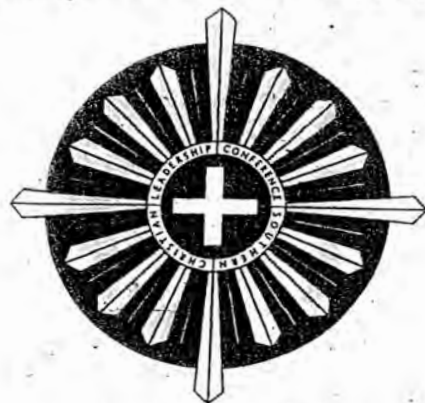


SCLC*Newsletter*

Volume 1

April, 1962

No. 6

NEW STAFF

S.C.L.C. announced recently the addition of five new members to the staff. The five men are: John H. Calhoun, Herbert V. Coulton, James L. Bevel, Fred C. Bennette, Jr., and Bernard S. Lee.

John H. Calhoun, serves as Georgia State Organizer for 1962-63 in the voter registration drive, is a native of Greenville, South Carolina. Mr. Calhoun attended Hampton Institute, Northwestern University and Morehouse College, from which he received the A. B. degree. He also attended Atlanta University.

Herbert V. Coulton of Petersburg, Virginia, serves as Field Secretary in the drive in Virginia, Tennessee and North Carolina. Mr. Coulton is concentrating his efforts in the 4th Congressional District in the South end of Virginia. Mr. Coulton attended Virginia State College and while serving in the army from 1957 to 59, he attended the University of Hawaii on a special grant.

James L. Bevel of Itta Bena, Mississippi and Cleveland, Ohio, is Field Secretary in the area of Mississippi. He was active in the Student Movement in Nashville, Tennessee. He served as Chairman of this movement for one year. While a student at the American Baptist Theological Seminary College in Nashville, he pastored the Chestnut Grove Baptist Church at Dixon, Tennessee.

Field Secretary for Georgia is Fred C. Bennette, Jr., a student at Atlanta's Turner Theological Seminary. A world War II and Korean War veteran, he is a tireless civil rights worker.

Early in 1961, Mr. Bennette was arrested in Atlanta's Terminal Station for "trespassing" while returning from a speaking engagement. He is currently out on bail and awaiting a hearing on that charge. He formerly was associated with the Atlanta Student Movement and at that time was popularly known as "Le Commandante."

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On foot, Dr. King and party start "Operation Door-Knock."

SCLC PEOPLE TO PEOPLE TOUR

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his SCLC task force swept into Southside Virginia at the tail-end of March recruiting more than 250 volunteers for its Freedom Corps and "Nonviolent Army." The Virginia visit coordinated by the Virginia SCLC's hard-driving Milton A. Reid of Petersburg, marked the second "people-to-people" tour of the Atlanta-based organization.

Dr. Reid indicated that his state unit's invitation to Dr. King's visit was geared to kick-off an intensive drive in the Fourth District and surrounding areas and provide moral support for the Rev. Curtis Harris, president of the Hopewell SCLC, who was convicted for contempt of court in the celebrated Boatwright Committee charge.

The King task force included the amiable Ralph Abernathy, partner in the Montgomery struggle, Wyatt Tee Walker, former Petersburg pastor and Staff Director of SCLC, Mrs. Dorothy Cotton, Director of the Citizenship Education Schools and two field secretaries in Voter Registration, Bernard Lee of Atlanta and Herbert Coulton of Petersburg.

The two-day tour began in Petersburg with a luncheon with Fourth District leaders at the Zion Baptist Church that was followed immediately by a voter registration canvass supervised by SCLC's field secretary for Virginia, Herbert Coulton. The Blandford section of Petersburg was flooded for two hours with Dr. King and his supporters ringing door bells and gathering data from the neighborhood to increase the voting strength in the Second Ward. Several homeowners were amazed to see Dr. King and Rev. Abernathy among the other clergy and leaders actually participating in operation "Door Knock."

Tuesday night, the SCLC caravan moved into Lynchburg, Virginia and literally took this mountain city by storm. The ram-packed E. C. Glass High School

(Continued on Page 4)

SCLC Newsletter

Publisher, SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN
LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

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Atlanta, Georgia
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DOROTHY GAINES, *Associate Editor*

STAFF

(Continued from Page 1)

Bernard S. Lee, 26, serves as Student Liaison in the five key states (South Carolina, Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi and Louisiana). He is a Korean War veteran, a former student at Morris Brown College, and has worked for S.C.L.C. since 1960, when he arrived in Atlanta from Montgomery, Alabama.

