

1110ms. ma. March 4,

The Alabama legislature is presently meeting here in a special session convened March 1 to discuss ~~the~~ ^{the} educational budget, but kept alive to be ready to counter any anti-segregation moves quickly.

Opening day a number of bills attacking desegregation were introduced. One, which passed the Senate without dissent and is now before a house committee would ask the U.S. Congress to spread "negroes among the several Northern and Western states, the areas where Negroes are wanted and can be assimilated."

another which is halfway through the legislature would establish a committee to investigate any group "suspected of having subversive tendencies." It specifically mentions the N.A.A.C.P. and the Communist Party. This bill is expected to pass. It would allow the racist ~~to~~ ^{to} ~~investigate~~ ^{investigate} ~~the~~ ^{the} legislators to subpoena witnesses and records.

a third measure would make available to the racist legislators the names of those ~~students~~ ^{students} Alabama University students who petitioned the school to ~~re-instate~~ ^{re-instate} negro co-ed Autherine Lucy.

I attended ^{the March 2} a session of this legislature
 - ~~representatives of the~~ ^{representatives of the} "Southern way of life"

When I entered the capitol, both houses were in session together as a committee-of-the-whole to discuss cuts in the proposed educational budget.

A committee member was reading a report listing the proposed cuts. (The ~~all~~ all white Un. of Ala with 7,000 enrolled was cut \$205,000, while the all Negro Ala. State Col. ~~with~~ with an enrolment of 2,500 was cut ~~\$255,000~~ \$250,000.)

Some of the Bolons lounged in their leather padded chairs, reading newspapers and drinking coles. ~~Some~~ A few ^{white-haired} listened attentively. One fat ^{Regulator} or lay ^{sprawled} ~~prone~~ across three chairs. Behind the speaker's table on the wall behind the speaker's table could be seen a large plaque inscribed: "In this hall the ordinance of secession which withdrew Alabama from the Union of Sovereign States was passed Jan. 11, 1861."

I couldn't really blame the lounging ~~representatives~~ law makers the discussion was dull. At length, one athletic looking young representative took the mile to speak against further cuts for the University of Alabama:

"We must remember how courageously the president of that University faced a court decision ordering him to do something which he could not do because it was directly opposed to the desires of the people of Alabama."

The people of Alabama! They are poorly represented
the Negroes, are

not represented as an, except by a majority in the State Prison inmates who open windows and turn on fans for the comfort of these "representatives of the people."

The white majority is not represented either. A few thousand plantation-owner-controlled votes from the "black belt" counties send more representatives here than the State's major population centers are allowed. ~~But~~

~~THE DISCUSSION CONTINUED ON THE SAME LINE FOR THE~~

~~rest of the session and after a while~~

I left the ancient hall and went into the streets of Montgomery to ask a few people what they thought of the legislation introduced the day before.

The bill to "spread the negroes through the north." was taken seriously by no one. Said a ^{white} gas station attendant: "Those fellows on the hill must be gettin' panicky. I wish they wouldn't do things like that. I'm for segregation, but you can't make people leave their home."

a white taxi driver commented "If they cancel my debts and give me a train ticket, I'll leave Alabama too."

The other two measures, to establish a "subversive" investigation and to reveal the names of petitioners ~~as~~ were taken more seriously.

Said one lean white man: "I don't think they'll get anywhere with this boycott. That Lucy gal didn't get anywhere. This legislation ~~is~~ ties 'em up, and that's about what we

got to do. Tis' em up in the law, they want get a number.

This man spoke calmly, without apparent anger, as did all ~~the~~ the whites I ~~had~~ talked too with the ~~another~~ exception of one. He said "I'd like to get my hands on that list of nigger-lovers (the petitioners for reinstatement of Miss Lucy) we know how to deal with them kind."

~~There is a very strong feeling among most~~ whites simply wouldn't talk about the subject with strangers. ~~Even~~ If they talk about it at length among themselves ~~they~~ they don't do it obviously.

