September 30, 1974

Presentor: Patrick F. Jones, Jr.
Lena Park Community Development Corporation

To: The Massachusetts Black Caucus
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

The Honorable Francis W. Sargent
Governor, State of Massachusetts
State House
Boston, Massachusetts

Dear Governor Sargent:

The Black Community Caucus on Education, a group of community parents, agencies and clergy has today convened an "Assembly of Justice" to articulate with our friends our concerns for our children stemming from the desegregation of the Boston Schools. We have obeyed the law and sent our children to the schools to which they were assigned. In some places they have been met by hostile, taunting mobs. The Boston Police Department has made valiant, and generally successful, attempts to protect the children. But we realize that this massive effort has left the City as a whole underprotected and they cannot indefinitely continue on this course.

The law is clear in its mandate. Each segment of government must accept its responsibility to uphold and implement the law. We do not believe that the state has fully accepted its responsibilities in this regard. Therefore, we are asking you as Governor to:

1. Use your power to see that the law is completely and impartially implemented.

2. Consider the implications of the limitations of the Boston Police Department and take the necessary steps to ensure the protection of our children by mobilizing State Police and asking for federal support should this become necessary.

3. Monitor the rippling effects of the racism which has surfaced from this controversy and
threatens the safety of individual Black citizens as well as areas of the city with predominantly Black populations.

4. Direct the Commissioner of Education to provide the maximum amount of money to the City to effectuate the Court's orders.

As Massachusetts prepares to celebrate the Bicentennial of the American Revolution, let it not be said that when it came to the reality of implementing the ideology of equal opportunity and the rights of every citizen to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" that Massachusetts could not respond in keeping with its history as the birthplace of American liberty.

Clearly, the final and fundamental responsibility for the safety of our children resides in the Black community. We have accepted the law, we have worked to achieve its implementation. We expect others to be as law-abiding as we have been and are now. We expect you to urge that the same restraint and compliance exercised by the Black community be followed by the total Boston community, and to take whatever steps lawlessness requires.

Respectfully yours,

Thomas Atkins, President
NAACP

Mrs. Ruth Batson
Solomon Carter Fuller Community Mental Health Center Consultation and Education

Dr. Patricia Goler
Archdiocesan Commission on Human Rights

Ms. Ellen Jackson
Institute for Education
The Honorable Francis W. Sargent

Patrick F. Jones, Jr.
Lena Park Community Development Corporation

Ms. Gloria Joyner
Educational Task Force

Ms. Elma Lewis
National Center for Afro-American Artists

Mr. & Mrs. Otto Snowden
Freedom House

Roger Taylor
Columbia Point Concerned Citizens

Rev. William Weeks
Black Ministerial Alliance

Percy Wilson
Roxbury Multi Service Center