He led the sit-ins in Montgomery and was expelled from Alabama State College because of his participation. Later, he was one of the students selected to appear before the platform committees of both National Conventions in 1960.

He led the Freedom Ride from Atlanta to Albany and was one of the first to be arrested there.

He is married and the father of four children.



Atty. Len Holt and Mr. and Mrs. Harris

The South mourns the passing of the Reverend Theodore Trammell, who died of a heart attack while engaged in a spirited campaign for a congressional seat from the Third Congressional District of Mississippi.



Reverend Theodore Trammell

Southern Christian Leadership Conference

41 Exchange Place, S. E.
Atlanta 3, Georgia

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., *President*

WYATT TEE WALKER, *Director*

MEMO TO: All Faithful SCLC Supporters

FROM: Home Office

RE: Annual Board Meeting

SCLC is growing by leaps and bounds. Many wonderful things have happened because of your faith in us. We invite you to be with us in Chattanooga on the dates given below. We have a lot of good news and many new services to offer your community. Please bend every effort to be with us.

IMPORTANT DATA

SUBJECT: Annual Board Meeting

DATE: May 15th - 16th (Tuesday and Wednesday)

PLACE: Chattanooga, Tennessee

HQST: Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance

CO-SPONSORS: Chattanooga Civic Committee

GENERAL CHAIRMAN: Dr. Major Jones, SCLC Board
Member, 601 Dodson Street

COORDINATOR: The Reverend C. T. Vivian, SCLC Regional
Representative

HEADQUARTERS: Monumental Baptist Church
Reverend John Cooper, Minister

MINISTERS' PILGRIMAGE

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., President of The Southern Christian Leadership Conference, joined with Dr. Milton A. Reid, head of its Virginia Affiliate, in calling on all Virginia ministers and laymen to journey to Hopewell, Virginia for the contempt trial of the Reverend Curtis W. Harris on the 29th and 30th of March.

The contempt action against the Reverend Harris arose out of his refusal to give names and other information about activities to secure integration to the Virginia Legislative Committee in September of last year.

At the preliminary hearing of this contempt action against Reverend Harris on January 19, 1962 in the Circuit Court of Hopewell, Virginia, more than 100 ministers and laymen rallied in support of the protest leader, Reverend Harris. For the trial on the 29th and 30th of March, the townspeople opened their homes to accommodate overnight those who were expected to come from great distances.

Dr. King, President of S.C.L.C. in endorsing the protest pilgrimage commented: "The strongest resource that is possessed by those of us desiring to see an America free of racism, is our strength of numbers. Whenever a fighter for freedom, such as Reverend Harris, is under attack, every available person ought to witness with his person two fundamental concepts: His opposition to the persecution of those who believe segregation is an intolerable evil, and his unqualified support of those whose lives are a living embodiment of the necessity of striving toward freedom."

SCLC PROFILE

Dr. Cuthbert Simpkins, the young Shreveport, Louisiana dentist whose desegregation efforts have met with reprisals in the form of cross burnings on his lawn and the total demolition of an almost completed \$50,000 house he was building, is a man courageous enough to sum up his situation with, "I assume my civil rights activities had something to do with it."

Dr. Simpkins has been a vitally concerned observer of injustices perpetrated against Negroes since early childhood when he saw a policeman "just drive up and shoot a Negro" for disturbing the peace.

On another occasion, while on his way to Sunday School, he saw a white man beating a Negro with a bullwhip because the Negro owed him five dollars.

While serving as an Air Force officer, assigned to a New York base he was denied housing on the base even though he had been assured that he would get it. Not a hotel or motel within a 50 mile area would take him in with his wife and children. He finally found substandard lodgings in Ithaca 40 miles from the base.