Certainly there is no obvious ~~any~~ wide spread hysteria at the present moment. Life goes on as usual, and ordinary subjects ~~the~~ start conversations off. ~~But~~ I often touches the ~~Miss~~ Lucy case or racist legislation which subjects appear on the front pages of the newspapers, but there seems to be reluctance to speak about the ~~subject~~ Montgomery events.

I asked a ~~white~~ white carpenter what he thought of the "~~the~~ boycott." He said: "I don't own the bus company." ~~I asked him~~ "Do you think the bus co should grant their

freely

that no more new money, for use, or improvement

"Then what do you think ~~they~~ should do?"

"I don't know. I don't own the bus co. as far as I'm concerned they can keep walkin' forever. It don't hurt me now."

Some whites are sympathetic to the ~~the~~ "protest." Aubrey Williams, publisher of the Southern Farmer, and President of the Southern Conference Educational Fund, and an outspoken opponent of ~~Jim Crow~~ for many years, appeared at the courthouse to offer bond for the arrested protest leaders. His money was not needed, however. He was the only white to do so.

One white woman ~~was behind~~ behind the counter of a store where I had stopped ~~hesitated~~ hesitated when I asked ~~how~~ how to get to a certain address. ~~She said~~ "Well," she said "There's a bus goes out there. That is if you want to take a bus." she hesitated again. "If you've got the money you can take a taxi." I thanked her and turned. ~~As I~~ as I passed through the door she called after me. "I ~~always~~ always walk myself, lately, its spring, you know."

The files of the local paper, the ~~the~~ Montgomery Advertiser reveal that at the beginning of the protest movement last December there was widespread sympathy ~~among whites~~ with the protest. Letters to the editor citing instances of ~~disrespect~~ ^{to} the rudeness on the ~~issues of the~~ ^{issues of the} ~~in the~~ ^{in the} December. ~~it is that~~

...entirely middle class."

Of course, there aren't many factory workers near here.

applications for WCC membership are easy to get. I picked one up in the white waiting room of the ~~spot~~ railway station. Ads from the WCC occasionally appear in the ~~new~~ newspapers.

This is pre election time here, and statements from politicians that they are willing to "die" for segregation are not uncommon, but I have yet to hear a white worker say anything like that. ~~It is~~ It is true that they don't talk freely with strangers, but in my opinion that is also significant. I have talked to many white racists before, and they always seemed brazenly outspoken about their attitude, ~~that~~ with anyone who would listen. This is certainly not the case here now, among the ordinary people.

The WCC's are semi secret organizations controlled
from the top following ~~an~~ ~~unrevealed~~ policy which
~~is not~~ is not discussed ~~by~~ by or based on the
interests of the white masses in the South. They are
at present in no position. They are not yet, apparently, a
mass movement, but are capable of intimidating
actively intimidating organizations by economic pressure
and by inducing any whites who sympathize

with the struggle of the negroes for equality.

The big thing here, and possibly the thing that has many of the white ~~uneducated~~ ~~uneducated~~ ~~uneducated~~ racists confused, and accounts for their reluctance to talk about the protest, is that they are no longer capable of intimidating the Negroes ^{at least} in Montgomery.

~~A number of students at the~~ A number of students at the all negro Alabama State College here told me that a cross had been burned on the ^{negro} campus the day before Miss Lucy was to attend her first class at ~~the~~ Ala. U. "We just all went out and watched it. We didn't run and hide like people used to do. These things don't scare us anymore." said one student

"These threats don't scare anyone anymore." said another.

"I asked them about the reported firings of negroes who had participated in the bus boycott.

"You don't seem to understand" one ~~old~~ young student said. "Nothing is going to scare us."

and another: "I think very few lost jobs. It was just a rumor to scare people, but it only made them mad."

and another: "Please ~~Mr. M.~~ These department stores and businesses down town aren't going to fire anyone, they

~~March~~ March 4, 1956

It is spring in Alabama. The pine covered hills between Birmingham and Montgomery are bright new green in the clearings, and patched here & there with red - outcroppings of iron ore.

