

June 3, 1970

Mr. Bennett A. Brown, Executive Vice President
The Citizens and Southern National Bank
P. O. Box 912
Augusta, Georgia 30903

Dear Bennett:

Thank you for your note of June 2nd enclosing your letter to Mr. Lane dated May 15, 1970. It is interesting to note that an overcrowded jail situation touched off the tragedy in Augusta. We have a terribly overcrowded jail here and until now with no prospect of doing anything about the jail. I assume there is nothing in your letter that I cannot reveal to people that I think might help our situation here.

With a special interest, I note the Number One demand of the black leaders. We had our most serious problems in Savannah in 1963, but since that date have been more fortunate than most other cities due to a number of reasons, the principal reason being that we have a strong NAACP organization here whose leaders have courage and ability. In 1963 we had a series of demonstrations up and down Broughton Street and the principal targets were the motion picture theatres, hotels, motels and restaurants. The overwhelming majority of the demonstrators were teenagers, many of them thirteen, fourteen and fifteen. Most of the demonstrations were led by Hosea Williams, who then had a government job in Savannah. His followers were terrorizing some neighborhoods and a peace warrant was taken out against him with a twenty-five thousand bond and he could not make the bond. He stayed in jail for around two months, when the bond was substantially reduced (some whites had to help with the bond or he would not have gotten out then). We had a series of meetings with Negro leaders in June and July of 1963 and offered to desegregate the larger hotels, some of the better motels and the motion picture theatres effective on October 1st, provided they would call off demonstrations and do no picketing on Broughton Street until after February 1, 1964. All of this was before the Civil Rights Act was passed and before there was any public school integration in Savannah and the Negroes said they would accept provided that all charges were dropped against the several hundred Negro youngsters. None of the charges were more serious than for trespass and many of the children had been arrested a half dozen times. I persuaded our group not to agree to drop the charges because I knew that would simply encourage them to trespass in the future. Many of the children were bragging about their number of arrests, about like a Boys Scout competing for merit badges, so the whites took the position that we would not try to influence the prosecution one way or the other and whatever the courts did would be up to the courts, but we made it clear that we would do nothing to try to get charges dropped. This resulted in lots of

argument, but we held fast and finally the local Negroes agreed. As Hosea Williams was in jail, Reverend Martin Luther King had sent his aid, James Bevil to Savannah as their group was very short of leadership. Bevil would not agree and finally said he could not agree to any settlement that did not include dropping all charges because it would hurt his political career. He said he would be going to other communities and he could not have any influence unless he could tell the Negroes he could get criminal charges dropped. After a two hour meeting, the local blacks persuaded Bevil to yield. I was opposed to heavy sentences to trespassers but felt unless they had to pay small fines they would be back in the street again for flimsy reasons, but if it cost their parents or troubled them, their parents would not be interested in Hosea Williams' blandishments.

The settlement worked out pretty well. The Negroes appreciated action before the passage of the Civil Rights Act. A biracial committee met once a month to try to alleviate problems and when Negro leaders found that while we often differed with them but that we told the truth, it meant a lot.

I hope to use your letter to try to help us from having a similar disaster here.

With kindest regards

Yours sincerely

A. Pratt Adams, Jr.

APA,Jr/vs

Central of Georgia Railway Company

*Law Department
P. O. Box 2126
Savannah, Georgia*

JOHN B. MILLER,
VICE PRESIDENT - LAW
JULIAN C. SIPPLE,
GENERAL SOLICITOR
WILLIAM H. TEASLEY,
COMMERCE COUNSEL

June 13, 1968
(d. 6-12-68)

Mr. A. Pratt Adams
Attorney at Law
15 Drayton Street
Savannah, Georgia

Dear Mr. Adams:

Thank you for your telephone call today. I endeavored to reach Bishop Scott around 1:35 p.m. at his home and left word for him to call. We are investigating his complaint. All personnel of the Central of Georgia Railway are under positive instructions to follow a rigid integration policy with respect to seating of passengers on all trains.

Ticket agents and train crew personnel are governed by the following policy:

"Distinctions in seat assignment may be based upon stations of entraining and detraining of passengers and space may be reserved for various stations along the route. But within such categories the assignment of seats must be made in rotation among the cars of the train without regard to the race of the passenger unless the passenger expresses a preference as to his seating assignment. Where the passenger expresses a preference, he shall be seated accordingly if practical. No car shall be reserved exclusively for any race".

When our investigation is complete we will advise both you and Bishop Scott. You may rest assured that this policy of complete integration will be enforced.

We appreciate your bringing this matter to our attention.

Yours sincerely,


John B. Miller

JBM:pj

cc: Bishop Alfred J. Scott
517 East Duffy Street
Savannah, Georgia

February 16, 1965

Yesterday afternoon there was a meeting from 4:40 to 5:45 p.m. with Mr. W. W. Law, Rev. Patterson, etc. Also present were Messrs. McClurkin, George Patterson, Malcolm Bell, Walter Henkel, Rev. Hooten, Henry Goldberg and Msgr. Toomey arrived about ten minutes late. Msgr. Toomey had asked me to preside as he knew he would be late and was afraid he would not get there at all. Very little of the meeting dealt with the Dick Gregory situation.

