

# Behind the Cotton Curtain

## Charles Remsberg

(Provided courtesy of [Freedom School Curriculum Website](#))

[In late 1963, the Presbyterian National Board of Missions gave reporter Charles Remsberg a small grant to travel down to Mississippi and write a report for them on the Civil Rights Movement and race relations. He titled his report "Behind the Cotton Curtain." Fearing what would happen to their churches and education institutions in Mississippi, Presbyterian leaders chose not to publish it. All information linking the report to the Presbyterian church was removed, and it was then forwarded to the National Council of Churches who passed it on to Movement activists. It was then used as a resource document in the Freedom School curriculum.]

As twilight crept over the hills of Mississippi's Piney Woods one evening last October, six college students climbed into their car after a day in the "niggertown" section of tiny Lumberton. The six, including two Yale divinity students, hoped to drive the 25 miles to Hattiesburg before dark. For when the cotton boll moon rises behind the long leaf yellow pine, "people down here (says a native Mississippian) sometimes lose all sense of responsibility to themselves, their consciences, their friends and their God; they become just masses of energy, and when they're mad, they'll do most anything to you." The students' car, however, would not start. Someone had poured water in the gasoline tank.

It was dark, then, and a hostile crowd started forming behind them as the six hurried apprehensively toward the Lumberton bus depot. The station was locked and deserted, the next bus due about midnight. Under the street lights, the mob grew steadily larger, attracting some men with sticks, others with knives, all spitting invective. Gruff voices punctuated the undercurrent of impending violence: "Let's stomp 'em." "They ain't got a chance." "Kill the dirty niggerlovers!" Terrified, one of the students ran to a nearby phone booth to call a local minister for help. The operator, a holdout against the dial system, refused to ring the number. "You're going to get just what you deserve!" she snapped. The line went dead. The students' world suddenly shrank to the perimeter of the angry mob. The seminarians began to pray. Seconds later a car driven by a Negro rounded the corner, and the six ran into the street and flagged him down. Pressing \$25 into his hand, they persuaded him to take them to Hattiesburg. Members of the mob ran to their cars to follow. Five miles out of town, a Highway Patrolman waved the Negro to a stop. "Get those guys out of your car, nigger," he ordered, "or I'll throw you in jail for running a taxi without a license." The Negro begged the students to leave, and they reluctantly stepped onto the blackened highway. They fled into the woods when they spotted headlights bobbing down the pavement from Lumberton.

Hours later, dodging cars that cruised back and forth on the highway in search of them, five of the students ran out and flagged down a bus to New Orleans. The sixth did not reach safety until dawn. He had separated from the others in the forest, and fearful of approaching the houses he saw, finally walked all 20 miles to Hattiesburg.

The "crime" that had rallied the official and vigilante forces of the Mississippi town and had thrown the students into the shadow of mayhem would scarcely have attracted attention in most sections of the nation.

They had gone to Lumberton to help Negroes try to register to vote in the state's gubernatorial election. But realizing it would take virtually an act of God to get Negroes registered in most

Mississippi counties, they spent much of their time encouraging colored citizens to vote in a mock election promoted by the Student Non Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). The mock contest would have no legal validity whatever and could not in any way effect the outcome of the real election. It was designed merely as a crude measure of the potential voting strength of Mississippi's 450,000 eligible Negroes, the vast bulk of whom are currently disenfranchised. Everyone, black and white alike, knew the election was little more than a game.

Even so, the students at Lumberton came within a brickbat of mob violence. And in other parts of the state, less fortunate colleagues were beaten, shot at, falsely arrested and threatened with economic disaster for participating in the campaign. The Negro druggist who ran for "governor" on this Freedom Vote ticket ended up on the chain gang, and the white Methodist minister who campaigned for "lieutenant governor" is now considered by most who know him to be living on borrowed time.

That a mere mock election could fan such public hysteria is reflective of the incredible atmosphere in Mississippi today. Behind the cotton curtain, violence is as much an accepted part of the culture as grits and beauty queens; virtually all social and political institutions are welded with white supremacist into a gigantic juggernaut to keep the Negro oppressed and segregated at all costs; the hostility toward outside "agitators" who are trying non violently to push Mississippi into the Twentieth Century is fanatical; any native member of the white community who suggests that the state's celebrated "way of life" (i.e., unbending opposition to racial integration in any form) might be altered or improved automatically becomes a "Negro" in the eyes of society and opens himself to fantastic abuse. Mississippi is, as any objective observer will tell you, a world unto itself a world, incidentally, that bears some unnerving similarities to Germany when Nazi jackboots were crashing across it in the Thirties.

Dr. James W. Silver, for 28 years a history professor at the University of Mississippi, recently offered some insights into the Magnolia State that newspaper travel sections never tell us about. His comments before the Southern Historical Association skewered modern Mississippi like a chunk of shish kabob:

"Mississippi has been on the defensive against inevitable social change for more than a century. The all pervading doctrine then and now has been white supremacy (whether achieved through slavery or segregation), rationalized by a professed adherence to states rights and bolstered by religious fundamentalism. . . .

"The romanticism associated with the Old South, the glorification of the Confederacy, and the bitter remembrances of Reconstruction have played their witless and powerful roles in preserving a social order based on neither fact nor reason. . . .

"Mississippi is deservedly famous for some aspects of its justice and for an incredible past of police brutality and for the harassment even death of those who defy the code. Many Mississippi conversations have the smack of manslaughter about them. . . .

"In public life, no white man demagogue or patrician proposes to do anything constructive about the Negro. Preferring corrupt and inefficient government to participation by the black

man, the whites have achieved a one party system . . . and no means of checking the wild eyes.

. . .

"With varying degrees of enthusiasm, the makers of the orthodoxy the press, the pulpit, the politicians, the philosophers, and the patriots... have rushed to the successful defense of this way of life..,

"The (typical) white man automatically distrusts new currents of thought, and if they clash with the prevailing wisdom, he ruthlessly rules them out. He cannot allow himself the luxury of thinking about a problem on its merits. In spite of what he claims, the white Mississippian is not even conservative, he is merely negative. He grows up being against most things other men at least have the pleasure to argue about. All his life he spends on the defensive. This is the Mississippi way, the Mississippi heritage. It will ever be thus as long as the closed society endures. . . ."

Another college professor told me recently: "I've said for months that things can't possibly get worse in Mississippi. But they are getting worse every day. You wonder where the bottom is."

And a Yale law school graduate, who came South to work with SNCC for \$10 a week, added: "Americans should be lying in the streets all over the country in protest of what is happening here. We have at work in Mississippi all the abuses we are fighting when we oppose a Communist police state."

Just what drastic forms is resistance to change taking in the land of cotton? What developments and conditions are molding Mississippi into the most explosive battlefield yet in the Negro fight for equal rights? What should we know about Mississippi today that the mass media have been amazingly deficient in telling us? And what, if anything, can be done?

Let's start with the recent gubernatorial election. The issues involved and the incidents that arose tell us much about the prevailing Mississippi climate.

For the first time since Reconstruction, the Republican Party flexed its muscles in the traditionally solid Democratic arena. The GOP challenger to Governor Ross Burnett's heir apparent, Paul Johnson, was Rubel Phillips, a Jackson lawyer and former chairman of the State Public Service Commission. On giant billboards that blended in with Confederate flags and White Citizen Council placards on buildings and highways, Phillips claimed his election would "K. O. the Kennedy's" (reflecting the intense Mississippi hatred of the late President and his brothers), while Johnson's Donkey serenade was that "Paul Stood Tall at Ole Miss Last Fall" (when, as lieutenant governor, he tried to bar Negro James Meredith from integrating the state university.)

Aside from their catchy slogans, however, objective observers found little basic difference in the two candidates. Johnson, though a Democrat, was probably as anxious to "K.O." the civil rights conscious Kennedy's as his opponent and could be expected to give virtually no support to the national party. Phillips on the other hand, had himself been an avowed Democrat before starting his GOP campaign. "The only issue," a Jackson newspaper editor told me, "seemed to be which one would be 'best' on maintaining segregation and defying the federal government. And there was no real contest there, because they are equally rigid." The consensus of the

persons I talked with was that the principal impetus to the Republican upsurge was a disgust with what they called "the personal bumbling of Governor Barnett," rather than disenchantment with any of the state's basic philosophies.

The way the GOP challenge was met, however, is significant in grasping the gulf between Mississippi and the rest of the U.S.

Typical of the Democrats' campaign publications was a leaflet declaring:

**DANGER!  
TWO PARTY SYSTEM IN MISSISSIPPI WOULD END OUR WAY OF LIFE  
VOTE NOVEMBER 5 TO STAMP OUT REPUBLICANISM!**

Inside, the text observed: "To have Mississippi Democratic nominees and Republican nominees running for every public office . . . municipal, county and state... every four years . . . would constitute an unnecessary nuisance and would bring to Mississippi the same political evils and dangers that now beset such states as Illinois, New York, Michigan, Pennsylvania and California . . . Mississippi has no need for a two party system that would divide our people and stretch our political campaigning over many additional months with resulting expense, confusion and disunity . . . Let's bury these Republican 'upstarts' so deep under good, solid Mississippi Democratic votes that it will be the year 2000 before you hear of Republican candidates for Mississippi offices again!"

Conservatively stated, such pronouncements (which allegedly were reinforced by intimidation of voters, stealing of ballot boxes and raw terrorism) are a departure from the American political philosophy that civics books discuss. The ruling Mississippi monolith made clear that it will brook no political dialogue whatever, considering any competition of ideas, any discussion of issues mild as it may be to be an "unnecessary nuisance" that might spawn "evils and dangers." One fear supposedly behind this totalitarian attitude is that a two party system such as most states enjoy might throw more weight to the relatively few registered Negro voters who, according to Democratic logic, would vote as a bloc and seize a balance of power. This is the argument the Democrats pushed publicly. Cynical observers, however, feel that the threat to perpetuation in office is the party kingpins' principal fear. The raising of the race spectre, the observers say, is an example of how Mississippi officeholders feed on public apprehension for their own benefit.