~~The road goes to Montgomery~~

The red diminishes and the green increases as you approach Montgomery. The greyhound bus ~~sees~~ ^{moves} out of the hills directly into the city. ~~It~~ ^{the} ~~car~~ ^{car} moves into the city before it is out of the hills; an old city, clean and quiet, slow moving at first glance. A tall building catches your eye ~~is~~ ^{is} painted high on its old brick side - Jefferson Davis Hotel. The street signs move past the window - Washington, Lee, Montgomery. Rich part-filled names, ~~all~~ ^{all} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~same~~ ^{same} ~~hand~~ ^{hand}, efficient for wide old streets, broken by hills and ~~small~~ ^{small} squares. Not like the efficient numbered avenues and streets in Birmingham's even grid.

Though it ~~has~~ ^{has} one fourth the population, Montgomery's down-town seems larger at first sight than Birmingham's ^{own}. There aren't the even rows of tall office buildings, or the smoke stacks, or mills with heaps of ^{coal} ~~ignite~~ and loud whistles. But there is an air of spaciousness, like a

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Driving rather than work. There are

large shops and houses and many more generic buildings than in the larger city 90 miles to the north. This is, after all, the capital of the state. Its railroad ^(seems) station is larger, though emptier than ~~any~~ Birmingham's two combined.

There are less of the wooden shacks ~~scattered~~ ~~the ground~~ standing off raw ground on foot high blocks of brick than in Birmingham. Up there, these ~~scattered~~ largely unpainted, poorly repaired dwellings cover whole hillsides ~~and~~ ~~sloping~~ sloping away from mills and factories and mines, and ~~the~~ railroads, and are inhabited by white and negro worker alike, though generally in somewhat separate sections.

~~Here~~ ~~where~~ they exist, but not ~~so~~ obvious, or at first view. There are small ~~wooden~~ ~~on~~ clean brick and frame houses with lawns and gardens. Many are old, and cracked ^(masonry and) sidewalks - or no sidewalks at all. ~~are~~ are not rare, but the trees and vines, and lawns seem to respond more effectively ^{here} ~~than~~ ^{to} ~~the~~ ~~wood~~ cover the cracks, and brighten the eye. There are more, though ^{ante bellum-type} really not many, of the ~~big~~ block like ~~houses~~ mansions with the tall greek columns across the front. The ~~the~~ columns ~~are~~ appear like gleaming white marble, at least, if you brush a dark suit against them, ~~white~~ ~~wash~~ but closer examination, or a brush of a dark suit reveals them white-wash painted.

The bus stopped in the depot, the Negro passengers, who had occupied the last three rows of seats, ~~and~~ remained seated or stood ~~back in the~~ in the aisle until the white passengers dismounted. COLORED WAITING ROOM, WHITE WAITING ROOM said the signs on the two doors that the passengers entered on leaving the bus. — insert 1.

The juke box in the white waiting room (much larger than the colored one) played "The poor people of Paris."

a tall young woman with chisled features, and then to
the point of seventy ~~and she~~ across the room to the
~~the next morning she was at a station. She walked~~
~~then sat down with the student and she had a better walk~~
across the room in rhythm with the tune. Struted
would be a better word - its hard not to strut to that
catchy tune. It's a good song for walking.

She took the hand of a tall young man ~~who~~ who
had been on the bus. He ~~was~~ was baki pants & a plaid
shirt. His face was ^{redish-}brown & his hands were large & work-
worn. He too was ~~this~~ very thin, like so many others
~~I had seen~~ I had seen in the streets, ^{and on the porches of working-class neighborhoods}
^(behind the counter) on the streetcars, in
the employment offices, and outside the factories and mills
in Birmingham.

in Birmingham.
(white) There are many adjectives one could use to describe
the ~~working class~~ ^{people} of this area - tanned, polite, quiet, rangy,
swarthy, poor, raw boned, ~~hard~~ but the ~~most~~ ^{best} ~~one~~ ^{word} that would apply

