

To Lafayette Dudley

19 September 1956
[Montgomery, Ala.]

After reading King's April 1956 article "Our Struggle" for a research project, Dudley, in a 3 September letter, praised King's "psychological, philosophical and sociological" insights, adding that King's former roommate, Philip Lenud, had introduced them in a Boston barbershop during the summer of 1955. Dudley noted that while attending college he had "long pondered starting a crusade for my brothering [brethren?]" and asked for King's advice: "Do you feel that I should get an early start before I finish school?"¹ King encourages Dudley and suggests that he talk with two prominent

1. Dudley attended Boston Junior College from September 1955 to May 1957.

clergymen at Boston University, Howard Thurman and Allan Knight Chalmers. On 15 December Dudley sent King a rambling letter in which he proposed forming a new organization to "motivate constructive social change."

20 Sept
1956

Mr. Lafayette Dudley
33 Braddock Park
Boston, Massachusetts

Dear Lafayette:

Thanks for your very kind letter of September 3. I should say that I definitely remember meeting you in Boston through our mutual friend Philip Lenud. I am very happy to know of your progress and to know of your great interest in our struggle.

Since I have such an accumulation of mail before me as the result of being out of the city for several days, it will be impossible for me to go into any detailed discussions of the question which you raise. I do feel, however, that the time is always right to start a crusade for better human relations. If this is your interest I think it would be a fine idea to start now working in that direction. Many great movements have started in universities where students were dedicated to a great cause. As I remember the Wesley brothers started their reforms while students at Oxford University in England which eventually led to the great Methodist Church.² I could point to so many other great movements that have been started by students with noble vision. I hope you will continue to consider this idea. Maybe at some future date I will have the opportunity to sit down and talk with you concerning the whole matter. In the meantime I would suggest that you talk with my good friends Dr. Howard Thurmond and Dr. Allen Knight Chalmers. Both of these men could give you excellent advice in this area.

With warm personal regards.

Sincerely yours,
M. L. King, Jr.,
President

MLK: mlb

TLc. MLKP-MBU: Box 16.

2. King refers to Charles Wesley (1707-1788) and John Wesley (1703-1791).