

NEW SOUTH

DECEMBER 1964

The Book Explosion of 1964

**AUTHORS ASSESS NEGRO PROTEST,
POVERTY AND PERSONALITY**

NEW SOUTH

Published by
SOUTHERN REGIONAL COUNCIL
5 Forsyth Street, N.W., Atlanta 3, Georgia
Volume 19 • December 1964 • Number 11

CONTENTS

A Year's Books 3

OFFICERS

John H. Wheeler President
A. W. Dent Vice President
Marion A. Wright . . Vice President
Josephine Wilkins . . Vice President
Rufus E. Clement . . . Vice President
Raymond Wheeler . Chm. Exec. Com.
Leslie W. Dunbar . . Exec. Director
Margaret Long Editor

New South is published 11 times a year.
Subscription cost is \$2.50 a year. Single copies are 20 cents each, or less in quantity.

A Year's Books

PROTESTS and bold social propositions emanating from the 1964 explosion of books on the Negro condition in the United States suggest to this reader, for one, that the Negro Movement of the last five years has inspired a prevalent spirit of reform with bold, do-gooding plans for the poor and outcast which would have sounded very radical — indeed “socialistic” and “communitistic” — before Negroes of the South started demonstrating and sitting in and then thinking about the American life and institutions they seek to enter and enjoy.

Authors of many of the new books seem to start with the plight of the Negro, particularly in northern slums, and inescapably proceed to the conclusion that life for the American poor, black or white, is not fit for anybody and is a matter of urgent public business. I do not mean to suggest that the 1964 authors are the first protestants against American poverty, or that insurgent Negroes discovered it; certainly our country's literature is brave with protest against the misery of the poor. But the Negro uprising, with its realization that “equality” is economic as well as civil, has nevertheless elevated poor people into a grave and fashionable cause, or at least popularized the profound concern of such eloquent writers as Julius Horwitz and Michael Harrington.

And, since the book-writers of the

race struggle usually end up railing against national neglect of hidden and helpless poor folks, I suppose it's not too chauvinistic as a Southerner for me to attribute much of this national concern to religious and intellectual Negro Southerners who have been preaching for the poor for several years now so that the book writers, being good fellows on the whole, have necessarily adopted their ideas.

Another recurring theme in the year's books is the incapacitating self-hatred of the Negro American inculcated by segregation and the white man's demeaning view of him, a damage most carefully investigated by Thomas Pettigrew, most vividly by C. Eric Lincoln and at great and sometimes tedious length by Charles E. Silberman and Nat Henthoff. It's not that Mr. Silberman and Mr. Henthoff are so tedious, but that the thesis is so frequent in the writings of 1964, and so painful, that I'd had enough of it by the time I got to their books. And I had also begun to wonder, where are these emotionally crippled black folks they're talking about? I do know a janitor so servile as to make me ashamed and a day-working cleaning woman so honeyed and agreeable as to appear scarcely self-respecting, whose unpleasantly humble personalities are doubtless their adjustments to the black condition in an arrogant white world. But I am inclined to

think this is the personality of the poor and dependent, white or black, with perhaps a different style for the black, and that nobody is really so permanently debased that he or she can't take a new opportunity to stand up and live and work like a man or a woman. My sanguine view of the Negroes I know is not to flout the psychological findings of these careful and compassionate researchers and writers, nor to mitigate the shame of white insult to colored people; it is rather to say that Negro Southerners, in their righteous cause, this year seem so much superior to resistant whites in reason, pride and generosity, that I feel obliged to dispute the book-writing consensus that Negroes are inferior because we white folks persuaded them that they are. We certainly tried, but obviously didn't succeed with this generation of thinking, nonviolent, revolutionary colored folks down here. Perhaps the Negro Northerner does, indeed, carry the shameful burden of 300 years of slavery and segregation on his back and in his psyche; but Negro Southerners, sacrificially transforming the South and leading the country out of its most serious sin, have clearly shed the stigma of the centuries in their brave and manly mission.

James McBride's profound and beautiful book, *WHO SPEAKS FOR THE SOUTH?* offers the entirely different proposition that the defeated Negro Southerner, with religion and wisdom, has wrested a character from his travail which can work the salvation of us all, this in an absorbing study to which we'll return.

Another repeated revelation in the new books is that of the resurgent Negroes' idealistic and religious (or, in some confused and gamey cases, ideological) rejection of the frivolous and materialistic aims of our times. And

this philosophical facet of the non-violent revolution promises, to the most hopeful of us, Negro persuasion and leadership into a more serious, unselfish and responsible American way of life. The Negroes, it appears, want not only "freedom now," but jobs, improved education, ample housing and proud good living for all Americans, and the high, human moral tone which will make these shared blessings possible.

Every one of the books I read rings urgently and fearfully with the warning that the white man's time to settle with his colored neighbors is running out, what with rising black anger and hatred at home and a wide world of colored and white peoples arrayed against each other abroad.

Mr. Silberman's *CRISIS IN BLACK AND WHITE* (Random House, 358 pp., \$5.95) is an excellent, comprehensive account of American race trouble. Mr. Silberman focuses on the Negro himself and propounds the idea that the Negro masses are, indeed, inferior in spirit, personality and performance because white men have made them so with slavery, segregation and humiliations. So, contrary to most liberal opinion that the "Negro Problem" is really a white problem of attitudes, Mr. Silberman says the Negro *is* his own problem.

His thesis that Negroes are crippled by our system and that every sector of society must move drastically and intelligently to train, house and employ them into equality is well supported by careful reporting, wide reading and a thoughtful grasp of Negro history.

Like C. Eric Lincoln and Howard Zinn, Silberman emphasizes that white distaste for color is historically nationwide, that the compromise of 1877 brought legal segregation to the South and *de facto* separation to the North and that the North has moralized and

postured as unprejudiced since the Union fought the South over slavery.

As Silberman has it, damage to the Negro personality began in the traumatic capture of black slaves and the monstrous Middle Passage to America and has continued ever since. He dismisses as scattered, few and feeble the slave uprisings which Dr. Lincoln and other writers recall as spirited and recurrent black rebellion.

Nor have Negroes advanced as much as they might have, he continues, in business, professions and other accomplishments, as other big-city immigrant populations did, suffering prejudice and poverty but not the dread distinction of color. He blames the failure partly on the Negro's "problem of identification" in white America which scorns, oppresses and ignores him. He has an interesting chapter on African societies from which the Negro came, many of them complex and learned cultures which contributed considerably to civilization, but which are presented to Negro Americans as the grotesque cannibals who confront colored children in school books.

In chapters as compassionate as they are informing, he surveys Negro family life, sex morals and crime to find that families are disorganized and matriarchal, that Negroes flounder and drift and that illegitimacy, dependence, violence and unemployment are inordinately greater among Negroes. He tackles the Negro slum school with as much commendable emotion and more judgment than Nat Henthoff, I thought, from the shocking and cruel prejudice of some teachers to the cultural poverty of little ones who come to school ignorant of words, sounds, ideas and objects which have filled the lives of white classmates for six years. He proposes nursery schools, work with families and complete official concern with the children, as in the Israeli

system which starts child education with the pregnant mother and demonstrates that even the feeble-minded can read when sensibly and simply taught.