The railroad station in Birmingham had the "colored" and "white" newly painted over, but ~~nothing~~ signs replaced them. ~~Also~~ They said ^[INTRA STATE] ~~passengers~~ "COLORED" WAITING ROOM, and INTER STATE AND WHITE ~~INTER~~ INTRA STATE PASSENGERS WAITING ROOM. ~~As far as I could~~ Even the colored inter state passengers entered the colored waiting room. The same device was apparantly considered unnecessary here in Montgomery.

insert (2.

wearing a cotton uniform, like that of a waitress walked

was "There sure are a lot of smiles." and his own face bore one. Throughout our conversation on the street (there is no other public place where we could meet) he tried to ~~maintain a serious face, but he only succeeded in looking like he'd just been kissed.~~ an expression in keeping with our serious discussion, but he only succeeded in looking like he'd just been kissed.

As I walked on down the street a ~~very~~ well dressed Negro man crossed the sidewalk ~~from~~ from inside a shoe store. He carried a tall stack of ~~shoe boxes~~ empty shoe boxes to be placed with others on the ~~curb~~ curb alongside the waste paper cans which stood there. He whistled "The Poor People of Paris", and he strutted as one must ~~when~~ when walking to that tune.

From behind me I heard the same song, whistled ~~from~~ from several pairs of lips. I slowed, and was passed by three Negro women, two young, and one possibly their mother. The man stopped whistling as he bent to lace the boxes on the curb. "~~How are you?~~" Hello Mrs. Smith" He said, his movements and ~~his~~ still in ^{words} rhythm with the song.

"Why howdy Mr. Jones." the woman replied, also in rhythm. "How's business,"

"Fine, just fine" said Mr. Jones as he crossed back ~~and he smiled a~~

changed my mind. It might change others. We are acquiring anyway, and we are going on to get justice."

But that conversation came later. I continued my stroll down the dignified streets of Montgomery Alabama. At the square with the fountain I turned right and saw what I had searched vainly for in Birmingham. ~~At the~~ at the end of the wide street which ~~runs up the~~ runs up the graceful slope of a hill commanding the city, ~~and~~ and on top of that hill ~~stands~~ a ~~building~~ monument to the Confederacy, a building which had stood when ~~Alabama~~ Alabama was a land of ~~chattel~~ chattel slavery. It is the capital ^{capital} building of the State, housing the legislature. Its ~~columns~~ ^{columns} Greek columns gleam whiter than any, and there ~~are~~ ^{are} even ~~real~~ real marble steps.

I walked ~~up the street~~ ^{up the street} ~~crossed~~ the broad lawn, mounted the steps and stood beneath a statue ~~which~~ at the entrance to the capital. ^{JEFFERSON DAVIS} ~~Jefferson Davis~~. The plaque said, and carved around the base were the names of the States which had seceded from the Union in 1861. ~~There~~

~~There~~ Birmingham has no such physical remnant of ~~slavery~~ of slavery, ~~or~~ or of the civil war, because that period had passed and been obscured by ~~years~~ ^{years} of fable and whitewashed with manufactured. ~~The city of Birmingham even existed.~~

Birmingham was born
in the 1870's when the railroads ~~were built~~ in the
~~came in~~ ~~to the~~ ~~large~~ ~~mineral deposits in~~ ~~Barrow~~
Jones valley ~~was built~~ surrounded by the
Southernmost ranges of the Appalachian system.

~~There~~ There within a few square miles are found
vast deposits of ^(every) ~~every~~ ~~mineral necessary~~
mineral necessary for the production of steel.

The city ~~of~~ is connected by a 17 mile railway to a navigable
river to the sea, and by ~~many~~ many railroads to the
rest of the nation. It is the chief center for coal and iron
South of Pennsylvania.

It is ~~a~~ almost exclusively a city of ~~heavy industry~~
basic heavy industry, and ~~its population is~~ ~~its population is~~
~~its population is~~ ~~its population is~~ the inhabitants
of its metropolitan area who number half a million, are
overwhelmingly industrial workers.

