

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT
BY DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.
PRESIDENT, SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE
DELIVERED IN JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI
AUGUST 10, 1966

Mr. Chairman, Fellow Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen:

We have assembled here in this Tenth Annual Convention of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in the Year of Our Lord 1966.

This is a most prodigious period in the history of the civil rights movement. During this year we have listened to the entrancing echo of black and white feet trampling across the pernicious swamps of Mississippi. And the thunder of this echo reminds us that a mighty wedge is steadily being driven into the imperious heart of the largest remaining bastion of southern segregation. The most significant event of this year, however, is the spread of the Negro revolution from the sprawling plantations of Mississippi and Alabama to the desolate slums and ghettos of the North.

Our nation is confronted by a situation in which invisible men will no longer stay invisible.

America for three centuries has oppressed, exploited and subjugated Negroes.

America has hidden this inhumanity behind a veil woven out of the myths of racism.

America has lived with the expectation that Negroes would put up with deprivation and adjust to it psychologically and socially.

Accordingly, the norms and values of American society have prescribed for Negroes a role less than that of a man.

America tore the African away from his homeland and through the institution of slavery smashed his culture and his family.

Slavery was maintained by the whip and the armed patrol. The forces of law and order were legitimate means of violence by which slavery and later sharecropper peonage were maintained. The South came to sanction Jim Crow laws and lynchings while the North invented slums and ghettos.

Through these instruments, American society has given Negroes a lesser share of everything, except frustration.

It must be recognized that the initiative of Negroes is the key in ending their oppression. In the process of freeing themselves, Negroes will cast off the deprivation and poverty of spirit that has been visited upon them. SCLC and the nonviolent movement offer a means by which this process can take place.

The nonviolent movement offers a means by which the aggression born of frustration can be channeled into an organized campaign for change.

The nonviolent movement can turn nightmares into dreams only if it can turn dreams into reality.

In the past the Negro's efforts to improve his living conditions have concentrated on going through well defined channels of white authority. Negroes for years have been asking, begging, pleading that white employers, board presidents, bankers, realtors, politicians and government officials correct racial patterns and inequities.

The major lesson that the Negro community has learned is that racial change through this process comes gradually, usually too late, and only in small measures.

In this rapidly changing world where technological changes may displace the unskilled worker, where affluence makes it possible to spend millions in waging wars in far away places such as Vietnam, and where the elimination of poverty and racism have become national goals, Negroes can no longer afford the luxury of abiding by the traditional gradualism of the respectable modifiers of status quo.

There is a restlessness and urgency about the Negro's mood and his needs, which at once demands militant and aggressive leadership, coupled with mature and stable patterns of organization and strategy for change.

SCLC has been thrust into this cauldron of frustration and human need, and we have accepted the challenge of the continuing struggle for human rights.

Following Selma, SCLC increased its permanent staff to 200 and enjoyed the services of some 1,000 volunteers for the summer. We increased our staff to these proportions in anticipation of a year of action in Voter Registration and political education following the Voting Rights Bill. The mandate was clear: Register as many of the South's two million unregistered voters as possible and prepare for the elections which were to come in 1966.

Now the direction is equally clear, but the demands have increased by geometric progressions while the gains have lagged at every turn. Now, more than ever before the Negro is seriously questioning en masse, not only the rate of progress, but also its inevitability and even its probability. Now, the

heretofore downtrodden masses rise up in unison and demand Freedom Now. And when they say freedom now, there is no consideration of the available votes in Congress. There is no consideration of the available budget for change-- only the determined effort to be equal.

The demands upon the movement were greater than ever before, yet Congress felt that it had done its job and that no more could be required during the coming election year. Many of our supporters assumed that the passage of the voting rights bill assured us equality via the democratic process and that it was just a matter of a little effort on our part before the problem was solved.

But before we were able to depart from the 1965 Convention, the fires of Watts began to burn and with Watts a whole new era of the civil rights struggle emerged.

The mood of the nation's liberals began to turn away from civil rights and toward the issue of world peace. After all, if you were anticipating the escalation of the war in Vietnam into a nuclear war with China, the voting rights of a few thousand Negroes in Alabama or Mississippi did not seem very important.

