

This document was prepared on March 22, 1963, but was only circulated in very limited fashion within ESCRU while negotiations were underway with the Bishop. He was provided a copy. When it became apparent that he was widely criticizing ESCRU a revised form of this was circulated further, but THE LOVETT EPISCOPAL DAY SCHOOL, non-publicly. It appears later....

THE DIOCESE OF ATLANTA,

and

MARTIN LUTHER KING, III

At the Council of the Diocese of Atlanta, meeting at St. Philip's Cathedral in Atlanta on January 23-24, 1963, the following resolution was proposed and reported out of committee favorably:

"Whereas the State of Georgia, the Government of the United States, and many private corporations and institutions have taken steps to eliminate discrimination based on race; and

"Whereas the Anglican Communion, the Episcopal Church, the Diocese of Atlanta, through Council, the Standing Committee and the Bishop of Atlanta, have all gone on public record stating that discrimination based on race is contrary to the Christian Faith,

"Be it resolved that this Fifty-sixth Council of the Diocese of Atlanta being the highest governing body in the Diocese require that all Diocesan institutions and all present and future institutions maintaining an affiliation with the Episcopal Church by means of charter, boards of trustees, or by use of the name of the Church in official or unofficial title, advertisements, etc., in the Diocese of Atlanta, make clear by statement and act that such institutions do not use race as a basis for their admission of persons and do welcome all applications meeting the requirements for admission, which applications will be processed equally regardless of race or color, in accordance with the oft-stated position of this Church."

The Bishop of Atlanta, upon motion for the adoption of the above resolution by the chairman of the committee that had acted favorably upon it, ruled it out of order. In a later statement to the press he said:

"In the Diocese of Atlanta there are no institutions that are segregated, as far as I know. Surely none is officially segregated. I suppose we took the biggest step when we accepted Negroes of both sexes of every age at Camp Mikell several years ago. Segregation is a blight on our nation that must be removed. I am against it. Every Episcopal minister that I know in this diocese is against it. Every official body of our Church - international, national, and diocesan - has repeatedly stated the principle that segregation on the sole basis of race is inconsistent with the principles of the Christian religion. The council of the diocese of Atlanta has passed resolutions on this subject over and over and over. For the past three years, a Negro layman has been one of the three lay members of the Standing Committee, the highest governing body of the diocese.

"I am very much aware of the fact that every member of our Church is not in agreement with this position. Any demand for new resolutions on this subject seems to me to encourage doubt as to our sincerity in both principle and practice, which have been clearly demonstrated.

"The resolution was out of order - so clearly out of order that no one appealed the ruling of the chair, even though I waited for an interval to permit such an appeal. Every institution has been informed by the

bishop that the name 'Episcopal' cannot be used if a policy of segregation is pursued. In the Episcopal Church segregation is out of order. It is not debatable in our Church governing bodies."

A review of resolutions of the Council of the Diocese of Atlanta fails to show any having the intent of the one ruled out of order, which would clearly have covered any institutions having an affiliation with the Episcopal Church. It may be noted here, also, that the undersigned had no knowledge whatsoever of the resolution ruled out of order and did not know of its existence or introduction into Council until after the committee of the Council had approved it.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Lovett Episcopal Day School, which is so listed in the Episcopal Church Annual for 1963 and in the directory of church schools published by the Episcopal School Association, is incorporated as "The Lovett School". It was given to the Cathedral of St. Philip in the Diocese of Atlanta in 1954 by its founder, Miss Eva Edwards Lovett. At that time the charter stipulated that all of the trustees of the school were to be selected by the governing body of the Cathedral, which is the Chapter. Amendments of 1956 specified that the Trustees should consist of the Dean, Senior Warden, and Junior Warden of the Cathedral, ex officio, and 12 others who were to be appointed by the Dean with the concurrence of the Chapter. In 1959 the present arrangement was effected through amendments that provided for seven trustees to be communicants of the Cathedral, seven others to be Episcopalians resident in the State of Georgia, and seven others without any specific denominational source. It is further provided "...that the Dean of the Cathedral of St. Philip in the Diocese of Atlanta, Inc., shall always be one of the 7 members of the Board of Trustees approved by the Chapter of said Cathedral...." ①  
②

*Handwritten note:* + HAD FOUND ANSIC DEPT. OF COM. ST. SEW HOUSE

In the 1959 amendments to the school's charter the following addition was made: "...and one of the objects of which shall be to further the cause of education and religion with reference to the teaching of the Episcopal Faith as contained in the Book of Common Prayer;" ③

The Dean of the Cathedral presently serves as the Chairman of the school's Board of Trustees, having previously also headed up the fund raising drive for construction of the new facilities that were dedicated in 1960. Before that many of the classes were held in Cathedral buildings, with some using facilities of another Atlanta parish for a while. As of its most recent issue, the phone number of the "Lovett Episcopal School" is carried under "Cathedral Information" in the weekly bulletin. Last year the school's baccalaureate service was held in the Cathedral proper and graduation exercises were in the Cathedral's Hall of Bishops. The annual "Bishop's Medal" was presented the graduating class's most outstanding member. The Lovett Mothers' Club also generally meets at the Cathedral and holds its annual fashion show in the Hall of Bishops.

