

*Charles Dunn*

JULIUS H. CORPENING  
MINISTER

Temple Baptist Church

Chapel Hill at Shepherd  
Durham, North Carolina

March 19, 1968

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

Dear Governor Moore:

Thank you very much for the booklet on the Governor's Conference on Community Relations and for the opportunity of participating in this conference. In light of your enclosed letter inviting comments and suggestions, I am presuming to write to you.

Very candidly I feel that the conference itself was only a beginning. Unless it is followed up both at the local and state levels, very little will have been accomplished. I realize, of course, that the follow-up is largely up to local communities but I also feel that through your good offices a number of things can be done.

One thing which I feel is particularly important at both local and state levels is to insure better lines of communication between all facets of the community. In one community, for instance, in a very unofficial, quiet way, a number of businessmen are seeking to enter into conversation with leaders of the more radical elements in the Negro community. It is the feeling of many that this may create better understanding and at least provide some kind of safety valve. As I indicated, this is being done very unofficially and quietly. Any publicity to this kind of thing would damage any positive outcome irreparably. What some are trying to do locally could also be done by you at the state level. For instance, while some would have serious reservations, I would hope that you might invite some people such as Howard Fuller, Ben Ruffin and other such leaders across the state to sit down with you in small groups to discuss the situation with your attitude being simply to listen. I recognize that this is terribly presumptuous for me to even suggest to you. At the same time, the possible help that such informal and unofficial conferences might be is tremendous.

A second suggestion that might have some possibility is for you through the Good Neighbor Council to sponsor a series of regional conferences on community relations which could serve as models for local communities in dealing with problems. In such conferences you might have the various elements of the community talking with each other to exchange ideas, hammer out possible solutions to problems, but most of all, to attempt to create an atmosphere in which communication could take place. Representation at such meetings might

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involve city administration, Chamber of Commerce, police, County Commissioners, human relations groups, radical Negro leadership, the church, and other groups. Each community ought to have a way by which these various groups get together; however, few do. A regional conference of this type could provide a kind of model for individual communities to follow.

Still another possibility that might be helpful is for there to be some kind of clearing house on information as to what various communities are doing to meet their problems. For instance, I heard by way of the grapevine that one city in North Carolina through its United Fund is attempting to provide camping opportunities for ghetto children on an entirely new basis for this summer. I recognize that camping opportunities are small potatoes in terms of the massive problems we face in urban situations. At the same time, this is the kind of gesture of good will and good faith which can go a long way toward alleviating some of the tensions and mistrust which exist. If this kind of information can be communicated to appropriate people, it would enable all of our communities to share in possible projects which could be helpful. This may already be done at a level of which I am unaware. It is an idea which has some merit, I think.

We are grateful for the leadership you are furnishing in North Carolina, especially for your efforts in this very crucial area of community relations. I am convinced that we as a state are in for serious trouble in the months immediately ahead. Whether or not anything could be done to head off some of the trouble remains to be seen. I do think that it is imperative that everything possible be done in this direction and, if such efforts fail, we will at least have some means by which we can begin to pick up the pieces after the trouble is over.

Sincerely yours,

Julius H. Corpening

JHC:rbe

RECEIVED  
MAR 21 1968  
GOVERNOR'S  
OFFICE

*Human Relations*

March 25, 1968

The Reverend Julius H. Corpening  
Temple Baptist Church  
Chapel Hill at Shepherd  
Durham, North Carolina

Dear Reverend Corpening:

Thank you for your letter and for your comments and suggestions on a meaningful program of community relations. I agree that the conference held in Raleigh was only a beginning. We are attempting to follow it up in various ways.

For instance, we have sent, as you know, copies of speeches to leaders throughout North Carolina. In addition we asked mayors and county commission chairmen to call upon us for any assistance we might render. Specially printed cards were enclosed for their convenience listing programs associated with employment, education, recreation and housing. We have begun to receive requests from some local officials.

To follow up these requests, we have established what we call an Opportunity Group of selected State officials to contact and work with local officials requesting assistance. I believe this will be a meaningful approach and that it will enable the State to be of meaningful assistance to local governments. We are hopeful that local government leaders will avail themselves of this service.

I also agree with your opinion of the value of communication between all facets of the community. As you know, this is one of the major purposes of the Good Neighbor Council and its local counterparts. We have urged local governments to establish these councils and to allow them to function in a manner most beneficial to the individual communities.

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We have also designated a member of my personal staff to work in the area of communication. He is talking with local government leaders as well as leaders in both Negro and white communities to bring about a better understanding of problems and potentials.

I also feel that your suggestion for a clearing house on information has merit. I feel it is beneficial for community leaders to be aware of and consider successful programs in other communities. I will give consideration to implementing your suggestions in this area.

Again, Reverend Corpening, thank you for your comments. I agree with you as to the importance of our actions in the coming weeks and months. I believe this is a period of opportunity for North Carolina and that we must do everything possible to reap the benefits rather than its failures.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

Dan Moore