

SCLC
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Newsletter



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OXFORD MISSISSIPPI, 1962

By MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

The Mississippi crisis has seared the conscience of our entire nation. It has been difficult to believe what our television sets have hurled at our eyes. Is this really happening in 1962?

Consider the stark tragedy of Mississippi: Governor Barnett, with interposition dripping from his lips, personally goading the racist element of the state and the university into a frenzy of hatred and prejudice; the acquiescence of the Board of Trustees to political demagoguery; the caricature-like move of the Governor appointing himself "registrar" to block the Air Force veteran's enrollment; the loss of two lives; the scores injured, and the yet uncalculated pain and agony the people of Mississippi and this nation must bear.



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

It is indeed stark tragedy, for it has all really happened *here in America in 1962.*

It must be acknowledged that the entire nation must bear some of the blame. We can never deny that the compromises made following the Civil War and during Reconstruction have at least come home to roost. The whole system of segregation and discrimination for the last hundred years has had either the consent of law and/or custom both South and North. The nation is partly to blame, for America, *to her dishonor*, learned to live with the system in its glaring and blatant forms in the South, and its cunning, mad, subtle forms in the North.

But let us turn again to Mississippi, for it is the locus of our immediate concern. Mississippi, according to statistical data on educational standards, is at the bottom of the list. This is not to say that all Mississippians are ignorant and unlettered. There are many, many intelligent and lettered people in the State of Mississippi, but there is such a great dearth of educational achievement among the economically suppressed Negroes and whites, that the average for the State is made miserably low.

The fading agrarian economy and inflexible sectionalism have expected this in Tallahatchie County if there were a wholesale attempt to integrate the county schools. However, the sound and fury vented its spleen at Oxford-site of the University of Mississippi. The young people who attend classes in the Lyccum, and who walk the shaded paths of "Ole Miss" are the aristocracy of Mississippi. The Board of Trustees is not composed of backwoods, cotton farmers! In the aura of that which could be adjudged the highest and best of Mississippi, law and order did break down *completely*. If this is the *best* of Mississippi, *God save us from the worst!*

There can be no gain in saying that the academic and educational leadership

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"WE'RE READY TO BUILD"

By Jackie Robinson

I am happy to say to the supporters of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and our many friends around the nation that we have to date received \$35,000.00 for the rebuilding of the burned churches in South Georgia. In about ten days, I will be meeting with the pastors of the churches, Dr. King, the architects and a few other people who represent funds that have been gathered in addition to reports that the Atlanta Constitution's fund is nearly \$10,000.00 and there is possibly another \$10,000.00 available through the National Council of Churches. We propose to coordinate our efforts early in December in order that these churches will be ready for use as soon as possible.

We are grateful to the thousands of people who have contributed in any denomination. Especially do we appreciate the generosity of Mr. Bill Black, my boss, who made the first \$5,000.00 contribution, Governor Rockefeller who made a gift of \$10,000.00 available and Mr. Frank Schiffman (shown chatting with me above) who started his gifts with \$1,000.00.

I never realized when I accepted the chairmanship of the SCLC Na-

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SCLC Newsletter

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SRC PUBLISHES REPORT ON U.S. LAXITY IN ALBANY

Howard Zinn, professor of history and social science at Spelman College, specifically charged the Federal Bureau of Investigation with laxness, and he says President Kennedy has failed to play "a key role in crisis such as Albany."

He states that Albany Negroes tend to distrust local members of the FBI.

"With all the clear violations by local police of constitutional rights," said Zinn, "... the FBI has not made a single arrest on behalf of Negro citizens."

Zinn's study, called "Albany, A Study in National Responsibility," was published by the Southern Regional Council, an interracial group formed in 1944 to advance "equal opportunity for all the South's people."

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OXFORD, MISSISSIPPI, 1962

of Mississippi failed her when she needed it most.

