

PJM 3416

27 APRIL 1967

**An Open Letter to the People of Lynchburg:**

Frustration and bitterness have been developing among the Negro citizens of the City of Lynchburg, and many white citizens consider this situation to be injurious to the good relations which have existed among the people of our community.

It is the judgment of these citizens that the Lynchburg newspapers are contributing to this frustration and bitterness by pursuing policies tending to increase these tensions. To persist in these policies can only be destructive of the general morale as well as the reputation of our community.

In the midst of this climate, the Negro citizens of Lynchburg have resisted appeals to follow those who have caused serious disturbances of the public peace and generated waves of lawless behavior in other communities. Negro citizens of Lynchburg, for the most part, have admirably turned their backs on outsiders who have no genuine concern for this community. They deserve the gratitude of the community for the quality of their citizenship as shown in their patience and hopefulness in the face of continued frustration.

Two policies of the Lynchburg newspapers, in particular, are sources of continuing annoyance to our Negro citizens and of embarrassment to a growing number of white persons:

- (1) the exclusion of news about Dunbar High School and the achievements of that school's students and faculty; and
- (2) the exclusion of announcements of deaths and funeral arrangements for Negro citizens except through paid advertisements.

We earnestly feel that Negro citizens of the community deserve prompt relief from these two policies and we urge the newspaper's management to change these policies not only to aid in developing a healthier interracial feeling but to advance the total progress of our community.

As we press this point, we hope that our Negro citizens will be encouraged by the knowledge that there are many thoughtful white citizens in this community who appreciate their continued willingness, in spite of repeated indignities by the newspapers, to help promote a more wholesome climate throughout the City of Lynchburg.

Lynchburg Chamber of Commerce  
George T. Hughes, President,  
by action of Board of Directors

Retail Merchants Association  
D. Ralph Gray, President,  
by action of Board of Directors

Central Virginia Industries  
James B. Hutter, President,  
by action of Board of Directors

Lynchburg Board of Realtors  
William M. Walker, President,  
by action of Board of Directors

Henry E. McWane  
M. Carey Brewer  
John M. Payne  
John D. Capron  
V. Howard Ford  
Charles G. Baber  
G. Everett Bond  
B. C. Baldwin, Jr.  
R. H. Harrison  
Ernest M. Taylor  
Samuel H. Williams, Sr.  
Charles A. Glenn

J. Holmes Kyle  
C. R. Pettyjohn  
Henry M. Sackett, Jr.  
Michael E. Shea  
Walter A. Garbee, Jr.  
Allen W. Harvey  
Walter G. Mason  
George C. Walker  
D. H. Dillard  
Robert C. Watts, Jr.  
William S. Patterson  
W. Martin Johnson  
L. D. Horner, III  
J. Mott Robertson  
Fred B. Fuqua  
J. Everette Fauber, Jr.  
Edward S. Graves  
David E. Basten  
R. P. Gifford  
E. V. Howerton  
Joan S. Jones  
S. W. Green  
John S. Morris, Jr., M.D.  
C. A. Sydnor, Jr.  
Lea Booth  
Percy N. Burton  
R. Frank Duncum  
Yuille Holt, Jr.

H. G. Leggett  
Robert S. Lockridge  
Robert C. Mark  
William F. Quillian, Jr.  
Paul E. Sackett  
Fred L. Showalter, Sr.  
George T. Stewart  
Gorham B. Walker, Jr.  
Robert B. Taylor  
James R. Forehand, Jr.  
Thomas O. Doyle  
Frank N. Buck, M.D.  
John H. Oglesby  
Danny A. Briggs  
J. Easley Edmunds, Jr.  
P. G. Cosby, Jr.  
James R. Gilliam, Jr.  
W. A. Carrington  
Bryant O. Phillips  
Harry Green  
Charles D. Hamner, Jr.  
John W. Ferguson, Jr.  
J. Gilliam Conrad  
W. E. Betts, Jr.  
George B. Craddock, M.D.  
Jack McCarthy  
A. G. Jefferson



Harold Leggett was the first major white retailer in Lynchburg to employ black salespersons. Courtesy of The News & Advance.

See; Lynch's Ferry Spring 2004