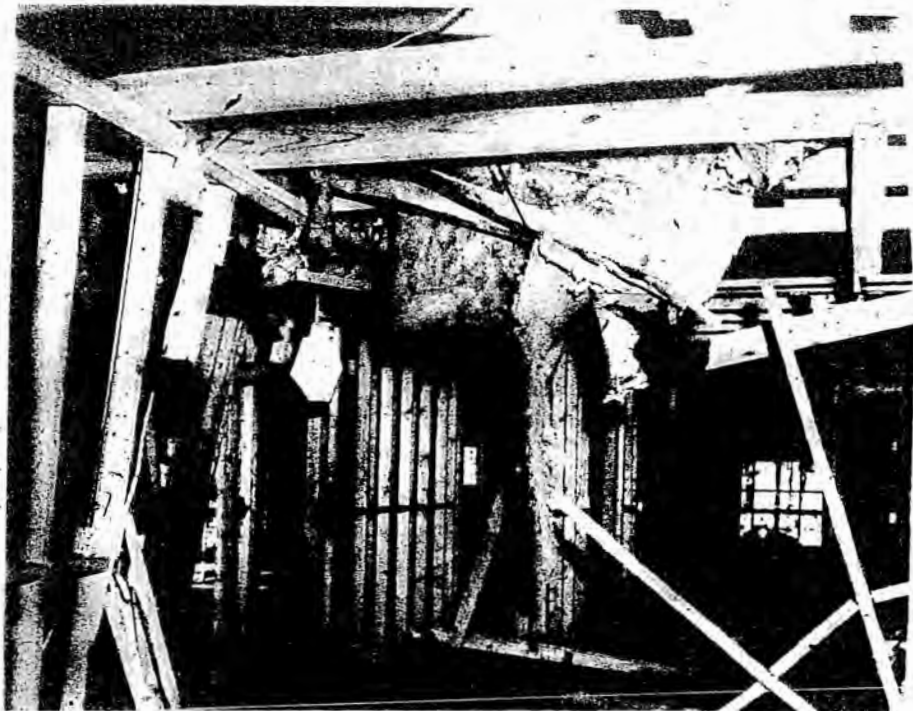
After a year he went to Washington and filed a complaint. An Air Force Colonel told him to "go back and wait." Simpkins threatened to go directly to President Harry Truman. "I believe you would," said the colonel. The Simpkins family then got housing on the base.

In 1952, he ran for the school board in Shreveport, the first Negro to run for public office in Louisiana since Civil War days. He lost that election, but never stopped urging and helping his fellow Negroes to register and vote.

As a member of the Board of Directors of SCLC, and President of the United Christian Movement (an SCLC affiliate), Dr. Simpkins has given unstintingly of himself for the cause of civil rights.

He was largely responsible for arranging the appearance of Louisiana leaders before the Civil Rights Commission during their investigation of segregation practices in that state.

The bombing of his almost completed new home on February 11th followed by a week, a cross burning on the lawn of his office which adjoins his present home at 1508 Gary Street. Following that cross burning, police apprehended suspects travelling in a station wagon in which was a cross and Klu Klux Klan literature. The suspects were released "for lack of evidence" showing them to be the persons responsible for the cross burning on Dr. Simpkins' lawn.



Wreckage of C. O. Simpkins home after bombing.

Shortly after, Dr. Simpkins' home, furnishings, office equipment, malpractice liability, landlord's risk, and summer home furnishing insurance were all peremptorily canceled. He has since found a firm which will insure him.

A native of Mansfield, Louisiana, Dr. Simpkins attended Wiley College and Tennessee State University. He earned his dental degree at Meharry Medical College. He is a 32nd Degree Mason and a member of Alpha Phi Alpha.

Above all, he is a fighter, a calm fighter, who is determined to keep on fighting for civil rights equality as long as he lives.

Suggested Reading

"THE OTHER AMERICA"

(Poverty in the United States), by Michael Harrington, The McMillan Company, New York (\$4.00), ably depicts the plight of the 50,000,000 people in America who are poor, poor, poor.

Says author Harrington, "If these people are not starving, they are hungry, and sometimes fat with hunger, for that is what cheap foods do. They are without adequate housing and education and medical care." Must reading for all Negroes.

PREGNANT DIANE NASH ENROUTE TO JACKSON JAIL

As the newsletter went to press, word came that Diane Nash, fearless Freedom Fighter and wife of James Bevel, S.C.L.C. Field Secretary for Mississippi, was enroute from Cleveland, Mississippi to Jackson, Mississippi to face a possible two-year prison sentence. The plight of this inspired girl was the result of the failure of her attorney to appear for hearing on her appeal of a 1962 conviction. (It is standard procedure for courts to notify defendants to appear for hearings. Neither Diane nor her attorney received such notification).

