

SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

208 AUBURN AVENUE, N.E.

ATLANTA 3, GEORGIA

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., PRESIDENT

WYATT TEE WALKER, DIRECTOR

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR

SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT

NOVEMBER 1 - APRIL 30, 1960

MR. PRESIDENT, OFFICERS, MEMBERS OF THE BOARD:

THESE SEVERAL MONTHS SERVING YOU, THE SOUTH, AND IN SOME WAYS THE NATION HAVE BEEN EXCITING AND EXASPERATING. HOWEVER, NO TASK, GREAT OR SMALL, IS WITHOUT THIS AMBIVALENCE. WHAT IS MORE IMPORTANT IS MAINTAINING THE TENACITY TO MOVE TOWARDS WORTHY GOALS IN A STRAIGHT LINE WITHOUT WHIMPERING AND COMPLAINING THAT SOMEBODY, SOMETHING, OR SOME CIRCUMSTANCE KEPT US FROM DOING OUR BEST.

FROM WHERE I SIT, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO GIVE AN OBJECTIVE APPRAISAL OF WHAT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED. PERHAPS IT WILL NOT BE UNTIL SOME DISTANT TIME IN THE FUTURE THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO REALLY DETERMINE WHAT HAS BEEN DONE. I DO KNOW THAT I HAVE LEARNED A GREAT DEAL, FOR I HAVE MADE MANY MISTAKES, AND ONE DOES LEARN DEEP AND LASTING LESSONS FROM HIS ERRORS.

SUFFICE IT TO SAY, FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS REPORT, THAT THERE IS MORE OF THE ROAD BEFORE US THAN THERE IS BEHIND US, AND THAT THE ROAD WE HAVE TRAVELED HAS AT TIMES BEEN MOST TORTUOUS.

POST SHREVEPORT . . . . .

WHAT HAS TRANSPIRED WITH SCLC SINCE OUR LAST HANDCLASP AT SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA?

IN RETROSPECT, THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ACTIVITY, DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY RELATED TO SCLC, MIGHT BE MENTIONED HERE AND THEN ALLUDED TO IN SOME DETAIL LATER IN THIS REPORT.

YOU WILL REMEMBER, THAT IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE ANNUAL MEETING OUR PRESIDENT BECAME SLIGHTLY INVOLVED WITH GEORGIA AUTHORITIES AND IN THE SWIFT SUCCESSION OF A FEW DAYS WAS ON HIS WAY TO A CHAIN GANG VIA THE REIDSVILLE, GEORGIA, PRISON. THIS INVOLVEMENT, AS SOME OF YOU KNOW, DID NOT COME ABOUT WITHOUT SOME SOUL-SEARCHING AND CONSIDERATION OF THE MANY POSSIBLE OUTCOMES. ASIDE FROM THE TREMENDOUS DRAIN ON THE PRESIDENT'S PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL RESOURCES, FOR WHICH WE MUST BE ETERNALLY GRATEFUL, THE BY-PRODUCTS OF THE PRESIDENT OF SCLC BEING SO INVOLVED WERE CERTAINLY SALUTARY AND GAVE A DEEPER MEANING TO WHAT WE ARE ABOUT.

OUT OF THIS CIRCUMSTANCE THERE GREW THE PRACTICAL RESULT OF A BROADENING OF SCLC'S OUTREACH AND APPEAL. ONE OF THE EVIDENCES OF THIS HAS BEEN A RESPONSE TO A FUND APPEAL THAT WILL CERTAINLY GO DOWN IN OUR HISTORY. AND AGAIN, THERE HAS BEEN AN INCREASING TENDENCY TO IDENTIFY DR. KING AS 'PRESIDENT OF THE SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE.'

ANOTHER HIGHLIGHT TO THESE SIX MONTHS HAS BEEN THE ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONING OF THE VIRGINIA CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE. THIS STATE ARM OF SCLC UNDER THE DYNAMIC LEADERSHIP OF MILTON A. REID OF PETERSBURG, VIRGINIA, PLAYED A DECISIVE ROLE IN THE INTERVENTION OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE TO REMEDY THE HEINOUS PRINCE EDWARD SITUATION.