This was the context in which we did our years work. Much of it was organizing block by block tenants unions in Chicago and precinct by precinct in Alabama. Only on occasion did the dramatic mood of Selma grip the country. Once, for a few days in Birmingham in demand of federal registrars, again over the administration of justice following a series of Dixie style acquittals of the assailants of civil rights workers, and again this summer in our March through Mississippi.

In spite of the absence of the movement's usual fervor and drama, a solid task was undertaken and great strides made both North and South. Only now are we beginning to see the sprouts from some of the seeds planted this year and we can look forward to a great harvest in the months to come.

Never before had a major civil rights organization dared to launch a nonviolent movement in the North.

SCLC did.

Not only have we launched such a nonviolent attack on the institutions that create and maintain slums in Chicago, but we believe that we have made nonviolent movements a power force in other Northern communities that seek to enslave millions of black people in concrete reservations which are no less vicious than the red clay reservations of the south.

They said it couldn't be done, but in seven months SCLC, with the cooperation of the Coordinating Council of Community Organizations (CCCO) the only umbrella civil rights organization in this nation, has:

Organized a tenant union in which tenants of slum dwellings have exclusive bargaining rights with their slum landlords. These organized tenants have the right to bargain for rent increases or decreases, demand improvements in their tenements and a closed shop-type of union clause which makes it imperative that all new tenants join the union.

This is truly a landmark in programs designed to uplift a despairing people.

SCLC's Operation Breadbasket already has secured \$1,800,000 in new jobs for Chicago Negroes, through carefully chosen selective buying efforts, and greater things are to come.

For those critics who said that nonviolence would not work in a major city, we point with pride to our successful Rally and March of last month. We had some 65,000 persons at a nonviolent rally at Soldier Field, of which 75 per cent of the audience was Negro. Following the rally we marched, even according to press reports, more than 50 per cent of the crowd to City Hall, where we posted demands calling for Chicago to become an open city.

Although 90 per cent of the Negro population in Chicago came from Mississippi and other points south, for the first time, we, SCLC, are being called outsiders and are being invited to go back home.

More than any other city in this nation, Chicago has proven that not long can one section of this nation wallow in pious condemnation of another while it practices worse atrocities against its black citizens.

Chicago is the test case for SCLC and indeed the freedom movement in the North. But even though Chicago is an experiment in faith, it is also a social experiment in which the ingredients of nonviolence and justice are destined to triumph over those of injustice, just as Mississippi stands as the largest bastion of crippling de jure segregation in the South, Chicago holds equal status as the most hostile bastion of de facto segregation in the North.

Under the dynamic leadership of Dr. Robert L. Green, an associate professor of educational psychology on leave from Michigan State University, SCLC's Citizenship Education Program has played a dominant role in molding a solid foundation for our action programs.

The CEP stands alone and above reproach in its creatively conceived programs to provide citizenship training for indigenous Negroes throughout the black belts of the South.

Dr. Green's capable leadership and the continuing support of the Marshall Field Foundation has brought us unparalleled results in the areas of literacy, handwriting, general communication skills and techniques in community organization.

Some 300 local instructors have been trained in either week-long workshops conducted by CEP staffs in South Carolina and Mississippi, or in three-day workshops conducted by the staff in the communities of Selma, Alabama and Natchez, Mississippi.

It was primarily through the strong leadership of Mrs. Septima Clark and Mrs. Dorothy Cotton that young people were provided with leadership training in the Natchez area. These same young people later became active in the successful Natchez movement.

It is of great significance that several persons who received CEP training during the past five years were instrumental in organizing Negro political candidates to participate in the Alabama Democratic primary. We were proud that the CEP staff culminated their political workshop efforts with a session at Ebenezer Baptist Church and brought in an impressive array of political specialists who had experience in the positions which the Negro candidates were seeking.

The flexibility of the CEP staff was evident in assisting Miss Mew-Soong Li to draft a massive remedial education program for Wilcox County, Alabama. This program has received the approval of the U. S. Office of Economic Opportunity and should be funded shortly for \$302,000.

The CEP will assist in staffing and administering this program. This grant represents a milestone for SCLC, as it is the first time that a civil rights organization in conjunction with a local community group was jointly funded. The funding corporation is called the SCLC Wilcox County Coordinating Committee.

Last May the CEP was host to a conference in Atlanta with behavioral scientists. This conference was unique in that this was the first time that the top social scientists in the nation met with social activists to discuss problems of mutual concern.