At any rate, the electorate heeded the Democrats' call for a one party system and stood tall with Paul to the tune of a nearly 2 to 1 landslide. The governor elect, speaking in Natchez, expressed irritation at the two way race and told a cheering crowd: "I assure you it will never happen again." Little wonder that there is no effective white opposition to the Democrats' racist policies in Mississippi when even a political group that agrees on the key issue of segregation is portrayed virtually as treasonous.

But what would happen to a group that offered real conflict of ideas, a group that presented a moderate view on race as well as some dialogue on the state's economic, labor, tax, and other problems? The answer can best be found in the experiences of the Freedom Vote campaigners and their mock election. But for full perspective on this project, one must first consider the plight of the Mississippi Negro who wishes to exercise his Constitutionally guaranteed right to vote.

Mississippi has the highest percentage of Negroes of any state (more than 42%) and the lowest percentage registered (an estimated 20,000 out of 450,000 adults.) In this century, says Dr. Silver, "never as much as ten per cent and normally less than five per cent" of the Negro voting age population has registered. In some counties where more than half the residents are Negro, there are no colored registrants.

As anywhere else, part of the problem is apathy. But in Mississippi, even apathy is different. It is born not so much of disinterest as of the feeling of utter frustration and futility passed from generation to generation in the Negro community.

For example, in Holmes County, with a 3 to 1 Negro population, there are no Negro voters. Two or three have been trying to register every day since last July. According to Oscar Chase, a SNCC worker: "The registrar has flatly said, 'You can take the registration test, but I'm not going to pass anyone. I'm not going to register any niggers.' He has been true to his word." Reportedly among those who have "failed" the test is the president of a junior college, holder of a Ph.D. degree.

The test, a constitutional interpretation exam, is a handy legal weapon for disenfranchisement. "The test," says Dr. Ernst Borinski, sociologist at Tougaloo Southern Christian College near Jackson, "requires the applicant to copy and interpret a section of the Mississippi constitution. A misplaced comma or incorrectly capitalized letter can result in a man being declared illiterate. Or the applicant can simply be disqualified because of his interpretation."

Explains Chase, a Yale law graduate: "There are some 285 sections of the state constitution, and the document is one of the most complex and confusing in the nation. The examiner points to a section and tells the applicant to copy and interpret it. On the tester's cognizance, you pass or fail. He has absolute power. His decision is not reviewable, and there are no standards by which it can be judged in court.

"In addition, a prospective registrant has to pay a poll tax of two or three dollars for two consecutive years before he can vote. This is a lot of money to sharecroppers in the Mississippi Delta, and saving and paying it calls for more foresight than many people there are accustomed to.

"Finally, an applicant can be required to state the 'duties and obligations of citizenship' before he is registered. There is no established answer. The examiner sets his own."

In 1962, the Mississippi legislature, which Dr. Silver says "spends much of its time devising legal subterfuge to keep the Negro in his place," enacted a new law, requiring the publication of names and addresses of all new registrants for two weeks in a newspaper of general circulation. Ostensibly, this allows prospective voters to be challenged on moral grounds, as is possible under state law. But obviously, it also conveniently pinpoints targets for possible intimidation.

Since 1961, white and Negro SNCC workers have labored to educate Negroes for the voting test and to get them registered. They work for subsistence salaries, usually drawing about \$9 a week, nothing at all when funds are low. They fan alone and in pairs through the backlands, sometimes sneaking onto plantations under threat of death to talk to Negro field hands, occasionally picking cotton and squash to get close to sharecroppers, often living in Negro

homes for weeks or months to break through generations of fear and intimidation. The workers are constantly trying to build a new Negro self image and strength to act, relying on sustained personal contact and a willingness to help with personal problems. (They are racing with time, for it is common knowledge in Mississippi that the White Citizens' Council and other racist groups are pushing agricultural automation, which leaves Negro field hands unemployed and eventually drives them from the state. Evidently it is the segregationists' hope that by the time all Negroes are registered, they will constitute so small a percentage of the population that the supposed Negro bloc cannot seriously affect election outcomes. In recent years, some Delta counties have dropped as much as 28.5 per cent in population, the bulk of the loss being in Negroes.)

Statistically, the SNCC results are slim. In the last two years, only about 6,000 to 7,000 Negroes (out of some 70 thousand contacted) have been persuaded to attempt to register throughout the state: only a fraction of those "passed" the test and even fewer will vote when the time comes. However, 6,000 is a significantly large number, considering the tremendous reprisals a Negro can suffer even for trying to register.

Last spring in Holmes County, for example, the house of a Negro who had been urging fellow farmers to apply for registration was attacked by rifle shooting whites. To protect his family, the Negro fired back. In return, his house was set afire and burned to the ground. The next morning, the Negro himself, who had barely pulled his family out alive, was arrested for arson. He somehow managed to win the case in court, rebuilt the house and resumed his registration work. He has recently been re-arrested, this time for illegal cohabitation, despite the fact that he claims to be legally married to the woman with whom he was living. "This," says Oscar Chase, "is the kind of intimidation and harassment a Negro can expect once he is known as a person who wants to vote."

There are other examples. When the registration campaign hit Leflore County last year, county officials stopped distributing surplus food they received through the federal commodities program. This quickly brought some 20,000 Negro recipients face to face with the threat of starvation. Until the federal government ordered county officials to resume the distribution, the destitute Negroes had only the food raised in a SPICC emergency drive in Chicago. This kind of "stomach intimidation" is expected in other Mississippi counties as registration efforts mount, as is the arbitrary firing by employers of Negro employees who try to register.

Even being seen with SNCC workers can be disastrous for Negroes in some areas. In Hattiesburg, a Negro restaurant proprietess recently gave some white Yale students a free meal. Minutes later, local police invaded the restaurant, smashed display cases and dishes, stomped on the counters and dumped food on the floor. During the confusion, someone planted a bottle of whiskey on a shelf. The proprietess was arrested for illegally possessing liquor (Mississippi is the last "dry" state). Either out of ignorance or intimidation, she hired a lawyer who allegedly is an official of the local White Citizens' Council. Predictably, he pleaded her guilty in court and she was fined \$75. (In interesting contrast to this, the white manager of a Mississippi restaurant where I was eating one evening last November (1963) brought a bottle of whiskey out of his kitchen, spiked a Coke for a customer, and set the bottle on the counter until the diner left. This occurred in plain view of four policemen, but no action was taken.)

In Itta Bena, someone hurled a smoke bomb into a registration meeting room. Fifty-eight persons walked to the town marshal's office to protest. For this, all but 13 juveniles were arrested for "breach of the peace," sentenced to six months in jail and fined \$500 each. (At about the same time, a segregationist was arrested in Alabama for illegal possession of dynamite. He was fined \$100.)

Probably the greatest weapon against vote conscious Negroes, however, is money. The vast majority of those who are employed work for whites. Many earn barely enough to live; 50 per cent of the breadwinners in the Delta gross less than \$1,000 a year and in some counties the average yearly income for workers is less than \$500. A great many are in debt to their employers through "company store" arrangements. If they tried to register, they might be fired, and many would probably be jailed for not being able to pay their debts. (These company store debts, incidentally, have made possible virtual slavery in the Delta. A Negro cotton chopper, for example, may owe a plantation owner \$40 at the end of the year. Another plantation owner might need more help for an anticipated big cotton crop. He settles the debt with the first plantation owner, often without consulting the Negro, and the worker is then "transferred" to the second farm, there he is obligated to work for the new employer.)

Understandably, reprisals have made a great many Negroes reluctant to declare themselves, logically preferring a marginal existence to no existence at all. It was partly to combat this despairing, to show the long range value of the registration campaign that the recent mock election was designed. Its structure was simple: on November 2, 3, and 4 Negroes who were old enough to vote were to drop ballots into converted milk cartons and other receptacles set up in Negro grocery stores, taverns, churches and recreation halls. Or, if fear of reprisal was too intense, ballots could be mailed in an "underground vote" to a designated headquarters. Further, those Negroes (and dissatisfied whites) registered to vote in the real election were urged to write in the names of the Freedom Vote candidates on their state ballot Aaron Henry, a Negro Clarksdale druggist running for governor, and the Reverend Edwin King, white Methodist chaplain at Tougaloo College, for lieutenant governor. Because write-ins are automatically invalid under Mississippi law, this would serve only as a protest.

Throughout the mock campaign, Henry and King discussed not only race but a variety of other issues they thought important to the state, largely in an unsuccessful attempt to start dialogue on other vital topics between the genuine candidates. Their mock candidacy brought them nearly 85,000 votes, some 35,000 more than they expected. (Perhaps significantly, the state registrar called SNCC headquarters to find out the official Freedom Vote tally, although the figures were never acknowledged or made public by state officials.) The vote was clear indication that significant proportion of Mississippi Negroes are interested in politics and would vote if given the opportunity. And it gave the Negro community some meaningful glimpse of the power Negro voters might someday wield, if diligent registration efforts are maintained.

The mock election was undoubtedly a chilling prophecy for both sides; for the white supremacist because it showed that Negroes are not as contented as Mississippi segregationists would like outsiders to believe, and for the SNCC campaigners because it graphically illustrated the reign of terror any candidate who really seeks office on an enlightened platform will have to endure.

"The election taught us," Reverend King told me recently, "that the best in Mississippi is as bad as the worst. During the last three weeks of the campaign, every single night a citizen was violated. It was not enough that the police were not protecting us from would be killers, but they were actually joining in the harassment. Houses were invaded without warrants, and students who were working on the campaign were dragged from their beds. Polling places were threatened with bombing. Some towns, such as Yazoo City, refused to let us rally. In every town, the police followed our workers, waiting for the slightest infraction as an opportunity to arrest them. Some workers were arrested on suspicion of auto theft because they couldn't show registration papers for rented cars. In some cases, they were thrown in jail without any charge, apparently just to keep them from campaigning. Workers were beaten by both hostile whites and the police, and on more than one occasion Highway Patrolmen stopped campaign workers at the entrance of a town, pulled guns on them and said, 'You'd better leave.' There was everything short of murder and the only reason there wasn't that was poor aim."