It is the center of a ~~near~~ changing South, and the
center of that change. Its population is ~~one~~ one quarter
negro. ~~The CIO organized both negro~~
and white workers here, and Birmingham has a
per capita union membership greater than Chicago's.
→ Montgomery, ~~on the other hand,~~
~~on the other hand,~~ ~~on the other hand,~~ Except
for the state capital and ~~Maxwell~~ Maxwell air force base

(which provides a large part of the city's business) is little more than an agricultural county seat.

Only a handful of its 125,000 people are industrial workers, and only a ~~small~~ part of these are union members. ~~It is~~ Its population is 40% negro, many of these are domestic workers, and ~~only a~~ a tiny minority belong to unions.

Life in Montgomery is not as obviously raw or harsh as in Birmingham. Montgomery is steeped in old habits and traditions, and it resists change.

Yet it is here, in "the cradle of the confederacy" (which motto appears on ~~city~~ trash receptacles ~~in~~ the streets) that a fundamental political change has already taken place. The dynamic city to the North has yet to follow.

This change is simply that the negro masses have begun to shape their own destiny. They are united in an ~~organization~~ organization which they built themselves right here, ~~and~~ and in the process of struggle. They ~~and~~ and they alone control it, and through it they act as one.

For the first time since the ~~alliance~~ alliance of ~~the~~ Northern Big Business and the Southern Bourbons succeeded in disenfranchising the negro under the yoke of segregation at the turn of the century, a negro ~~in it~~ is a political force to be reckoned with.

This organization is the Montgomery Improvement
association. It has been described by one of its leaders
as "the council of the negroes of Montgomery. We have no
voice in ~~the~~ ^{the regular} government. This is our voice."

The origin and character of the Montgomery Improvement
association is the subject of the next article.

~~the~~

(2)

MONTGOMERY, Ala., March 5 - ^{Montgomery, near} March 5, 1956

Tonight I attended one of the bi-weekly meetings of the Montgomery Improvement Association. This is the organization which the Negroes of Montgomery have set up to run the protest movement ^{here} against segregation.

Tonight's meeting was held in the Bethel Baptist church on Mobile road in a Negro residential district. ~~When~~ It was a warm and humid evening and it had started to rain when I arrived at the church. Though it was an hour before the meeting was to begin the hall was already overfull. People cramed the aisles and overflowed off the steps into the muddy paths ~~between~~ on the edge of the street (there are no sidewalks in this section of town). ~~Many~~ ~~cars~~ ~~were~~ ~~parked~~ The long lines of parked cars were full of people escaping the shower, and more ^{loaded} cars ~~were~~ were arriving.

~~I was~~ ~~standing~~ ~~way~~ ~~just~~ ~~inside~~ ~~the~~ ~~doorway~~

I made my way (pushing wasn't necessary, people politely squeezed up and made room) to a point just inside the doorway. The hall was not as large or well proportioned as many ~~of~~ churches I had seen in the North, though it was very well kept. ~~When~~ I estimated ~~about~~ between 2 and 3 thousand people were there ~~although~~ though ~~much~~ ^{many} church was meant to hold ~~much~~ less.

(2)

I had been told that the size of the meetings is always limited only by the size of the hall. That was certainly the case tonight.

There were people seated on the platform, but no one at the speakers stand. A man ^{was standing} in the middle of the hall half singing a story about his life. The audience kept time with a low rhythmic hum. "Oh lord I've shuffled too long, now I walk for righteousness. I'll walk for 50 years if I've got that many left..."

The audience responded now and then ~~with~~ with the traditional "yeah," "yes yes," "I hear you," "yes lord." The humming continued throughout, now soft, now louder.

The man sat down, the humming continued. In a moment a woman rose from her seat and told a story about her child who had come home one day in tears. He had been chased ~~away~~ away by a policeman from where he had been playing, and he asked her why. She had told him it was because only white children can play there, but he didn't understand. The humming rose, the audience responded. The woman continued:

"I broke that child's heart." ~~With~~ her voice rose

"I ain't gon break no more children's heart. Didn't God make all children?" "Oh yes!" the audience responded with ~~passing~~ and musical cheers. "We ain't gon break no more

(3.)