In a discussion of "welfare colonialism" and other phases of Negro wrongs he makes the important point that Negroes, and all poor people, must participate in and direct their own advancement, if there is to be any. His chapter on the Woodlawn Improvement Association in Chicago is a heartening exposition of how the poor can wield pressure and power to extract what they need and are due from landlords, city hall and other reluctant ramparts of the establishment.

Mr. Silberman's just and magnanimous view of our terrible trouble is well characterized in a moral appeal in his first chapter, to "accept the Negro as an equal and participating member of society because it is the only right thing, the only decent thing to do."

Nat Henthoff, the bearded jazz critic and big-hearted devotee of Negro rights, in *THE NEW EQUALITY* (Viking Press, 221 pp, \$4.95) concludes that Negroes will only succeed with more organized power and white allies—including other poor folks—to open our society to equality for everyone. And by equality Mr. Henthoff means, for one thing, federally guaranteed income for everyone to have a decent life.

Mr. Henthoff also concludes, as the southern Negro Movement did several years ago, that poverty and squalor in a rich economy will curtail anybody's equality and that the Negro cause is the American cause. He also suspects the Negro Movement may lead the country to radical political and economic reforms, which a lot of us Southerners discerned a couple of years ago in hearing and heeding our Negro insurgents hollering "one man, one vote," "jobs for everyone" and, as

the youngsters insist on calling it, "a new value system" for a competitive and greedy society.

He opens with an interesting prologue, a perceptively reported account of the "unique" Leadership Training Institute for Civil Rights Activists at Nyack, N.Y., sponsored by the League for Industrial Democracy. Here is a touching view of the real, but uneducated brains and bigotry of some of the young Negro militants and the bewildered humility of young whites they gratuitously insult, in a convincing show of the new hatred and hostility we've been hearing so much about.

His book appraises Negro gains, illustrates their personal and public handicaps, refutes resisting white rationales and altogether gathers up an informative array of facts, feelings and prospects.

Henthoff's chapters on the education of Negroes, vividly illumined by his big heart and his indignation for each abused black child, are an able examination of slum schools. I think, though, that here he swallowed too much well-meaning, brains-demeaning and senseless spinnings of the educationists, and that he misses the point that even children struck dumb by poverty and neglect could learn if they were lovingly taught with respect for knowledge, and would even stay in school. This is a prospect generally overlooked, I think, by most contemporary education in its concern for the "whole" and "adjusted" child to the neglect of his brain; but slum schools seem a good place to recover the joys and benefits of learning,

Mr. Henthoff's book is valuable for discussions of bussing, the Princeton and other plans for integrating segregated school neighborhoods, and the integrated "park" or great school centers. He quotes Dr. Martin Deutsch's

plan to maintain neighborhood schools for very young children who "after kindergarten would be saturated with the basic skills necessary to learning the Three R's before the beginning of the school community at the fourth grade." I don't know what these "basic skills" are, but it seems to me that as long as Dr. Deutsch and Mr. Henthoff want to take these terribly deprived children from their stultifying homes to kindergarten and neighborhood schools, they could at least teach them the Three R's before the fourth grade. Mr. Henthoff also espoused the abolition of "tracks," which I supposed to be class groupings by ability where smart children may learn as fast as they can, apparently on some educationist's word that this isn't democratic or kind to the dullards. Here, I wish the reformers would show the same mercy to superior children that they do to the dullards.

I dare say this is an audacious book, for Yankces who haven't been listening to idealistic and radical Negro leaders in the South. It's not an original book, but rather Henthoff's devoutly-committed view of the Negro condition and opinions of other leftist thinkers about American society.

As helpful as the Henthoff study, facts and advice are, I regret his adoption of the jargon of the various authorities who informed him; his vocabulary seems commonplace enough without further damage from the pompous word-abuse of the professional "disciplines."

Two intense and emotional little books bring a moving revelation of the formidable character of Negroes and whites who have abandoned the comfort, safety and young joys of ordinary boys and girls to dare the Deep South for Negro freedom.

Such examinations of our liberators are rare enough. The first perhaps

were the studies of Dr. Robert Coles, a young psychiatrist with pronounced literary talent who spent two years with SRC studying integrating Negro school children and branched out to the incomprehensible heroes and heroines of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, whom it was then the prevailing mood to regard as a bunch of nuts and needful nuerotics. Dr. Coles wrote professionally detached vignettes of many of these youngsters and came up with the idea that these boys and girls who have the strength to act on what everybody else pretends to believe are not the ones who are crazy.

Far more direct than Dr. Coles' careful studies, and deepened by an artist's abandon with a belief, is Lillian Smith's *OUR FACES, OUR WORDS* (E. W. Norton and Company, 128 pp., \$3.75). Miss Smith who has long since moved on from the hurts and harms of racial segregation to the big and basic theme of everybody's freedom to be human, has done monologues accompanying some beautiful and horrifying photographs of "direct action" in South and North—a girl felled by a fire hose, black children, picket lines, a young Negro crouched in the self-protecting hunch against blows of police and hoodlums, poor country people, police clubbing a fallen boy.

Miss Smith's solemn dedication of this searching and heart-swelling little volume seems well worth quoting:

To the young in the Movement who wisely or sometimes unwisely have risked their lives for a way to freedom that will bring growth to all; and to the older ones, whether in years or experience, who have learned that freedom is a hard thing, that change means inner as well as outef change, that nonviolence has as much to

do with truth as with love; to all of these I dedicate the monologues which reveal, I trust, some of the hopes and dreams and triumphs, the complexities and difficulties of creating new kinds of human relationships with one's fast-changing world.

Each of Miss Smith's monologues, offering the thoughts, fears and hopes of white and black Southerners and Northerners, is a gripping and poignant little novel in itself. Her first two chapters, the impassioned musings of two Negro boys, certainly belie the currently fashionable cliché that "no white person can know what it's like to live in a black skin." Just read Miss Smith; she can listen, feel, love and know.

Her monologues of the white southern girl, the colored girl and others are brutal, gentle, poetic and colloquial with the jargon of the braver and more serious youth of this generation.

It's an important, profound and thrilling little book.

Howard Zinn's *SNCC, The New Abolitionists* (Beacon Press, 241 pp., \$4.95) is so perceptive and respectful a book about the young folks of Snick that I wish he had made it longer and elaborated his thesis that this is "a major social movement, shaking the nation to its bones . . . more a movement than an organization, for no bureaucratized structure can contain their spirit, no printed program capture the fierce and elusive quality of their thinking." Poor and anonymous, "They are clearly the front line of the Negro assault on the moral comfort of America." To be with them in hardship, persecution and brutality "is to feel the presence of greatness." His book is dedicated to Ella Baker, an excellent and unegotistical woman whom he calls "the wisest activist I

know in the struggle for human rights today.”

The Zinn story is enlivened by his gift for evoking a big, historical sweep or an old storied pattern into sharp metaphor and focused by his fierce faith in human rights and freedom, so that in contemplating some of our failures his style moves from gravely furious to satirically comic.

These “abolitionists” who “live in tension . . . have no party, no ideology, no creed . . . no clear blueprint for a future society. But they do know clearly that the values of present American society—and this goes beyond racism to class distinction, to commercialism, to profit-seeking . . . to religious or national barriers against human contact—are not for them.”