DURING THE SAME PERIOD, OUR LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM, OUTLINED TO YOU IN SHREVEPORT, HAS REALLY GOTTEN OFF THE GROUND AND IN SEVERAL COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE SOUTH IS PRESENTLY OPERATIVE. THE SOUNDNESS AND VALIDITY OF SUCH A PROGRAM HAS BEEN ATTESTED TO BY A GRANT OF \$26,000.00 BY THE FIELD FOUNDATION OF NEW YORK CITY TO UNDERWRITE A YEAR'S PROGRAM. HOWEVER, ONE PHYSICAL OBSTACLE THWARTS ITS IMMEDIATE HIGH-GEARED OPERATION.



AT LAST, SOME OF YOU ARE SURE TO SAY, WE ARE DOING SOMETHING CONCRETE AND ORGANIZED IN VOTER REGISTRATION. WE HAVE BEEN INVITED INTO THE ALL CITIZENS VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVE IN ATLANTA. THE REASON FOR THIS CHOICE OF CITY WILL BE INDICATED FURTHER DOWN IN THIS REPORT. IT IS OUR SINCERE BELIEF THAT THIS IS OUR BIG OPPORTUNITY TO DO SOMETHING REALLY CREATIVE IN THE AREA OF VOTER REGISTRATION, AN ACHIEVEMENT THAT COULD SERVE AS A BLUEPRINT FOR THE ENTIRE SOUTH.

WE MUST MENTION THE INVOLVEMENT OF FOUR OF OUR OFFICIALS WITH THE ALABAMA AUTHORITIES. RALPH D. ABERNATHY, JOSEPH LOWERY, S.S. SEAY, SR., AND FRED SHUTTLESWORTH, TOO, HAVE FELT THE 'SLINGS AND ARROWS OF OUTRAGEOUS FORTUNE'. WE HAVE DONE AS MUCH AS WE KNEW TO DO UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES. HERE AGAIN, THE INTENSE INVOLVEMENT OF THESE FOUR OF OUR COMPATRIOTS HAS BEEN, PARADOXICALLY, A MEANS OF EXTENDING OUR WORK AND MESSAGE.

IT HAS BEEN CORRECTLY SAID THAT 'THE MIND CAN ONLY DIGEST WHAT THE SEAT CAN ENDURE'. IN LIGHT OF THIS TRUISM, MAY I TURN TO AN ORDERED AND PERHAPS LOGICAL RELATION OF THE AREAS WITH WHICH OUR HANDS HAVE BEEN BUSIED.

### S O C I A L   A C T I O N . . .

THE JAILING OF THE PRESIDENT MUST BE CLASSIFIED AS SOCIAL ACTION FOR IT WAS IN A REAL SENSE THE 'WORD BECAME FLESH'. IN A VERY DEFINITE SET OF CIRCUMSTANCES, MUCH OF WHAT SCLC STANDS FOR WAS CRYSTALLIZED IN THIS INSTANCE. WE CANNOT CLAIM THIS AS A PART OF OUR PROGRAM, PLANNED OR ANTICIPATED, BUT THE RESULTS OF SAME CREATED AND DEEPENED THE IMAGE OF WHAT SCLC REPRESENTS BY THE MERE INVOLVEMENT OF THE PRESIDENT. THE FACT THAT DR. KING IS OUR PRESIDENT, REQUIRED A GREAT MANY TASKS TO BE PERFORMED RELATIVE TO HIS JAILING THAT CONTINUE TO THIS VERY DAY.

MANY PEOPLE ACROSS THE SOUTH AND THE NATION WERE SPELL-BOUND BY THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL THAT HE WOULD ENTER THE PRINCE

EDWARD COUNTY SCHOOL-LESS SITUATION. TO BE SURE IT REQUIRED SOME INITIATIVE ON THE PART OF THE NEW FRONTIER, BUT WHAT WAS DONE COULD HAVE BEEN DONE MONTHS AGO. WE ARE VERY SURE THAT ONE OF THE LEVERS THAT PROMPTED THIS STEP WAS THE INTEREST AND CLIMATE OF OPINION GENERATED BY THE VIRGINIA CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE. THIS BEGAN WITH A PILGRIMAGE OF PRAYER SPONSORED BY THE VCLC THAT ATTRACTED MORE THAN 1200 PEOPLE TO THE COUNTY SEAT IN PRINCE EDWARD FROM ALL OVER VIRGINIA TO NONVIOLENTLY PROTEST THE ABSENCE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION.