One of SCLC's major programs which did a tremendous job of relieving the plight of unemployed and underemployed Negroes in both the North and the South is our Operation Breadbasket, under the direction of The Rev. Fred C. Bennett.

It is with a great deal of personal pride that I have observed this department grow into fruitful maturity.

During the past year, Breadbasket has established local chapters in Florida, Illinois, Kentucky, and Tennessee.

It was ironic indeed that when the City of Chicago released a statement that it had become the richest city in the nation, SCLC's Operation Breadbasket was announcing that it was mobilizing clergymen of every major denomination to relieve the plight of more than 100,000 unemployed Negroes and

thousands of other Negroes who were victims of underemployment.

From Atlanta, Breadbasket dispatched the Rev. Joseph Boone to Chicago, to coordinate the drive in its initial stage. Within five months, more than 260 upgraded jobs averaging \$7,000 each annually were acquired through Breadbasket, adding more than \$1,800,000 to the Negro economy in Chicago. Locally, the Breadbasket program is continuing its thrust under the guidance of a dynamic young minister, the Rev. Jesse Jackson.

In Atlanta, headquarters for Operation Breadbasket, more than 20 million dollars annually has been added to the Negro income, and major utilities and automobile dealers are the immediate targets of our drive.

In recent months, Operation Breadbasket has accelerated its activities through alliances with several labor unions, after mutually agreeing that the improvement of the Negro's economic status and the acquisition of freedom and equality for all men is paramount.

We are cognizant that the total income of the people in this nation is more than \$545 billion, and the Negro population of more than 20 million, the largest minority in this nation, have an income of less than \$30 billion. Statistically, this tells us that the Negro's per capita income is 50 per cent less than that of his white brother. Although we have a long way to go, Operation Breadbasket has brought us to a significant juncture on our journey.

Operation Dialogue, a relatively new department in SCLC, has engaged in an intensive search for reconciliation as a clearly defined phase of our nonviolent philosophy. Although the activities of this department have been experimental in their psychological aspects, we have undertaken to

interpret throughout the nation by lectures, seminars and discussion groups SCLC's commitment to interracial understanding and goals.

From Maine to Florida, from Oregon and Washington to Texas, and 42 communities in between, Operation Dialogue has carried on intensive dialogue to accomplish its objectives.

During the past several months, Operation Dialogue has been invited to and has participated in workshops set up by 11 city human relations commissions and local offices of the Office of Economic Opportunity. These local organizations have found that Operation Dialogue techniques provided a method through which their interracial staffs could relate for the first time comfortably with one another.

Alabama will never be the same.

This is due primarily to the efforts of our political education and voter registration department headed by Mr. Hosea Williams. Even Governor George Wallace has learned to pronounce the word "Negro" correctly. After his landslide victory in the democratic primary (I'm sorry about that mistake, it was Mrs. Wallace, wasn't it?) he said publicly that Negroes ought to support him because he had never done anything against them.

Mr. Williams, ever mindful that we do not engage in partisan politics, undertook to organize one of the most significant grass roots political organizations in the South. Called the Confederation of Alabama Political Organizations (CO-A-PO for short), this organization united the Negro vote and for the first time since the first Reconstruction, had white political candidates bidding for Negro support at the polls.

CO-A-PO was primarily responsible for 81 Negroes being able to run for public office in Alabama. This is a record, even over the first Reconstruction.

CO-A-PO Power also can be measured in its ability to bring former state trooper head Al Lingo to the brink of civil rights conversion. Mr. Lingo, who masterminded the Edmond Pettus Bridge brutalization of civil rights marchers into what is now referred to as "Bloody Sunday", personally sought the support of CO-A-PO in his unsuccessful bid for Sheriff of Jefferson County.

CO-A-PO today is representative of Negroes seeking freedom from political and economic shackles in 39 Alabama counties. It is so organizationally structured whereby every Negro voter is able to participate in political activity without being controlled by either the white or black supposed-to-be politicians.

Before CO-A-PO, Hosea Williams had conducted one of the most successful voter registration campaigns ever started in the state. It was the power of this registration figure that made it possible to bring political power to Alabama's previously disenfranchised Negro community.

Within eight months after the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Bill, SCLC's special task force raised Alabama's Negro voter registration from 95,000 to 250,000. In Jefferson County, Alabama, 39,000 new Negro voters were registered within a nine-week period. A record 3,000 voters were registered in one day. For the first time since the first Reconstruction, there are now 11 counties with more Negroes registered than white.