Dr. Zinn’s seven-year experience of the South, as a history professor at Spelman University and advisor to the young insurgents across the Deep South, makes another 1964 book, an ardent and intelligent one. *THE SOUTHERN MYSTIQUE* (Alfred A. Knopf, 267 pp., \$4.95). His thesis is that southern vices are American, but exaggerated and amplified in our fierce and struggling region. He says, among many other interesting things:

The South is everything its revilers have charged, and more than its defenders have claimed. It is racist, violent, hypocritically pious, xenophobic, false in its elevation of women, nationalistic, conservative, and it harbors extreme poverty in the midst of ostentatious wealth. The only point I have to add is that the United States, as a civilization, embodies all of these same qualities. That the South possesses them with more intensity simply makes it easier for the nation to pass off its characteristics to the

South, leaving herself innocent and righteous.

. . . To pick out the South has the advantage of focussing attention on what is worst; but it has the disadvantage of glossing over the faults of the nation. It is particularly appropriate at this time, when the power of the United States gives it enormous responsibility, to focus . . . on these qualities which mark—or disfigure—our nation. With this approach the South becomes not damnable, but marvelously useful, as a mirror in which the nation can see its blemishes magnified, so that it will hurry to correct them.

Dr. Zinn’s book is refreshingly fair, I feel, and sharp with such cynical insights as his observation that Southerners care more about manners and money than segregation when the chips are down. It is also sweet with appreciation—of appealing Negroes and decent white people—expressed in bright and illustrative phrases.

Dr. Zinn is harsh about cruelty and injustice in which we abound, but he has a novelist’s relish for southern personalities good, bad and dreadful, as he evinces in his discussion of the Albany Movement, first published in an important SRC report, and in his nearly lyrical account of his response to lovely black and brown girls in his Spelman classes and to the Negro community around Atlanta University, a chapter which was a *New South* article before publication of the whole book.

Samuel Lubell’s *WHITE AND BLACK: Test of a Nation* (Harper and Row, 196 pp., \$4.95) is an able account of the Negro advance in the United States, this “testing” which “will make us one nation again or leave us ripped into two nations with

segregated skins." In clean, clear and fast journalistic style Mr. Lubell, author of the prize-winning *FUTURE OF AMERICAN POLITICS* and a celebrated political pollster, reminds us that "American history is world history and that our domestic conflicts usually have been part of far-flung upheavals," even as now the Negro revolt comes with African independence and the rise of Red China and other colored peoples.

He recalls and appraises Booker T. Washington, the Negro leader of the nineties who offered the white South "peace and capitulation in the raging racial war" and got in return no more for his people than "white America was ready to yield at that time;" W. E. B. DuBois' lonely, intellectual protests against racism; the early Black Nationals and Marcus Garvey, the NAACP and other groups of Negro protest. This is a terse and readable history of Negro types, movements and attitudes in the last 70 years since the South segregated its black folks. He describes the "Roosevelt revolution" which brought Negroes and working whites together into the Democratic Party, Negro migration to northern cities for voting power and present Negro voting patterns threatening a great cleavage in the Democratic Party.

Mr. Lubell sees other alarming cleavages in American life—of group against group in a managed economy, of white suburbanites against Negro city dwellers, of resistant whites against demanding Negroes and of Negroes with voting and bargaining power against which whites will unite.

"But," he writes, "The Negro is not strong enough to make the white man do the right thing. If we are to reconcile our racial crisis the white people will have to devise a program for racial unification which extends beyond the trials of political bargaining power and under which white and

black can reconcile their interests. Can this be done? The evidence to date testifies, 'no'."

He does not spare us Southerners the shame of our Negro-debasing past, from the insulting incitements of the Tillmans and Vardamans and the prosperity-hunting racism of a Henry Grady to some of the ferocious expression of the last ten years. But he has a careful reporter's instinct for talk, and in the colloquial and colorful quotations he gives us from his southern tours there is much good sense, good will and searching of conscience from housewives, businessmen and working people, a side of southern life which most reporters from elsewhere don't have the wits or the will to find. Well aware of the South's success in destroying dissent, Mr. Lubell yet says: ". . . it was my feeling that if President Kennedy had stumped the South in 1964 in a calm, straightforward defense of civil rights, the campaign might have had an historic impact. Certainly he would have precipitated a really intensive racial debate in the South. . . ."

Regretting that we have waged our race war "where the white man resisted least and where the Negro pressed hardest," he declares we don't have "the time to waste in this kind of battling." He says we must seek peace with "a clear-cut national commitment to individualism against racism—to agree among ourselves to bring into existence the conditions that will enable us to treat each Negro as a recognizable individual and not as an anonymous black face." Mr. Lubell's "recognizable individual," by the way, seems a far more familiar and feasible fellow for our brave new world than the debased and self-hating black man described by Silberman and Henthoff.

Lubell advises the President to break "the tragic continuity of conflict" with

Racial Peace Commissions for each southern state, in the belief that "the South can come to agreement with itself." In fact, he thinks the "commitment to individualism" may be more difficult outside the South where resistance is fiercest in housing and Negroes are denied the advancement to the betterment of good neighborhood.

"No one is free," he concludes, and most white people don't even expect the "freedom now" which Negroes demand. But "... we should let him come into the arena on the same basis as everyone else, with the same chance to fight to advance himself even as we, the rest of the people, battle to advance ourselves."

C. Eric Lincoln, author of **BLACK MUSLIMS IN AMERICA**, now has **MY FACE IS BLACK** (Beacon Press, 133 pp., \$3.50), a jewel of a book which embraces most of the history, themes, alarms and analyses of a dozen larger and lesser volumes compressed in an elegant selection of events and ideas. He warns that if Malcolm X and his rifle clubs and calls to arms "means anything, it is that America has but a little while to learn the meaning of color, which is, that it has no meaning."

Among the many sharp refreshments in his book is the eloquent acerbity with which he lays to rest the ridiculously prevalent notion that "channels of communication have broken down" with the obvious truth that "communication" between Negroes and whites is truer and more unmistakable than it ever has been.

Dr. Lincoln shows us, in clean and stylish writing, the harrowing crimes of the slave trade and the bravery of unceasing black revolt brutally repressed to remind us that the contemporary Movement with its rising threats of black violence and terror-

ism is nothing new in this country. He, too, spares us no pangs of black pain and personality impairment from generations of oppression and picturing the Negro and his ancestors as savage and shameful. And in his chapter, "Mood Ebony" he notes a new acceptance of and pride in blackness which is, of course, associated with recent corrections in African and American Negro history and with the new African independence.

Dr. Lincoln, in a big look at worldwide color antagonism, writes:

Malcolm X is not alone in his belief that a racial conflagration in this country and perhaps on a global scale is the shortest and surest solution to the problems of this civilization. The primacy of the white races of the West over the past 500 years did not win friends for them, and hatred for the white man is not confined to the *black ghettos* of America. This is the price of conquest and all conquering peoples have paid it. But the point to be established here is that the Negro in America, who has received less consideration and more abuse from the hands of the American white man than any other people anywhere in the world, has stood steadfastly behind him (and, when permitted, beside him) with a degree of patience and loyalty that is unique in the annals of time. Let the white man recognize this now, before it is too late, and learn to love mercy and do justice.

Sarah Patton Boyle, author of **THE DESEGREGATED HEART**, has written now a "Primer for Human Understanding," a paperback handbook for newcomers to black and white associations and friendships, **FOR HUMAN BEINGS ONLY** (Seabury Press,

128 pp., \$1.25) which this reviewer found as surprising as it is interesting. Mrs. Boyle's experience of the pitfalls in personal integration in many respects confirms the year's warnings of Negro lack of self esteem and hostility.

