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GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

3855 Sylvan Drive
Wilmington, N. C. 28401
April 10, 1968

Honorable Dan K. Moore
Governor of North Carolina
Raleigh, North Carolina 27602

Dear Governor Moore:

As an American citizen who has deep love and respect for our great nation and the principles on which it was founded, I feel I must exercise my freedom of speech to cry out against certain injustices and certain acts that deprive law abiding citizens of their rights.

During the past three days, I saw and felt what life is like in a totalitarian state. I live in Wilmington, N. C. and at 3 p.m. Sunday afternoon, April 7, a curfew was placed on this city and we were forced to remain in our homes while a few demonstrators in certain areas of our city proceeded to harass law enforcement officers with bricks and stones. The local newspaper stated that 70% of the troublemakers were between the ages of 9 and 13 years old. As a result of this small minority, the majority of citizens could not attend church or school or any function for three days. This small minority was confined to a certain section of this city. Why couldn't our law enforcement officers have blocked off these sections of our city, thus confining the troublemakers instead of punishing 93% of the population because of the misbehavior of 7%. Tactics such as these demonstrated by the local officials in confining private citizens are the same actions applied in Communist countries to suppress and restrict individuals. Our enemies are now aware of the ways and means at their disposal to control the movement and rights of private citizens, to control schools and regulate our very activities.

I am aware of all the arguments made by local government and police officials for enforcing a curfew, but none of these are valid when there were other methods at their disposal for dealing with this problem. We can not allow a small minority to dictate to the majority of law abiding citizens and take our freedoms as they strive to destroy our very way of life.

As our elected leader, it is your duty and responsibility to protect the rights and preserve the liberty of every citizen. I appeal to you to use whatever power available to you to see that justice is dispensed in our state - that law breakers are punished - that decent, law abiding citizens are protected, but not subjected to curfews and restrictions such as those witnessed by us these last few days.

Copy to:
Honorable O. O. Allsbrook
Mayor of the City of Wilmington

Sincerely yours,

Jane L. Knight
(Mrs.) Jane L. Knight

Heeman Relation

April 19, 1968

Mrs. Jane L. Knight
3855 Sylvan Drive
Wilmington, North Carolina 28401

Dear Mrs. Knight:

The Governor is out of the city at the present time and I am responding to your letter to him of recent date.

For your information, I am enclosing a copy of his television statement which he made as the riots subsided. You understand that he does not have the power or the authority to establish curfews and that he did not do so in the City of Wilmington. Nonetheless, I am aware of the fact that it is his opinion the establishment of these curfews throughout the State of North Carolina prevented an ever great destruction of property, perhaps even a loss of life. It is indeed regrettable that a small minority of our citizens have brought so much destruction and misery upon the majority of the population. I am also sure that you are aware of the fact that the Governor did everything in his power to bring the matter to a swift and a sure end. Another matter concerning breaches of the law is up to the courts, and we must await the outcome of those trials.

I will bring your letter to the Governor's personal attention when he returns.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

George R. Ragsdale
Legal Counsel to the Governor

GRR:rc