Tears welled up in my heart and my eyes not long ago as I surveyed the shambles of what had been the Shady Grove Baptist Church of Leesburg, Georgia. I had been awakened shortly after daybreak by my executive assistant, the Rev. Wyatt Tee Walker, who informed me that a SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) staffer had just called and reported that the church where their organization had been holding voting clinics and registration classes had been destroyed by fire and/or dynamite.

Lee County is one of the three southwest Georgia counties where for years an attempt to register to vote has been tantamount to inviting death.

As I stood there sensing the intense heat from the smoldering remains, there came to mind all of the protestations of the segregationists, the conservative whites, the liberals, and many Negroes who have not yet grasped the meaning of nonviolent direct action.

Their reservations on "Sit-Ins" and "Freedom Rides" do not all sound the same, but they total the very same attitude: "There must be another way for the Negro to achieve his civil rights. He should seek redress through the courts", or "Lunch counters and schools should not be the emphasis. The Negro should register and vote", and on and on.

Unfortunately, when the nonviolent movement is at full peak as it has been in Albany, Georgia over the past summer, there seems to be a greater temptation for detractors and some friends to discount the nonviolent technique as a legitimate method for a minority people to secure the guarantees of the Constitution. They do not understand that the massive insistence of the Negro community through nonviolent direct action forces the lawless segregationist to a compromise position where

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COST OF BALLOT (From P. 1)

he howls (as he is doing at this moment in Albany) "Seek your rights through the courts and not the streets and we will obey the law."

However, in Lee County, there was no lunch counter issue, no requests for talks with the City Commission, no insistence on compliance with the ICC ruling on November 1, 1961, no omnibus suit pending — there was only a handful of the plain and simple people of the land who sought to equip themselves to vote as American citizens. They were being helped by student volunteers of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee who barely existed on subsistence pay of $40.00 a week. Yet, the site of their voter rallies and registration clinics was now in ashes. Why? Why? Why?

The naked truth is that whether the object of the Negro community's efforts are directed at lunch counters or interstate busses, First Amendment privileges or pilgrimages of prayer, school desegregation or the right to vote—he meets an implacable foe in the southern white racist. No matter what it is we seek, if it has to do with privileges or pilgrimages of prayer forts are directed

with the participation of such groups as these, we look forward to enlightenment of all citizens and thereby the establishment of the "beloved community" which SCLC's President, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. works for all over the South.
THE CONGO, U. S. A. (Continued from Page 1)

compounded by the frustration of 99 years of hypocrisy and deception, and to date more than 1200 arrests have taken place, thousands of man hours invested and millions of dollars of energy have been expended in the name of freedom. In that glorious process, the souls of the black people of Albany have been set free.

I do not know what moment or day or week or year we shall have a just resolution of the grievances of the Negro community in Albany, but whenever it is, there will be Negroes who step forward with confidence and assurance and implement every privilege constitutionally declared.

These are they whom the naive and the unenlightened call "law-breakers". This is the favorite cliche of one Chief Laurie Pritchett who in some instances has been made the darling of the press because he has abstained from police brutality. In his role as Chief of Police, he is as villainous as the system in which he is hopelessly caught. Granted he is a cut of man who sincerely abhors police brutality and will not allow it. But he is also a peace officer committed to fulfill the solemn oath that hangs upon the wall of his office: "As a law enforcement officer my fundamental duty is to serve mankind; to safeguard lives and property; to protect the innocent against deception, the weak against oppression or intimidation and the peaceful against violence or disorder; and to respect the constitutional rights of all men to liberty, equality and justice (italics mine). The "lawbreakers" are they who hurl the accusation: Mayor Kelly, the City Commission, Chief Laurie Pritchett et al who deny aggrieved citizens, by chance Negro, their constitutional guarantees under the First Amendment.