While I'm standing before you giving this report, Mr. Williams and his hard working staff are engaged in Grenada, Mississippi, the first truly open city in the South. When SCLC entered Grenada, four weeks ago, there were only 550 Negroes registered. Four days later, Negro voter registration soared to 1,890. This drive inspired Negro Grenadians to file 29 suits now pending in Federal Court, designed to hasten making Grenada an "Open City". Their selective buying campaign is now 95 per cent effective. Local Negroes already have raised \$29,000 to start their own shopping center.

At least 11 other Mississippi counties have invited SCLC forces into their communities, because of our demonstrated nonviolent success in Grenada.

Our new Affiliate director, Mr. Herbert Coulton, has done a magnificent job in re-organizing and revitalizing our affiliate program. We now have 309 affiliates in 25 states throughout the nation; 182 are church affiliates and 127 are organization affiliates. Mr. Coulton has given priority in the coming year to increasing the number of church and organizational affiliates; the reactivation of affiliates that have become inactive and the development of balanced year-round programs in affiliates that meet the needs of their respective communities and the rendering of more supportive services to affiliates from SCLC's headquarters in Atlanta.

The nonviolent image of SCLC has profited immeasurably from the work of the Public Relations Department. The major emphasis of our PR Department has been to project the work of our programs to the American public.

The success of the Department can be measured in the time that television and radio have devoted to our work and in the number of column inches that newspapers give to our work.

Public Relations is essential to the success of any organization, and the educational and informational value of our PR activity can be measured in the quality and content of the message which has been sent into American homes.

During the next few months, you will see additional literature concerning SCLC in your homes in the form of pamphlets, brochures, a tabloid newspaper, and even by newsletters.

SCLC's image is the image of freedom, and we intend to keep informing you of our efforts to secure justice and equality for all men through our Public Relations Department.

The early months of the year 1965-66 found the Washington Bureau handling numerous requests from the field for assistance in making application for various federal programs in general, and the War on Poverty in particular.

In connection with the War on Poverty, the implementation of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1965, the office also handled and processed numerous complaints and grievances with respect to the implementation of these laws and the operation of these programs.

Moreover, Rev. Fauntroy, aided by his subsistence staff assistant, Ross Connelly, lobbied on Capitol Hill for various pieces of legislation relevant to the civil rights movement, including the truth in packaging bill, the

proposed civil rights bill of 1966 and the War on Poverty authorization.

The Bureau Director was on leave during the months of February through June, serving as the Vice Chairman of the White House Conference to Fulfill These Rights.

Mr. Fauntroy finished off the year with a major effort as coordinator of preparations in Jackson for the Meredith Mississippi March.

WHAT OF THE FUTURE?

This, in brief, is an account of SCLC's work over the last twelve months. We did not go to the difficult and challenging tasks confronting us bearing great gifts of omniscience or omnipotence. We confronted our jobs with a dedicated heart, some useful skills and, above all, an unswerving devotion to the cause of freedom and human dignity. The results have been impressive and we have added a great number of assets to the ledger sheet of freedom. But we cannot rest contented on the laurels of past achievements. It may be true that we have left the dusty soils of the Egypt of slavery and we have crossed a Red Sea that has for years been hardened by a long and piercing winter of massive resistance. But before we reach the majestic shores of the promised land, we will continue to face a bewildering wilderness bedecked with prodigious hilltops of injustice and gigantic mountains of opposition. And so our theme for this convention is both timely and true. The struggle for human rights is a continuing one. Our yesterdays of promise must be transformed into tomorrows of fulfillment. Our legislative victories on paper must be transformed into implemented facts of life.

TWO AMERICAS

Our continuing struggle grows out of the fact that there are still two Americas. One America is invested with enrapturing beauty. It is an America flowing with the milk of prosperity and the honey of opportunity. This America is inhabited by millions of the fortunate whose dreams of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are poured out in glorious fulfillment. This America is the habitat of men and women who have food and material necessities for their bodies, culture and education for their minds, freedom and dignity for their spirits. This America is inhabited by millions of children who will grow up in the sunlight of opportunity.