In July, 1961, acting as a member of the Freedom Ride Coordinating Committee, Diane directed local citizens of Jackson, Mississippi, in an attempt to enter the main waiting room of the Jackson Greyhound Bus Terminal. Forty persons were arrested some of whom were high school students. Diane was arrested for contributing to the delinquency of minors and convicted in the local courts. Pending an appeal, she was released on \$2,000 bond.

Expecting a baby in August Diane determinedly stated as she set out for Jackson, "I am going to serve this two year jail sentence unless the charges are dropped."

COMING

WEDNESDAY,
JUNE 6, 8 P.M.

Atlanta Municipal
Auditorium

Harry Belafonte

and his entire company, featuring the
-South African chanteuse,

MIRIAM MAKEBA

Harry Belafonte was acclaimed by Ed Sullivan Sunday night April 22nd as, "one of the greatest artists in the world today."

Seat Prices
Orchestra \$5, \$7, \$10, \$15
Lodge, \$7, \$10, \$15
Dress Circle, \$5

For seat reservations, call 524-3849
Address mail orders to Belafonte Concert
Committee, Suite 402, 41 Exchange Pl.,
S.E., Atlanta 3, Georgia

CONTRIBUTIONS

I wish to contribute to the work of
SCLC and the social struggle in the
South.

NAME

ADDRESS

(street)

(city & state)

Amount of Contribution

Send to: SCLC
41 Exchange Place, S.E.
Atlanta 3, Georgia

VIRGINIA TOUR (Continued from Page 1)

auditorium site of the Western Virginia "Freedom Rally" was described by Virgil Wood, Lynchburg SCLC prexy, as "the greatest turnout we have ever seen in history." From the 2500 enthralled freedom supporters, 118 "Freedom Corps" volunteers were recruited in a moving appeal by Rev. Abernathy. More than a score of white persons, men and women, were among those who came forward toward the close of the meeting. The entire audience was visibly moved when Chuck Moran, a white lad of nine, came forward and gave his hand to Dr. King as his gesture to join the nonviolent struggle.

Wednesday morning at daybreak found the caravan on its way again, this time to the county seat of Prince Edward County's beleaguered school-less children. (This Virginia County closed its public schools three years ago to avert desegregation). Farmville's peerless leader and prophet, The Rev. L. Francis Griffin, was assured by Dr. King that he would return again and pledged SCLC's full support in their heroic struggle. Dr. King spent more than an hour with 250 townspeople and some fifty children with whom he chatted informally in the lower church of the First Baptist Church served by Rev. Griffin.

Noonday, found the King entourage at Virginia State College where the non-violent leader of the struggle in the South delivered an address, "The Tragedy of Sleeping Through a Revolution" in a campus-wide assembly that college officials described as the "largest voluntary assembly in the history of the school." Virginia Hall auditorium's capacity of 2600 was sorely taxed to accommodate the crowd. By 2:30 p.m. the SCLC task force was in near-by Hopewell, Virginia where city officials supplied Dr. King and his followers with an anteroom in the court house building where he commended 62 convicted sit-inners for their courage and devotion to nonviolence and human dignity.

By nightfall, two stops had been made in Dinwiddie County, Virginia, another Negro-majority county. In the Mt. Level Community at the church of the same name, a standing-room-only church full heard informal remarks from their former minister, Wyatt Tee Walker and Dr. King. A half hour drive across the county brought the "people-to-people" tour toward its climax in the Rocky Branch community. Without a break, the final public meeting featuring Dr. King, was held at the First Baptist Church Petersburg, where scores of people were turned away as early as eight o'clock in the evening.

One hundred and fifty-eight volunteers were received for the Freedom Corps and nonviolent army.

Before taking leave of Virginia's Black Belt, Dr. King and the Rev. Mr. Walker accompanied Dr. Reid and a score of ministers from around the state to the contempt trial of the Rev. Curtis Harris in Hopewell Municipal Court.

"The Fourth District has never seen anything like this," commented Dr. Milton Reid. "If we buckle down now and get to work, we can send a Negro Congressman to Washington from the Black Belt, just as Dr. King has said."

State leaders who accompanied Dr. King and his party across the Commonwealth included the Rev. David Collins of Williamsburg, the Rev. R. G. Williams of Petersburg, the Rev. Curtis Harris of Hopewell and the Rev. Mr. Wood of Lynchburg.

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