A list from John Lytjen was presented showing the attendance at the Vocational School class in Sales. All present agreed that it was up to the white representatives to help place qualified graduates of the class when they finish their course. It was pointed out that just because the individual finished the course, it did not mean that she was qualified. Mr. Goldberg stated that the downtown merchants had been left to carry the load alone and he wanted the shopping centers to help, as well as other employers.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

As at other meetings, it was very apparent that the Negroes are far more concerned with employment than any other phase. They do not count janitorial and maids work. Mr. Law stated that about ten days ago, there were two applications for operators jobs at the Telephone Company and they had been rejected. He felt they were qualified. I have heard on the street that one of the applicants had been an operator up North. Mr. Law said there were Negro operators in Atlanta. The Negroes wanted to know if a qualified Negro applied for a clerical job at the banks or at the Electric Company, would they be considered for the job if there were an opening. It was explained by Messrs. Patterson and Bell that there would have to be a vacancy and the applicant would have to pass the regular test that white applicants have to pass. It was explained that a tellers job usually required three years experience in the bank before an individual was turned loose as a teller. The Negroes seemed to understand that it would be most difficult for anyone to start as a teller and that a teller started out in the bookkeeping department.

With reservations as to openings and qualification, Messrs. Patterson and Bell stated Negroes would be considered for clerical jobs.

The Negroes complained that the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. were segregated, as well as the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. They said that Frank Chaatham, President of the Y.M.C.A., had publicly stated that the new Y.M.C.A. would be segregated. They are apparently going to protest to the U.C.A. It was pointed out that the U.C.A. had forced the U.S.C. to desegregate.

All persons agreed that problems should come before our group before other strenuous steps were taken, but it was recognized that this would not always be practical. Msgr. Toomey stated that the Justice Department wanted complaints filed with it on violations of the Public Accommodations Act. The Negroes complained of almost complete segregation at Memorial Hospital. They stated that the whites were waited on first, private rooms on the white side were better and that really there were no Negro private rooms. They had attempted to cure the situation with the Hospital administrator, but had not gotten anywhere and it was suggested that they set up a meeting with the Hospital Authority.

February 16, 1965

For sometime I have gathered that the Negroes are going to concentrate on the utilities and banks for employment, and the meeting on February 15th confirmed this impression.

After the meeting, I talked with Mr. Law, who stated that the Atlanta banks were presently employing between twelve and fifteen. He had been talking with a Mr. Hill from Atlanta, who is an officer of the Atlanta Life Insurance Company, and who had been the Negro negotiator with the banks in Atlanta. I believe he talked with the banks separately rather than as a group. He was told that some of the Negro bank clerks had been a success and that one girl at the First National had received a promotion, but that others had been discharged for valid reasons. One or two were discharged for incurring garnishments, some were not qualified for the work but just hired because they wanted jobs, and some were not qualified to be clerks but had been promoted from service jobs because they were well liked by their fellow employees, but nevertheless they were not capable of being satisfactory clerks. According to my information, all three of the other big banks in Atlanta have Negro clerks. According to Mr. Law, Mr. Hill explained that it took much experience to be a teller and a new employee could not start out as a teller. I gathered the Atlanta employees were largely in bookkeeping.

I am convinced that we had a far easier time in Savannah in 1964 because of the partial integration in October, 1963. I know that the job opportunity question will be with us beyond the foreseeable future. We will be defending ourselves before the five member Equal Employment Opportunity Commission just like employers defend themselves before the National Labor Relations Board. It is my thought that the banks and utilities in Savannah would help themselves after July 2, 1965 by trying a few Negro employees before the Act goes into effect. It will reduce the chances of such things as mass demonstrations around employers' premises. It will greatly help us if we give some employment before the Act goes into effect when we get hauled before the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Many times matters before the National Labor Relations Board have been decided by the Board for or against an employer depending upon whether the employer had a previous record of being antiunion.

I do not think one bank should stick its neck out, but think the three name banks should all take the step at the same time.

"The following hotels and motels would on October 1 begin serving negro customers on a limited basis, The DeSoto Hotel, The Menger Hotel, The General Oglethorpe Hotel, The Heart of Savannah Motel, The Holiday Inn, The Town Motel, The Town and Country Motel, and the Alamo Plaza Motel.

"The following theatres would on October 1 begin admitting Negro patrons on a limited basis, The Lucas Theatre, The Weis Theatre, The Avon Theatre and The Savannah Theatre.

"The following Bowling Lanes would on October 1 begin admitting Negro patrons on a limited basis, Live Oak Lanes, Major League Lanes and

"In the case of the Hotels and Motels Negro guests would be accepted under the so called Dallas Plan which provides for the registering of limited numbers of Negro guests and dining service to them during conventions. In addition to the Dallas Plan, the hotels and motels will accept up to four tourist or transient guests for rooms and/or meals at one time. Service in the bars, the cocktail lounges, and in those areas immediately adjacent to the bar areas will not be available to Negro guests.

"The four participating theatres will limit Negro admissions to two persons per day per theatre, with the understanding that no Negroes will be admitted during the first weekend of October. Special tickets, identifying the holders, will be issued during the first week. Admission of Negroes will be liberalized after a period, and providing no untoward incidents occur.

"The bowling lanes will limit Negro admissions to two persons per day, per place of business, with the understanding that no Negroes would be admitted during the first weekend in October. Special tickets identifying the holders, will be issued during the first week. Admission of Negroes will be liberalized after a trial period and providing no untoward incidents occur.

"Lunch counters in the bowling lanes will be opened to Negro customers, but the bars, the cocktail lounges and the nurseries will be excluded.

"The four business categories affected have agreed to put into effect the policies affecting Negroes as stipulated providing racial peace prevails in the community until the plan becomes operative on October 1, and in accordance with the agreement of the leaders of the Negro community that there will be no demonstrations, parades or mass picketing for a period extending to January 15, 1964.