But there is another America. This other America has a daily ugliness about it that makes for endless despair. This America is inhabited by the defeated, the bruised, the battered and the scared. This other America is the home of men and women who live on the outskirts of hope, and who feel that they are detached exiles in their own country. It is an America where work-starved men walk the streets in search of jobs that do not exist. It is an America inhabited by millions of people who are poverty stricken aliens in an affluent society; too poor even to rise with the society; too impoverished by the ages to be able to ascend by using their own resources. It is an America where millions are forced to live in depressing, rat-infested, vermin filled slums. This America is the home of the dispossessed, the disinherited, and the disenchanting. This is the America where fathers are stripped of their masculinity because they cannot support their families. This is the America where hopes unborn have died and where radiant dreams of freedom have been deferred.

So long as these two Americas exist, there must be a continuing struggle for human rights.

RIOTS: THE LANGUAGE OF THE UNHEARD

We are meeting during another long hot summer. How many more do we need before we will hear and act on the sordid conditions of the Other America which breeds this violence and hostility?

I hardly think that I need take the time to condemn this aimless violence. The results themselves: Negro women and children lying dead in the streets, the few places of employment and enterprise in the ghetto destroyed in anger, the continued breeding of resentment and frustration let us know that this is no rational act. But the response to violence: the giving of sprinklers to cool off and the token concessions which accrue make it necessary for me to say that violence creates more problems than it solves; and that even when it is violence as a response to generations of oppression or hate produced by years of being hated, or separation chosen in the face of a thousand experiences of being rejected, I must ~~still~~ say that this is not the way. There are some problems in life to which there is no violent or military solution, and it is just these kinds of problems which afflict the Negro.

But every statement about the foolishness of violence must be coupled with an awareness that our summers of rioting are caused by winters of neglect and indifference.

Riots are desperation attempts of the poor of our nation to say "Here am I, do something." Riots are the language of the unheard. And what are they trying to say? That the plight of the poor in America, especially the Negro poor is worsening. Summer riots grow out of summer anguish.

In June 1966, the unemployment rate for white 18 and 19 year olds declined by 4 per cent, while the rate of unemployment for Negro youth the same age increased by 5 per cent. The Negro rate was 32 per cent. We are dealing with a depression of the same proportions as that of the 1930's in the Negro community though it barely touches most whites. Infant mortality is about 21.6 per 1000 births for the white population, but it is 43.1 per 1000 births for the Negro community. The median income for a white family is only \$3,839 per year. It is this poverty in the midst of plenty which is so humiliating.

The police usually provide the spark which ignites the flame of ghetto hostility. They are the symbols of the oppression of the total society and the lack of concern for the humanity of the poor. My brief experience among the poor of the ghetto leads me to believe that just the simple use of courtesy titles by police and the cessation of the use of profanity in dealing with all citizens could reduce ghetto tensions immeasurably. But this will only come about when the society at large comes to respect the poor as children of God, entitled to all the benefits and opportunities of citizens of other economic and racial groups.

In short, it is the powerlessness and the voicelessness of the ghetto which makes it necessary to lash out blindly in retaliation against the lawlessness, exploitation and inhumanity of man against man which surrounds their lives, and these are the conditions with which we must deal.

THE WAR AGAINST POVERTY

The war on poverty is an excellent beginning, but that excellent beginning ran into immediate difficulty in the political maze which was entrusted with its administration. At its best it proved to be a channel for experimental efforts at alleviating the symptoms of poverty and only a stop gap measure while we began to work up the will and the wisdom to take the bold steps which are necessary to put an end to poverty.

When Western Europe was faced with destruction and poverty following World War II, no one talked of the kind of kindergarten project to rehabilitate the children of war torn Europe. Instead, they developed a Marshall Plan to bring a total economic rehabilitation to entire nations with the knowledge that economic security would bring with it some measure of family security, educational opportunity and incentive to continue a productive and meaningful community life. The same kind of confidence in Negro America is now called for if we are to wage total war on poverty. Petunia planting projects in Chicago's slums or rodent control units can only wet the appetite for real dignity and bring more fury at its denial.

Our nation can provide a Guaranteed Annual income for its poor. A program to generate jobs and provide meaningful work is not too much to ask

from a nation whose Gross National Product exceeds 700 billion dollars a year and which is now spending some 25 billion dollars a year in Viet Nam. A. Phillip Randolph's Freedom Budget of 100 billion dollars over the next ten years to provide freedom and opportunity for the nation's 50 million poor is a small pittance against 25 billion dollars a year which is supposed to secure freedom for 14 million Viet Nameese.

