


From: Community Relations Commission   
121 Memorial Drive, SW  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303  
For Release, Thursday, September 25, 11:00 A.M.

BEN HILL LEADERS DEPLORE VANDALISM

*Mayor — We had a fine response!*  
*Nat*

A group of Ben Hill church, school, business and community leaders released a statement today expressing their "shock and shame" at an act of vandalism directed against a Negro family recently who moved on an all white street in this southwest Atlanta community.

The McMichael family purchased a home on Kimberly Road and moved into it in late August. Vandals hit once breaking windows and hit again some three days later. The McMichael's elected to move and their money was refunded by the real estate agent who sold the property.

The statement by the group of Ben Hill leaders continued: "We know the spirit of this community. We believe that the good people of Ben Hill and surrounding communities want their moral support placed behind the movement for fairness in housing and equality in education. We encourage that every effort be made by the Atlanta Police Department to apprehend the offender so that justice will prevail and respect for the law be strengthened in event that a similar situation should face us again. We believe that man, his person and his personality, is sacred and that property rights must be respected and that unless we can come to this point of view, none of us are safe." This statement represented the first collective effort of censure from that community. The group met at the Ben Hill Methodist Church with the Atlanta Community Relations Commission acting as the convener.

Among those participating in the meeting were: Rev. L. Clyde Allen, Bill Atchison, Ernest R. Bennett, Rev. W. C. Bowen, Kenneth R. Drane, Milton S. Earnest, John Geren, Rev. William Geren, Mrs. Thelma Heath, James R. Lemon, Walker McKnight, Charles L. Moates, Dr. Harmon D. Moore, H. Jack Smith, Charles Stinson, Jr., Ray Terry, Jr., Cecil M. Thornton, Lyndon Wade, Thomas G. Ward, Nat Welch, Rev. Paul F. Wohlgemuth and Cy Young.