She writes at a brisk pace with feminine warmth and frequent nice turns of imaginative phrases. Her little book of advice to white and colored people trying to cross cultural lines and bridge social differences and misconceptions is illustrated with anecdotes on personal black and white setbacks, hurts and misunderstandings of people trying to make the intergroup scene. It is replete with her own veteran and valid explanations of how this innocent white insulted an inexperienced Negro and, again, how this harshly resentful Negro's misunderstanding cut to the heart of a well-meaning white friend.

It is handily furnished too, with new and more human ideas and attitudes to ease encounters, and with suggested replies to stereotype questions and rejoinders in conversations about race or between the races. And Mrs. Boyle makes felicitous and persuasive appeal to "turn our minds, once more, to the broader horizon: how to function as total human beings — persons who seek each other, caring for one another."

It occurs to me that if I had suspected even half the white pains and pitfalls Mrs. Boyle described I never would have extended the hand of friendship to anyone darker than an albino. She presents the *faux pas* from one side to the other vividly and veraciously, and that these offenses are outside my bumbling and happy experience as a blithe intergroupier is no tribute to my perception and sensitivity.

Still, many of us relatively unscarred integrators might take issue with Mrs. Boyle's injunction to suspicious Ne-

groes whom whites seek as friends: "By offering you his hand, he is saying, 'We should be together.' Be certain he means it for in taking your hand he places you in the balance against all the rest of his world. . . Much that he values most is subject to destruction. There is no one to turn to — unless to you. He has no hiding place. There is no refuge anywhere."

Surely deep and easy black-white friendships in many southern cities, even to Montgomery, Ala., dispute this poignantly expressed end of Chapter V.

Still, Mrs. Boyle obviously knows what she's talking about, even if I don't, for her little book is hailed by all the big guns in the integration business as a blue-print to "the enrichment that comes from true freedom of association," as Roy Wilkins, for one, put it.

Two books which acknowledge the devastating effects of slavery and segregation without losing perspective on the great human qualities which have endured in the Negro culture and community were written by two of the nation's most important Negro leaders, southern ones at that, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and Whitney M. Young Jr., executive director of the Urban League.

Mr. Young's book, *TO BE EQUAL*, (McGraw-Hill, 254 pp., \$5) which is tedious in tone while hair-raising in content, provides the most complete accumulation of sad statistics about discrimination against and deprivation of Negroes in American employment, education, housing, welfare, health services and everyday human dealings. He, like Dr. King, makes the point that the crushing effect of racism weighs on the poor Negro in addition to all the other misery that his white

brother in poverty suffers. Mr. Young is thus able to argue for a compensatory advantage for Negroes in all their deprivations. He sets out in detail the Urban League's blueprint for this "domestic Marshall Plan."

Mr. Young seems to ignore the need to solve unemployment before such a plan might work. He does not embrace with the same churchish charity all of the poor, white as well as black, as Dr. King does in demanding a "Bill of Rights for the Disadvantaged"—a federal government effort to compensate for deprivation and discrimination.

Dr. King's book, *WHY WE CAN'T WAIT*, (Harper & Row. 169 pp., \$3.50) is interesting also for all its glimpses into this great leader's thinking beyond the specific tribulations and treatments of racism. He is, for example, quite willing to urge a federal government public works program where private industry can't provide employment for all. And, just before he was to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, he was writing here his emphatic belief that the methods and commitments of non-violent direct action, which have worked their miracles upon the closed minds and hearts and societies of the South, are the only real hope of a menaced world for an enduring peace.

Dr. King's book also contains the Letter from the Birmingham Jail as part of his thundering denunciation of white moderates who have failed themselves and the nation in the race crisis, accusations this gentle-voiced preacher hurls with all the anger and precision of Old Testament prophets.

Both of these books are important; they are as unlike as the two famous gentlemen who wrote them.

In spite of a sometimes regrettably professional vocabulary, Thomas Pettigrew, a Virginian and social psychologist now at Harvard, in *PROFILE*

OF THE NEGRO AMERICAN (D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 201 pp., \$5.95) has a fascinating, detailed and analytical study of segregation damage to Negro personality. It is a bitterly moving picture indeed, for all Dr. Pettigrew's careful detachment and accuracy of style.

But Dr. Pettigrew also makes the encouraging point, well-substantiated by studies and graph measurements, and by what seems to me to be his sharp trustworthy intuition, that relief from self-hatred and from the base role assigned to Negroes is tremendously transforming. He shows us this in the integration of young colored men in the Armed Forces and in Negro association with decent white people in good jobs, and as we in the South witness among Negroes in the southern movement. So, Dr. Pettigrew also demonstrates in his scholarly way that no man bears 300 years of shame if elevating and liberating circumstances intervene so he can respond to them.

He says the necessary "playing of the Negro role" imposed by whites "can be devastating—confusion of self-identity, lowered self-esteem, perception of the world as a hostile place, and serious sex-role conflicts," and he paints a sorrowful picture of fatherless Negro boys who turn to gang violence for masculine expression or retreat to dependence on matriarchal wives, of girls who scorn the absent father and hence the husband, to become, in turn, matriarchs and thus extend the un-American pattern of a family without a male head and of men impotent from the imposition of inferiority. The poorest Negroes and those least bound and bolstered by family love and those who "most passionately hate whites tend to be those Negroes who most hate and reject themselves" and who project their self-hatred also to other minorities such as Jews. On the other hand, Dr.

Pettigrew notes that Negroes of solid families and self-respect are extraordinarily "resilient and tolerant" of white people.

This is just to dip into Pettigrew's comprehensive and enlightening study of Negro personality and his suggestion, in common with other writers, that the "Negro problem" is a profound problem of democracy and social responsibility for the poor which our country has, so far, attacked only in a piddling, apologetic and piecemeal manner.

Dr. Pettigrew concludes:

As in many revolutions, *freedom* has assumed a definition special to the situation. Freedom to protesting Negro Americans means a complete casting off of the inferior role of "Negro"; it means the cessation of all the disabilities traditionally placed on black skin by American society. It means the stilling of self-hatred. Freedom also means an end to claims of white superiority, to dire poverty, to the social conditions permitting inflated rates of disease and inadequate medical care, low intelligence test scores, and heightened crime rates. Freedom means, in short, the right to participate fully in American society with the dollars and dignity of other Americans.

One of the best of the year's books is an old one, the late Richard Wright's *WHITE MAN, LISTEN* (Anchor Books, 137 pp., 95 cents) a paperback reprint of a 1957 Doubleday edition of the Negro novelist's and essayist's lectures in Europe in the fifties. In the fearful spate of frequently dreary and undistinguished writing on civil rights and race, Mr. Wright's big, historical thinking, his handsomely li-

terary use of the language and his religious respect for mankind (a religiosity which excludes conventional and traditional God and gods in favor of the sanctity of man) come like a surge of great music or an honest and beautiful burst of sunlight.

His emotional and reasoned essays range from the confused and spurned condition of the American Negro to colonized colored Asians and the spiritual and psychological homelessness of Africans debased by overlord whites. He reminds us, among other uncommonly and emphatically expressed truths, that Asians and Africans, for all their suffering and humiliation at the hands of white imperialists, still have gained in humanity and manhood by the imposition of western Christianity which uprooted ancient, ancestor-worshipping religions holding the dead holier than the living. To this "clumsy and cruel deed," of tearing colored people from their old roots and religions Mr. Wright says, "Bravo!" for "Western plundering . . . that created the conditions for the possible rise of rational societies for the greater majority of mankind."