In Jackson, the police swept into a Negro area one Saturday, when SNCC workers hoped to contact rural Negroes who came to town to shop, and rounded up a carload of campaigners. The officers drove them eight miles to the city limits, forced them from the car, and left them stranded.

In the cotton fluffed Delta region, a white girl working for SNCC was arrested for running a stop light in Greenwood and for driving with defective lights. The arrest was in broad daylight when the car's lights were turned off, and the girl has five witnesses who swear the stop light was non existent. Nevertheless, she was held on \$1,000 bond and eventually fined \$150. ("We lost thousands of dollars in fines during the campaign," Reverend King explains. "The local courts are part of the system against us, and we simply did not have enough lawyers to appeal all the cases.") Another SNCC worker was arrested for displaying improper license plates; "improper" because they were not issued in the county in which he was driving. "I know it doesn't make sense," he told me. "But it doesn't have to make sense. The idea behind a phony arrest is to get you out of circulation, and that got me in jail overnight."

On another occasion, according to Oscar Chase, a carload of Negro campaigners was stopped by Highway Patrolmen near the Jackson airport. "Do you really think niggers are equal to whites?" one trooper asked. The driver replied that he did. The patrolman suddenly grabbed the youth's hand, held the wrist over the window slot and began hitting it with the butt of his service revolver. Then he cocked the gun and put the muzzle to the driver's head. "Nigger," he said, "I could kill you now!" His finger was on the trigger when his partner leaped from the squad car and pulled him away.

There was no one to restrain the assailants in other encounters. On U.S. 61 near Natchez, a city renowned for its quiet dignity, a Chevrolet carrying several whites chased a carload of SNCC workers and repeatedly tried to crowd them over bluffs on the highway. Finally the campaigners were forced to a stop. Hurriedly they rolled up their windows and locked their doors and the pursuing whites scrambled out of the Chevy, and crowded around the car. "Get out and come with us!" one of the assailants ordered. A gun glinted in his hand. The SNCC driver suddenly jammed the accelerator to the floorboard and took off with a screech of rubber. Shots rang after the fleeing car, hitting the trunk, a fender and the right rear tire. With the tire losing air, the escaping driver forced the car to more than 100 mph, finally shook the gunmen and sped to a Negro community where the campaigners were hidden for the night. "In an



incident like this," says Reverend King, "it's almost a moot point that the shots didn't hit anyone. The intent was clearly to kill."

Brushes with death are an occupational hazard to those who would change Mississippi. Aaron Henry, for example, has survived shots fired into his house in the dead of night and the bombing of his drug store. Last summer he was sentenced to the chain gang after taking Negroes to register. And recently an ex-convict voluntarily testified before the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights that he had been offered the job of sending Aaron Henry to his grave. He said that while he was serving a jail term for drunkenness in Clarksdale, a police official came to his cell and asked him to pick a fight with Henry, kill him and say the quarrel was over a woman. The convict, who has a long police record, allegedly was offered money and was promised that he would not be convicted for the murder. However, he refused to cooperate. (A person who gives such testimony is taking great risk, beyond the obvious one of physical retaliation. State officials have advised individuals summoned by the Commission to refuse to provide information. And in 1960, the state legislature passed an act changing the requirements of proof for prosecution of perjury. Now solely in cases where a defendant has testified before the Commission or any other U.S. agency on the subject of deprivation of rights the prosecution needs only the testimony of one witness to obtain a conviction for perjury. "Ordinarily," a Commission report observes, "perjury is not sustained by the uncorroborated evidence of a single witness.")

As the Henry incident suggests, the defiers of Mississippi's social code can expect no help from the police, indeed often find in the police their worst enemies. State, county and local law "enforcers" on many occasions have made clear that the protection they are sworn to give does not extend to those who embrace liberal social creeds. Oscar Chase recalls a time that he went to the Jackson Police Department to bail out a friend who had been arrested in a racial demonstration.

"Do you live over in niggertown?" the assistant police chief asked him.

"There are some Negroes there," Chase replied.

"Do you live with the niggers or with the whites?"

"Some of both."

"Well, you'd better be careful. You'll get run out of there some night."

"Well," Chase said, "if I get into trouble I'll call you."

"Don't call us," the chief said emphatically.

It was probably wise counsel. In practically every showdown where race is involved, a Jackson college professor told me, the police have displayed a "massive callousness that seems horrendous to the outsider."

Last spring in Jackson, for example, an integrated group of Tougaloo students, accompanied by a white professor, asked to be served coffee at the Woolworth store lunch counter on Capitol Street. Told to go to the store's Negro soda fountain, they refused. The waitresses turned out the counter lights and left, but the students remained seated.

An hour passed before anything happened. But then a crowd, largely of high school students who were out of class early because of semester exams, began gathering. Before long name calling exploded into mob violence. Roughnecks in the crowd squirted catsup and mustard in

the demonstrators' faces and poured fingernail polish in their hair. Some grabbed aerosol cans of paint from a hardware counter and sprayed "NIGGER" on the Tougaloo students' backs. One girl, a white student from Georgia, was beaten with a catsup bottle, and her friend was dragged into the street by her hair. A girl in the mob (the shrieking girls seemed particularly vicious) hurled a glass at the white professor and slashed his face. Then she rushed to him, pulled open the wound and ground salt and pepper into it. About the same time, a former policeman in the crowd jerked a Negro student from his stool and began kicking and stomping his head as the youth lay on the floor, offering no resistance in accordance with nonviolent tactics. Several switchblade knives were evident in the mob, and one jeering onlooker swung a noose.

All the while, Jackson policemen were standing outside watching the mayhem. At least one person, Reverend King, begged them to act, but they refused on the grounds that the store manager had not filed a complaint. Finally, so much property was being destroyed by the hysterical crowd that the manager closed the store. By then, most of the demonstrators were severely cut and bruised. Some could not see because pepper had been rubbed into their eyes, and the Negro youth on the floor was bleeding from his mouth and ears. The police arrested him and his assailant for breach of the peace. The attacker was eventually fined \$100 and sentenced to 30 days in jail. The Negro, whose role had been strictly passive, was fined \$500 and sentenced to six months.

Jackson police, incidentally, are careful to arrest no one for violating Mississippi's various segregation statutes, which would open up these laws to court review. Instead, demonstrators are charged with breach of the peace, traffic violations, parading without a permit, trespassing, refusing to obey an officer, etc. A Negro lawyer told me, "This is a sophisticated way of doing that which can't be done in a simple minded manner." The breach of the peace law, conveniently, includes a clause making illegal "any act which may lead to a breach of the peace." According to police interpretation, this means a person is guilty of breach of the peace if his presence makes someone else want to hit him.

In Biloxi recently, after local officials had promised no violence would occur, police looked on for an hour while a rabid mob stoned the Back Bay Mission where an NAACP ministers' conference was in progress. With bricks, bottles, and lead pipes, the crowd broke every window in the building, slashed tires and smashed windows of cars parked outside, and threatened the Negro and white pastors inside. The police never intervened against the attackers but finally ordered the ministers to empty the church. Biloxi's mayor later praised the officers for their "handling" of the incident. He also allegedly told officials of the church, located in a white neighborhood, that "there is no longer any need for your institution in this community." The mission had angered neighbors by sponsoring typing classes for Negro girls.

Similarly, the police were praised by civic organizations and city officials last summer for the way they quelled demonstrations in Jackson after NAACP leader Medgar Evers was murdered in ambush. First, they arrested some 15 ministers who were walking single file toward City Hall to protest the shooting. Then they moved against an estimated 200 persons who had started to march downtown from a Negro section. Streets were blockaded with barricades lettered: BUILDING A BETTER JACKSON. Highway Patrolmen, dressed in brown uniforms and carrying rifles, were moved in by the truck load. Storming in from the rear, they wildly began swinging clubs, sending the marchers fleeing to porches for safety. The troopers then grouped

themselves four abreast and three deep and marched through the narrow streets to rhythmic cadence calls.

From the porches, people yelled out: "Where were you when Medgar was killed?" "Why don't you protect us?" "Go get Evers' killer!" As a group of troopers reached a porch of shouting people, a captain with a bullhorn boomed: "Left face!" The troopers swung around, rifles in hand. "Ready!" the bullhorn blared. "Aim. . ." Then: "Silence on that porch!" When the porch was quiet, the troopers moved on the scene of the next outbursts. By the time "outside" newspaper and magazine reporters reached town that afternoon, all was orderly.

Police harassment and intimidation have taken a kaleidoscope of forms. During the riots at Ole Miss when James Meredith was being enrolled, says Dr. Silver, Highway Patrolmen "encouraged the restless crowd to demonstrate against U.S. marshals." In Greenwood, a CBS cameraman who photographed Negroes seeking to fill out voting applications, was arrested and his film destroyed. A policeman stationed at the recently integrated Jackson public library makes a habit of following Negro patrons to the book shelves, to reading tables, even to rest rooms. When Negro Clyde Kennard tried to register at Mississippi Southern College before Meredith's headline making escapade, he was arrested for illegally possessing several bottles of whiskey, which he claimed the police planted in his car. Last Flag Day, a 15 year old Negro boy was arrested in Jackson for parading without a permit after he donned a sweatshirt lettered FREEDOM and walked down a public sidewalk carrying an American flag.

On other occasions, sign-carrying demonstrators walking single file have been charged with blockading the sidewalk, despite the fact that labor union members had picketed a Jackson bakery for several weeks without the police interfering. One white man tells of being followed by a Jackson patrolman while driving his colored maid home one evening; after the maid left the car, the policeman stopped him and advised that it isn't the "Mississippi way" for a white man to let a Negro ride in the front seat with him. A white minister recalls that after he was arrested in a recent demonstration, police refused to let him take the New Testament to his cell: the Book of Acts is considered communistic by many Mississippians. In some cases, as we shall see later, police, acting without a formal complaint, have even invaded churches on Sunday morning and arrested persons they thought should not be there.

The violence and brutality that characterize Mississippi mobs too often characterize the police as well. Officers broke up one peaceful demonstration in Jackson earlier this year by beating women across the breasts with Billy clubs and by carrying off men to paddy wagons with night sticks between their legs. Some 400 persons were driven in garbage trucks to the State Fairgrounds, where they were then quartered in sexually mixed groups in hog pens surrounded by barbed wire.