THIS GROUP UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO MOBILIZE A SUITABLE NONVIOLENT DEMONSTRATION IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL. THUS WAS BORN THE CONGRESSIONAL SIT-IN UNDER THE SPONSORSHIP OF SEVERAL STATE AND NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS. THE ADMINISTRATION WAS MADE AWARE EARLY IN FEBRUARY OF OUR SINCERE INTENTIONS. MAY 17TH WAS FIXED AS A SUITABLE DATE. DR. KING HAD CONSENTED TO JOIN DR. REID, REV. GRIFFIN AND JIM FARMER OF CORE IN AUDIENCE WITH MR. KENNEDY. THE PLAN WAS THREE-PRONGED TO PROVIDE THE EXECUTIVE, THE JUDICIAL AND THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCHES OF OUR GOVERNMENT WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE SOME REMEDIAL ACTION. LATE IN APRIL, WE PRESUME THE KENNEDY ADMINISTRATION WAS CONVINCED WE WERE COMING DESPITE NEGATIVE SUASION FROM SEVERAL SOURCES, AND THIS INFLUENCED THEIR DECISION. FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES, IT IS BETTER TO HAVE A RECORD OF MOVING ON INITIATIVE THAN TO MOVE AT BAYONET POINT.

WE HAVE KEPT ABREAST OF THE FAYETTE COUNTY CRISIS AND ONE FIELD TRIP HAS BEEN MADE INTO THE COUNTIES AND NEARLY \$1,000 HAS BEEN FORWARDED TO <sup>THE</sup> JOHN MCFERREN ORGANIZATION THROUGH US. WE ARE PRESENTLY WORKING ON THAWING THE FREEZE ON GASOLINE THAT STILL PERSISTS. OUR INTEREST AND SUPPORT OF THE STUDENT MOVEMENT CONTINUES THROUGH THE COUNSEL, SUPPORT, AFFORDED THE STUDENT NONVIOLENT COORDINATING COMMITTEE.

#### FUND - R A I S I N G

AS INDICATED IN AN EARLIER REPORT, IF SCLC IS TO DO THE JOB IT MUST, IT IS IMPRACTICAL AND UNFAIR TO DEPEND UPON OUR PRESIDENT TO BE PERSONALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR RAISING THE CHIEF PORTION OF OUR BUDGET. THUSLY, WE HAVE SET FORTH AN ORGANIZED PLAN BY WHICH WE CAN DOVE-TAIL SEVERAL FUND-RAISING TECHNIQUES AND LESSEN THE BURDEN ON OUR LEADER.



THE BACK-BONE OF OUR FINANCIAL LIFE WILL BE OUR DIRECT MAILING LIST. ON A SINGLE APPEAL LETTER GROWING OUT OF THE KING JAILING, MORE THAN \$37,000 HAS BEEN GROSSED. WHEN OUR 'LIVE' LIST HAS BEEN BUILT TO 25,000, WE WILL HAVE THE KIND OF SOLID FINANCIAL BASE WE NEED.

OUR CRUSADES CONTINUE WITH OUR PRESIDENT MAKING APPEARANCES IN STRATEGIC METROPOLITAN AREAS ACROSS THE COUNTRY. HERETOFORE, WE HAVE DEPENDED ON LOCAL PERSONNEL TO SHOULDER THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ORGANIZING THE COMMUNITY, GATHERING THE FUNDS, HANDLING THE PROMOTION, ETC. NOW, WE HAVE EMBARKED ON A PROGRAM FOR THE CRUSADES WHERE A FINELY ORGANIZED JOB IS PERFORMED IN THE INTEREST OF THE CONFERENCE BY A MEMBER OF THE STAFF. SEVEN SUCH MEETINGS, USING THIS CLOSELY SUPERVISED APPROACH BY THE CONFERENCE, HAVE BEEN ARRANGED FOR THE PERIOD BETWEEN THE PRESENT AND JULY 1ST.

IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE ABOVE, WE HAVE INSTITUTED ANOTHER FUND-RAISING DEVICE BUILT UPON THE PHILOSOPHY THAT IT IS FAIRLY EASY TO GET A DOLLAR FROM SOMEONE FOR A GOOD CAUSE. THE MAJOR CHARITIES IN THE NATION USE THIS METHOD. THEIR OBJECTIVE IS TO GET ONE DOLLAR FROM A GREAT MASS OF PEOPLE. IN THIS SAME VEIN WE HAVE CREATED THE DOLLAR FOR FREEDOM CAMPAIGN THAT WILL CONTINUE IN SOME FORM YEAR ROUND. A TYPICAL ENVELOPE IS ATTACHED. THIS KIND OF SOLICITATION WORKS WITH GREAT FACILITY IN ALREADY-STRUCTURED INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS AND ADAPTS ITSELF VERY WELL TO OUR CRUSADE FORMAT. THERE ARE A COUPLE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL GIMMICKS THAT MAY PROVE HELPFUL ALSO.

THE BENEFIT REPORT SPEAKS FOR ITSELF. CARE MUST BE TAKEN ON THE CHOICE OF CITY AND THE SUPERVISION OF FUNDS FOR THE MAXIMUM NET TO BE REALIZED. THE USE OF FOUNDATION MONIES POSES SOME PROBLEMS BUT NONE THAT COULD NOT READILY BE RESOLVED BY A SEPARATE TAX EXEMPT SECTION GIVEN TO ONE OR MORE SPECIFIC AREAS OF OUR OVERALL PROGRAM.

OUR AFFILIATE DEVELOPMENT HAS BEEN SIDE-TRACKED A BIT BUT HERE AGAIN, THIS PROMISES TO BE A FERTILE AREA OF SUBSTAINED SUPPORT FINANCIALLY AND WITH SOME TANGIBLE HELP TO THE COMMUNITIES WHERE AFFILIATES EXIST, E. G. VCLC. WE HAVE NOW NEARLY FIFTY AFFILIATE ORGANIZATIONS, ONE-HALF OF WHICH



ARE IN VIRGINIA.

## EDUCATION

OUR LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM IS AT THIS MOMENT THE DARLING OF OUR EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM. I SHALL NOT TAKE THE TIME HERE TO DETAIL IT SINCE MRS. COTTON WILL DEAL WITH THOSE FACTS WHICH ARE MOST PERTINENT.

OUR PRINTED LITERATURE NOW INCLUDES IN ADDITION TO THE PERSONNEL BROCHURE, BROCHURES ON VOTER REGISTRATION, AND 'THIS IS SCLC' AND OUR MONTHLY NEWS-LETTER (ATTACHED).

OUR LIMITED STAFF HAS NOT ALLOWED US TO CONDUCT AS MANY INSTITUTES ON NON-VIOLENCE AS WE HAD HOPED, BUT ONE CREATIVE AND MEANINGFUL WORKSHOP WAS HELD IN LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA UNDER THE SPONSORSHIP OF THE LIA. THIS COMMUNITY HAS BEEN THE FOCAL POINT OF CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVITY FOR THE LAST SEVERAL MONTHS.

TO BE SURE, THE TRAVEL, PUBLIC MEETINGS, FUND-RAISING MEETINGS, LECTURES, ETC. HAVE AN EDUCATIONAL VALUE THAT MUST<sup>BE</sup>/MENTIONED BUT CANNOT BE DETAILED HERE. SUFFICE IT TO SAY, THE STAFF MEMBERS OF SCLC HAVE APPEARED ON MANY OF THE SIGNIFICANT PLATFORMS IN AMERICA.

## VOTER REGISTRATION

THE VOTER REGISTRATION PROSPECTUS ATTACHED TO THIS REPORT OUTLINES IN DETAIL WHAT WE PROPOSE IN THE AREA OF SUFFRAGE. IT IS OUR HOPE THAT IN ADDITION TO THE ATLANTA PROJECT, WE SHALL CONDUCT AND/OR ASSIST IN SIMILAR DRIVES IN MONTGOMERY AND MIAMI IN THIS CALENDAR YEAR.

## LEGAL DEFENSE

OUR PARTICIPATION IN EXTENSIVE LEGAL DEFENSE HAS BEEN INVOLUNTARY. THE LIBEL CASE HAS INVOLVED GREAT EXPENSE AS INDICATED IN THE REPORT FORWARDED FROM THE COMMITTEE IN NEW YORK. DR. KING'S DEFENSE IN THE TRAFFIC CASE WAS BORNE BY THE LEGAL DEFENSE AND EDUCATION FUND OF THE NAACP, THURGOOD

MARSHALL, DIRECTOR.

