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NORTH CAROLINA STATE CONFERENCE OF BRANCHES
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE

Subject: A DISCUSSION IN REFERENCE TO EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY IN STATE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT, and A REQUEST FOR QUALIFIED NEGROES TO BE EMPLOYED IN STATE GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES AND DEPARTMENTS ON AN EQUAL BASIS WITH OTHER CITIZENS.

To: HIS EXCELLENCY, THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA, TERRY SANFORD

From: NORTH CAROLINA STATE CONFERENCE OF BRANCHES, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE
Presented by Kelly M. Alexander, President

Governor Sanford:

We consider it a very high honor to be given this opportunity to meet with you and words are inadequate to express our sincere and deep appreciation.

Permit me to say, we appreciate your dedicated, able and inspiring leadership and it is our opinion that you have an appreciation for the struggle the Negro is making in this state for equality of opportunity for all.

There exists in North Carolina racial discrimination in employment. In industry and government Negroes are not employed on an equal basis with other citizens. Certainly, no form of racial discrimination should be permitted to stand in the path to prevent Negro workers from taking their place, upon a basis of equality, merit and ability, in our expanding economy. An examination of the status of Negro workers in state government clearly substantiates the fact that the State of North Carolina is not making full use of

the individual Negro's talents and abilities. We urge you on this occasion to think seriously and use the influence of your public office to eliminate discrimination in government employment. North Carolina does not have a fair employment practice law in relation to government employment but we feel that action by the Governor to eradicate racial discrimination from all state-supported programs, activities, agencies, and departments, will give the Negro an equal chance to develop and utilize his talents and to enjoy the rewards of his efforts. Action by the Governor will assure the Negro an equality of treatment consistent with the principles of democracy which we profess, and will display an effort on the part of the highest official in the State of North Carolina that it is possible to equalize job opportunity by governmental action and contribute to the elimination of the influence of prejudice in employment.

We firmly believe that "now is the time" for a program of equality of opportunity in government employment to be effectively implemented. We feel you are in a position to take the necessary steps to change the policy and procedure of all state agencies and departments from discriminatory practices to a policy of non-discrimination in the hiring, appointment, assignment, and in cases where Negroes are employed, the promotion of all personnel.

We request and urge you, Governor Sanford, to do something about the systematic exclusion of qualified Negroes from certain job classifications in state government solely because of their

color.

We have observed that exclusion of Negroes in the process of hiring is effected in various ways, by newspaper advertisements requesting only whites to apply, by application blanks or forms on which space is reserved for race, by discriminatory job orders placed with employment agencies, or by the arbitrary policy of a personnel director, department supervisor or an official in charge of hiring.

We don't think this state can afford to waste manpower at this time, but we are wasting it. Discrimination in employment is a waste. When a qualified Negro is unable to assume his rightful place in state government employment because of his color, the economy suffers. His skill, whatever it may be, is not utilized; his education and training are wasted; and, because he cannot earn, he cannot consume the economy's goods. We are losing many qualified Negroes to other states because of economic discrimination.

When jobs are withheld from the Negro, he is forced to a lower economic level, to a lower level of health, housing and education.

There are some people, Governor, who contend that the economic condition of the Negro cannot be improved, changed or alleviated except by education and persuasion. We agree that these factors are essential and are useful techniques and effective tools for the elimination of discrimination in the employment field. However, they are not sufficient.

We say very clearly, that intolerance or prejudice is a state of mind which laws cannot reach. Discrimination in government employment, such as denying a qualified man the right to earn a living, is a separate matter which you, as Governor, certainly can effectively regulate.

Governor Sanford, the manner in which government itself behaves in the employment area, has a large educational effect upon all people everywhere. Its practices, therefore, will be the most useful and persuasive example of what should be and can be done in many areas of the employment field. But beyond mere example, government directly organized, sets the pattern of much more of our lives than we realize. We go to government owned and operated public schools in childhood. We use public recreational facilities. Many of us live in houses owned or financed by government. The basic circumstances of much of our living are directly controlled by government. You may not agree, but it is our opinion that the armed services, the public schools, our nationwide housing projects, all such organizations and institutions, are tremendous sociological forces. It doesn't matter whether we wish it so or not. The thinking and acting of millions of human beings are profoundly influenced by the circumstances of their living and association in these government controlled relationships. When people deny that these governmental activities are "sociological laboratories", they are really voicing a desire to use them to perpetuate or strengthen certain

patterns of living and thinking, and an objection to their use to develop other patterns. It is our belief that if all public or governmental institutions and activities, Federal, state and local, were conducted on a wholly non-discriminatory basis for five years, the evils of racism would cease to become a major problem in the State of North Carolina.

The continuing economic crisis for Negroes in the State of North Carolina requires vigorous and rapid action by you, Governor Sanford, to effectuate a program of non-discrimination as to state government employment.

We call upon you, Governor, with the power invested in you, to alter the discriminatory employment practices in state government and make it possible for qualified Negroes to be employed on an equal basis with other citizens.

Governor Sanford, there is another matter in reference to employment we do hope can be corrected. We refer to discrimination in State Employment Services. There is a rigid pattern of racial segregation and discrimination existing. Separate white and Negro sections, which accept racially designated job orders from employers and make job referrals of workers on a racial basis.

Negroes using the various state employment services are referred only to "colored jobs" and are denied access to employment and training in the most desirable job opportunities.

We call upon you, Governor, to correct this evil and not allow

discrimination as to the administration of state employment services. We also urge you to make available more and better job opportunities for Negroes within the state employment services.

