

Newsletter

Volume 1

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Number 9

Burned Churches...

Portion of 400 persons who observed ground-breaking ceremony for three churches burned last summer. Walker, author of statement below is shown 2nd to right of Dr. King.

Ground-Breaking Services Held

The following are introductory remarks by Wyatt Tee Walker, Executive Assistant to Martin Luther King, Jr.

During the last summer, the dynamism and fervor of the Albany Movement electrified all of South Georgia. It was the most dramatic bid for self-respect and human dignity in the Negro community since the Freedom Ride of 1961. The sharp lines of racial separation and discrimination in the general Albany area ultimately overflowed the cup of the Negro community's patience and twice, within the span of a year, the Albany Movement erupted in its bid for Freedom.

The Albany Movement was prodded by the voter registration activity of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the December protest as well as the July and August activity, were supplemented by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and two of its titular leaders, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Ralph D. Abernathy. Parallel to the registration and direct action efforts in Albany, SNCC maintained training centers in Lee and Terrell County to aid the rural community equip itself for full citizenship. The church communities of Leesburg and Sasser were particularly responsive.

The impact of the revived activity of the Albany Movement in early July and increase of staff workers on summer internships with SNCC, produced a never-ending series of incidents directed at harassing the work of voter registration.

The harassment degenerated to church burnings and/or bombings. On the morning of August 15th, Miss Margaret Dammond of the SNCC staff notified SCLC headquarters in Albany that the Shady Grove Baptist Church at Leesburg had been almost leveled by fire in the aftermath of an obvious bombing. Scarcely three weeks later, on September 9th, the Mount Olive and the Mount Mary churches were burned to the ground

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**SPRING
ISSUE**

SOLID WALL OF SEGREGATION CRACKS AT ALBANY

By Martin Luther King, Jr.

Sharp social change is painful and at times painfully *slow*. This has been apparent at Albany, Georgia, scene of the largest "jail-ins" of the non-violent movement. The City Commission, recently repealed the entire section of the city code that carried segregation ordinances. Despite the fact that this was only an obvious maneuver to preserve the segregated system through some sophisticated technique other than by law, it is of critical significance to those who have been working for more than a year to "democratize" this now-famous southwest Georgia city.

The repeal of the city's segregation laws indicates clearly that the city fathers are realistically facing the legal death of segregation. The city is not wont to battle in the legal arena because the outcome, with all its costliness, is a forgone conclusion. In the wake of the legal retreat at Albany, the public library has been opened on a 30-day "trial" basis—*integrated!*

To be sure, neither of these related
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Dr. King, SCLC president, breaks ground for burned churches at Shady Grove in Lee County. The Rev. J. D. Ousley at right shoulder of Dr. King, pastor of Shady Grove, looks on, with the Rev. William Boyd (left) minister of Mount Mary in Terrell County. The Rev. Benjamin Gay, Albany movement leader, is shown at right.



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DIS 'N DATA

Have You Read . . . **Freedom to The Free?** This is the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights report, issued in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, of national progress in civil rights during the last 100 years. Copies may be ordered for \$1.00 from the U. S. Government Printing Office in Washington.

Did You Know . . . of the **Annual Board Meeting** in Memphis, April 30-May 1st?

Have You Heard . . . the **American Dream?** There are 50 copies of this hi-fidelity recording left at the home office. Only \$3.50. Special prices for schools and churches. Address orders: The American Dream, SCLC Newsletter, Auburn Avenue, N. E. This record of a major NLK speech at Syracuse University will soon be a collector's item.

Have You Seen . . . "**Committee On Un-American Activities,**" a documentary black and white film of the past 25 years of HUAC's hearings? Various persons who are critical of the Committee, such as Congressman James Roosevelt and Wyatt Tee Walker, tell why they oppose it. Organizations and institutions interested in showing this film should write to:

Robert Cohen Productions
Film Sales Department
P. O. Box 1641
Beverly Hills, California.

THE 22 BILLION DOLLAR GIANT

By Mr. Robert J. Brown, President of B & C Associates, public relations and market research firm, High Point, N. C.

The growing Negro market is receiving more attention today than ever before in history. But more important than the sales aspect is the enlightened attitude of many companies toward the nation's 19 million Negroes and the contributions they, as individuals, are capable of making in the field of commerce and industry.



Robert J. Brown

Some companies, of course, are still slow in recognizing the great potential offered by the Negro market both as purchasers of their products and services and as employees. Others are interested in the Negro market primarily for increased sales. Still others are motivated by the increased militancy and potency of such organizations as SCLC, NAACP, CORE and SNCC.

This growing awareness of the Negro market has brought about brand new marketing techniques by many companies. To implement these new programs, many companies have had to set up special training programs or to go outside and compete actively for experienced and competent Negro personnel. Many companies, for the first time, have opened up job classifications and created opportunities heretofore restricted.

These classifications are not confined to any one category, but include a broad list ranging right on up, in many cases, to policy-making positions. Some of the larger companies who have become aware of this 22 billion dollar giant and who are taking steps to cultivate it are: Bell & Howell, Coca-Cola, Pepsi Cola, R. J. Reynolds, and F. W. Woolworth, just to name a few.