Thus the hue and cry of the racists that the Communists and the "outsiders" have taken over their town falls a little flat on the ears of the nation and the world when their deeds are contrasted with their words. That which really strikes fear in the hearts is the prospect that the example of Albany, Georgia will produce 25, 50 or 100 "Albany". "Mistuh Charley" knows he is about to lose "a good thing".

In Albany, as nowhere else, the paraphrase of the old plantation song is startlingly true. It is the song of the new Negro, the New Albany, perhaps the new South and nation.

"I'm coming, I'm coming"
And my head ain't bending low.
I'm walking tall, I'm talking strong.
I'm America's NEW BLACK JOE!"

Jackie Robinson and Wyatt Tee Walker looking at the ruins of Mt. Olive Baptist Church

JACKIE ROBINSON HEADS SCLC DRIVE TO REBUILD BURNED CHURCHES

Jackie Robison, former major league baseball star responded willingly to Martin Luther King's suggestion that a national fund drive be started to rebuild three churches in southwest Georgia that were completely destroyed by "night-riding" arsonists. The Shady Grove Baptist Church in Lee County was rocked by an explosion (see Page 1) and then burned August 15th. The other two churches were swept by early morning fires September 9, the same Sunday Mr. Robinson was scheduled to address a voter registration rally of the Albany Movement. Following his arrival in Albany, he accompanied Wyatt Tee Walker (investigating the tragedy for Dr. King who was on the West Coast at the time), to the scene of the holocausts. At the Mount Olive ruins where some of the church still

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Birmingham, Alabama, “the worst city in the South” will be the scene of SCLC’s Sixth Annual Convention, September 25-28. The convention occasions bringing together some of the “best” people. Beginning with the First Annual Freedom Dinner at which the wives of the “Freedom Fighters” will be honored, the top personalities identified with the Negro struggle in this generation will share the speaker’s dais.

Jackie Robinson, former Brooklyn Dodger all-time great and newest entry into Baseball’s Hall of Fame will serve as principal speaker at the dinner. The convention schedule includes major presentations by Congressman Adam Clayton Powell; Wiley Branton, Director of SRC’s Voter Education Project; Dr. William Stuart Nelson of Howard University; one of the country’s foremost authorities on nonviolence; the National Urban League’s crusading Whitney C. Young; Anne Braden, militant white Southerner and Field Secretary for SCEF (Southern Conference Educational Fund). Ralph D. Abernathy, keynoter and President King round out the roster of principal speakers. The Reverend Otis Moss, leader of the Atlanta Sit-ins will deliver the closing message on Friday. The host affiliate for the annual meeting is the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights headed by the Rev. Fred L. Shuttlesworth.

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“creating a disturbance” and “congregating on the sidewalk”. Upon his release from jail, the Rev. Mr. Middleton commented, “The system of segregation has been placed squarely where it should have been all the time—on the front door-step of the Church.”

The “Pilgrimage of Prayer” to Albany came as a response to a call from SCLC’s president, Dr. King. Chief coordinators were the Rev. Ralph Lord Roy of Grace Methodist Church, New York City and Rabbi Israel Dresser, Temple Sharyn Shalom, Springfield, N. J.

JACKIE ROBINSON (From P. 3)
burned an hour before sunset, Mr. Robinson commented, “It makes you want to cry, deep down in your heart.” He then pledged to do whatever he could do and pledged the first $100.00 to the fund. Within a week’s time, Mr. Robinson had money and pledges for nearly $10,000.00. At press time, Governor Nelson Rockefeller “as a Baptist layman and concerned American citizen” had pledged to Dr. King and Mr. Robinson an unspecified amount equal to one-third the cost of constructing the three churches. Mr. Robinson said the total cost could be $30,000.00 or more.

Those wishing to contribute may do so by sending their contributions to Mr. Jackie Robinson, 425 Lexington Avenue, New York, New York or Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., 334 Auburn Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia. Because of tax purposes, the fund is officially named the Mt. Olive Baptist Church Building Fund with the understanding that each church would share proportionately in all monies raised.

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