At this Fairgrounds Motel (as the demonstrators called it), students were marched in 100 degree heat and ordered to do pushups until they collapsed. Then the police walked on their bodies. Twenty were locked in a 10 man paddy wagon parked in the broiling sun. When the doors were opened 30 minutes later, some of the demonstrators were unconscious. At meal time, food was placed on the floor, and police stood over the prisoners, ordering: "Eat it off the floor, dogs!" On one occasion, police and guards tore a pile of mattresses to shreds, then called in news photographers and charged that the demonstrators had rioted and destroyed the bedding.

Jackson's mayor announced that he was prepared to house 100,000 demonstrators at the Fairgrounds concentration camp "if necessary". And it was soon after this that the city purchased its "riot control car," an armored vehicle capable of shooting tear gas in 12 directions.

A few months earlier, dozens of Negroes, no doubt risking their lives by talking, had reported endless stories of police sadism to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. Typical was the case of a Negro whose car was stopped by a Mississippi Highway Patrolman after being trailed for three miles. When the driver asked why he was halted, the trooper whipped out a blackjack and began clouting him. When the man raised his arms to fend off the blows, the patrolman drew his revolver and threatened: "I'll kill you if you don't get them arms down, nigger!"

Taken to the police station, the man was blackjacked again in the presence of eight other officers, who ignored his pleas for help. Finally one policeman took a brown leather strap five inches wide and three feet long from a drawer. "Drop your pants, nigger!" he commanded. The half naked Negro was then handcuffed to the legs of a chair and bent over its back. "If you holler," he was told, "we'll kill you!" Five policemen took turns beating him, then poured raw whiskey over his torn flesh. Nearly 29 hours later, never having been charged and consistently denied the right to use a telephone, the man was released from jail.

Those who are charged and are sentenced to Mississippi's medieval prison system enter another nightmarish world. At Parchman State Prison, some young girls who had been involved in racial demonstrations were housed on Death Row next to the gas chamber; their cells were so crowded that some had to sleep in the showers. White demonstrators have been celled with rabid segregationists who beat them constantly. Others have suffered in Parchman's "hot box." "This is a windowless isolation cell with temperature control," SNCC worker Jerry Bray told me recently. "The guards pack six or seven prisoners into it, then turn on the heat. The guys start sweating, suffocating. They take off their clothes. The guards take the clothes away, then turn on big fans that make the cell cold. By switching the temperature back and forth, they can make everybody sick."

And illness in a Mississippi prison is a terrifying thing for anyone involved in racial matters. For example, Clyde Kennard, the first Negro to try to crack Mississippi's segregated schools, was behind bars when he learned he had cancer. He was operated on at a university hospital, and doctors told him he had one chance in five of living for five years if he was brought back in 30 days for additional treatment. A month passed, but Kennard remained at the prison. Authorities there refused to let his lawyer see him. The attorney, Jesse Brown, asked to receive Kennard's medical reports; he never got them. Prison officials continued to work the Negro in the fields despite his growing weakness. Six months later, they finally took him back to the university hospital. It was too late. Shortly after he was paroled, he died at Billings Hospital in Chicago. "What was the reason?" Jesse Brown asks. "Was it an administrative oversight? Or was it deliberate negligence because of his connection with school integration? No one can say for sure. You have to draw your own conclusions."

There is no doubt of deliberate abuse in other cases, however. At Greenville, I talked to Jesse Harris, 21, a native Negro Mississippian who served time at the Hind's County Work Farm last year for contempt of court after sitting in the white section of a Jackson courtroom. After his arrest, Harris was held incommunicado for two days and refused permission to contact a

lawyer. During his trial, he requested a continuance so that he could get an attorney. This was denied. He was sentenced to 30 days and fined \$100, to be worked out at \$3 a day.

"Right after the trial, I was taken to an elevator by three deputies," Harris told me. "They told me to put my hands against the elevator wall and to spread my legs. They started to beat me with their fists on the back and face. I fell down. They kicked me in the neck and back and stomped on my head. Some teeth broke off and my nose felt like it was broken. I was hurt bad. But they wouldn't let me see a doctor."

At the Work Farm, Harris was dressed in stripes because he was an "agitator" and told that if he spoke to anyone, the entire prison population would be punished. On two occasions, he was beaten.

"The first time, they said I wasn't working fast enough," he recalls. "The guards got four other prisoners to hold me down, then took down my pants and whipped me 16 times with a rubber hose. That doesn't leave a mark, but it can tear you apart inside."

"The second time, I wasn't able to move a 300 pound fallen tree on a work gang. They beat me 12 times with a stick the size of a baseball bat. Then they threw me into solitary for 36 hours. The cell was a sweat box no windows, no lights, no toilet. I had bread and water twice a day, and the temperature felt like 140."

(Such savagery is not reserved for racial "agitators." One of Governor Barnett's achievements is the re-introduction of the lash into the prisons, which Mississippi newspapers reported straight faced as a move to increase prison agriculture production. One night while Harris was at the Farm, a prisoner discovered his T shirt had been stolen. Sixteen men on the cellblock were roused and asked to name the thief. No one did. The guards produced "Black Annie," a four foot studded belt five inches wide, and ordered the men to strip. Each was flogged on his bare back 15 times.)

"Even when you can pin down police and prison brutality," a college professor explains, "there's little you can do about it. If charged, the accused will be tried in a Mississippi court before a Mississippi jury with a Mississippi judge. He'll be acquitted."

The courts and their officers, in fact, are as much a part of the perverted system of denying Constitutional rights to half the state's citizens as the police and the prisons. In most racial cases, what happens in Mississippi courtrooms is an obscene burlesque of the legal process. From the days of the Scottsboro Boys on, the plight of the Negro in Southern courts has been a well known scandal. Today for pro integrationists, white and black, there is even less hope of justice.

A common inequity in Mississippi courts concerns the setting of bond; where race is an issue, it is consistently exorbitant. Recently, for example, two Negro students and a white friend were arrested in Jackson when they tried to attend a segregated symphony concert for which they had purchased tickets. Charged with disorderly conduct in a public place, their bond was set at \$500. That same evening, a white citizen was picked up for public drunkenness and disorderly conduct. His bond was \$15.

When cases come to trial, an attorney representing Negroes or white "agitators" can rarely expect procedural fairness from the judge. Many jurists make their positions clear at the outset. When Freedom Riders were brought to trial in Jackson in 1961, the judge (reportedly a member of the White Citizens' Council) opened court by apologizing to the all white jury "for taking your time" and assuring the jurors he would do everything he could to get the trial over with swiftly. He permitted the prosecutor to take great pains in categorizing the defendants, presumably for the jury's benefit. The prosecutor carefully pointed out that one student was a Catholic and repeatedly reviewed the fact that he was from California, i.e. an "outsider." Another defendant was asked if she were a member of the "Jewish race" which, of course, was pertinent to the case only so far as it aroused the jury's prejudices. During a recess in the trial, a police captain, the state's star witness, was permitted to talk freely with jurors, explaining his views on the "freedom movement" and showing them pictures of arrested riders. With only five minutes' deliberation, the jury brought in a verdict of guilty.

In many cases, Negroes and white "agitators" face such situations without a lawyer. When Byron de la Beckwith was charged with firing the sniper's bullet that killed Medgar Evers, attorneys from all over the state volunteered their services in his behalf. Yet there are perhaps only one or two white lawyers in the entire state who would defend anyone involved in a civil rights arrest. "A white man who would do that," one attorney told me, "would be a traitor to the cause."

Among the last who would was William Higgs, a graduate of Ole Miss who began seeing the injustice of segregation while attending Harvard Law School. After returning to Jackson, Higgs began aiding Negro lawyers in drawing up briefs and planning strategy for integrationist defendants. But it was strictly a secret association; he was reluctant even to speak to Negro lawyers in the halls of the courthouse. "He knew if he came out in the open, he'd immediately lose a lot of business from white clients," a Negro attorney told me. "A white lawyer has to think a long time before he goes into a Mississippi court with a civil rights case."

Higgs finally did, however. He filed suit against the state to prohibit tax money from being paid to the White Citizens' Council for propaganda purposes through the Mississippi Sovereignty Commission. Later, he took the case of Dewey Green vs. the University of Mississippi, in which a Negro youth sought admission to the school.

The Green suit was scarcely filed before a young man who was living with Higgs was involved in an auto crash while driving the attorney's car. During interrogation by the police, the driver allegedly confessed that he and Higgs had indulged in unnatural sex acts. Higgs was charged with contributing to the delinquency of a minor. A friend says:

"He was afraid that if he were arrested and jailed, the charge would be changed to sodomy. Police often change charges here after a suspect is in custody, and sodomy is a popular accusation to use against 'agitators' in Mississippi. Even your friends won't speak to you after that. Sodomy is not a bondable offense and conviction carries a 10 year prison sentence.

"Also about this time, news was leaking out about Clyde Kennard's mistreatment in prison. And Higgs, along with a lot of other people, believed that Kennard had been framed in the first place. Bill finally fled the state rather than face trial."

He was tried and convicted in absentia. He has never been brought back to Mississippi, but has been barred from further practice of law there. Most of his friends believe he was framed. Some claim the youth who accused him has recently signed a statement saying the "confession" was false.

Regardless, any white lawyers who now appear in Mississippi civil rights cases are most likely imported from the outside. They earn their livings in Chicago, New York and other cities, and come South only on special assignment.

Getting a Negro lawyer in Mississippi is not easy, either. There are only four (4) practicing full time in the entire state, and they, too, are frequently subjected to harassment in civil rights cases.

Jesse Brown, for example, nearly lost his license last year after taking a school desegregation suit in Lake County. While the case was in progress, unidentified gunmen fired shots through the window of a cafe operated by one of Brown's clients and into the homes of several other Negroes. The next day, the cafe owner claimed she had never hired Brown to represent her. He was cited for contempt of court, which jeopardized his right to practice.

Eventually he was cleared when he produced a written retainer from the woman. But the judge still assessed him for the court costs of his hearing.

