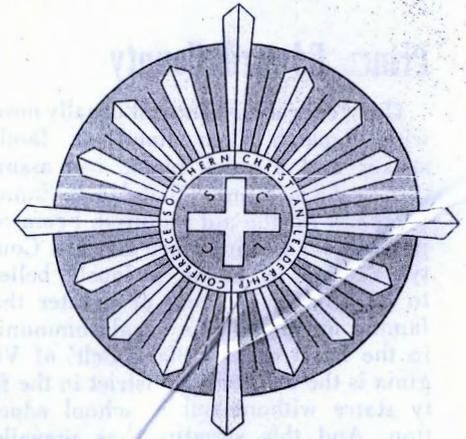


## Newsletter

Volume 1

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No. 1



Ray Simons photo

### ATLANTA STUDENTS—Briefing Before Demonstration

#### Atlanta Sit In Agreement

During the winter of 1960 eighty students and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. were arrested for sit-in demonstrations. They chose jail rather than bail. Later, store owners dropped the charges against them. A negotiating committee was formed with Atlanta's Mayor, William B. Hartsfield serving as liaison with the merchants. A thirty-day truce was set during which student demonstrations were halted. Negotiations broke down at the end of the truce and demonstrations were renewed. The adult Negro community widened its boycott to the entire downtown business area in support of the student protests. A. T. Walden, retired attorney and civil rights leader was selected to explore the renewal of negotiations. He immediately reestablished communication between the students and merchants and negotiations were reopened.

On March 7, 1961, Ivan Allen, Jr., president of the Chamber of Commerce representing the merchants released a statement to the press setting October 15, 1961 as the latest date for desegregating eating facilities, the re-employment of Negro persons discharged because of closed lunch counters and restaurants and the up-grading of Negro workers on the basis of merit.

It was erroneously reported to the press by Mr. Allen that the merchants had decided to desegregate when the Atlanta public school issues "are fully decided upon". The Negro leadership did not agree to that. Item No. 2 of the Agreement between the merchants, and signed by both sides, reads: "The final date for desegregating all lunch counters and other eating facilities as agreed upon by a group of merchants, is

October 15, 1961 or before if deemed practicable, even if there be a delay in the school matter."

Great confusion resulted when the impression was given by the press that desegregation of lunch counters would be contingent on solution of the school integration problem which the community faces under a court order to desegregate when schools reopen in the fall.

What further nettled the Negro community was the reopening of lunch counters on a segregated basis. Neither students nor Atlanta Negroes feel they can in good conscience go back to the stores as long as the lunch counters are segregated. Therefore, the boycott continues and all indications are that it will remain effective as long as eating facilities in the stores remain segregated.

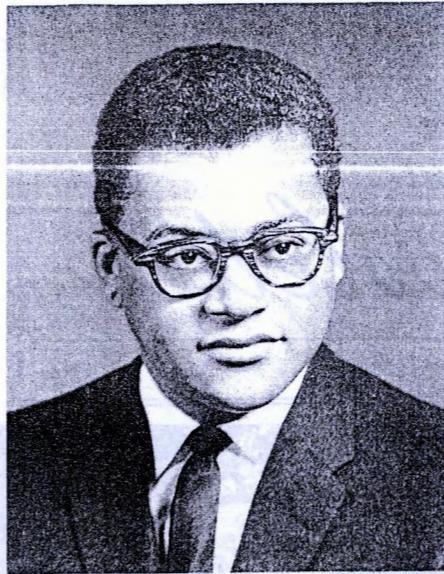
## Prince Edward County

Our Federal government usually moves with dispatch when flood or famine strikes and a quick phone call assures the local community that Uncle Samuel is on call for the aid required. From our posture, we see in Prince Edward County, Virginia what we seriously believe to be disaster as great or greater than famine or flood. This rural community in the heart of the 'Black Belt' of Virginia is the only school district in the fifty states without public school education. And this situation has prevailed since June 1959 when the Board of Supervisors shut-down the public school system in the face of a court order to desegregate. (Prince Edward is one of the three original cases that brought about the May 17th Decision of 1954). More than this, Farmville, the county seat, is little less than 150 miles from the Nation's capitol.