One of the reasons Mississippi did not weather the rigors of the most severe social transition which the South has seen since the Civil War, is that, she suffered the complete abdication of responsibility by her political leadership. Not a single cry of caution or moderation resounded from the walls of any governing body—from the State Capitol to the smallest county seat. The verse, chorus and refrain that echoed around the State was always the same—"never!"

How different might the picture be in Mississippi today if only the political leadership of the State had had the courage to face the problem instead of throwing up their hands and delivering harangues against Federal intervention. They, whom the people elected to be the guardians of the commonwealth of the citizens, in Mississippi's most critical hour since secession, abdicated their responsibility and allowed the campus of "Ole Miss" to literally become a battlefield for a cause that was lost a hundred years ago.

And where was the cry of the Lord's prophets? The most serious indictment is not to be made against the screaming mob, for they were propelled by bottled-up venom and hatred that was tragically having its ultimate catharsis. Surely the abysmal silence of the church and clergy cannot pass without its due reckoning. Where are they who shout, "Lord, Lord!"? The New Testament admonishes us that the people cannot hear if the trumpet makes an uncertain sound. What is their hope if the trumpet makes no sound at all?

I have traveled much the length and breadth of Mississippi. On lazy summer afternoons and crisp autumn mornings I've seen tall church spires and sprawling brick monuments dedicated to the glory of God. Often did I wonder, "What kind of people worship there? Who is their God?" When I review that painful memory of the last week at Oxford, and cannot recall a single voice "crying in the wilderness," the questions are still the same—"What kind of people worship there? Who is their God?"

What are we to say to the world? Oxford, Mississippi, has placed democracy on trial as never before. The cry of the Negro for equality and justice in our nation has been muffled, at best. But the Little Rock's, the Montgomery's, the Albany's, and the Oxford's place the questioning of our world leadership on the lips of the emerging African and Asian nations. We cannot stand before the judgment bar of world opinion so long as there erupts an Oxford, Mississippi. What we are doing speaks so loud, they cannot hear what we say.

DIS 'N DATA

Have You Read . . . *The Desegregated Heart!* by Sarah Patton Boyle?

This book is a *must* for any one who wishes to understand clearly the dilemma of the "white" liberal who sincerely wants to help desegregate the South and the nation. Warmly and honestly written. Sarah Patton Boyle's marvelous life shines right through.



Sarah P. Boyle

Did You Know . . . that Sammy Davis, Jr. and Peter Lawford are doing a gala benefit December 11th for SCLC? Entitled "Westchester Salute to Dr. King," star-studded show will be held at 4000 seat County Center. Lotte Kunstler, wife of famous civil rights lawyer and author, is general chairman.

Have You Heard . . . that L. Francis Griffin, the "prophet" of Prince Edward County (Va.) was honored at a \$11 a plate testimonial last month? The Virginia State Unit of SCLC, headed by hard-working Milton Reid of Petersburg, sponsored the affair honoring Griffin for unselfish devotion during 11 years of school segregation controversy. Note: After four school-less years, Federal courts say Prince Edward schools must open or ALL Virginia schools must close!

NOW AVAILABLE! A hi-fidelity recording, *The American Dream* by Martin Luther King, Jr. This record can only be secured through the home office. Only \$3.50. Special prices to schools and churches. Only a limited number left. Address orders: The American Dream, SCLC Newsletter, Auburn Avenue, N. E. This record of a major MLK speech at Syracuse University will soon be a collector's item.

GIVE the UNITED WAY
... SUPPORT your
LOCAL UNITED
FUND APPEAL!



NEGRO MINISTERS UNFOLD "OPERATION BREADBASKET" IN ATLANTA

October signalled the launching of a brand new program into orbit at the local and national level. Among the real concerns of SCLC that were discussed in strategy sessions during the annual convention in Birmingham, was the alarming rate of unemployment in the Negro community, South and North. National statistics reveal that though the Negro only comprises 10% of the nation's population, the ratio of unemployment is 2 to 1, Negro to white. This means that, proportionately, there is 20 times the unemployment among Negroes as there is among whites.