~~Thousands~~ ~~thousands~~ ~~condemned~~

The woman sat down. Others rose, now here now there. Telling out the story of what segregation means to negroes, to individual human beings who ~~endure~~ ~~live~~ a life of oppression and have ~~been~~ ^{been} subjected to it. They talked of the ^{restrictions} ~~right~~ to vote, of the ~~disadvantage~~ ~~that stops at the~~ ~~with the white section of town,~~ of the saying yes + no to people who called them nigger, of the ~~lack~~ ^{inadequate} electric lights in the negro section of town compared to the ample electricity in white neighborhoods. They told of the small things like getting your shoe filled up with water coming home at night because sidewalks stop with the white section, and they told of the big things like having to do all the hard and dirty ~~and difficult~~ ~~dangerous and difficult~~ and tedious work because of a lack of other opportunities for negroes.

and to every speaker there flowed the ~~word~~ ~~of~~ ~~thousands~~ ~~present~~ understanding and sympathy and love of the thousands present. It flowed in the form of the humming and the musical cheers and the religious words, and now and then it welled in great solidarity and strength and burst out with "God is with us!" "We are strong."

One woman told of an indignity she had suffered at the hands of a white person. "If one of 'em lays a
hand on you, I'll gonna be just me + see them,

people reported -

in -

~~first~~ A young man beckoned me outside. "are you with the press he said."

"yes," but ~~that just stood there~~ I'd just as soon stand here"

~~man~~. He insisted, however, and with quick courtesy checked my press card and conducted me ~~to a press~~ around the building to a small room behind the stage where I was introduced to the other out of town ~~guest~~ visitors. They were preachers and ~~business~~ ~~and~~ ~~just~~ teachers and just plain people who had come and reporters and just plain people who had come from as far as Chicago, some bringing donations from organization

~~after our names and mission had been recorded~~

~~from other guests and myself~~ The only whites were to two reporters besides myself. There was one white face already on the stage.

after our ~~out~~ names and mission had been recorded we were ushered onto the platform. In front of us were faces, not a sea of faces, but thousands of individual faces. You couldn't look out there without focusing on individuals. Some were smiling, some were serious, ~~was~~ all were attentive and participating.

On the platform beside the guests were many ~~reporters~~ many of the leaders of the ~~press~~ association. There was the Rev. L. R. Bennett who is Vice President of the association, a tall distinguished looking man. ~~and~~ a ~~beard~~ man in a black suit whom I think

~~from the bus~~ I from the bus
~~sat~~ off to the side I recognized Rosa Parks, ^{Ganderson}
~~young~~ middle-aged woman whose ^{great one for a} refusal to give up
her seat on a bus precipitated the movement.

There was E. O. Nixon, president of the local organization
of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters who ~~had~~
~~had been bawled~~ after the protest started. ~~He~~
~~has been active~~ for many years in the fight for civil rights and in union
affairs. He is an old time ~~was~~ civil rights and union
fighter. ^(I was in Montgomery) I remembered what one leader had said of him.

"We have many fine leaders, but ~~if~~ if it hadn't been
for E. O. Nixon this movement wouldn't be where it is
today."

He is a lean, dark, raw boned man, and very tall.
He sat off to the side ^{smiling} ~~responding~~ only occasionally,
and then, it seemed, only ^{at} some practical point.

A cheer rose from the hall as Rev. Martin Luther King,
resident of the association entered. He is a young man
only 27 and ^(I was told) ~~just~~ only a short time away from his
postgraduate education. ~~He has~~ He has
been in Montgomery only since 1954, and now he is
~~the~~ ~~most~~ ~~prominent~~ ~~leader~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~movement~~
~~the~~ ~~most~~ ~~prominent~~ ~~leader~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~movement~~
~~the~~ ~~most~~ ~~prominent~~ ~~leader~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~movement~~
~~the~~ ~~most~~ ~~prominent~~ ~~leader~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~movement~~
a powerful and
active movement protesting segregation itself, and this in
"the heart of Dixie."

He carried a stack of ~~undelivered~~ letters and notes in his hand and he walked seriously, like a man conscious that he was making history.