But I am afraid that the cries of warning and the shouts of desperation of our ghettos now fall on deaf ears. The 1.7 billion dollars which Congress approved for the war on poverty has only served to increase the aspirations for dignity and opportunity among the poor, while providing City Hall with additional patronage with which to further humiliate the poor, by making a mockery of the issue of maximum participation of the poor themselves. This lack of the right to have anything to say about the decisions which affect their lives and their community is often the final crushing blow which reminds them that they are powerless and therefore helpless.

POWER FOR THE POWERLESS

As we prepare to move into this second decade of accomplishment we must stop to examine the question of power.

There is a real sense in which it is true that we have come this far by faith, leaning on the Lord. The on-rush of the events of our time has catapulted into first one conflict after another, and we are amazed that we have worked our way through the shadows of death and molded from the chaos of Southern prejudice a pattern of liberation and change which has in some small way pointed to the redemption of an entire geographic area politically and the emotional salvation

in a generation of men.

But honesty impels us to face the harsh realities of the movement's progress thus far. First we were dealing with areas of clear denial of Constitutional rights, and secondly, we were dealing with the areas where there was no significant alteration of the existing alignments of power and existing authority. While this was indeed promised by the 1965 Voting Rights Bill, the fact is that right gave way to might and Senator Eastland prevented all but a token application of the federal statute in Mississippi, while Senators Russell and Talmadge were able to avoid any application of the Voting Rights Bill in Georgia.

What we have been dealing with is potential power, and our ability to rally support from other pockets of potential power through our conscience-searing action. But now, as we confront the giants of vested interest in our nation, a more serious assessment of power and in fact an actualization of power becomes necessary.

In a recent speech in Chicago, Walter Reuther defined power as, "the ability to make the largest corporation in the world, General Motors, say yes when they wanted to say no." This is actual power. It is graphically demonstrated in the present Air Lines strike. The Machinists Union possessed a tremendous amount of potential power, simply by virtue of their organization, but it remained necessary for them to strike and virtually paralyze air travel in this nation before the Air Line Companies would even begin to hear their demands. So it may well be with the civil rights movement in the years to come. Influence and moral suasion may continue to prepare the climate for change, but there must be present an actual power for change if we are to achieve our purpose.

For the past ten years we have spoken largely in terms of Freedom. Our movement was the Freedom Struggle. Implied in the concept of freedom, however, is the right to self-determination; and self-determination for an oppressed people requires power.

When we think of power, we must see it in the context of our freedom. It has been made plain to us in these past ten years, that we cannot have the freedom to determine our own destiny unless we have the power to wrest the right to decide from those who now make the decisions which determine our destiny. In America Freedom and Power are inextricably bound. One cannot be free without power and there can be no power without freedom to decide for oneself.

But, even a cursory analysis of power will reveal to us that Negroes are not the only ones who are deprived of the right to decide in our society. We have experienced in this century an ever narrowing centre of decision making in our society. The whole study of Power Structures and the Power Elite of C. Wright Mills and others pointed out long ago, that democracy was being seriously compromised by the centralization of power in the hands of an "economic, political and military Power Elite", where decisions are determined by immediate profit and the retention of control regardless of the values of the community, regardless of the wisdom of our intellectuals, and regardless of the needs of the people. This is the crisis which afflicts our democracy: the fact that the majority of the people in our society are now powerless, and in no way able to participate in the decision making.

The continuing struggle for civil rights now shifts into a new phase: a struggle for power. It is ironic that this call for power is sounded forth most clearly

from the community of the poor and the community of black men, but our experience in Chicago has taught us also that the intellectuals at the University of Chicago and Illinois Institute of Technology are also powerless and continually find their recommendation in regard to everything from the education of young people to rapid transit and public health continually ignored in favor of the demands of political patronage and economic opportunism or military necessity. The same thing can be said for the religious community, and that wing of the labor movement which refuses to sell its soul totally to the interests of the party in power.

The cry therefore of the movement at this time need not be simply a cry for black power, for that in fact becomes a limitation upon the power which is potential for change. Rather the rallying cry for our generation must be power for people in the face of generations of domination by a decadent Southern oligarchy, corrupt big city machines and a conscienceless Pentagon, the actualization of power for people to participate in the decisions which govern their lives.