"Buttressed by the belief that their God had entrusted the earth into their keeping, drunk with power and possibility, waxing rich through trade in commodities, human and non-human, with awesome merchant and naval marines at their disposal, their countries filled with human debris anxious for any adventures, psychologically armed with new facts, white Christian civilization during the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries with a long, slow and bloody explosion, hurled itself upon the sprawling mass of colored humanity in Asia and Africa." Thus Mr. Wright commences his books and proceeds to show the white colonial crime on the people of the East and Africa. He examines

with depth and intense emotion the material and psychological damage to the colonized and the equally costly effect on white rulers in four essays which seem to me as exciting and enlightening as anything you can read this year about the world's biggest trouble.

Mr. Wright closes with some advice to the white man which sounds familiarly like Lillian Smith's solemn injunction to white Southerners, "We must humbly confess our sins and ask forgiveness."

More than techniques . . .
Point Fours . . . loans and gifts
. . . Africans need a simple acknowledgment from the white West of what it did. And that terribly human gesture . . . is about the last thing the white West will give to Africa. . . It would mean that the white man would not again, acting upon a ridiculous delusion, attempt to conquer lands in the name of a superior god or race. And that assurance would leave the newly freed African in psychological peace for a while to find himself and rebuild his shattered existence. . .

A free Africa will not only mean a chance of life for millions of people who have been victimized for centuries, but it will be a sign, too, that at long last the white man has grown up and no longer has any need to crucify others in order to feel normal. In sum, a free Africa presupposes a free mankind. . .

We made the world in which we live. So far, we've made it a racist world. But surely such a world is not worthy of man as we dream of him and want him to be.

The jacket says Stanislas Fumet, author of *THE LIFE OF ST. MARTIN DE PORRES* (Doubleday, 119 pp., \$2.95, translated from the French by Una Morrissey) "is a member of that brilliant group of French intellectuals who did much to . . . revive the Church in France," that he advocated canonizing the Negro saint, which was accomplished in 1962, and that this biography "is written with simplicity and sincerity."

Well, I've got a longstanding respect for the purity and accuracy of French style, and I started this little book by the intellectual M. Fumet in some awe. I'd also read brief accounts of the great Peruvian Negro lay brother and his saintly ministrings to the poor, and was eager to read more. But a third of the way through I wondered if M. Fumet were pulling our legs in the wide-eyed way of such wicked and irreverent Frenchmen as Voltaire and Anatole France, so lucid and unadorned is his writing and so simple his fearful story-telling.

I think now, though, M. Fumet isn't pulling any legs and really offers this vile story of a man's self-abasement, self-loathing and unclean and unnecessary suffering in the "simplicity and sincerity" which the jacket claims for him. I think it's an obscene and distressing little book, which I rue, because the sixteenth century mulatto son of a Spanish don and a Negro servant had previously appeared to be a brave, decently humble and good man. Now, alas, thanks to M. Fumet's simplicity and sincerity, St. Martin appears to be a revoltingly crazy and utterly lamentable fellow.

Perhaps, though, this blatant little story has something to say to us about the sinful effects of white-black bastardy, which the author offers as the source of St. Martin's hideous and inhuman humility.

A nice antidote to commonplace writing and repetitious theses in the year's output, and a book interestingly relevant to race considerations is *THE INDIAN AND THE WHITE MAN* (Anchor Books, 478 pp., \$1.95) a compilation of white men's accounts of their encounters with American Indians. The book has a careful and comprehensive range from the opening excerpt out of the journal of Christopher Columbus describing his landing at San Salvador through letters and narrations of Captain John Smith, many settlers and traders, fighters in Indian wars and reports of other negotiators with Indians. And it takes us through lively documents of the Commission on Indian affairs and Indian stories such as passages from Hemingway's "Fathers and Sons" and Faulkner's "The Bear."

William E. Washburn, an historian now at American University, has edited a fetching and fascinating record of white impressions of Indians. He connects his selections with crisp and literate prose, points out the inevitable conflict between white and Indian cultures, organizes his evidence that white and Indian relationships existed in conditions of either trade or war and sadly records that the Indians who resisted white depredations most violently and valiantly "survived the longest."

He notes, mercifully, in his thoughtful introduction, that "though white society displaced red in domination of the continent, it was not done without thought or shame," and he shows us "a significant literature . . . in an attempt to justify colonization and conquest in the New World."

Mr. Washburn writes without any folderol or learned aridities of style and with keen, if nicely subdued, feeling. The archaic prose of some historical white observers of the Indian is enchanting from a day when the literate were not so learned in so many dis-

ciplines that they could not write descriptive English.

Sixteen illustrations are quite as pleasing and evocative of the flavor of history: photographs of Geronimo; a sweetly primitive painting, "Peaceable Kingdom" by Edward Hicks commemorating Penn's treaty with the Indians; pictures of Indian artifacts; the deep and elegant portraits of Pawnees by Charles Bird King; and some Aztec sculptures.

While this *New South* report includes none of the fiction, poetry and drama dealing with black-white troubles, I mention Martin B. Duberman's documentary play, *IN WHITE AMERICA*, a paperback (Houghton-Mifflin Company, 112 pp., \$1.75) because it so compellingly encompasses most of the history, protest and problem-solving of the other voluminous and often less exciting books of the year.

Mr. Duberman, whose play was, I understand, a big hit in the New York theater, and which traveled to Mississippi for the COFO summer project and is being performed elsewhere in the provinces, uses as narrators three Negro and three white actors. He employs a guitar, a few songs and great quotations from slave ship doctors, old letters, speeches in Congress, newspapers, slaves, abolitionists and contemporary comment on Negro liberation, for a rousing narrative of Negro life in the United States. This little collection of aspiration and resistance (even to a testy, insulting session for Negro leaders with the Virginian, Woodrow Wilson, in the White House) has poetry, humor, history, sociology and sermons in a huge drama so stirring as to shame many other efforts of the year.

The belief many of us entertain that the surviving Negro is strengthened rather than weakened and debased by

his bitter estate is agreeably confirmed by Mr. Duberman's comment in his brief and unpretentiously eloquent preface: "Yet if there is much in this history to enrage or sadden the Negro, there is also much to make him proud: here is a people who maintained their humanity while being treated inhumanly, who managed to endure as men while being defined as property."

Comedian Dick Gregory can scarcely be called Literary Man of the Year for his *NIGGER* (E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 224 pp., \$4.95), but his autobiography of his struggle to survive and succeed is, to my emotional taste, one of the most moving books of the year.

He reminisces back to a poignantly poverty-stricken childhood, to high school and college eminence in track and entertainment, if not in education, to his break-through to celebrity as a comedian and his passionate participation in the Negro Movement, North and South. His account is crude, powerful, wildly honest and often comic to the point of tears, as I dare say the best comedy is.

If Mr. Gregory ever needs a psychiatrist, I reckon he can afford it, but it's hard to imagine what a pro could do for him that his hot and insistent candor hasn't already done for himself. Here he gives us in the simple, often brutal vernacular of the St. Louis slums the loved and hated "weak father image," Big Pres, and describes "my beautiful Momma" slaving for a brood of five in white folks' houses, and later eased and rested by the ferocious slaving of her first-born son in the meanest and hardest "nigger" work. And here is what Mr. Gregory calls his "monster" which rose in recurring crises and disasters, a fierce strength and drive, to seize the chance and push him to superhuman effort for distinction.

