbelief. They thought he would say at least one hundred years.

Five more of those years are left. And while the millennium in race relations will not be reached within five years, the prophetic words of Dr. Park have been proved so far to have had real meaning.

Certainly since 1954, we have been extremely encouraged. The decisions of the federal courts, other efforts of federal agencies to secure constitutionally given rights for all; the emerging independent nations of Africa; the dramatic emergence of Negro youth into the all-out struggle for true freedom--all have real meaning for the elimination of discrimination and segregation from American life.

If there are any who have doubts about the final outcome of the Negro's struggle, these doubts should be dispelled by recent indications of southern defensiveness as revealed in the press, especially during the past week. The South is on the defensive as it has never been before. A few news items will reveal unmistakable signs of the times. Under the title, "Unappreciated White Citizens Council," the Selma-Times Journal (The Montgomery Advertiser 8-31-60, p. 4-A) said: "If the Citizens Council of Dallas County could get the same kind of support that Negro agitators give the NAACP, there would not be much doubt about the future of our section racially." This is astounding, because the Councils have been trying to make us believe money was the least of their worries. At least it should be when they have been able to delve into public funds.

On the editorial page of the Atlanta Constitution of <sup>August 30</sup> September 1, 1960, Eugene Patterson reminded the South, in his column headed "The Sit-ins Have Run Their Course," that it should not take its race problem into the streets; that the white men who took the Confederate flag into a common street brawl dishonored it; that the men with their axe handles in Jacksonville subjected the white South to defeat. Take the race problem to the courts, to the polling places, into public print, into pressures, moral or economic, he said, but "in the name of post-jungle civilization," it must be kept out of the streets.

"In this struggle of wills the white brawlers broke. They lost the test of stamina, took a dare to their patience, and exhibited what the South would strenuously deny--a resort to violence. They were defeated by the act of stepping into the street. They proved what the Negro had said was so." He continued: "The sit-ins are a symbol. They disrupt a business only briefly. The moving pressure of Southern stores has been withdrawal of Negro business. The sit-ins have simply symbolized what the boycotts are about, and defined the moral issue for white consciences to ponder. The point is made. It is now being belabored rather dangerously. There is a point of diminishing return. The sit-ins have reached it and ought, in wisdom to be ended." In other words, we are beginning to have enough.

Southerners have been saying that the desegregation issue has not affected industry in the region, but let us listen to what the President of the Southern Association of Science and Industry told a state-wide industrial conference in Florida. According to an AP release which appeared in the Montgomery Advertiser of September 1, 1960, he stated: There would be "little value discussing industrial development in any Southern state unless an early end to our domestic conflict is found," because "capital investment and civil strife are incompatible, as is well illustrated by Little Rock which has not reported a new industrial plant since 1957." Noting that 1,000 new plants had located annually in the South since 1951 and that the \$5 a week Negro yard boy was now receiving ten to thirty times what he received fifteen years ago in large centers, he almost threatened that "as the Negro was the greatest beneficiary, so will . . . his be

the greatest loss if industry declines." The choice before Negroes, he said, is that between "moral victory at lunch counters or bitter economic defeat through forced integration." He is here threatening the loss of jobs by Negroes if they do not desist from their sit-in activities.

But the rarest gem is an editorial of August 30 in the Birmingham News entitled "The Jacksonville Lesson." In part, it states: "This nation faces serious peril from abroad. This is no time to be whipping up domestic troubles. Sit-in promoters do the nation a grave disservice. Such actions are seized upon elsewhere to indicate that here in the United States there is a seed of rebellion. The manifest desire of Communists and unthinking 'liberators' in other lands, especially the colored areas of the world, is to link the American Negro's challenge of the whites with a world-wide color crusade.

"The American Negro only rarely before," <sup>he</sup> it said, "has played into the hands of those of foreign soil who would do this nation in. The sit-in movement today, however, gravely runs this obvious risk. Patriotism ought to require some second thought."

What a statement from a newspaper in a region which during World War II preferred to lose to Hitler rather than give Negroes fair and just treatment.

The defenses of our common enemy are beginning to give way. We must continue to support the Tuskegee Civic Association until the enemy's defenses have been completely destroyed, whether the time is short or long.

To-night, let us give most generously to this most fundamental of all causes.