Through the Atlanta SCLC headed by the Rev. John Middleton, and its chairman of the Committee on Fair Employment, Dr. Gerald Reed, a research project was begun to determine which industry producing consumer goods was the most flagrant violator of equal opportunity in employment. All indications point to the baking industry.

The project has been named "Operation Breadbasket" because it represents the creation of jobs and income for the Negro community. At press time, the Rev. Leon Sullivan, architect of the Philadelphia "selective patronage" campaign that resulted in more than 1000 "white collar" and sensitive jobs for Negroes, was brought to Atlanta for a public meeting and round of meetings with ministers and lay leaders. Dr. Sullivan disclosed that in a year and a half, the buying power of the Negro was increased \$4,000,000.00. Inspired by the logicity of the Philadelphia approach (Sullivan said they got the idea from King) Atlanta has gone to work and it appears that before long there will be some new jobs for the Negro in the baking (or some other) industry. SCLC's Treasurer, Rev. Ralph D. Abernathy, has been tapped as the "Call Man" (chairman) of the Priority Committee (Steering Committee). Rotating committees will attempt to negotiate the differences with a particular industry. If this fails, the "word" is passed on to the Negro community through the pulpits of the Negro clergy with instructions as to what product is taboo. In the event it is necessary, storeowners who distribute offensive

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"WE'RE READY TO BUILD"

(From P. 1)

tional Fund to Rebuild the Burned Churches how much work would be involved. More than that, I can honestly say, that with all the causes with which I've been associated never have I felt the great sense of satisfaction that this has given me. When these churches are rebuilt, they will be symbols for all the world to know that burning the churches of the Negro community that seeks its full citizenship through the ballot, will not in any way deter their efforts. The segregationists might as well understand that every time they burn a church, we'll build it back five times better!

(If any of our readers missed the opportunity to give to the Fund for the churches, checks or money orders can be forwarded to Mr. Robinson, 425 Lexington Avenue, New York City, made payable to "Mount Olive Baptist Church Rebuilding Fund." All churches will share equally and gifts ARE tax deductible.)

SOUTHERN LAWYERS CONFERENCE SET FOR ATLANTA

Atlanta will be the site of "A WORKSHOP SEMINAR for lawyers on CIVIL RIGHTS and NEGLIGENCE LAW," November 30th and December 1st. The seminar is sponsored by the National Lawyer's Guild, and the National Bar Association in cooperation with SCLC.

The seminars are planned to achieve two objectives: First, make it possible for more attorneys to accept civil rights cases by making their practice in other areas of the law more lucrative. It is believed that if the attorneys' proficiency in this area is improved his income will be improved and he will be more willing to accept civil rights cases. Second, to provide the attorney with an intensive review of the latest developments in civil rights law, with particular attention to the discovery of new techniques for the protection of civil rights.

Donald Hollowell, noted Atlanta civil rights attorney, is General Conference Chairman, George W. Crockett of Detroit is Co-Chairman in charge of the Conference program and Isabel Webster is serving as Conference Secretary. Wyatt Tee Walker, executive assistant to Dr. King, is Co-Chairman in charge of Conference facilities. All sessions will be held at the Waluhaje. A closing banquet that will be open to the public is scheduled for the Boy's Building of the Butler Street YMCA. Judge Wade

SCLC PROFILE OF THE MONTH

The city of Atlanta claims many mountain-peaks of leadership. The Rev. Dr. Samuel Williams is one of them. As pastor of the historic Friendship Baptist Church, professor of philosophy and religion at renowned Morehouse College and president of the Atlanta branch NAACP, "Dr. Sam's" influence for good is difficult to calculate. He provides his church congregation with his stimulating and provocative religious bent; his students from Morehouse, in their later days, thank him for being such a demanding taskmaster; and the most significant NAACP victories in public accommodation and education have been achieved during the tenure of his presidency.



"Dr. Sam," as he is affectionately called, moves without haste in the performance of his community tasks. He is known for his incisive mind that explores every problem thoroughly, be it religious, philosophical or social. He has little concern, if any, with standing alone on an issue (in many instances he has). Everyone will agree that "Sam does his own thinking."