Despite such experiences, Brown continues to travel throughout the state defending Negroes and sympathetic whites in civil rights cases even in dusty backcountry courtrooms where spittoons line the jury box and the all white jurors wear faded overalls. He undoubtedly risked his life by being the only Mississippi attorney of record for James Meredith; he came within a few hours of being lynched along with client Mack Charles Parker, accused of raping a white woman; he recently had to sneak out of town on back roads after defending Cleve McDowell, the Negro arrested for carrying a gun at Ole Miss after his life was threatened. He undoubtedly is the kind of fighter NAACP leader Charles Evers had in mind when he recently told a Connecticut audience that "Mississippi is the home of the free and the brave; the whites are free and the Negroes are brave."

Unfortunately, however, Evers' statement is only half true. The strange paradox of Mississippi is that the whites are not free. They have, in the words of Reverend King, "built a prison around themselves," and they are as much captive of the Mississippi system as the Negroes. Simply stated, there exists what one Mississippian calls "a fog of fear" that prevents most whites from voicing anything but rabid segregationist views. I heard one Negro student say half joking to a white classmate at Tougaloo: "After we get free, we're going to free you."

"Within their own community," says Dr. Borinski, "Negroes are able to move with comparative freedom and say what they like. This is not so true of the whites." Dr. Silver adds: "The white man's ideas must be harmonious with the orthodoxy. Nonconformity is forbidden. The white man does not dare express a deviating opinion without looking over his shoulder." These days,

a man explained to me, "you don't express your views in any social situation unless you are absolutely sure that your listeners are in utter agreement with you." Further, the typical Mississippi white does not dare give any indication that he might even privately hold an opinion that differs from the majority creed. Jesse Brown, for instance, tells of the time a white judge invited him to his home to discuss legal matters. "I smoked his cigars, I met his family and we had a nice evening in his den," the Negro attorney recalls. "But when it was time to go, he opened the front door first and checked to be certain the street was clear. When he saw that none of the neighbors was watching, he said I could leave."

In the white community, dialogue on the race issue is not tolerated, only monologue. After the Ole Miss bloodshed last year, the president of a life insurance company appeared on a TV station he owns in Jackson and editorialized quite mildly to the effect that mob violence perhaps was not the way to solve Mississippi's problems. The next day, the board of directors of the insurance company flatly informed him that he was to make no further statements on the subject if he wished to remain president.

Reprisal against whites who speak out takes a variety of forms: shots were fired from a roving car into the home of a college professor; children of Negro sympathizers have been spat upon, beaten, jeered and ostracized at school; a doctor refused to treat one little girl's infected leg because her father, a Baptist missionary, worked with Negroes; the auto insurance of white demonstrators was suddenly cancelled "for confidential reasons," and no other companies would write him coverage; a Molotov cocktail was hurled into the home of a man who protested police brutality; two Methodist missionaries (native Mississippians) who began a speaking tour of the state to explain how racial turmoil is harming Christian mission work in Malaya suddenly found their appearances cancelled.

On one occasion, an Episcopal rector who had permitted his church to be used by an unpublicized interracial group interested in bridging the white Negro gap was telephoned by a man who identified himself as a New York Times reporter. In answer to questions, the rector explained in detail the purpose of the group, but asked that much of what he said be off the record because of anticipated opposition by segregationists. Only later did he discover that the interviewer was not a reporter, but was himself a white supremacist who tape recorded the conversation and then used it in an effort to get the rector ousted.

The most powerful way of cutting off dissenters, however, is through economic pressure. For example, many Mississippi bank officials are believed to be members of the White Citizens' Council. "If you get out of line by expressing liberal racial views," a Mississippian told me, "you may be unable to get loans, or a note might suddenly come due, or your mortgage might be foreclosed. If you run a store and word spreads about your attitude, your business might be boycotted.

"In a wealthy state, economic pressure is serious enough. But in a dreg state like Mississippi the poorest in the nation hitting a man in the pocketbook can be fatal."

One who was hit there was a Jackson contractor, whose wife served on a federal advisory committee that investigated police brutality and other civil rights abuses of the segregated system. Typical of the committee's statements was: "In all important areas of citizenship, the Negro in Mississippi receives substantially less than his due consideration as an American and



as a Mississippian. The denial extends from the time he is denied the right to be born in a desegregated hospital, through his segregated and inferior school years and productive years when jobs for which he can qualify are refused him, to the day he dies and is laid to rest in a cemetery for Negroes only." Recently the contractor's wife told me:

"People couldn't stand this criticism of the system coming from Mississippi citizens. All the committee members were harassed. In our home, the phone rang at all hours of the day and night people making obscene remarks, threats, or just breathing into the receiver. All my relatives and friends were called, too. At school my kids were pestered and my son was kicked off his bowling team. Then rumors spread that I was a Communist. Anyone who wants to change things in Mississippi is automatically a Communist, you know.

"Finally, my husband's business was affected. He was no longer invited to bid on city contracts and he lost out on other jobs. Inspectors on jobs already underway became extremely picayunish, causing delays and big losses. We held out as long as we could, but eventually things reached the point where I had to resign from the committee or move out of the state. I resigned. So far no one has been found to replace me.

"There is a sizeable minority of whites in Mississippi who feel things are wrong and would like to help change them. But experiences like mine keep them from becoming involved."

The White Citizens' Council denies that it is directly involved in the violence and harassment that today scar Mississippi. The organization prides itself on its veneer of refined and respectable opposition to the forces of integration. But at the very least, the council has helped create a climate in which intimidation and brutality are both spawned and condoned.

The Council, which urges its members to "work . . . hope . . . pray for White Monday" (in contrast to Black Monday, when the Supreme Court school desegregation decision was issued), produces an endless stream of inflammatory propaganda. Says Dr. Borinski: "Everything it puts out, speeches, radio and TV programs, movies, newspaper articles, brochures is a veiled invitation to violence."

Consider the inevitable reaction of the bigoted Southerner who is incessantly hammered with these "truths" from the Council: "If the Negro was permitted to obtain the ballot... it would mean that no qualified white man ...could ever hold public office (and) seats now held by competent white representatives would be held by ignorant, incompetent Negroes"; "the obscenity, vulgarity, immorality and brutality which came about (where schools were desegregated in other states) requires the constant maintenance of policemen in the halls . . . obscene pictures and notes were placed on the desks of white girls by Negroes . . . the carrying of concealed weapons, the vicious aggravated assaults, the actual rape and attempted rape of white girls and even teachers are the results. . . ."; "There is a vast gulf of difference between the IQ of the Negro . . . and the average white man because of an inherent deficiency in mental ability, psychological and temperamental inadequacies, of indifference and natural indolence on the part of the Negro . . . the white man (in an integrated situation) would be dragged down to the Negroes' level"; "If segregation breaks down, the social structure breaks down. . . . The Communists hope to achieve disintegration through integration in America"; "Integration represents darkness, regimentation, totalitarianism, Communism and destruction. . . . Segregation represents the freedom to choose one's associates, Americanism, state sovereignty

and the survival of the white race"; "The enemy, cloaked in the mysterious name of 'integration' is hysterically assaulting the natural order, the created order in nature, the legal order under God, and above all else, the free grace of our Lord Jesus Christ"; "The fate of the white man (and woman) in the Congo and other new African nations is a stern warning"; "Where integration occurs, violence becomes inevitable"; "Integration will bring the evils of miscegenation (which) will be seriously detrimental to both races and to our civilization." A newspaper editor told me: "This (racial interbreeding as a result of desegregation) is the point the Council hits hardest. If there's anything that'll send a redneck running for his rifle, it's the thought of a big, black nigger in his wife's bedroom."

Some Council literature is also liberally laced with racist jokes and quips. One speech on sale in Council offices in Jackson tells of Lena Horne, the Negro vocalist, going to the mirror and saying:

"Mirror, mirror on the wall,  
Who's the fairest of them all?"  
To which the mirror replies:  
"Snow White, Nigger,  
And don't you forget it!"

A few paragraphs later, the same speech mocks the Kennedy's with the phrase, "Ignore that nigga, with vigga!" And another paragraph reads: "I'm no snob. I think the Kennedy's are all right. But I sure wouldn't want my daughter to marry one." The Council, despite its professed abhorrence of violence, does not disown those who are accused of living by the gun. When Byron de la Beckwith's fingerprints were found on the high powered rifle that killed Medgar Evers, the Council launched a state wide campaign for funds for his defense. Without the help of the Council's Legal Defense Fund, he would have been virtually penniless. Interestingly, before the slaying Beckwith had been a tobacco salesman in the Delta, and in spare moments he gave street corner orations in behalf of Black Monday, a book length attack by a Mississippi Supreme Court justice on the federal school desegregation decision. The book is strongly publicized in Citizens' Council literature.

The grim irony of the Council is that much of its propaganda is financed by Mississippi tax money, including that paid by Negroes and moderate whites. Through the state Sovereignty Commission, the Council is given as much as \$5,000 a month to pay for radio and TV programs. In addition, the Commission itself sponsors a speakers bureau which sends lecturers all over the nation to tell the "white side" of Mississippi's integration battles. The Commission is very conscious of public relations material that might be used in these presentations. The Reverend Gilbert Haughton, a Negro minister, recently recalled the day when several colored pastors called on Jackson's mayor in stern protest of the city's segregation policies. The mayor immediately offered one of the Negroes his chair. The man no sooner was seated than a photographer from the Sovereignty commission snapped his picture. This was then displayed to outsiders as evidence of how good race relations are in Jackson, Reverend Haughton explains. "Why, a Negro was even sitting in the mayor's chair!"

Less publicized to outsiders is that Sovereignty Commission agents allegedly appear at integrated meetings, taking photographs and copying the license numbers of those attending. Some Negro agents supposedly are employed to infiltrate Negro groups and attend Negro

church services to learn of any integration plans. And the Commission also allegedly maintains files of persons reported by their neighbors and other sources as being "soft" on integration.

In a healthy and dynamic society, there would be institutions the press, the church, the schools and other agencies which would speak out against the fateful developments that are sweeping Mississippi toward an inevitable rendezvous with tragedy. In the "Magnolia jungle," however, these institutions, with rare exception, have actually helped foster the prevailing climate. Indeed, to fully understand the fanatical Mississippi mentality, one must comprehend the roles of these influential groups, for as Dr. Silver has pointed out, they are "in the service of the closed society."