The NAACP, almost a year ago entered a suit seeking to reopen the schools and it appears that the machinery of the District Federal Court has broken down entirely. We would not expect to hear any word from Mr. Eisenhower. Perhaps it has never occurred to the Justice Department that someone's civil liberties have been abridged. Federal funds are squeezed into the mortar of the bricks that hold these school facilities upright and the physical plants are deteriorating at a great loss to the county, state, and nation.

SCLC through its Virginia Conference (VCLC) proposed that within the first 100 days of Mr. Kennedy's administration, it may be well if he were provided an opportunity to act via executive authority in the light of this disaster or use the moral influence of his office to encourage some remedial action post haste through the Judicial or Legislative branch of the Federal government. To be sure there are some problems of precedent-setting to be considered, but none so grave as the nearly 4,000 young American citizens in Prince Edward County, Virginia without a public school system.

The method used might be a Congressional Sit-In for Public Schools. The Prince Edward situation might be pointed up to the nation and the new Administration, if, on an appropriate day, the parents and children of this beleaguered county were to come to Washington, D. C., and 'sit-in' on our law making bodies until some respite is forthcoming. Already, several human relations organizations have given their endorsement or tacit approval to join in such a concerted direct action. CORE, The National Beauticians Association, the labor industry, and the American Friends



REV. JAMES M. LAWSON JR.

Service Committee are numbered with these.

Perhaps you would lend your voice of protest to relieve this disaster of another stripe. For further information, Write: CONGRESSIONAL SIT-IN, c/o SCLC, 208 Auburn Avenue, N. E., Atlanta 3, Georgia.

## NEW LEADERS

Training new leaders in the social struggle will advance on an organized basis now that SCLC has launched its Leadership Training and Citizenship Schools programs. Officials of SCLC have long realized the need for trained leaders working in their local communities to implement the social struggle for full citizenship.

The Affiliate organizations of SCLC will select persons to be trained as teachers and leaders. The trainees will go to Highlander Folk School at Monteagle, Tennessee to attend a five (5) day course. They will learn to teach Reading and Writing, Civics, Simplified Politics, the Philosophy of Nonviolence, Picketing, and other subjects necessary for understanding How our Nation Works.

Voter-Registration is a primary goal of the Citizenship Schools which will operate under the affiliate organization. There are no charges for attending these schools and receiving Certificates of Completion. Home study courses will be available at nominal costs for those who do not attend schools.

As the number of schools increases, training centers for teachers will be established throughout the Southern States to reduce travel time and cost. The first year will produce 240 schools and train about 12,000 citizens. Further information is available from Mrs. Dorothy Cotton, Educational Consultant of the Atlanta office.

## Staff Consultant

The Reverend James M. Lawson, Jr. recently joined SCLC as staff Consultant to serve as lecturer and will work in program development of the Philosophy of Nonviolence.

While a graduate student at Vanderbilt University School of Divinity, Nashville, Tennessee, Mr. Lawson was expelled for his participation and arrest in lunch counter demonstrations. Two-thirds of the Divinity School's faculty members supported Lawson by immediately resigning in protest.

Mr. Lawson spent two years in India as a Methodist Missionary, and served as a Southern Regional Secretary of the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR). He will continue as pastor of the Scott Chapel Methodist church of Shelbyville, Tennessee.

## CONSPIRACY

On February 21, 1961, attorneys for the Reverends Ralph Abernathy, Solomon Seay, Fred Shuttlesworth, and Joe Lowery filed a complaint in the Federal District Court at Montgomery, Alabama charging conspiracy by Governor John Patterson and other state, county and City of Montgomery officials, to deny them their Constitutional rights, guaranteed by the First, Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments.

This action followed a judgment totaling one million dollars against the ministers, ordered by an Alabama Court in favor of the officials who charged that statements printed in the New York Times newspaper were libellous. The ministers' names appeared in a full page ad. The New York Times is co-defendant in the suit which is still before the courts.

Automobiles and property owned by the pastors were impounded and sold at auction. Salaries will be garnished and all other property owned by them subject to auction.

