

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Papers Project
From William Holmes Borders

6 April 1957
Atlanta, Ga.

The longtime pastor of Wheat Street Baptist Church, located on Atlanta's Auburn Avenue near Ebenezer Baptist Church, praises King's "leadership, imagination, consecration and insight." Borders, leader of Atlanta's Triple L Movement against segregated buses, also reminds King that ongoing local struggles will require attention after the Prayer Pilgrimage.¹

1. On 10 January 1957 Borders and five black ministers, leaders of the Love, Law, and Liberation (Triple L) Movement, were arrested for violating Georgia's segregation laws after they boarded an Atlanta trolley and took seats usually reserved for whites. Borders, who enjoyed favorable relations with Atlanta's political leadership, had arranged the arrest with Mayor William B. Hartsfield, as both men

6 Apr
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Dr. M. L. King, Jr.
309 South Jackson Street
Montgomery, Alabama

Dear Brother King:

I was honored to attend the meeting which was called by you, Mr. A. Philip Randolph and Mr. Roy Wilkins. I believe that the Prayer Pilgrimage to Washington on May 17 will prove to be one of the most dramatic and effective things that this nation has seen.

Your leadership, imagination, consecration and insight are marvelous and wonderful. More power to you as you continue to go higher and higher. I am glad to follow the lead which you have so nobly laid down.

It occurred to me in the meeting that there would be those who would ask where we will go from the Prayer Pilgrimage. The need of completing bus fights in Atlanta, Tallahassee, Birmingham; the need of voting; the need of testing integration in additional eating places in the South; leading our people in the use of stations willing to comply; continuous intelligent agitation for implementation of the Supreme Court decision—these are just a few of the things which have popped into my mind. I am almost sure that you gentlemen have thought of action beyond May 17 but I wanted to ease my own conscience by writing, to be sure. I am equally sure that my hesitancy in mentioning same in the Washington meeting was wise in the light of desired unity on the part of the great and noble leadership which we have produced. I am even praying that the program on May 17 will be intelligent, objective, comprehensive, deeply religious and effective.

May God bless you as you continue to lead us.

Yours sincerely,
[signed]
William Holmes Borders

WHB/L

Via—Air Mail Special Delivery

cc: Mr. Randolph
Mr. Wilkins

TLS. MLKP-MBU: Box 67.

sought to avoid the bad publicity and disruption a mass bus boycott would bring to the city. Having obtained the legal test cases they had hoped for, the ministers discouraged other African Americans from attempting to integrate the trolleys ("Negroes End Bus Push Here, Plan Court Test," *Atlanta Constitution*, 11 January 1957). In January 1959 a U.S. District Court struck down the segregation law, and Atlanta's public transit system was integrated shortly thereafter.