Let's start with the press. It is not, as many Northerners assume, devoid of racial news. On the contrary, there often are only a handful of stories in an edition of a newspaper which are not in some way connected with Negroes, integration and civil rights frequently to the exclusion of other important national and international reports. This is not to say, however, that race stories are thoroughly or fairly covered. Indeed, at times the Mississippi press come close to resembling the hate sheets distributed by extremist groups. Because Mississippians like the residents of other states confine the bulk of their reading to their daily papers, a few examples of reporting by the two Jackson dailies (the largest in the state) will illustrate the kind of information that is constantly feeding the public mind.

A simple but telling incident occurred when Beckwith was arrested for the Evers' slaying. In a large headline, the Jackson Daily News identified him as a Californian, i.e. an "outsider." Buried deep in the story was the fact that Beckwith had been born in California of Mississippi parents and had moved back to Mississippi when he was about two years old, and stayed there ever since. However, as any newspaper survey will reveal, more people read headlines than read stories, so many readers no doubt got the impression that this violence was caused by an outsider particularly since the papers have consistently blamed outsiders for Mississippi's racial troubles (The papers, incidentally, have encouraged contributions to Beckwith's defense fund. While I was in Jackson, one paper ran a lengthy letter from the accused killer, appealing for financial help.)

Last November (1963), under the headline "White Mixer Weds Arkansas Negro Woman," the News told of an integrationist from Ohio who married a Negro he met while working for SNCC in Pine Bluff, Arkansas. Much of the story was devoted to quotes from the Arkansas attorney general, such as: "It is a direct, deliberate insult and disservice to the white and colored people of our state. . . . The girl was thrown out of college and the man is a disinherited son of a Cincinnati family. . . . Neither of these people works for a living, but are paid by the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, which is a trouble making organization. . . . This marriage was not conceived in any light except that designed to ferment hatred." There were no contradictory quotes from the couple or their friends. Not only does a story like this reinforce the Mississippi fear that integration will instantly bring intermarriage, but it conveys other favorite themes: that SNCC employees do not "work" for a living, that the group's voter registration attempts are "trouble making," that only outcasts would intermarry, and that an intermarriage is not possibly an outgrowth of genuine love but is conceived to "ferment hatred."

Another race story recently headlined concerned a series of interviews on intermarriage conducted by US News and World Report. In the magazine, seven prominent persons, including Swedish social economist Gunnar Myrdal and anthropologist Margaret Mead, gave their views on the facets of intermarriage. Six of the experts agreed that marriage between Negroes and whites would not be harmful to either race and that Negroes were considerably less interested in intermarriage than in attaining basic civil rights. Strongly dissenting opinions were given by the seventh interviewee, a psychology professor at the University of Virginia, who declared that "race mixing" would be "catastrophic." Only two of the seven authorities were quoted in the Jackson paper: the Southerner and a New York university professor who was quoted out of context to the effect that the "motive for intermarriage is often neurotic."

Such one sided treatment is not unusual. When Dr. Silver made his recent speech, reports in the New York Times covered nearly a full page. However, the Jackson Clarion-Ledger, according to a Mississippi newspaper man had three or four inches of quotations from Silver, then devoted the bulk of its story to a critique of the speech by an Ole Miss student.

Coverage of the Freedom Rides and other demonstrations has been significant, too. Jackson papers have described the demonstrators (who included divinity students) as "scummy looking creatures, prostitutes, dope addicts, auto thieves and registered homosexuals hot off the slut alleys of California." Yet no mention has been made of the numerous instances of police brutality. Indeed, police have been praised for their "efficient handling" of the situation, and the White Citizens' Council has been credited with restraining "the more emotional whites." (The Jackson Daily News said: "A strong Citizens' Council in each community that is comprised of the community's most able leadership would be an effective means of avoiding violence and bloodshed as more funny folks, plate passers and outside agitators swarm into the South.")

Also an important ingredient of the race conflict are Jackson's local columnists, Tom Ethridge of the Clarion Ledger and Jimmy Ward of the Daily News. Both openly indulge in race libel and hate mongering. For example, when Dr. Ralph Bunche spoke at Tougaloo college last October, Ethridge referred to him as "Bier Bunche" and said he should be "undergoing trial as a war criminal instead of making demagogic speeches and laying the groundwork for colored supremacy through world government." On another occasion, displaying his disrespect for the Kennedy family, Ethridge posed the late President in a hypothetical situation in which he "kicked his family out of the White House and shackled up with Madame Nhu."

Ward, on the other hand, has indulged in kind of a Bilbo humor. For instance, "Did you hear about the new Tougaloo doll? It looks black and white until you shine light on it, and then the thing turns pink." And: "As summer school opens at Tougaloo College, affectionately known as Cancer College, a new course is being installed. It's a class in Rapid Hate." And: "Mrs. R. S. McCorkle of Vaiden. says her definition of NAACP goes like this: 'National Association for the Advancement of the Communist Party.'" One day last June, Ward commented: "When Dr. Martin Luther King hits a town, he leaves in his wake bricks, glass and burned out buildings as well as bloodshed and a great amount of hatred. While this may provide Dr. King with a high plane of living for himself, he has yet to clean up a single slum or make life easier for a single Negro." Five days later, Ward relayed this "joke" contributed by a woman reader: "Three young men sat talking on the stile that led from the church yard into the cemetery. L.C. said, 'Boys, I'll tell you what. When us gets desegregated, I'm going to dress in my Sunday best and go up town to that big First Methodist Church, and I'm going to march down to the first bench and

set, and I'm gonna sing louder than all them white brethren.' 'Yeah,' Gabe agreed. 'I'm gonna put on my glad rags and some perfume, and I'm gonna walk right in that swell Country Club out on Ash Cat (Ascot) Avenue. I'm gonna tap the swellest blonde and I'm gonna tell her, "Miz, Madam, dis here next dance is mine.'" John Lee said calmly, 'Well after you all does that, I'm gonna get out my good blue serge suit and buy me a white carnation for my button hole and I'll mosey down to the I Hope to Rise Funeral Parlor and set up with two deceased pals.'"

An impartial psychologist might well be asked if this kind of commentary does not implant the suggestion of unlawful reprisals against Negroes in the minds of Southern white readers, just as surely as does Dr. King's "agitation."

"You have this kind of 'news' drumming at you day after day," says a Mississippi college professor, "and even if you don't want to believe it, it begins to raise doubts. You can't blame people here for being misinformed and feeling as they do. If you come away with any feeling at all after reading the papers, it is a feeling of fear because the Negroes are coming or of superiority because the Negroes are being put down."

A few years ago, a Jackson industrialist, Dumas Miller, purchased an evening paper, the State Times, to compete with the Clarion Ledger and Daily News, both of which are owned by the influential Hederman brothers. Walter Smith, who operates a string of weekly newspapers, recalls: "Miller's paper didn't take liberal views; nothing is liberal here. But it at least tried to give the other side on the race issue, tried to get people ready to start thinking about these things. As soon as the State Times started to make a profit, the Hederman papers announce combined advertising rate. It was set up so that by advertising in the morning paper, you get an ad in the evening paper virtually free. This put Miller's evening paper out of business, and the only moderate voice was stilled."

In other parts of the state, the same monolithic pattern exists, by and large. Daily papers are published in fewer than 20 other Mississippi cities, and only 12 per cent of the state's residents reads a daily, the lowest percentage in the nation. Many of the rest read weeklies, which, in many cases, means they have no access to wire service stories to give them even a glimpse of the outside world. Charges newspaperman Smith, whose papers have urged sanity and reason in the racial crisis: "Only about six papers in all Mississippi have ever gone against the Citizens' Council line. In the offices of many weeklies, the editor's desk is merely a junction between press releases and the linotype operator. The editors will slap ahead on virtually everything that comes across. And the Citizens' Council is flooding them with reams of information all the time." (Furthermore, Smith points out, one of the Hederman brothers is president of the Mississippi Press Association, and small town papers largely "take their line" from the capitol press.)

Mississippi radio and television reporting has proved equally irresponsible. In the past, some stations have prefaced special network reports on the race issue with the announcement: "The following program is Northern managed news." And during on the spot network reports of outbreaks of Negro white violence, some TV stations frequently develop "transmission trouble" which blacks out the film. When pictures of the vicious Woolworth riot in Jackson were broadcast from New York, one Jackson TV station suddenly announced "cable difficulty." Reverend Edwin King telephoned and asked a station employee if this were a deliberate blackout. "Yes, it is," the man allegedly replied. When Reverend King said he intended to notify

the FCC immediately, the employee said the trouble was not deliberate. However, the picture resumed almost instantly.

On another occasion, 17 Negro ministers meeting with Jackson's Mayor Thompson to request a bi-racial discussion committee disgustingly walked out of his office when the mayor refused. The mayor then recorded statements from two Negroes (both described by members of the Negro community as "Uncle Toms") who had sat in on the session. The statements, claiming that local Negroes "like things as they are" and that "outside agitators are just trying to stir up trouble," then were played over local radio as a report on the meeting.

Perhaps the most striking incident of TV distortion occurred last summer when residents of Jackson's Negro community came out on their porches one evening and began singing freedom songs. Police swarmed into the area, shouting on bullhorns for them to keep quiet. On one porch, officers spotted John Salter, a white political science professor from Tougaloo who has been active in civil rights, and charged toward him. The police beat him, laying his face open, then took him away. The entire sequence was captured by a local television photographer. On the evening news show, however, the part of the film showing police charging the porch was shown, then the cameras cut to a newscaster, who reported: "At this point, Dr. Salter became excited and fell off the porch." Then the film resumed, showing the police standing over Salter, whose head was streaming blood. No mention was made of the beating and, obviously, the film sequence of it never made the screen.