[illegible]

a white journalist who lives in Montgomery had told me part of the answer. "That December 5 protest ~~wasn't~~ wasn't called because of Rosa Parks alone. That was just the last straw. ~~It was~~ There had been other arrests ~~and~~ and a long history of incidents. ~~and~~ ~~and~~ for one thing buses here don't have a fixed segregation line like they do ~~in many other~~ in Birmingham. ~~For instance~~ Everything was up to the driver, and I'm telling you, if it had been company policy to be nice, ~~then~~ some of those bus drivers wouldn't have done worse. ~~Some~~ ~~sometimes they'd take a Negro's~~ sometimes they'd take a Negro's money and drive off before he walked ^{ground} to the back door.

"Why one time they even arrested a 13 year old girl
or not givin' up her seat. They handcuffed her and took her
to jail. What was that for?"

"I'm told, though I wasn't and not by Negroes either,
that some of the drivers even carried guns in
the back of the car."

(6.) E. D. Nixon had filled the answer in person at a press conference I attended. "Some of us had tried to get something done about those busses long before this protest. We tried to talk to the city officials, but they wouldn't even listen. When Mrs. Parks got arrested that was the last straw. ~~At that time for several weeks~~ We decided to do something about it."

The Rev. Thomas R. Thrasher, a white man, wrote an article in the ~~newspaper~~ ~~Report~~ ~~March 8~~ ~~Reporter~~ which supplied a few more details. "On Saturday Dec 3 [three days after the arrest ~~and two days before the trial~~] a number of mimeographed and typed circulars were distributed in the negro community calling on citizens to stage a one-day protest by not riding the city busses the day of the trial."

Three quarters of the negro riders stayed off the busses that ~~morning~~ Monday ~~and~~ ~~protest~~, but the judge convicted Mrs. Parks anyway, and fined her \$14. She appealed.

That night about 5,000 negroes attended the protest meeting at the Holt Street Baptist church. Says Rev. Thrasher "... it appears there was a general welling up of grievances in which the specific case of Rosa Parks was all but forgotten."

"A general welling up of grievances" I remembered having wondered at that phrase when I had ~~seen~~ read the article, but now I understood it, I was seeing it myself in this hall, ^{tonight} at a different church, and three months later.

I was reminded of a description by Jack Belden of times by Chinese women during

(1) But there was something in my
away to heart and determination by the humanizing and
and changed by ~~music~~ and religious ~~music~~

But it had welled up and overflowed that night three months
ago, and that was the night the Montgomery Improvement
Association ~~was~~ was born.

~~Once~~ Once again E. D. Nixon's words came to mind.

"We could have settled this thing long ago if the white leaders
had just sat down and talked to us, but after that
first day it was too late. We had to go on. ~~Then~~ Our
people just insisted. We formed the association ~~right~~
~~on the spot~~ They voted to go on with the ~~big~~
protest until we got something definite, and we
organized the association right there on the spot. ~~Then~~
~~Montgomery the next day~~ Rev. King
was elected President."

Reverend King was on the platform now, three months
later. He handed a ~~single~~ sheet of paper to the
chairman, a penciled agenda. I could see the line across
the top. It said "Mass Protest Meeting."

The meeting began officially with a spirited prayer
and a reading from scripture. The audience responded
traditionally.

~~There were~~ There were
some short speeches interspersed with ~~some~~ hymns.
~~I don't~~ I don't remember the order or ~~all~~ all the names.
I know at least: "1956 will be our finest

"Lord - take pity on those who may grow weary - you
"we're going so big, we need the colosseum" - response: "lets
ask for it." - "we'll keep even if we have to go to jail, why
we already been to jail." musical cheers.