Lovett has used a letterhead form and envelopes stating that it is "An Episcopal Day School". Its Headmaster is an Episcopal priest in good standing and canonically resident in the Diocese of Atlanta, exercising his ministry as he is with the consent of the Bishop of Atlanta. At a clergy conference in 1962 he was invited by the Bishop to address the clergy about the school, during which address he testified to the Church-related orientation of the school. The question of tuition grants to pupils at private non-sectarian schools had been a matter of public concern during that period and the Headmaster pointed out the sectarian nature of the school. The Dean of the Cathedral has also publicly indicated that Lovett pupils could not qualify for grants since it was clearly a church school.

On February 23, 1963, the Headmaster of the Lovett School addressed the following message to Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr., of Atlanta:

"Since the application of your son, Martin Luther King, III, was the first formal Negro application in the history of the Lovett School, it was necessary for me to consult the Admissions Committee of the Board of Trustees. The by-laws of the institution are quite explicit in stating that admissions policies are set by the Board. Due consideration was given this matter, including a full meeting of the Board of Trustees. It was decided at that meeting that, under present circumstances, it is not advisable to accept this application for testing.

"I am returning your check, therefore, in compliance with the Board's directive. I apologize for any inconvenience you may have experienced pending the decision of the Board of Trustees."

When news of the rejection of their child on the basis of race reached the Atlanta press, Dr. and Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr., said, as partially reported by the Atlanta dailies: (3-16-63)

"Our sole purpose in making application to the Lovett School for our son, Martin III, was a sincere attempt to secure for him the best possible secondary education.

"This is not meant to be any sort of test case, though we do desire for our son the experience of integrated schooling."

The Bishop of Atlanta commented on the rejection of the King child through the Atlanta dailies in the following manner: (3-16-63)

"I am interested to know that a Baptist minister has a desire for an education for his son in a school where Episcopal services customarily take place.

"If Dr. King wants an Episcopal education for his child, he can easily apply to one of our parochial schools which the church does control.

"Segregation is not a policy in the Episcopal Church. I don't know any of the details of this application.

"The Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Atlanta, has no official connection with the Lovett School, and the Bishop of the Diocese of Atlanta has no official connection with the Lovett School. It is an independent, autonomous institution subject to no ecclesiastical control..."

The Bishop of Atlanta gave the following statement to THE LIVING CHURCH, an Episcopal periodical, with a dateline of March 24, 1963:

"The Diocese of Atlanta has no official connection with Lovett School. I have no official connection with Lovett School. I am sure the racial policy at Lovett School must be satisfactory since the children of the Rev. John Morris have been enrolled here for some time.

"If the family of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., do not find the admissions policy of Lovett School acceptable and if they want their children to have an Episcopal educational background, they should apply to one of our parochial schools where the Church is responsible - such as Holy Innocents Parish in Atlanta, where the Rev. John Morris and his family are affiliated."

These statements and facts are unumcated here so that concerned Churchmen may weigh for themselves the question of the Church's relationship to the Lovett School. Before distribution a copy will be submitted to the Bishop for his inspection, which is done on request of the Canon to the Ordinary. If there are errors in fact they will be corrected.

It seems inescapable that the Episcopal Church is very much involved in and connected with the school, both officially through charter provisions implicitly accepted by the diocese and explicitly requiring the initiative of the Cathedral Chapter, as well as unofficially through the historical, physical and spiritual ties that are manifold and generally known and taken for granted in Atlanta. In a sense, every layman and clergyman of the Church is involved where the "...Episcopal Faith as contained in the Book of Common Prayer" is to be furthered.

Lovett's connection with the Cathedral involves the Diocese of Atlanta even more than if it were sponsored by another parish, because of the diocesan nature of the Cathedral. Many parishes and individuals contributed toward the completion and furnishing of this seat and symbol of the bishop's authority. A Cathedral is often called the bishop's church. Diocesan Canon Twenty stipulates that "The Cathedral of St. Philip's Church, in the City of Atlanta, is hereby continued as the Cathedral Church of the Diocese of Atlanta under the name of 'The Cathedral of St. Philip in the Diocese of Atlanta' (a) To afford a Diocesan (the bishop) a place where of right he may at any and all times administer the duties pertaining to his office; and may officiate at will, in preaching or in any public administration; and for said purposes may appoint services at his discretion. (b) To be the center of Diocesan Unity and administration, and, (c) To be the center of Church Extension - educational, social and eleemosynary....."