In their complaint, the Negro leadership documents the design of intimidation, harassment and violence which is aimed at them. They charged further that state, county and city police, and judiciary are used to implement the conspiracy to impede their efforts in promoting full citizenship for Negroes under the Constitution.

Negro leaders are finding constantly increasing use of "officialdom" in efforts to defeat their mounting demands for full citizenship. The Courts are suitable arenas for this type of fight.

## AFFILIATE ACTION

*SCLC affiliates have been active in many areas where social protest and mass direct action have taken place.*

• In PETERSBURG, VIRGINIA, the PETERSBURG IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION, an SCLC affiliate has moved steadily forward in its efforts to desegregate eating facilities.

The successful desegregation of the public library and the opening of eating facilities at the Trailways Bus Depot were high points in its program. The program at present has moved into merit hiring and non-segregated housing throughout the city.

• The recently formed VIRGINIA CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE has its headquarters in Petersburg and will serve as liaison with the parent body of SCLC in local and state programming.

On January 1, 1961 the VIRGINIA CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, Dr. Milton A. Reid, president, led a Prayer Pilgrimage to Prince Edward County, Virginia focusing national attention on the plight of Prince Edwards' school-less children. \$1,000.00 was raised to aid in the reopening of public schools in the county.

• In LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA where SCLC recently conducted an institute on Nonviolence, the LYNCHBURG IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION of which Rev. Virgil Wood is president, has been pursuing its human dignity program relentlessly. A suit in Federal Court against the city to desegregate all public facilities has been presented to the City's bi-racial committee as the alternative to the City Council's refusal to desegregate voluntarily.

• The MONTGOMERY IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION of MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA, an SCLC affiliate has moved its fight into the courts. Under the worst possible kind of terrorism of citizens by police the faithful leaders and followers continue their fight for freedom. The personal loss of property resulting from court judgments against the civil rights leaders strikes a vicious blow in the hearts of these men who so courageously lead the fight for freedom.

• At a recent testimonial banquet in his honor, the Reverend Kelly Miller Smith, president and organizer of the NASHVILLE CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP COUNCIL, an SCLC affiliate, tribute was paid to his dynamic leadership in the social struggle in NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE and its surrounding area. Many notables including the Mayor of Nashville; Dr. Walter S. Davis, president of Tennessee A & I State University and others were present.

The Reverend Smith organized and directed the students and adults in the protest program which resulted in the desegregation of eating facilities in the City of Nashville. The Reverend James Lawson, Jr., at that time a student at Vanderbilt University assisted with the training of students for sitting-in and picketing.

Often referred to as the "Athens of the South", Nashville, Tennessee has been the scene of the kind of cooperation by students and adults which demonstrates outstanding leadership and deep dedication by all to the ideals of the social struggle.

• Since the Montgomery bus boycott, numerous organizations in California and surrounding states have given support to the Southern struggle. In January, 1961 this support took on structure when Martin Luther King, Jr. went to LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA where he met with over one hundred ministers and the WESTERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE was formed. The Reverend L. Sylvester Odom, pastor of Ward A.M.E. Church was elected president. The Reverend Edward Stovall, pastor of the Progressive Baptist Church, Berkeley, California is vice-president. The WESTERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE encompasses California and six surrounding states. The State of California is divided into Northern, Central and Southern divisions. Dr. King recently returned from a very successful visit to OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA at the invitation of the Northern Division of the WESTERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE where he was principal speaker at a fund raising rally in the Oakland Auditorium.

10,000 persons attended. With the auditorium filled the crowd overflowed to the park next to the building. More than \$8,000.00 was raised under the leadership of the General Chairman of the meeting, the Reverend Edward Stovall, vice-president of WCLC. The general program of the WESTERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE is to provide financial and moral support to SCLC in its general crusade to bring first class citizenship to all Americans. It will also continue supporting the SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE's scholarship program for students forced to leave college because of participation in the social protest; to provide aid to the four ministers against whom the State of Alabama was awarded a two-million dollar judgment and whose personal property has been sold at auction and income garnished.