WE CANNOT GAINSAY HOW MUCH ANXIETY AND SACRIFICE HAS BEEN EXPENDED BY ABERNATHY, LOWERY, SEAY, AND SHUTTLESWORTH, BUT <sup>IN</sup> ANOTHER OF THE STRANGE WAYS THIS STRUGGLE CONTINUES TO EVOLVE, SCLC HAS BEEN HELPED AT THEIR EXPENSE AND WE OWE THEM MORE THAN WE CAN EVER PAY.

IT WAS FROM THIS POSTURE THAT THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE, WITH THE AID OF SOME LOYAL SUPPORTERS IN THE EAST, INCLUDING DR. THOMAS KILGORE, THAT AN EMERGENCY DEFENSE FUND WAS BEGUN TO AID IN SECURING THE ABERNATHY FARM AND PROVIDING SOME IMMEDIATE TRANSPORTATION FOR THE MEN WHOSE CARS WERE IMPOUNDED. A DETAILED REPORT HAS BEEN GIVEN YOU BY THE TREASURER.

#### S U M M A R Y

I DO NOT KNOW WHETHER THIS HAS ENTIRELY COVERED THE WATERFRONT BUT IN SOME MEASURE I HAVE ATTEMPTED TO PROVIDE A CURSORY GLANCE AT THE MAJOR AREAS OF THE CONFERENCE'S OPERATION. IF THERE ARE ANY INQUIRIES THAT YOU MAY HAVE, IN RESPECT TO OUR WORK, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO ASK PUBLICLY OR PRIVATELY. YOUR HELPFUL CRITICISM IS INVITED IN ORDER THAT THE LARGER DESTINY OF THE SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE MAY BE REALIZED. WE DESPERATELY NEED YOUR REAL SUPPORT, YOUR UNDERSTANDING, BUT MOST OF ALL YOUR PRAYERS.

#### R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S

THE RECOMMENDATIONS BELOW REPRESENT THE MOST IMMEDIATE NEED OF THINGS TO BE DONE IN BEST INTEREST OF THE CONFERENCE. I TRUST YOU WILL GIVE THEM YOUR FULL CONSIDERATION. THEY ARE CHIEFLY THE RESULT OF OUR WORK EXPERIENCE AND CONSULTATION WITH THE PRESIDENT AND TREASURER.

1. STAFF EXPANSION IS A MUST. THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE HAS ALREADY TAKEN SOME ACTION IN THIS REGARD. WHAT I SPECIFICALLY WISH CONSIDERED IN ADDITION TO THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE IS THE ADDING OF A STUDENT SECRETARY. THIS WOULD BE DONE ONLY AS THE BUDGET AND PROGRAM ALLOW.



2. IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE DIRECTOR, AND/OR PRESIDENT, BE ALLOWED TO NAME REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES WHEN DEEMED ADVISABLE FOR THE EXTENSION OF OUR WORK. THIS WOULD BE SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE AND CONFIRMATION OF THE BOARD.

3. THERE IS A GREAT NEED FOR PARTICIPATION BY THE BOARD MEMBERS THEMSELVES IN THE TOTAL PROGRAM OF THE CONFERENCE. IT IS REGRETTABLE THAT SEVERAL OF OUR BOARD MEMBERS WHO/<sup>ARE</sup>PASTORS HAVE NOT ENROLLED THEIR CHURCH AFFILIATES. THIS IS TRUE IN SOME RESPECT OF ORGANIZATIONS THAT WE HEAD. WERE THIS DONE, SOMETHING CREATIVE MIGHT BE DONE BY THE BOARD MEMBER HIMSELF IN SECURING OTHER AFFILIATES. YOU CAN HARDLY HELP SOMEONE ELSE GET RELIGION IF YOU HAVEN'T GOT IT YOURSELF.

4. WE NEED TO CALL OUR ATTENTION REPEATEDLY TO THE ROLE OF THE PRESIDENT. IN THIS MANNER ALONE CAN WE DEVELOP A FULL APPRECIATION OF WHAT HE INVESTS IN TERMS OF HIS TIME, AND TALENT IN SUCH A SELFLESS WAY. HE MAKES CONTINUALLY GREAT SACRIFICES OF HIS CHURCH, HIS WIFE AND FAMILY TO FURTHER THE WORK OF THE SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE. IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE CONFERENCE EXPRESS TO OUR PRESIDENT OUR SINCERE GRATITUDE FOR THE GREAT WORK THAT HE DOES IN THE INTEREST OF SCLC.