Mr. Gregory reveals himself as an awesome spirit—and that rather artlessly, it seems to me. He gives us the young liar, thief, trickster and braggart, and, again the boy running like a lunatic to become a track star and working like six men for his mother. He shows us the terrible pains and efforts of his childhood which developed Negro "callouses of the soul." And in adult struggle for success and failure, here's Gregory, remembering Momma and the starveling boys and girls, leaving a job to protest abuse of bar girls, risking a riot to integrate a Maryland Penitentiary audience, ever aware of the pains and oppressions of the poor.

Gregory's gradual involvement in the Negro Movement, first in northern benefits for NAACP and SNCC and then his terrified descent into Mississippi to speak, demonstrate and go to jail, make very emotional reading, indeed. I remember *Time* Magazine's view of Gregory's angry, ebullient and witty response to Greenwood police, that his excesses did more harm than good. But to read of Gregory's giving the cops "nigger" for "nigger," "blue-eyed monkey" for "black monkey" and exuberant nigger insult for white trash obscenity is a gratifying story. Mr. Gregory was resolutely non-violent, if not loving. And I remember SNCC's Charles McDew's serious smiles and soft, persuasive voice as he described the silent exultation of Negro Mississippians hearing Gregory stand up to Greenwood police.

Mr. Gregory's account of his courtship and marriage to Lillian Smith (not the Georgia author, but Mr. Gregory's Chicago sweetheart) seems to me one of the more endearing love songs of our time.

His analysis of his comedy—the outlandish bland acceptance of the black condition to laugh at it and thus ridi-

cule "Whitey"—is a gripping story in itself, which starts with a dirty, ragged street child making fun of himself before his tormenters could, and is, of course, a commentary on humor which sometimes reduces laughter almost to a sin instead of a joy.

I'm sure there will be reviewers of taste who will chide Mr. Gregory for rough writing, inflated ego, lack of reticence and sentimentality. But I even liked his conclusion: "You didn't die a slave for nothing, Momma. You brought us up. You and all those Negro mothers who gave their kids the strength to go on, to take the thimble to the well while the whites were taking buckets. Those of us who weren't destroyed were getting callouses on our souls. And now we're ready to change a system, a system where a white man can destroy a black man with a single word. Nigger.

"When we're through, Momma, there won't be any niggers any more."

A less passionate Negro testimony is Jimmy Brown's *OFF MY CHEST*, written with Myron Cope (Doubleday and Company, Inc., 219 pp., \$4.95). Since I gave up looking at and reading about football, or any sports, at the age of 18, I never heard of the Cleveland Browns or Jimmy Brown, who, the jacket says, "is one of the greatest athletes of all time." But even to a sports illiterate, Mr. Brown's story is an engaging and admirable one in which he looks back on his life and football career with a healthy Negro cynicism for a white-run world, a good deal of fairness and affection regardless of color, considerable humor and no prejudice at all, that I could discern. Mr. Brown does confide anger, hurt and rational resentment at white prejudice he met at Manhasset High School in New York, Syracuse University and with the Browns and elsewhere in the world; but at 28 he tells

his story like a man of pride and good sense.

He explains that he was a happy child of a "broken home" reared between a great grandmother and his mother in the North. A "cute little pickaninny," he roamed the home beaches of St. Simons Island in Georgia, played with white and colored children, learned from teachers he respected, loved his "little old Mama" with her birch switch and scarcely knew he was segregated until he returned to St. Simons as a big boy.

In a chapter on "Observations," Mr. Brown describes the obstacles and adjustments of Negro athletes, the subtle separations and occasional outright insult with what seemed to me proper indignation but no bitterness.

The acceptance of the Negro in sports is really an insignificant development that warms the heart of the Negro less than it does the white man, who salves his troubled conscience by telling himself, "Isn't it wonderful that Negroes and whites are out there playing together?"

The problem is a little bigger than a ballgame. My views—strong views—are not original, yet I am in a better position than most Negroes to attempt to awaken the white man to the fact that the time is not tomorrow but now. I'm one of the niggers who "ought to be glad to be here." I make big money. I enjoy fame and adulation. My future is assured. Nevertheless, I'm not thankful to be here. If anything, I am more angry than the Negro who can't find work. . .

I doubt that the American white man realizes that the time has come when he must make a move. He must give us the laws

that make us free men, and he must enforce those laws. I am not interested in winning freedom for my three children. Both my wife, Sue, and I have gone through college learning the principles of democracy, and we intend to have that democracy while we're young enough to enjoy it. "Go forth, and live in Heaven," we are told. . . . But the white man lives today. I, too, intend to live today. If I make heaven, that's a bonus. I hope we can win freedom peaceably, but I'm skeptical. Great battles for freedom have seldom been won peaceably."

Mr. Brown tells a sweet and human story of little white girls looking at the big, black, football hero from a circle of smiling white autograph hunters. "But Jim Brown can see that hug and kiss coming. And he knows that after the little girl has kissed him he will look up and find the smiling white faces replaced by frozen faces. So he quickly maneuvers out of the little girl's range . . . finesses his way out. . . . And his heart hurts, because at that moment he loves the little girl just as she loves him. . . . You have to wonder if the white man will ever begin to understand you."

Alan F. Westin, an associate professor of public law and government at Columbia University, got himself together a telling collection of writings on Negro protest, of reporters on the revolutionary scene and of published roundups of Negro advancement. Some of Dr. Westin's reprints go back several years to Freedom Rides and to decades-ago Negro protest. Most of them are last year's hot, angry and high-minded arguments for a free society in the United States. His book is *FREEDOM NOW* (Basic Books, Inc., 328 pp., \$5.95).

Some of *FREEDOM NOW* is real literature and deep, unorthodox religious feeling. Some of the best chapters are straight reporting or interpretive stories from southern reporters, such as Claude Sitton of the *New York Times*, whose fairness, objectivity and imagination have not only told the country what is happening in the South, but explained it.

A highlight of Mr. Westin's anthology is Martin Luther King's superbly rational and religious "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," in which he answers with devastating reason and feeling all the timid self-deceits, fears and follies of go-slow southern "moderates." Close to this masterpiece is Louis Lomax's "The Unpredictable Negro," in which Mr. Lomax describes and explains Negro acts and feelings with his usual eloquence and rectitude, and, as far as I could see, without his frequent trivial inaccuracies which his opponents seize on to impugn his really impregnable big themes.

Mr. Westin has included a James Baldwin excerpt, which, in its angry, loving cry in the wilderness of our inhuman meanness and moderation, gives us more promise than less penetrating prophets offer us. He speaks sternly of duty and says that whites and blacks of decency "may be able, handful that we are, to end the racial nightmare, and achieve our country, and change the history of the world." This is big talk, but it makes the sense of Richard Wright, Lillian Smith, our Mr. Dabbs, Eric Lincoln and other really serious thinkers and writers. I value Mr. Baldwin's kind of preaching and prophecy and don't quite understand the white literati who regard him as bitter, hostile and unreasonable. Mr. Baldwin, I think, is just understandably angry, rather than hostile. And he has, after all, made the grandest and most ulti-

mate appeal to our humanity, that we should love one another.