It is regrettable that the presence of my children at the school has been introduced as if it were germane to the issues at hand. I can only say that it had been my hope and trust that the Lovett motto, "All For the Glory of God", meant just that. Now, however, the Cross of Christ that appears on both the Lovett emblem and the diocesan seal has the look of being marred as of old. The visage seen now is of a five-year old boy whose rejection must have echoed in the heavens.

The mother of the rejected child and I were talking while enroute back to Atlanta on a plane from Albany, Ga., last August. She expressed the hope that at least some of her children might have the opportunity to grow up with an educational experience unfettered by all of the old racial patterns. She asked where my children went to school and wondered if hers would be accepted. I spoke highly of the academic excellence and general spirit of the Lovett Episcopal School and indicated that I knew of no racial restrictions and hoped there were none because of the church connection. She asked if I would let her know if it seemed possible that she might apply in behalf of her next oldest child who would enter first grade in a year. After the bishop's statement following Council in January of this year I advised her that it surely seemed there could be no problems. However, so that persons in authority might be advised in the event the matter was problematical, I communicated with the Headmaster and the Bishop regarding these actions.

It is a painful irony and a judgement on all of us in the Church that the only person associated with the school or the diocese known generally to have protested the decision of the Board is one of the seven trustees out of twenty-one who need not be an Episcopalian. He has resigned from the Board. He is a Jew.

March 22, 1963

Respectfully submitted,  
The Rev. John B. Morris, Executive Director  
The Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity

ADDENDUM

1. Martin Luther King, III, is the first Negro applicant to be formally rejected by the Lovett Episcopal School. However, concurrent with the application for him the Rev. Warren Scott, Episcopal Chaplain at Atlanta University, was inquiring at Lovett in behalf of another prospective Negro pupil. He was, it seems, put off with evasive answers and never told plainly, as in the King application, that the policy was against accepting Negroes.
2. A further indication of the close ties between the Cathedral and the school is the fact that the children of Cathedral clergy attend the school for lower charges than paid by other pupils.
3. The Chairman of the executive committee of the trustees said in the Atlanta dailies on March 16, 1963, that the school's worship "...is in the Episcopal way." This is conducted by the Headmaster, who is an Episcopal priest, and by at least one Episcopal clergyman from a local parish.
4. The Bishop suggested that the Kings apply to "...one of our parochial schools", when, in reality, the Lovett Episcopal School is both a diocesan school (because of its cathedral associations) and a parochial school because it has been sponsored by the cathedral parish since 1954. On page 101 of the JOURNAL of the Diocese of Atlanta for 1959, in a report on "Day Schools", it is stated that: "There are a number of kindergartens operated in the Diocese; however, there is only one parish day school, this being Lovett School which is connected with the Cathedral."
5. Repeatedly during the last several years the Bishop of Atlanta has had conferences with "Lovett Episcopal School" officials and attended special events related to the school, as may be found in the Bishop's Diary as published in the JOURNAL of the Diocese of Atlanta and including the most recently published issue for 1962. In a number of instances, also, he reports showing friends the school, as on October 14, 1961: "Enjoyed showing our guests something of our beautiful city and some of our Church construction. They found particularly impressive the Cathedral and Lovett Episcopal School."
6. On November 20, 1960, the Bishop reported in his diary: "Atlanta, 5 P.M., participated in the dedication of the magnificent new Lovett Episcopal School." THE ATLANTA JOURNAL for November 18, 1960, reported that: "Dedication of the recently completed buildings of the Lovett Episcopal Day School..." would be held on Sunday; and that: "Officiating at the dedication services ...will be the Rt. Rev. Randolph R. Claiborne, Jr., Bishop, Diocese of Atlanta; the Very Rev. Alfred Hardman, Dean, Cathedral of St. Philip; and Canon H. A. Zinser of the Cathedral of St. Philip."
7. The February, 1963, issue of THE DIOCESAN RECORD, publication of the Diocese of Atlanta, carries numerous photographs of church construction (including parish houses, rectories, etc.) completed during the last ten years. The title for the series of photographs is "The Claiborne Decade of Progress". A picture of the Lovett School appears in the series.
8. The Associated Press quotes Mrs. King, in a story datelined March 18, as saying: "I'm disappointed, of course. I think it's much better if children start out in a desegregated situation. They adjust easily in the first grade but sometimes it gets awfully difficult later on.....We believed that because of the Episcopal connection there wouldn't be any trouble at Lovett." With reference to the Bishop's references to an Episcopal education, Mrs. King said she thought the bishop was "evading or clouding the issue - which is the rejection of one of my children because of race."