As president of the Atlanta NAACP, the most notable achievement under his leadership was the desegregation of the University of Georgia. There followed swiftly, the desegregation of public schools of Atlanta. These two notable accomplishments had been preceded by his participation as plaintiff in the bus desegregation case in Atlanta and the ruling won against the Georgia State College in 1959. Dr. Samuel Williams was the chief witness.

"Dr. Sam" is also third vice-president of SCLC and has served his present post since 1954. Academically, he is a graduate of Morehouse College, Howard University (double graduate) and has done extensive postgraduate study at the University of Chicago in Philosophy. We salute Atlanta's "Dr. Sam."

McCree, of the two Negro Federal Judges in America will be the principal speaker.

Some of the areas to be covered in the Negligence Seminar include "Settlement Negotiations" and "Discovery Proceedings." The Civil Rights Seminar will embrace "Discrimination in Criminal Law," "Civil Remedies to Enforce Civil Rights" and "Federal Practice and Procedure."



Miss Mahalia Jackson, internationally known singer, is shown with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Rev. Richard Battles after having received a special citation during the Festival of Faith and Freedom which was held in Hartford, Connecticut on October 28 at the Bushnell Auditorium. More than 2000 people attended. Wyatt Tee Walker, executive assistant to Dr. King, presented the citation to Miss

Jackson. The full text of the citation is as follows:

**SPECIAL CITATION
TO MISS
MAHALIA JACKSON
*Festival of Faith and
Freedom 1962***

Bushnell Auditorium
October 28, 1962
Hartford, Conn.

Miss Mahalia Jackson is internationally known for her perceptive presentation of the words and music of faith.

She excels in her chosen profession because her artistry reflects her own deep personal spirituality. We affectionately salute her as "the Queen of Gospel Music."

Miss Jackson has traveled throughout the world making command performances before the kings and queens of the world. Her interpretation of Negro music especially, has built new bridges of understanding to many of our friends in foreign lands. She is one of America's foremost ambassadors of goodwill.

It is significant that Miss Jackson is one of the pioneers for the Negro community in the broad maze of the television industry. She has warmed the hearts of millions with her fervent renderings of the "songs of the Lord."

Beyond all this, Miss Jackson has been for years a close, personal friend of Martin Luther King Jr., president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. She is a devotee of the struggle he represents and has joined with him on many occasions such as this to raise the needed funds for the struggle in the Deep South. This is still another facet of her remarkable talent and personality.

Tonight, the citizens of the Hartford community salute you and Dr. King for the inaugural "Festival of Faith and Freedom." God bless you and may he ever keep you in the hollow of his Hand.

"OPERATION BREADBASKET"

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consumer items is also prone to picketing and boycotting.

Meanwhile, the home office lodged two formal complaints with the President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity against Kraft Foods, a division of National Dairies; and the Blue Plate Division of Hunts Foods & Company, Inc. Employees of the respective companies sought the aid of SCLC officials to correct discriminatory practices in merit advancement and hiring policies in these two companies that hold sizable government contracts through the office of Defense Supply. Wyatt Tee Walker, executive assistant to Dr. King, was advised by John Feild of the President's Committee within a week that formal investigations would begin November 5th at both companies. Hunts Foods flew in their Industrial Relations Manager from the home office in Fullerton, California to negotiate a settlement for voluntary compliance.

Within two days, Blue Plate acceded amiably to complaints of employees and agreed to the immediate desegregation of rest rooms and dining facilities, the institution of a fair employment policy by January 5, 1963 (opening all job categories to Negro personnel with first option to present employees) and an iron-clad agreement against reprisal to workers who filed complaints. The negotiations with Kraft Foods are still pending final settlement. Note: Special plaudits are due the President's Committee and Office of Defense Supply who provided swift responses with personal on-the-scene investigation.

CONTRIBUTIONS

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

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....
(street)

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(city & state)

Amount of Contribution.....

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