A young Negro friend of mine visiting my office picked up a copy of *A SOUTHERN PROPHECY*, by Lewis H. Blair (Little, Brown, 195 pp., \$5.00), regarded the elegant, balding and swarthy portrait of the author on the jacket and wondered, "Is he one of us, or is he one of you?" "He's one of us," I replied looking at the high, stiff collar, the 1889 coat lapels and the heavy profile. You can't always tell, we agreed.

You couldn't tell by reading Lewis Blair's reprinted 1889 book, either, because he writes like a protesting Negro in this appeal of a rich, aristocratic and history-minded white Virginia for complete equality for Negro Southerners. *A SOUTHERN PROPHECY* is edited and introduced by the distinguished historian, C. Vann Woodward, with a lively account of Blair's life and times and the sad report that Blair recanted from his large-minded and hard-headed demand in the rigid segregation at the turn of the century. Mr. Woodward doesn't know if Mr. Blair's second wife—a lady of no great brains and liberality—or the consensus of the southern times dissuaded Mr. Blair from his audacious and intelligent thesis.

At any rate, Woodward thinks Blair's well-reasoned opinions that the Negro should be made free and equal for the sake of the economy, the white Southerner and the South's general prosperity (with undertones of moral indignation, also) is of value to us as a sign of unceasing dissenting southern thought. And it is a book to read with reassurance about the southern past which always produced worthy rebels against our wrong-headed conformity.

Oscar Handlin, author of the Pulitzer Prize history book, *THE UPROOTED*, has a thoughtful and hopeful, if con-

servative, book on the Negro advance and American opportunity for a free and fair society in *FIREBELL IN THE NIGHT*, *The Crisis in Civil Rights* (Little, Brown and Company, 110 pp, \$3.50).

This is not to say Dr. Handlin is undisturbed by continuing injustice, Negro anger and white recalcitrance; indeed, he seems most concerned at the unexpected "widening of the distance" between blacks and whites since 1954 and a new birth of racism not only among extremists of both sides but among "moderates beginning to cock their ears." And he warns that Negro insistence on "integration" instead of emphasis on justice and equality will further alienate white and colored Americans.

Dr. Handlin's sober little book is graced with historical and social erudition which enables him to understand white resistance and guilty confusion as well as Negro anger and drive. He considers competently the difficulties of Negro demands for jobs in a new situation of widespread general unemployment, the crowded and second-rate quality of all schools and the new dislocations of white suburbs and black cities which further segregate Americans. And he says that granting of real equality in politics, work, housing, education and public life, with a public attack on common problems, will allow all Americans freedom to integrate, segregate or resegregate in compatible cultural communities as other American minorities have done.

He chides both whites and Negroes for unreasonable emotional resistance and unrealistic demands. And he suggests that the Negro drive to integration, and Negroes who "would pull the whole structure down unless it is forthwith reformed," demonstrate the "unhealthy focus in these ten years of the total energies of Negro com-

munities on the single issue of integration."

"The more concerned they are with integration," he continues, "the more likely they are to see the whole society rigidly divided into blacks and whites . . . The categories of white and black are not coherent, unified or self-contained; each encloses groups which are significantly divided from one another . . . bankers and laborers, teachers and physicians, Catholics and Methodists, Irish- and Italian-Americans, Yankees and Texans, Republicans and Democrats. It would be a tragedy to forget the way in which equality permits individuals to conduct their lives freely within these co-existing groups."

Dr. Handlin also has assurance for Americans who fear racial intermarriage: that persons who marry outside their racial or cultural confinements are usually those with fewest family bonds and attachments, so that equality with its opportunities for well-being, family ties and firm ethnic character "leads not to the effacement but to the strengthening of group lives."

Well, maybe Dr. Handlin thinks this "equality" of opportunity to retreat to "group lives" and "ethnic character" is a fine, natural separation of differing Americans. Certainly Negroes, Poles, Irish, Italians, any immigrants to our cities, are entitled to drive into the middle class and then re-segregate themselves in suburbs.

But this is scarcely the integrated dream and demand of the southern Movement that "black and white together, brothers we shall be," nor Dr. King's promise that the great grandsons of slaves and of slave-owners shall sit down in brotherhood and break bread together.

In *A LOOK DOWN THE LONESOME ROAD* (Doubleday & Company, 223 PP., \$4.40) Ralph Creger, with Erwin McDonald, rather breezily

traces his life-long racial liberalism from Nebraska beginnings and scantily integrated schools to residence in Little Rock from 1955 through the school crisis, political struggles and present-day change of climate in a dawning moderation in the city and the state. Subtitled "What a liberal living among segregationists can do, say and accomplish," this first-person account has a straightforward introduction by Harry Golden (by no means Mr. Golden's most risible essay), who says "Ralph Creger, like the Negroes themselves, has been fighting this moral battle with Christianity."

After much reading on race, Mr. Creger arrived with his family in Little Rock an outspoken integrationist with strong Baptist, Biblical and anthropological reasons.

The book refutes chattily, and sometimes with humor, the segregationist's fears and illusions and points out anecdotally the cruelty and absurdity of human segregation. It contains a chapter of "Sermons I'd Preach," to substitute for the sermons Mr. Creger heard during school integration which "mentioned just about every sin . . . except the worst sin . . . violation of Christ's second great commandment."

A top selling book of the year is James Silver's *MISSISSIPPI: THE CLOSED SOCIETY* (Harcourt, Brace and World, 243 pp., \$4.75) an absorbing account of Dr. Silver's experience of some of the wilder Mississippi events in recent years and his description of the fallacies and defenses which support that strange society. For 28 years a history professor at the University of Mississippi, Dr. Silver wrote his book from "an obsession" to tell the truth about the September 1962 riot when James Meredith entered the University. His commendable obsession to assert the truth to a state defending its "Way of Life" with long-

entrenched lies and newly-devised fantasies about events at Ole Miss occupied Dr. Silver for more than a year in correspondence correcting a persistent spate of inventions about that tragedy in press, pulpit, politics and conversation. These inventions were to the effect that federal marshals attacked students, killed coeds and started and continued the riot, typically devised illusions by which Mississippi maintains its morale for preserving the state as "white man's country." Dr. Silver first told his story in a paper at the Southern Historical Association which he expanded into this intelligent, telling and spirited book.

Dr. Silver's eloquent lament for the follies, falsities and cruelties of that society is written with anger and indignation which often smiles off to humor and irony in contemplating the fantasy of prevailing views, the book censorship of the Daughters of the American Revolution, the "anthropology" of the White Citizens Councils, the lawlessness of former Governor Barnett and other politicians and the almost completely protected ignorance of most Mississippians.

He also writes with respect and affection for "a hospitable and friendly people," a good and gracious land, excellence of persons and departments at the University, and brave dissenters—former editor Ira Harkey of Pascagoula, Representative Karl Weisenburg, Rabbi Charles Mantinband ("a remarkable churchman" who "challenged the closed society for 16 years" in Hattiesburg) and the valorous and brutalized Negroes who, he says, with the federal government and no white Mississippi support will eventually open the Closed Society.

A good portion of the book is letters Dr. Silver wrote to the Jackson papers, to his children, to friends, to Mississippi correspondents and to members

of the Justice Department concerned with the integrating Meredith's indecision over whether to stay at Ole Miss. They are immensely interesting, particularly in Dr. Silver's admiration for Meredith and his candid bewilderment at a confusion and "mystical" element in the young Negro's thought and self-assertion.