What about printed reports coming in from the outside, such as in newsmagazines and books? Aren't these capable of alerting Mississippians to the deficiencies of their own news media? "No, they're not," says Walter Smith. "The local press, by constantly claiming Northerners distort the situation, have conditioned people not to read or not to believe what comes in from the outside. A local magazine distributor told me recently that almost all the copies of Time, Newsweek and the Saturday Evening Post he puts on the newsstands every week come back. People have been conditioned to believe these are all "against" the South. Yet when Look ran an account of the Ole Miss riots, hundreds of people here bought copies. It was an amazingly factual report, but nobody believed it. The local papers had claimed that the whole trouble was caused by the Federal government, and the Junior Chamber of Commerce had distributed reprints of the newspaper articles. That was what the people believed, even when they had contradictory facts. This kind of brainwashing is really more frightening than outright censorship."

It should also be noted that on the whole the local press is lax in exposing any government corruption in Mississippi, as the press in some other areas thrive on doing. It may be that Mississippi has no corruption. But more likely possibilities no doubt lie elsewhere, such as in the fact that the Hederman printing company holds the state's printing contracts and that the powerful Hederman brothers and other editors have historically supported the one party system. The editor of a Negro weekly told me: "No part of the officialdom is being watched by the press. In the whole spectrum—from the United Givers Fund to the governor's office—no watchdog reporters are looking over politicians' shoulders and telling the public what is really going on."

The press service to the closed society may not always be entirely voluntary. Walter Smith points out that considerable pressure has been put on his advertisers by the White Citizens'

Council because of his paper's moderate stands, and such pressure could cause some papers to collapse financially. They are forced to "go along" to survive.

Similarly, pressure on teachers and schools, who might be expected to stimulate constructive thought, undoubtedly is partly responsible for the lack of dialogue on race offered by the state's educational institutions. To be hired, teachers must sign oaths that they are not members of or contributors to the NAACP and other integrationist organizations. To stay hired, in most cases, they must avoid expressing or being connected with any moderate or liberal views. One Mississippi teacher, whose son was planning to participate in racial demonstrations in another state, was advised to keep him away from such activities if she wished to retain her job. At Ole Miss, youthful spies have sat in classes, reporting "subversive" remarks by professors to the White Citizens' Council; several professors have been pressured out of the university since Meredith's admission. For exercising supposed academic freedom, others have been arrested. For example, Ray Kerciu, an Ole Miss art teacher, painted several canvases of the Meredith crisis. One showed the Confederate flag with the word WHITE painted across it, and another bore the word NEVER (the Citizens' Council's slogan). Another painting was covered with curses, slogans and epithets Kerciu heard during the riot. For expressing himself, he was arrested for exhibiting obscene and indecent paintings and for desecrating the Confederate flag. The charges, which could have brought him seven months in jail and a \$600 fine, were eventually dropped but not before the controversial paintings were removed from exhibition.

Students are not so closely shielded from segregationist views, however. White Citizens' Council speakers are invited to school assemblies. The Council's newsletter goes to all school libraries, and there is wide student participation in the Council's annual essay contest. (This last is particularly insidious, Reverend King believes. "A student, writing on a topic such as 'Mississippi's Way of Life,' can use various research sources suggested by the Council and think he is doing independent research," the minister explains. "Actually, he is teaching himself prejudice.")

Negro teachers are especially reluctant to speak out on race issues though the inequities of Mississippi's segregated school system must be painfully evident to them, considering that four times as much state money is spent on every white student as on every Negro. "They can't afford to speak out," Walter Smith explains. "They are likely to be among the few persons in the Negro community getting a half way decent salary. They are getting it from the state, and the state can ease them out one way or another if it wants to."

Even schools and teachers who receive no state funds are made to feel the pressure to conform. A few years ago, Dr. Borinski, head of the social sciences division at Tougaloo, spoke on race relations at Millsaps College, a private Methodist school in Jackson. After the talk, members of the Citizens' Council demanded that Millsaps' president issue a statement explaining where the college and its faculty "stood" on the race question. When the president refused, the Mississippi Association of Methodist Ministers and Laymen (a group dedicated to curbing the "teaching of integration, socialism, and communism in the Methodist church literature" and described by some observers as the "Citizens' Council's wing inside the church") began a campaign, urging Methodist churches to stop donating funds to the college. Some did, and Millsaps has taken no strong stands on the race issue.

One college in the state is Tougaloo. Its academic freedom has not suffered because it is supported by out-of-state money. However, some state officials now are reportedly trying to get it chartered as a Mississippi college, which would, of course, give segregationist elements absolute control. For the time being, though, Tougaloo students and faculty are at the forefront of integration movements in Jackson, particularly the school's 27 year old white chaplain, Reverend Edwin King.

Reverend King's experiences in the last few months graphically document the fact that another social institution, the church, is largely an instrument of the Mississippi system. What has happened to him well illustrates a point stressed by Dr. Silver: "Organized religion can take little pride in its role in the (race) controversy. In the past years, many preachers and a few ministerial groups have made courageous stands, but the church as a whole has placed its banner with the status quo."

The young minister, a native of Vicksburg, became active in the civil rights movement while a seminarian in the East. In 1960, he was arrested in Montgomery, Alabama, for eating lunch in a racially mixed group and was sentenced to the county work farm. During his confinement, he was forced to sleep on a bare cell floor, was beaten by segregationist cell mates while guards looked on, and was photographed in prison stripes. (The picture was distributed to Mississippi newspapers, with the announcement that he was engaged to a Mississippi girl.)

"After he was ordained in 1962," recalls his wife, Jeanette, "Methodist ministers from the Mississippi conference pressured him not to return to Mississippi and offered him a lot of help if he'd agree to join another jurisdiction. He felt Mississippi simply had to change or suffer a holocaust, and he wanted to help change things through the church, so he persisted."

For awhile, he was allowed into the conference on a trial basis, but when he pushed a vote by the Methodist Ministers of Mississippi which would give him the right to vote on conference business, he was expelled, on grounds that he was "not fit" to be a Christian minister. Because this procedure is usually taken when a minister is adulterous, habitually drunk or otherwise immoral, the reasons for the expulsion traditionally are not made public. Thus Reverend King has been unable to appeal the decision because he lacks a statement of the specific charges against him from which to prepare a defense. Regardless, he has since become chaplain at Tougaloo and among other activities has tried to take integrated groups of students and out of town ministers to white protestant churches in Jackson. "I know a little integration in the church isn't going to change a society as sick as Mississippi's" Reverend King told me recently. "But people here respect religion very highly. I figured that if any Negro right would be accepted, it would be the right to worship anywhere. And once integrated contact in the church is established, I have enough faith in the church as a powerful social institution to think the potential for other advancements is tremendous."

Except in isolated instances, however, the contact has never been established. Since last fall, more than a score of visiting ministers and students have been turned away by the ushers of Jackson churches and an equal number have been arrested and jailed for trying to enter Protestant churches in integrated groups. Following the pattern of other integrated arrests, they have been subjected to police harassment, held on exorbitant bond and charged not with violating segregation statutes but with such offenses as trespassing, breach of the peace and blockading the sidewalk. The first group arrested, three girls who tried to attend church on



World Communion Sunday, were held in jail incommunicado from 11 a.m. Sunday to 3 p.m. Monday and finally were given one telephone call among them just one hour before going on trial. (Charged with disturbing divine worship, they were fined \$1,000 and sentenced to six months in jail.)

Since the integration efforts began, a whirlwind of fantastic developments has swept through Jackson's churches. The White Citizens' Council, which publicly announced it would "save the churches from integration," has been busy transferring its members from church to church, encouraging some to change their church membership so that racists will be well represented in each congregation. One Presbyterian minister announced that members of his flock might not be the persons who were turning Negroes away at the church; he said roving representatives of the Citizens Council and the Sovereignty Commission had been spotted outside the church on Sunday morning, and he suspected them of the action. Some pastors have said banks would refuse their church credit if they cooperated with integration attempts. Other ministers have made no excuses, however.

At the Wesley Methodist church, sanctuary doors were locked and worshippers admitted only after an usher had peered out through a peephole and ascertained their acceptability, in the style of Prohibition era speakeasies. At Capitol Street Methodist church, where I observed an integration attempt recently, a phalanx of ushers swept down the steps and formed a human wall across the entrance the moment they spotted an integrated group of ministers approaching. A few Sundays earlier, a young member of this congregation had come down the steps and stood with the demonstrators in a display of sympathy; his parents were warned by an anonymous phone caller that their home would be bombed "one of these nights" because of the boy's action. At another church, a band of old ladies, clutching Bibles, stood in a semi circle around the would be visitors, chanting: "Nigger lovers, nigger lovers," . . . while the church bells rang. A resolution currently is being discussed at one church, requesting arrests of any integrated group even approaching a church which would include, of course, any mixed group driving or walking past.

An Episcopal minister has commented: "Things are so bad that even if I use the word 'integrated' in a non racial sense, as in 'integrated personality,' I can feel a silent tide of resentment rising against me from the congregation."

The police have not hesitated in making arrests, though to date no formal complaints have been signed by any church officials or members of the congregations. On one occasion, at Galloway Methodist Church, a police officer actually invaded a Sunday school room to arrest an integrated group that had been invited inside by church members. The "agitators" were charged with trespassing, although no complaint was signed by any church representative. "The police took it upon themselves to prosecute in behalf of the church," Reverend King explains. "This and other aspects of the police action have raised serious questions about the supposed separation of church and state." Significantly, when the wife of one of the men arrested asked the minister to intervene, he told her: "You know I am helpless. The church is in the hands of the (police) officers."

Within the churches, discussion seems taboo as it is elsewhere in Mississippi. The Sunday after Medgar Evers' murder, John Garner, a Tougaloo faculty member, tried to explain to his Methodist Sunday school class some of the inaccuracies in press reports of the slaying. The next

Sunday, the class president announced that in the future "all members of the class are not to say anything that might offend the basic beliefs of anyone else in the class;" in other words, cease all discussion of race relations. More recently, when Galloway's Women's Society of Christian Service voted to withdraw support from its national organization because the parent group had furnished bond money for the demonstrators, Garners wife spoke against the resolution. Women crowded around her, screaming: "You're a Communist! You're a Communist!" At Capital Street Church, a move is reportedly under way to expel from membership a Millsaps faculty member who has urged moderation of the race issue. And at one church, where the minister resigned in protest against the barring of Negroes, the board of stewards passed a resolution saying it wanted a "minister that will preach what the congregation wants to hear."

