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# Chamber President Backs Integration

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WASHINGTON (AP)—The president of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce said Saturday it is urgent that businessmen give leadership and support to prompt and peaceful racial integration.

Edwin P. Neilan, Wilmington, Del. banker, who became head of the country's largest business organization last month, gave his views in a telephone interview which may foretell a major new policy stand for the chamber.

He said he believes the chamber's 64-member Board of Directors, which meets here June 28, should give serious consideration to such a declaration of belief. The chamber never has taken an official position on the issue.

Chamber policies normally are adopted by delegates voting at annual meetings but emergency declarations can be made by the board acting alone.

Despite the hazard of boycotts and reprisals, Neilan said, local business leaders should take the initiative in joining with Negro spokesmen and representatives of other segments of community life in drafting plans to end segregation in business places and public facilities.

"And I believe the timetables

should not be too slow, with intergration deferred unduly," the banker added.

"They should move fast enough to avoid the buildup of emotional pressures that can result in hostility and violence."

Approval by the directors of Neilan's stand, even if not in the form of an official policy statement, would bolster support for President Kennedy's appeal last Tuesday for business leadership in the orderly desegregation of stores, theaters, restaurants and other business establishments.

Until the recent spread of racial strife beyond the South, Neilan said, the issue never was deemed national in scope and thereby subject to national chamber action.

But Neilan moved on his own this week. He issued a statement urging upon businessmen the "good examples" given by businessmen in Birmingham, Ala., and other troubled cities in seeking moderate solutions to explosive problems.

The 58-year-old financier, president and board chairman of the bank of Delaware, spoke in more specific terms Saturday of what he regards as the responsibility of businessmen.