Although the employment picture for Negroes has brightened considerably in recent years, there is still, of course, a long way to go. A good deal more must be accomplished in this field before it can be said that equal opportunities exist for all. But, a significant point is that there is great momentum in this movement forward and it must continue vigorously if the Negro is to achieve his ultimate goal. Above all, the Negro *must not forget* that equal opportunity demands equal preparation and equal responsibility.

SCLC BENEFIT FEATURES LEADING ENTERTAINERS

The Westchester County Center in White Plains, New York was the site, December 11, of a "rock 'em, sock 'em" SCLC benefit. The multi-talented Sammy Davis, Jr. headlined the three hour show that featured comic Pat Henry and the Sy Oliver band. Peter Lawford, brother-in-law of President Kennedy, was on hand to "assist" Sammy with his props and paraphernalia. Mr. Lawford introduced SCLC prexy Martin King at intermission. King electrified the capacity audience with a stirring report of the challenge and progress in the Deep South.

The benefit, titled "Westchester Salute to Dr. King," was sponsored by a citizens committee headed by Mrs. Lottie Kunstler, wife of the famous civil rights attorney. Mrs. Kunstler reported a net of more than \$12,000 for SCLC work in the Deep South.

Two rallies held the following evening in Great Neck and Long Island City featured Dick Gregory, the comedian, and Dorothy Schlamm, the well-known folk singer. Don Schaffer, Manhattan insurance executive, coordinated the Long Island rallies which netted nearly \$12,000 for the SCLC voter registration program in seven Deep South states. If every month (fund raising) could be like December, it would be Christmas all year!



Sammy Davis Jr. (r) and Peter Lawford (l) "whoop it up" before a capacity audience at Westchester County Center.

Join The
NAACP

PROFILE OF THE MONTH

Milton A. Reid is a big man with a big heart. The six foot four, 260 pound Virginian has displayed through most of his pastoral career a keen sensitivity to social ills of our day. He is "Mr. Civil Rights" of Virginia.



Reid's civil rights career was heightened upon his reception of a "call" to the First Baptist Church in Petersburg, the parish he presently serves. There he teamed with two other SCLC personalities, Robert G. Williams and Wyatt Tee Walker, and formed what was respected among racist forces in the Old Dominion as the most formidable coalition of Negro leadership in the state. Reid and his colleagues organized the Petersburg Improvement Association, later lending aid and support in forming other protest groups around the state. Walker and Williams subsequently left Virginia for new responsibilities, but Reid remains, the titular and *de facto* leader of the civil rights forces in Virginia. Dr. Reid is largely responsible for the existence and life of the Virginia State Conference of SCLC. He has with ingenuity pressed for equal rights at lunch counters and restaurants, provided equal job opportunities, fought militantly for hospital desegregation, and has been a major force in the resurgences of the Negro voting strength in the Black Belt of Virginia.

Milton Reid has some scars from the civil rights wars of the South but he is a determined young giant who seeks the full emancipation of his people. He has been jailed three times in Virginia, faced the mob in Montgomery during the Freedom Ride and only last summer led a pilgrimage of clergymen from the mid-South to join the non-violent protests in Albany, Georgia.

SCLC STATE CONFERENCE ORGANIZED IN ALABAMA

Under the leadership of Martin Luther King and Ralph D. Abernathy, two former Alabamians, the Alabama State Conference of SCLC was organized early this year with sixteen organizations or communities as members. Three planning sessions were held around the state following SCLC's "People to People" tour last December. (The "People to People" tour led by Dr. King and staff visits some southern state every month or so and makes an intensive day by day itinerary with the grass-roots communities of a given section.) Montgomery, Talladega, and Anniston have been sites for the state meetings. Permanent officers for the year were selected at Birmingham in February with the Rev. Nelson Smith drawing the bid as state president. Rev. Smith is secretary of the Shuttlesworth-led, Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights, another SCLC affiliate.

Smith has set the next state meeting for Selma, Alabama where the state conference will launch its state-wide drive in voter registration. "We are going to concentrate on some of the key rural areas where the problem is admittedly more difficult but where the Negro community is a decided majority."

Some observers believe that a hard-hitting well organized structure of "grass-roots" organizations across the state can materially change the political atmosphere in Alabama.

GROUND-BREAKING SERVICES

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shortly before daybreak. Two of the three churches had been used as the meeting place for voter registration rallies sponsored by SNCC. The third, Mount Mary, was served by a minister, W. M. Boyd, prominent in the leadership of the Albany Movement. Perhaps by providence, Mr. Jackie Robinson arrived in Albany that very Sunday afternoon for a gigantic city-wide registration rally. Visiting the site of the two churches after conferring by phone with Drs. King and Abernathy on the West Coast, Mr. Robinson consented to serve as National Chairman of the SCLC Church Rebuilding Fund. Several days later the Atlanta Constitution initiated a fund appeal in Georgia. The Georgia Council of Churches, the Albany Movement and others cooperated individually and collectively to bring this day to pass.