In Chicago and in the deep South we are engaged in the actualization of power through our non-violent movement. The new voters of Alabama are gradually being organized into political units which can make their voice heard not only in the elections of governmental officials, but also in Agricultural elections, poverty boards, bond issues, and other issues which affect the life of the community. Chicago is witnessing a birth of para-governmental institutions in the form of community organizations, tenant unions, unions of unemployed, all united in a city wide movement to effect change and organize the tremendous power which is potential in these groups as well as in suburban labor unions

human relations councils, religious groups, independent labor unions, and civil rights organizations. This coalition of conscience is rapidly emerging as a coalition of power for the people of Chicago, black and white together.

This power of which we speak springs from three sources, from the nonviolent ideas, from the nonviolent action, and from the nonviolent organization. The ideas spring from the very best thinking and most sensitive analysis of which the people are capable. The action springs from the felt needs of the people and the organization represents the institutionalization of both into something which is permanently relevant.

So far our work is but an experiment in power, as Ghandi called his work an experiment with truth. There is no contradiction in these two in-so-far as our work grows from a commitment to the philosophy of nonviolence.

NEGRO-WHITE ALLIANCE

Our concern for social change and the continuing struggle for human rights in this era has brought us even closer to our white brethren. At a time when some are thinking black exclusively, we are becoming even more aware of the fact that we are bound together, black and white in a single garment of destiny.

The problems which we face are America's problems. As marginal citizens of this nation we may experience them first, but you can rest assured that the problems of which we speak can never be confined to the Negro alone. Unemployment due to automation is driving the ranks of labor even closer to the civil rights movement as they see their rank and file slowly but surely drifting into the lines for unemployment compensation and then into the ranks of unskilled and under employed unorganized categories. The nation's intellectuals are quick to see that the crisis in American education is not just a crisis for black men. And the shortage of hospitals and the pitifully low wages of hospital personnel reflect not just a problem for the Negroes who are now protesting these conditions they reflect the general need for our nation to place a greater percentage of its resources into public health and hospital facilities.

We can well understand the impatience of our brethren with the gradualism and do-nothingism of a generation of do-gooders who had little understanding of the need for structural change and who saw the civil rights movement as something which eased their conscience for years of indifference to the plight of their black brethren. But this is no time for a purging of the ranks.

This is a time to join together even more closely.

And I must hasten to add that white men and women in the Movement must understand this determination to control our own destiny.

There will be times when Negroes in their frustration will blame you for all of the "sins of your fathers upon the third and fourth generations", but if you are in the Movement because you love justice and because you are committed to fight injustice, no impetuous or angry individual will be able to drive you out.

If my Catholic brethren said to me that we now have enough Catholic Power to fight religious bigotry, I would still insist that I am going to stand up and speak up against anti-Catholic sentiment, simply because it's unjust, and because I am determined to make my life a witness against injustice wherever I find it, and I don't care who says my help is not needed. I do it because I need to do it for my own mental health and salvation.

NON-VIOLENT DEMONSTRATIONS REAFFIRMED

The continuing struggle for human rights demands now more than ever before, a disciplined adherence to the tactics and philosophy of nonviolence if we are to continue to give creative leadership to our nation through this period of social transition.

Nonviolence is based on the truth that each human being has infinite dignity and worth. When men stand together and affirm their humanity, saying in one loud voice that I will no longer accept oppression in silence or cooperate with the exploitation of my own people, we have one of the world's most powerful forces for change. History has demonstrated our

effectiveness, we need not grow apologetic or defensive when we are challenged by those of less courage. The fact remains that no one in this nation is organizing for violent change, and if they did it would soon be crushed, by the superior violent resources of this nation. But even if there was an active violent movement, it still would not produce the changes which we seek.

The nonviolent movement seeks to create a community in which justice prevails. We seek an expanded economy which includes all men. This can be accomplished by disciplined campaigns of selective buying which encourage and demand that we be given an equal and rightful share and an opportunity to participate as full partners in the economic expansion of our communities.

Violence cannot provide adequate educational opportunities or health facilities, but nonviolent action can so plague the conscience of the community and arouse the latent good will that the just demands of the poor or the Negro be met.

