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December 26, 1962

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President John F. Kennedy  
Washington, D. C.

GEN. LIT. SECTION

Dear Sir:

I am writing to you because I feel that my wife's inhuman treatment is not an isolated case, but to thousands of Negroes in the heart of the Black Belt, it is symbolic of a system of lawlessness perpetrated by State Officials against Negroes. The action or inaction of the Federal Government in this case may have considerable import on future race relations in this area.

I wrote you in July concerning my wife but as yet I have received no reply.

To briefly restate what happened: My wife went down to Camilla jail to take food and clothing to some of the juveniles who were incarcerated in the Camilla County jail.

They had been arrested by the Albany Police Force. They were peacefully demonstrating against the denial to Negroes of constitutionally guaranteed rights.

The deputies in Camilla would not allow any clothing or food to be left. They also began to curse the Albanians very vehemently who had driven down to see the juveniles and requested that they leave the jail grounds immediately.

My wife was five months pregnant and because she did not run or walk as fast as the others, all of the venom of the Sheriff and the deputy was directed against her. She was knocked down by both of them, and was kicked once or twice on her buttocks while she lay on the ground unconscious, to this we have sworn testimony.

Last month the baby was born dead. My wife has given birth to three other children and never encountered any difficulty.

Our physician, Dr. J. L. Shirley, Jr., stated that he felt that the brutal attack was the major cause of the baby not living.

Many Negroes who have constantly watched this situation have asked me what action has the Federal Government taken. At this stage I can only reply, none.

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CIV. RIGHTS DIV.  
Gen. Lit. Sec.

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Many have further stated that when and if such happens to them (and knowing the determination of the whites in this area to resist all social change, it is no doubt that it will occur again) that they will not rely on the F. B. I., or any other Federal Agency to take action. As I had priorly stated to many of these Negro Citizens here, this incident concerning my wife is a symbol and actions taken or not taken by the Government bear very heavily upon future race relations in our area.

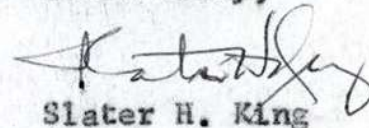
When decent, law abiding Negro Citizens who are leaders in their community are subjected to such flagrant abuse of their civil rights and The Federal Government sits by mute and withdrawn, the words of Democracy and Freedom should turn sour in our mouths.

For if such had happened to any white female, all Heaven nor hell, could have kept the cumulative Federal Agencies from working simultaneously to bring the guilty parties to trial.

Although a few whites try to fight the shameful legacy of America's treatment of its Negro Citizenry, by and far, the majority of the United States whites, no matter what positions they hold, have two standards for the application of the law, one for whites and one for Negroes. The treatment of my wife confirms this without a doubt.

In conclusion, I demand that the responsibility of your office express itself in bringing to justice the perpetrators of this injustice, and restore Negroes confidence in the Federal Government, which at this time is badly shaken.

Yours truly,



Slater H. King

C. C. to Atty General Robert Kennedy  
U. S. Justice Department  
Washington, D. C.

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