November 4, 1942

TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE:

This is an open letter to the American people of an incident which occurred in Alexandria, Louisiana on November 1, 1942. It is typical of innumerable incidents of equal significance affecting the lives and safety of the Negro military personnel in our southern Army camps. The incident in question involves a colored M.P., who in the performance of his duty was shot down in cold blood by a civilian state trooper.

At the onset it should be thoroughly understood that every statement made herein has been carefully checked concerning the authenticity of the case and can be verified if necessary.

Briefly it is a compilation of facts and observations obtained from civilians and soldiers alike who were witnesses to this terrible tragedy. The sequence of events in details are as follows: A Negro soldier M.P., Raymond Carr, about 21 years of age of Patterson, La., one of four brothers now serving in the armed forces of the U.S., was shot in the performance of his duty in the Negro district of Alexandria by a civilian state trooper, who arrived on the scene with other state troopers. The actual cause of the shooting, as seen and heard by the observers was attempted disciplining of another colored soldier on his beat. The state trooper, out of a clear sky demanded that the colored M.P. accompany him to the civilian police precinct and submit to arrest. This he rightfully refused to do. Another state trooper struck him back of the head knocking him to the ground. Immediately upon rising, he shot him through the stomach and back. The wounded soldier at no time was wrong or acted in a

disrespectful manner. As a matter of fact both hands were extended in the air. He was unarmed except for a night stick innocently hanging by his side. His Negro M.P. companion submitted to arrest and was held over night in the police station. The wounded soldier was taken to a civilian hospital where he lay for hours bleeding and in a weakened condition, in the basement, receiving no medical care. He was then taken to Camp Livingston Hospital, operated upon in a serious and mortal condition where he died some three days later.

This officer who killed this soldier is still at large and has never as much as been questioned by the local or state authorities. In other words, there seems to be a premium placed on the murder of Negro M.P. soldiers in the performance of their duty in the Alexandria area. Alexandria is the center of four of the largest military camps in the south, namely, Claiborne, Livingston, Polk and Beauregard.

We Negro civilians noted the lie published in our local newspaper, The Alexandria Town Talk, and also released to the Press by the Police Department to cover up one of the most dastardly deeds committed since the famous riot of January 10, 1942, when Negro M.Ps. and other military personnel were likewise shot down and beaten unmercifully without cause by the same local and state police. At that, also similar lies were offered to the press, accusing Negro soldiers of disturbing the peace, but after an unbiased and exhaustive investigation by Federal authorities every Negro soldier was exonerated and released from protective

custody.

It is likewise noted that no civilian policeman was ever reprimanded for that massacre, and our southern white press either silently condoned or ignored the matter entirely. May we expect the same procedure to be repeated in this instance? In other words, will the same whitewash be reenacted in this case or will justice, law, and order prevail whereby the city of Alexandria will be placed under Federal police and martial law, since it has by deed and example proven itself incapable or unwilling to protect our soldiers who are offering their lives for their country and anxious to strike at the enemy of democracy represented by Hitler, Tojo and Mussolini. If the present status quo continues and these patriotic Negro soldiers continue to be sacrificed by these ignorant selfish and bigoted southern civilian police officers, there can be no other alternative except fair and impartial police protection of our army personnel by the U. S. Government.

We as Negroes in the city of Alexandria and outlying parishes realize that we have taken a bold stand when we utter these statements, but we are speaking not only for the Negroes of this State, but for the liberal whites are well. AYE! We are speaking for all Americans, hoping that this incident which has far reaching implications and repurcussions may become known to the President of the U.S.A., Secretary of War, Attorney General, F.B.I. and other law enforcing agencies in the Federal government, which may be of assistance in correcting these evils.

We are hopeful that the southern white press as well as the northern press will give this letter wide publicity and even editorial comments because all Americans are at the cross road, and we must act in unison and ever be ready to unearth and rectify those evils, which if uncorrected, only serve to furnish fuel for Axis consumption.

Finally, we hope that our War Department will not sit supinely by after a careful investigation has been made, and continue to condone lawlessness and murder under the pretext of not wishing to offend the sensitivities of a few ignorant reactionary individuals or groups who permit murder under the guise of state rights or local self government.

Signed by the loyal, patriotic and hard working colored people of the city of Alexandria and State of Louisiana.