We must hasten to say that there will be a continuation of demonstrations. The Marches that are now underway in Chicago have unmasked the hypocrisy of the residential areas of the North and called them before the judgment seat of the court of World Opinion. Not only do they arouse the conscience, but they so threaten existing political alliances that those who have vested interest in the status quo will readily negotiate change, rather than face the complete collapse of their enterprises.

But a distinction must be made between nonviolent demonstrations and riots. Nothing hurts me more than to see the television commentators refer to the chaotic outbursts of an angry mob as demonstrations. When I say that demonstrations will continue, I refer to the planned action of trained and committed nonviolent soldiers who will destroy neither person nor property in their pursuit of justice and who will see nonviolent action as a tactic for social change and suffer willingly if need be in the confidence that their suffering is but the birth pain of a new age when men will walk together in justice and harmony.

Ghandi was always aware that India's commitment to nonviolence was quite shallow. Even Nehru, his closest associate and heir was never committed to nonviolence as a way of life. But he did accept it as a strategy for freeing India from British Colonialism. So we must not despair when friend and foe alike assail us with doubt and suspicion, accusing us on the one hand of a perverse passivity and on the other of plotting insurrection. Gurs is a lonely but valiant way. We have been chosen by God and history to redeem this nation and build bridges of understanding the world over. Let us walk on in the silent strength that comes when you know that you are right, no matter what others may say.

All that I have said reveals that the struggle for human rights is a continuing one. The nonviolent victories of our past have, like a helicopter, only lifted us to higher ground where we may see more clearly the road we must travel and distance we must go.

It is abundantly clear now that the only road that leads to the promised land of world brotherhood and human rights is that of nonviolent resistance to evil. It is abundantly clear, that the distance to the majestic shores of that land of promise is still far, and that as we travel it, there will be chasms of hatred to be bridged by understanding and mountains of fear to be cast out by love. There will be pockets of poverty to be filled with plenty and rivers of selfishness and greed to be crossed by the sturdy craft of compassion and human kindness.

Only the forces of nonviolence have in their arsenals the resources required for so difficult a journey. To us has fallen the task of building the bridges, fording the streams and climbing the mountains. I tell you today that we have the tools and that the battle is in our hands. I like that Negro spiritual: "Joshua fit de battle of Jericho . . . Biblical history tells us that in its simple yet colorful depiction of that great moment

Joshua fit de battle 'roun Jericho,
Joshua fit de battle 'round Jericho,
An' de walls come tumblin' down.
Up to de walls of Jericho dey marched,
wid spear in han'
Go blow dem ramhorns, Joshua said,
cause de battle am in my han'."

I tell you the battle is in our hands, and as I move swiftly to my conclusion I simply want to blow the ramhorns today. Now, I know there are those who don't want us to speak on questions of human rights in our world. They say questions of human rights are not your business, stick to the civil rights of Negroes in America, that's your business. But I know with Lester Granger

that the Negro seeking his freedom on a platform of civil rights alone is like a three legged dog in a whippet race; he doesn't win many ribbons.

And so, whenever the rights of men are trampled by the cruel heels of injustice, it's my business;

Whenever the hearts of men are infested with the lethal venom of hatred, it's my business.

Whenever the souls of men are enslaved in the deep dark dungeons of hopelessness and despair, it's my business.

It's my business when rats, roaches and hate-filled mobs persecute the residents of northern black ghettos;

It's my business when the government of this nation ignores the plight of citizens forced off the land and wills government property to higher education while half the state has no adequate education;

It's my business to blow the ramhorns today, to sound forth the trumpet that will never call retreat, to say to the thousands of soldiers of our nonviolent army that it's time to march.

Let us march on segregated housing until there is open occupancy all over the land.

Let us march on overcrowded, inferior ghetto schools until every child has all the rights and privileges which our best educational minds can provide.

Let us march to the storehouse of the wealth of this nation until there is a job for every man that needs one and a guaranteed minimum income for every family that requires it.

Let us march on ballot boxes until the Eastlands and Russells and
Ellenders go the way of the Bull Conners, the Jim Clarkes and the Howard Smiths.

Let us march on till every chasm of hatred has been bridged and every
mountain of fear tunneled and every river of greed and selfishness crossed and every
pocket of poverty is filled.

As Dr. King would say--Let us keep on marching. Walk together children.
Don't you get weary!