## SCLC and HIGHLANDER

It is standard routine for segregationists to label those working toward full citizenship for all Americans as "communist" or "red". Highlander Folk School at Monteagle, Tennessee has been under constant attack since its founding, twenty-eight years ago. It has never been proven that the program of the school or its staff is anything except sincerely devoted to the task of pointing the way to better racial understanding through education.

There is increasing use of the "red smear" to silence liberals working for a new South. However, SCLC will not curtail its program because of intimidation and harassment by segregationist "red baiting" tactics. Highlander has been supported by such great liberals as: Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, Reinhold Niebuhr, Harry Golden, Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick and others.

This school has given great support to Southern liberal leadership throughout its history.



DOROTHY F. COTTON

### *Educational Consultant*

Dorothy F. Cotton, formerly Administrative Assistant to the Executive Director of SCLC, has been appointed Educational Consultant, to develop and direct educational programming of SCLC.

She is a graduate of Virginia State College and Boston University, and a native of Goldsboro, North Carolina. Mrs. Cotton will conduct liaison with SCLC affiliate organizations in the development of the Correspondence Institute, Leadership Training, Citizenship Schools, and other educational projects.

## PROTEST In Jail

ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA —Eight Negro students, jailed for sit-in demonstrations, have carried the Nonviolent Method of resistance to work-gangs of the South Carolina Penal system. It has been reported that eight students were put in solitary confinement on bread and water for a "sit-down" and refusal to work. Cause of the protest was an order for the group of eight to shovel thirty-six loads of dirt each day. A companion crew of 27 prisoners were required to make thirty-two loads each day. Considering this unequal treatment, the student protest followed.

The moral courage displayed by students throughout the nation is a shining example of the "new" Negro.

### CONTRIBUTIONS

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

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....  
(street)

.....  
(city & state)

Amount of Contribution.....

Send to: SCLC

208 Auburn Ave., N. E.  
Atlanta 3, Georgia

## Benefit Show

Heading a cast of star performers, Sammy Davis, Jr. Frank Sinatra, Sidney Potier, Mahalia Jackson, Count Basie, Dean Martin, Jan Murray, Nipsey Russell, George Kirby, Carmen McRae, Ruth Brown, Sy Oliver, and many other headline performers staged a benefit for SCLC and "Tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr." which grossed \$53,000.00.

Under the sponsorship of A. Philip Randolph, the Reverend Gardner C. Taylor of Concord Baptist Church of Brooklyn, New York, and Harry Belafonte, the Committee to Aid the Southern Freedom Struggle (New York group of SCLC), organized and promoted the benefit which took place at Carnegie Hall in New York City. The night of January 27, 1961, the auditorium, famous for the great names which have graced its stage was completely sold out.

Squads of extra police were detailed to handle the huge crowd milling backstage in an effort to catch a glimpse of performers and notables.

A telegram from President John Kennedy was read which congratulated the Committee on its effort to aid the Southern freedom struggle. He also stated his determination to "make democracy in this country, not only a name but a reality".

Harry Belafonte, Sidney Potier and many other celebrities are members of the New York group.

During intermission Harry Belafonte stated "... we are taking a stand for what we believe is right, moral and democratic..."

## • VOTING •

From the beginning, SCLC has been acutely aware of the unlimited potential of the Negro vote. Steadily it has been building up its voter-registration activities. The field staff is being enlarged to more effectively develop its program in the deep South states. Increased education in the Philosophy of Nonviolence, through workshops and institutes is scheduled for these areas. Several large hard-core states have been selected for highly intensified voter-registration campaigns.

## Equality Now

In an article published in Nation Magazine, February 4, 1961, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. speaks to our President.

Carefully documented are the powers, rights, and privileges of the Nation's chief executive to destroy segregation in all walks of life.

"... the primary goal of a well meaning administration should be ... to wipe out immediately, every vestige of federal support and sponsorship of discrimination", noted Dr. King. "We must face the tragic fact that the Federal government is the Nation's highest investor in segregation".

Reprints of the article EQUALITY Now are available. Write: SCLC, 208 Auburn Avenue, N. E., Atlanta 3, Georgia.

## SCLC Newsletter

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