Six assumptions, he says—of anthropological "proof" of Negro inferiority, of God's Biblical sanction of segregation, of the mutual happiness of whites and Negroes in segregation, of the necessity of segregation to law and order, of a view of history which insists Mississippi race relations have been satisfactory for a century and of denial of the validity of Supreme Court decisions over state law—prevail, so that "within its own borders the closed society of Mississippi comes as near to approximating a police state as anything we've seen in America."

"The strongest preservative of the closed society is the closed mind," he finds. He predicts that while Mississippi must inevitably change and open to the rest of the nation, "for the foreseeable future the people of Mississippi will plod along the troubled road of resistance, violence, anguish, and injustice, moving slowly until engulfed in a predictable cataclysm. . . .

"It cannot be too long before the country, seeing that persuasion alone must fail, and perhaps acting through the power and authority of the federal government, will, with whatever reluctance and sadness, put an end to the closed society in Mississippi," Dr. Silver thus ends a brave and literate book.

The Board of Education of the City of New York has produced a good little "bulletin" for teachers informing them of some long neglected, or suppressed, facts of African and American Negro history. It's an enlightening 150-

page pamphlet called **THE NEGRO IN AMERICAN HISTORY** which I suppose can be ordered from the board, since it sent it to us, presumably for review.

After a tidy and thoughtful survey of the institution of slavery throughout history, there's an interesting chapter on the difference in southern American slavery and the human bondage of Greek, Roman, Asian and South American cultures. An ancient tradition of safeguards in the earlier societies and the Catholic Church in South America protected the slave from the dehumanizing damage which the American system, festering with the moral and political conflict occasioned by bondage in the "land of the free," inflicted on black slaves.

This bulletin, which seems long overdue in view of the ignorant distaste of many New York and other big-city teachers for Negro children reported by Silberman and Henthoff, proceeds from slave suffering and rebellions to a competent and readable outline of Negro accomplishment and contribution to the United States. An unheralded little paperback, it seems to me one of the better books of the year and a tract which would be valuable to white Southerners, and black ones, too, if the New York Board will supply it in a mission of fast enlightenment.

In **RACIAL CRISIS IN AMERICA**, *Leadership in Conflict* (Prentice-Hall, Inc., 144 pp, \$1.95) Lewis Kilian and Charles Hall, Florida State University sociologists, have a thorough, careful and pretty pessimistic study of conflict, tension and community moods in southern scenes of Negro push and white opposition. They examine, with quiet detachment, victories and defeats of the Negro Movement, "communication," "confrontation," the sorry role of the "white liberal," and the interplay

of white and Negro leadership as antagonists. They have a formidable study of the "biracial committee" with intriguing details of white and Negro attitudes, aims and accommodations.

They agree with other writers that the Negro's disadvantage and actual inequality must be attacked at "some sacrifice by white Americans" as the presently biracial arrangements are assailed, if but feebly, by token integration. They conclude on this sensibly somber note:

But why should the white American, particularly the segregationist, help the Negro to achieve greater equality when inequality is one of the major bulwarks against integration? Here the American Creed and the dream of government by consensus, not by force, become relevant. It has become painfully evident in the past few years that unless the nation begins to take longer strides in the first mile of the long road to equality and integration, the Negro revolt will change from a nonviolent to a violent one. The white community will have to fight those Negroes who have too much spirit to submit any longer, and it will have to support with its charity those who are too apathetic to fight. The only other alternative would be increasingly repressive measures which would change the nature of the Republic and destroy the image of American democracy in the eyes of the world. There is no easy way out. The battle has been joined. The question is whether the conflict will rend American society irreparably or draw its racially separated parts together in some unforeseeable future.

We at the Southern Regional Coun-

cil have been gratified at the extremely good press of Benjamin Muse's **TEN YEARS OF PRELUDE**, The Story of Integration Since the Supreme Court's 1954 Decision (Viking Press, 288 pp, \$5.00), an SRC sponsored book which seems to me an impeccably accurate and high-minded account and appraisal of Negro advance and white opposition in the last decade.

One review reader noted the frequent enthusiasm of Negro reviewers for Mr. Muse's excellent history, and surmised that Negro intellectuals so ardently approve of our Mr. Muse because he's the only 1964 author who "isn't telling the Negroes what to do."

Well, Mr. Muse, writing with rare moral elegance and style, certainly doesn't tell anybody what to do. He just tells the story with an admirable eye for importance and interest of the events and with an aristocratic kind of eloquence and understated scorn for the scandals of the decade, such as Little Rock harridans spitting on children, Alabama mobs beating Freedom Riders and police elsewhere brutalizing nonviolent Negroes. I found it fascinating thus to be refreshed and informed on the cruelties, heroism and occasional white magnanimity of the era.

This report of a deep-rooted Southerner which, like the work of our best journalists, seems all the more truthful and responsible for the author's obvious belief in equality, is one of the big and lasting books of the year. Mr. Muse's conclusion is one of the more soberly reassuring pronouncements of the year:

The unrest will end sometime because it is inevitable that in America justice and humanity will prevail . . . the Negro population has been in America as long as the white. Negroes joined the

settlers at Jamestown before the *Mayflower* reached Plymouth Rock; Negro arrivals in the United States virtually ceased before the nineteenth century flood of European immigration began. To the Negro American this is his country; he knows no other. What he was striving for in the tenth year after the Brown decision was to become at last a part of the American people.

It's good to know that Mr. Muse has begun a history of the next ten years.

I found it a restoring and nearly religious experience to turn from all the political, economic and psychological sweats and fevers over Negroes and the painful concentration on outrages and despairs and convulsions to come—to leave all these valid considerations for James McBride Dabbs' learned, loving and sophisticated view of the South. His book is **WHO SPEAKS FOR THE SOUTH?** (Funk and Wagnalls, 381 pp., \$5.95), an SRC sponsored publication.

Mr. Dabbs studies, thinks and writes with charm and knowledge, gems of irony and feeling, and in interweaving, ambivalent but consistent themes on the character of white and Negro Southerners. In a luminous history he shows the early promise of our part of the nation and the South's high aspiration for America, an aspiration corrupted and laid low by slavery which alienated us from the nation. This "anguish" of alienation, of yearning to share and give to the country, he thinks can end in the "creative" contribution of Negro Southerners to our national ideals and democratic practice.

He describes the Southerner's traditional ease on his beautiful land and

(Continued on last page)

NEW SOUTH

A Year's Books

(Continued from page 23)

his conflict between that world and God, complicated by the puritanical strain of the Scotch-Irish. He describes southern frontier violence, the meaning of manners and always the profound interplay and influence between blacks and whites.

Perhaps most beautifully and importantly he analyzes the southern experience of defeat—white man defeated in a war and black man defeated by the white—and of the wisdom this experience can contribute to an “adolescent” nation which has never known defeat. Mr. Dabbs thinks the Negro now speaks for the South, from his

greater wisdom and deeper religion. This is a welcome characterization, prouder and more profound, to southern readers, anyway, than the sociological and psychological diagnosis of Negro inferiority in which the year's other books abound.

WHO SPEAKS FOR THE SOUTH? is history and philosophy in a book of great composure and considerable passion. And for all Mr. Dabbs' grace of style and quietude of tone, it is perhaps the boldest book of the year, saying that southern blacks and whites belong together because they are the same and that God can lead “two originally opposed peoples into a richer life than either could have found alone.”

BY MARGARET LONG