

Southeastern Business College

POST OFFICE BOX 1071
DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

TELEPHONE 682-6125

February 21, 1968

The Honorable Dan K. Moore
Governor of North Carolina
Raleigh, North Carolina

Dear Governor Moore:

I respectfully request that you use the powers of your office to assist in establishing effective channels of communication between the city government and the people of Durham. It is my feeling that the two groups have reached an impasse.

The events of Thursday, February 15, 1968, in the City of Durham pointed up the tensions which lie just beneath the surface of the city. It is tension which has built up to explosive proportions and broke out in destructive disorder. These tensions still exist, potentially more explosive than before.

A number of people have made statements in response to this event emphasizing the need to maintain law and order and the determination to control any similar outbreaks in the future. However, none of these people addressed themselves to the real causes of the disorder, those things which produce and maintain the tension. Durham is still ripe for disorders because the tension is still here. It needs only a spark to light the fire. Durham is typical of the cities where riots occurred last summer. Each of these; Watts, Newark, and Detroit, according to the chairman of the President's Study Commission on Riots, was triggered by events involving the police. So also was the event in Durham last Thursday.

In none of these cities has there been decisive action by the city government which would ease the tension. Neither has there been any action to ease the tension in Durham. All these cities are as ripe for riots today as they were last summer. Will they be set off again? Will Durham's tensions be triggered again?

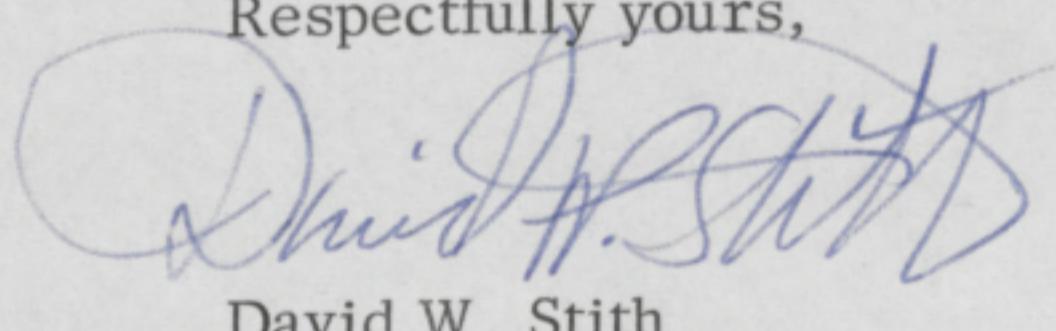
My hope is that this will not happen. But this hope can only be realized through decisive action--words will not suffice. Decisive action must be taken to reduce and eliminate the tensions which exist. The answer is not in increased and more efficient methods of riot control. Controls such as this do nothing to prevent outbreaks but are only effective in putting down disturbances. The threat of punishment will not stop disorders from breaking out. More people may be jailed or killed in a shorter period of time using these methods but the tensions within the city will continue to rise.

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The answer lies in attacking the root causes of the tensions. Of course, these cannot be overcome quickly but will possibly take years of patient effort. A beginning can be made, however, which will greatly reduce the tension. This beginning is to establish truly meaningful communications between the city government and the people of the city.

Once again I ask for your assistance.

Respectfully yours,



David W. Stith

DWS:aa

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FEB 22 1968
GOVERNOR'S
OFFICE

From

THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

To

Governor Moore

This man is a Congressional candidate.

Charles

February 23

*Human
Relations*

February 23, 1968

Mr. David W. Stith
Southeastern Business College
Post Office Box 1071
Durham, North Carolina

Dear Mr. Stith:

Thank you for your letter concerning the situation in Durham. Various State agencies are attempting to work with the people of Durham in finding solutions to existing community problems.

I am sure you are aware of the efforts of the Good Neighbor Council in particular. Several months ago I met with the Mayor and City Council of Durham to discuss various matters of importance to all citizens of the Research Triangle area. We intend to continue to make every effort in working with local officials to meet the needs of citizens in Durham and throughout North Carolina.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

Dan Moore

CD/ec

(separate note to Governor: This man is a Congressional candidate)