The tension in Jackson's churches is obvious and bewildering even to fellow Southerners. As I was checking out of my hotel, I overheard a Baptist from Tennessee telling a friend of his visit to a Jackson church: "I had the feeling that if I said, 'God is love,' people would jump up shrieking that I was dirty integrationist."

High church officials have provided little leadership in the crisis. The Methodist bishop, Marvin Franklin, has flatly told visiting Chicago ministers: "I may go to Hell for it, but I'm not going to take a stand on this issue." Methodist district superintendent J. M. Leggett, on the other hand, has actually assumed a negative role. On one occasion, according to Reverend King, the superintendent refused to serve holy communion to ministers and students who were jailed for trying to attend church, commenting that it would be a "mockery of the sacraments" and that even Christ would refuse to serve "common criminals." (Once when Protestant ministers refused to visit the prisoners, a Jewish rabbi agreed to do so. After a short service, he launched into a droning, religious chant. Amidst his sing song Hebrew sentences, he slipped in English phrases, conveying the day's headlines without attracting the Jailor's attention.) Another time, Reverend Leggett reportedly threatened to have Reverend King committed to the state mental hospital at Whitfield because the Tougaloo chaplain would not "call off his dogs" in the integration movement. (This has raised genuine concern among Reverend King's attorneys. Apparently, under Mississippi law, anyone can sign papers to have another person committed, with the judicial process consisting only of a perfunctory hearing.)

Even the Jackson office of Western Union has entered into the church controversy, at times holding up bond money from other states so that arrested ministers and students would be forced to remain in jail a few hours longer. When I left Mississippi, one idea under discussion by integration leaders was the establishment of an "underground church," in other words the holding of worship services in private living rooms and other secluded spots for Mississippians whose Christian consciences will not permit them to participate in segregated services.

The need of going "underground" is one of many chilling similarities between modern Mississippi and Germany at the time of Nazi ascendance. Like Germany, Mississippi also suffers the oppression of nonconformity, the omnipotence of the police, the perversion of the courts, the relative unconcern by most of the society about basic freedoms, the unrelenting persecution of a minority group, the harnessing of potentially dynamic social institutions into the service of the state. "There is also," says one newspaper editor, "the Hitler technique of blaming outsiders for all the trouble. And there has been a decided flight of intellectuals from the state, just as there was in Germany." Says Dr. Silver: "Year after year, large numbers of the most ambitious Mississippians, the ablest and the most adaptable to change, have left." In the

last year, more than 50 professors have gone from Ole Miss, "many of them literally driven from the state," says Silver, though many would have remained "if there had been any prospect of an atmosphere of freedom or a decent chance to fight for one." Likewise, says Reverend King, "some 60 ministers have fled the Mississippi Conference in the last 5 years, many of them seminary graduates, 'the cream of the crop'." In short, one native Mississippian told me, "This is fast becoming a fascist state imposed on a democratic nation."

Some other Mississippians apparently agree. During the recent election campaign, Walter Smith reports, Republicans led off radio announcements with recordings of Nazi cadence calls, the tromping of marching storm troopers, and shouts of "Seig Heil." followed by a voice asking: "You thought it couldn't happen in Mississippi?"

In such an atmosphere, wrote a Chicago Daily News reporter recently, "you cannot leave Mississippi without the conviction that tragedy waits for the people there." Many Mississippians, probably the vast majority of whites, have not yet grasped that they are in the vortex of a revolution; they somehow cling to the naive belief that the rising tide of black anger is transitory, a puppet protest stirred up by "communists" who will someday withdraw. At best the white community talks in long range terms of the Negro "preparing himself" for integration, of gradually allowing him to take a more prominent role in society "when he is ready for it."

But the Negro, brushing away the cobwebs of a century's waiting, has no further patience with gradualism. One told me: "I don't know how soon things will change, but it won't be years and years. We don't have years and years." In connection with the argument that Negroes are not yet "ready" for equality, Jesse Brown's observation is interesting: "At a movie theater here, even the lowest level of white man in rags, drunk, can go up to the window and get a ticket. But Ralph Bunche or Thurgood Marshall can't. How much more getting ready is it going to take for a Negro Ph.D. or a Negro federal judge to be prepared for equality with the white man in the gutter? Furthermore, what if 10 million Negroes aren't ready but 5 million are? Why should the five be held back to wait for the others?"

Some Mississippians feel the situation is so hopeless that they suggest "someone should put a fence around the state and turn it into an insane asylum." But others, particularly in Jackson, are counting minor breakthroughs: there the public library has been desegregated, transportation terminals no longer can segregate waiting rooms, the airport restaurant will serve Negroes, and some churches from time to time have admitted them. The next breakthrough may come in the downtown stores, which have been under Negro boycott for several months. The "selective buying" is seeking to change policies that are typical of white owned stores throughout Mississippi: maintenance of white and colored restrooms and drinking fountains, refusal to let Negroes try on clothes without buying them, refusal by clerks to use courtesy titles (Mr., Mrs., sir, madam) in addressing Negroes (one Sears clerk was threatened with dismissal because a manager overheard him say, "Thank you, sir," to a Negro who had purchased a necktie,) refusal to use Mr. and Mrs. on bills sent to Negroes, refusal to hire qualified Negroes for any except menial tasks and the practice of waiting on white customers ahead of Negroes. (Strangely enough, an Episcopal bishop once commented that he thought only one demand among all these was "too radical" ever to be accepted by Mississippians: that Negroes be addressed with courtesy titles.)

Some companies have given in to the demands, and others may follow in order to survive. One bakery, for instance, recently reported that it is losing nearly \$1,000 a day because of the boycott, and the city reportedly has had to extend tax credit to some firms.

Ultimately, however, many observers feel the most hope lies in voter registration. "If Negroes had the vote in Mississippi," says Jesse Brown, "we'd be getting from the legislature what we're having to get from the Supreme Court and demonstrations. This is the master key." The temper of the times indicates, however, that before this key opens the door to freedom much violence lies ahead. "It is part of the Mississippi way," says one observer, "to start shooting when you see yourself losing." (Anonymous shootings are facilitated in Mississippi by the facts that almost everyone owns a gun as it is big hunting country and that many automobiles do not, for some mysterious reason, display license plates, a condition which does not seem to trouble the police.) Still, no amount of violence is likely to stop the integrationists; many are fully aware that they may be murdered (as was Medgar Evers when his NAACP group began to register some gains in its fight), and they have come to terms with this. "We believe that ultimately nonviolence can win out," Reverend King explains. "The more of their (the segregationists') violence we can take onto ourselves, the more we take it out of their systems. Maybe if we're still alive when they're exhausted, we can talk to them in a sensible way." Adds a white student from Georgia (who uses an assumed name at Tougaloo so that her family will not suffer reprisals): "When you start fighting for civil rights, it is almost like a conversion experience. You change your whole sense of values. Jail means nothing to you. You learn to be physically beaten. These things do not matter, because you know the future lies with you."

Nevertheless, the integrationists need help. Many would like to see more intervention by the federal government. "The Justice Department has done more under the Kennedy administration than ever before," says Reverend King. "But still, we can't feel they care as much for us in Mississippi as they would if we were traveling in East Berlin, for instance. If one of us was killed there, the nation would go to the risk of war over it. But if we are killed defending civil rights in Mississippi, the government sends telegrams to our wives.

"It is time the government acted as more than an arbiter. We need protection from the very police.

"The segregationists can kill us off systematically, they can bomb a church like they did in Birmingham, they can do one crime against us every night and go on doing them indefinitely. But unless the Negroes turn out a violent crowd of thousands against the whites and an all out clash looks imminent, the government will do nothing."

(Some observers feel such all out race war may come sooner than expected. Despite the philosophy of nonviolence, they say, every man has his breaking point, and sooner or later, Negroes will have more than they can stand peacefully.

Illustrative of this was a recent incident in Jackson. A college educated Negro was ordered by a service station operator to stop drinking from a "white" fountain. The Negro refused, and the attendant turned a water hose on him. Then, without warning, the white man dropped the hose and started toward his cash register, where many station attendants keep revolvers. The Negro pulled a gun and shot him dead. "At some point," says one Negro, "it is only human to meet

violence with violence." Often when that happens, Mississippi could become the biggest bloodbath the nation has ever known.)

Meanwhile, the integrationists are looking to individuals from out of state for help in applying peaceful pressure such as the Methodist ministers who have been coming weekly from Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland and other cities to demonstrate at Jackson churches. "The pattern cannot be broken, and Mississippi brought back into the mainstream of American life, except by outside pressure," declares Reverend King. "For one thing, continual outside pressure may help the liberal white community revolt. And that would be a big step forward."

Also, it is important that "outsiders" remember that they are intimately affected by what happens in Mississippi. Explains Dr. Stanley Hallett, an executive of the Church Federation of Greater Chicago who led the first delegation of out of state ministers to Jackson: "Through the federal government, we subsidize Mississippi and have a right to know how our money is being spent." (Despite Mississippi's incessant bleating about state's rights, it drew some \$750 million in U.S. government funds in 1961.) "As residents of cities like Chicago, we care for refugees from Mississippi and can expect to continue to do so. Many future citizens of northern cities are being shaped and molded by Mississippi institutions. The failure of Mississippi to provide education, participation in democratic institutions, and training in job skills, plus the formation of fears hatreds, and prejudices, are a major concern for residents of these cities. And the denial of political opportunities, including the right to vote, means that men who are unrepresentative are in significant positions of power in shaping both domestic and foreign policy which affect all of us.

"Further, there are certain kinds of confrontation of issues which must be raised by "outsiders." No one in the society can raise them and hope to survive, but once the issues are raised in a way that cannot be dodged, the genuine moderate is then given working space that can lead to constructive change.

"Finally, for a Christian, the "outsider" question is utterly irrelevant from the point of view of the meaning of our faith. Our Lord responded to the "outsider" argument with the story of the good Samaritan, and indicated that in the household of faith, all men are "insiders" in a fellowship of concern, service, and suffering."