We also urge you, Governor, to assist in eliminating discriminatory restrictions in technical and industrial training programs. There should be no state apprentice training program which excludes qualified Negroes. Negro young people should be given every opportunity to develop their talents and skills on an equal basis with other citizens.

We would like to say that Negro young people making career choices are normally guided by whether they see others of their race in a certain job category. This should not be the case. Rather they should be guided by their own job interest. Their race should be no barrier to getting a job, once they are qualified.

Should there be a total war, our manpower resources must be expanded and this country will need the maximum use of all qualified citizens. Permit us to bring to your attention,

N. C. Statute 127-2. COMPOSITION OF THE NATIONAL GUARD - The National Guard shall consist of the regularly enlisted militia between the ages of 17 and 45 years, organized, armed, and equipped as hereinafter provided, and of commissioned officers between the ages of 18 and 62 years.

and

N. C. Statute 127-6. WHITE AND COLORED ENROLLED SEPARATELY - The white and colored militia shall be separately enrolled, and shall never be compelled to serve in the same organizations. No organization of colored troops shall be permitted where white troops are available, and while permitted to be organized, colored troops shall be under the command of a white officer.

We would highly appreciate your securing an advisory opinion from the Attorney General and an advisory opinion from the Supreme Court of the State of North Carolina, to determine the constitutionality of Section 127-6.

We would also appreciate your creating a state policy that applications for work or employment in the State Highway Patrol be processed without using race as a criteria, and that the same policy be employed by each department of the state government.

It is interesting to note that Mr. Gene Roberts, Jr., in a series of articles, examined the employment problems in North Carolina, and in his article on Monday, September 4, 1961, stated the following:

"State government employment, like the positions in private industry, is also largely closed to Negroes. Out of the more than 7,000 jobs in Raleigh's "Capitol Square" area, there are less than two dozen Negroes who hold jobs above the rank of janitor and messenger.

"There are three Negro secretaries serving one Negro Welfare Department administrator and seven Negro education supervisors in the Department of Public Instruction.

"State Prison Department headquarters employs three Negroes—a rehabilitation supervisor, a chaplain and a prison recreation assistant.

"Negro employment opportunities are limited in State government outside of Raleigh, but not as severely as in the State administra-

tive offices. The Probation Commission has three probation officers; the State Alcoholic Beverage Control Board has eight Negro investigators, and Negro mental institutions are heavily staffed with Negroes.

"There are also Negro positions in Highway Department maintenance and truck crews and with the State Health Department laboratories and dental hygiene teams. The State prisons system which has more Negro inmates than white, has eight Negro guards and five Negro matrons in a total guard force of 1,249.

"Other Negro prison jobs are confined to an all-Negro unit in Guilford County and a Negro youth center in Goldsboro."

The article stated that William R. Henderson, who heads the Conservation and Development Department's industrialization program, said, "until we find adequate income for all of our people we are not going to enjoy a good per capita income in the State." Henderson noted that North Carolina ranks 43rd among the nation's 50 States in per capita income.

We cannot afford to figure minorities according to the population of a community, or a single state, or even a great nation. In a world in which man-made satellites are orbited, in which destructive missiles can be sent by push-button from continent to continent, we can afford to figure minorities and majorities in no area smaller than the earth itself.

We say to you on this day that if freedom is to survive in a world in which peace can be secure, we must win the struggle for

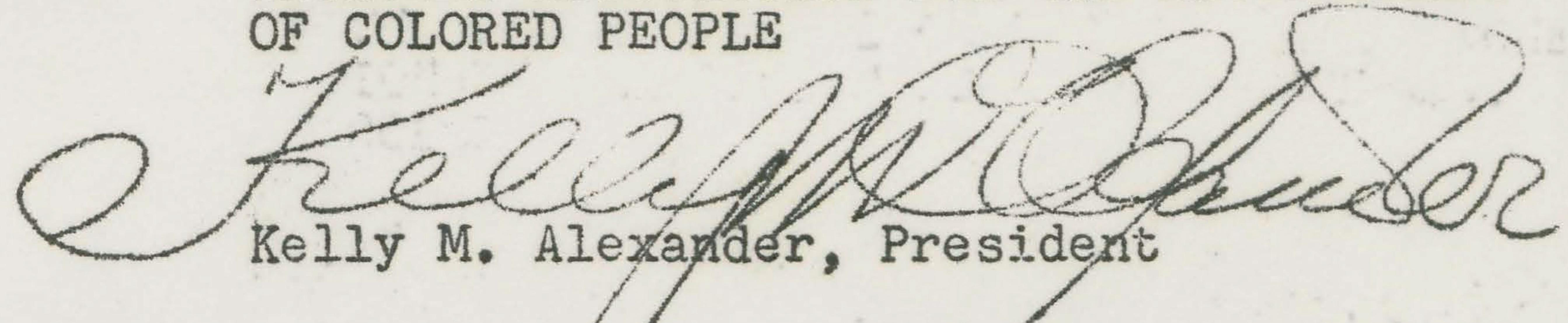
- 182 (removed (10/16/1961 (

the minds and hearts of men by demonstrating that the democratic way of life is the best in the world and that our way of life is better than communism. We must demonstrate, in terms that have meaning for all, the difference between our philosophy and that of communism with regard of the worth of every human being and how those differences affect our way of life. In the field of human relations, we must not only declare we believe in equality of opportunity, but demonstrate our superiority by living up to our ideals of equality.

Governor Sanford, we want to thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to discuss these matters with us.

Respectfully submitted,

NORTH CAROLINA STATE CONFERENCE OF BRANCHE
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT
OF COLORED PEOPLE


Kelly M. Alexander, President

October 27, 1961