Nearly \$70,000 in cash is on hand for the task of rebuilding these churches that had been so nobly used and so ignobly destroyed. More than half of this amount was realized through the tireless efforts of Mr. Robinson. Mr. Robinson's employer, Mr. William Black, started the fund drive with a personal gift of \$5,000, Governor Nelson Rockefeller followed with a personal gift of \$10,000. The Georgia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, led by Mr. Joseph Amisano of Toombs, Amisano & Wells, assumed the full responsibility of preparing acceptable sketches and drawing the blueprints. The Trappist Monks at Conyers, Georgia, committed themselves to providing the stained-glass windows. The United Church of Christ has made available through the Southern Regional Council a gift of \$5,000. Countless other offers of various gifts have been pledged.

The tragedy that beset these houses of worship has been off-set by all that is high and holy in our Hebraic-Christian tradition. As these new sanctuaries rise from the site of their charred remains, they symbolize the rising hopes of those who refuse to have their faith in the *American Dream* crushed forever to earth. They shall be eternal monuments of the indomitable human spirit that in oppression reveals a resiliency that turns darkness into light and despair into hope.

CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION PROGRAM TRAINS 212

The Reverend Andrew Young, administrator of the Citizenship Schools, has announced in the bi-annual report of CEP that 212 people have been trained at the Dorchester Center in McIntosh, Georgia since.

Citizens from nine southern states, in five monthly training sessions, were taught community organization in rural

and semi-urban areas, structuring in voter registration demonstrations, and training volunteers for civic action.

The Dorchester trainees have set up 104 schools in their home towns which meet two or three nights a week for three months. These schools have in turn a combined enrollment of 2,091 people.



Citizenship Education Class in Telfair, Ga.

With the Affiliates...

Virgil Wood, president of the Lynchburg Unit of SCLC, and his organization are heading the fight to thwart the double standard of justice in the Wansley case. Thomas Wansley, an 18 year old Negro, has been sentenced to die in the electric chair twice by an all-white jury on two alledged crimes of rape. In comparing Wansley's death sentence with a 5 year sentence give to a white man convicted of raping an 11 year old Negro girl, Negroes in Lynchburg have charged that a double standard was used. The Ghandi Society of Human Rights has agreed to interceed in the case and underwrite court costs. People interested in knowing more about the Wansley case, or contributing to the appeal fund, should write:

Lynchburg Unit, SCLC
P. O. Box 1-126
Lynchburg, Virginia

The Nashville SCLC has been making a frontal attack on segregation in hotels and restaurants. The city has been the scene of recent sit-ins and protest marches. The Reverend Kelly Miller Smith led a mass march to the downtown YMCA to protest segregation in downtown Nashville public facilities, and the arrests of Negroes at the "white" Y.

The Virginia State Conference of SCLC has been fighting for the desegregation of Central State Hospital, and has achieved it in the eating facilities. Central State Hospital is a segregated mental hospital, and until the action by the Virginia State SCLC, was segregated within itself.

In Edenton, there has been activity on two fronts. The Edenton Movement has asked the Chowan Hospital

to remove all racial signs. In their letter to the hospital authorities, they said, "We believe that segregation in the Chowan Hospital is unchristian, undemocratic, and unconstitutional." A prayer pilgrimage to the courthouse was organized to protest the jailing of Golden Frinks, director of the Edenton Movement, on contempt of court charges.

David Gunter, president of the Petersburg chapter of SCLC, is facing trial on April 2 for criminal contempt of the General Assembly. This grows out of SCLC leaders refusal to answer questions of the General Assembly's Committee on Offenses to the Administration of Justice. The Committee has been described as Virginia's answer to HUAC.

On March 17th police dogs were used against college students peacefully demonstrating in protest of theatre segregation in Petersburg.

In Alabama, The Gadsden Christian Citizens Committee has been pushing for equal rights by means of a three-prong attack. Sit-ins at lunch counters before Christmas resulted in over 70 arrests. CEP-trained teachers are conducting Citizenship Education classes, and more than 220 have attempted to register in the last two months as part of their voter registration program.



Negroes desegregate Danville (Va.) cemetery. Shown above are Julius Adams and A. I. Dunlap purchasing plot.

Segregation Cracks at Albany

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events can be measured as a full victory, but neither do they smack of defeat for those who have championed justice, self-respect and human dignity. It does, in fact, represent a partial victory, for it vindicates the direction in which the W. G. Andersos-led forces always moved. The repeal of the segregation ordinances and the vertical integration at the public library are only portents of that which is to come.

Many prophets of doom have written Albany off as an indefinite stalemate. The most important thing that has been accomplished has been the sensitizing of the Negro community to the injustices and immorality of the system of segregation.

It has been said that it is impossible to ride a man's back unless it is bent. If nothing else, the Negro in Albany has straightened his back. We say now as we have said earlier, Albany will never be the same again. You have not heard the last of that Southwest Georgia city.

CONTRIBUTIONS

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

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