Rev. King spoke: "you know, ~~whether~~ whether
we want to be or not, we are caught in a great moment
of history everybody stood to sing. I ~~heard~~ I was
and old hymn. I knew it well. I had even sung it on
picket lines, though the words had been slightly -
and the ~~rythm~~ rhythm much different. "I shall not, I shall
not be moved..." ~~It was an overpowering~~
~~that showed~~ There was no choir, none was
necessary "I'm on my way to heaven I shall not be
moved. . . . It was ~~an~~ overpowering. ^(practiced) Two thousand voices
~~trained~~ ~~singing~~ ^(and with a cause to sing for) singing together. The music rolled
and swelled. I started singing myself. a few people
smiled. Someone pointed. "just like a tree that's standing
by the water..." a flashbulb popped. Someone took our picture
... We shall not be moved."

Rev. King spoke: "you know whether we want to
be or not we are caught in a great moment of history...
't has reached the point where you are part of this movement
- you are against it. . . . It is bigger than Montgomery..."
we're ~~response~~ "we are somebody..." cheers.

① insert.

"We must oppose all exploitation..." ~~the~~ ~~the~~

~~we~~ "we want no classes and castes..." response

"we want to see everybody free..." cheers.

He listed a number of famous Negroes "Is that why the white man should respect us? because we gave the world great men? No that's not why. He should respect us because - because God made us both." ~~the~~ wild cheers.

"Each individual is important. ~~the~~ The poor and uneducated person is an important person. We are important as individuals.. Cheers."

~~we must never~~

"God isn't just interested in freeing just Negroes. God is interested in freeing all people..."

"We must never use our brother as a means but always treat him as an end."

"the vast majority of the people of the world are colored..."

response. "Up until four or five years ago most of the one and one quarter billion colored peoples were exploited by ~~imperial~~ empires of the west..." He listed the places.

"~~the~~ India... China... Africa!..." Today ~~they are~~ many are free...." response "And the rest are on the road..."

response. "We are part of that great movement..." cheers.

~~He spoke of Bandung~~ ~~was a part of the movement~~

He spoke of the Bandung conference. "~~that~~... and another section of that movement met on a cold ~~evening~~ December evening in the Hope Street Baptist Church." ~~insert~~ cheers.

"There are several methods to bring about social change one is ~~revolutionary~~ damaging, violent revolution... we won't use it." ~~response~~

He spoke of passive resistance of Gandhi and of Christ. "We are using the methods of the son of Galilee... his peaceful methods... toppled the Roman Empire and split history into A.D. and B.C." response, cheers.

He finished with "We're gonna love everybody. just gonna stay off the buses!" laughter, cheers.

a young ^{from Chicago} minister ^{guest} in the platform ^{next to me} said "Boy that's great, we gonna move to Montgomery,"

This minister smiled. E.O. Nixon looked serious, as

~~The speaker~~ One speaker looked at the two other white reporters as he ~~was~~ reported told about how the papers had reported the ~~reporters~~ driving protest leaders driving around in Cadillacs. "Of course Mr. Asbell is too fine a journalist to make a mistake like that on purpose. It's just that he doesn't know how to spell Ford." laughter. "I make a motion to buy Mr. Asbell a dictionary." laughter cheers. The reporters looked nervous.

One speaker ~~was~~ said "I wish the gentlemen of the press would get this... There is one thing we in the South deeply resent, and that is that whenever we show some element of self respect... you say somebody from the outside taught us that." ~~We don't~~ His voice rose. "We don't have to have northerners to tell us to act like human beings. That's what we're doing now."

"Many whites are with us," said a speaker, and the people cheered.

A minister from Birmingham said "When you get things straightened out down here you can come on up and help us do it there." "We'll come!" "Well better!" cheers. He said the Birmingham people were thinking of making a ~~grand~~ pilgrimage to Montgomery. "We figure maybe we'll ride down to the outskirts of town some fine day and ~~eat~~ together and Walk Children Walk!" ~~There were~~

The transportation committee made a report.
This is one of the two committees in the association.
The other ~~is financial~~ is the financial committee
~~with~~ (the ~~association~~ ~~financial~~ ~~committee~~)
(Mrs. Ida Mae ~~Carlwell~~ Carlwell who is ~~the~~ financial
secretary of ~~the~~ Amalgamated Clothing Workers 490 here ~~is~~ ^{is on}
the ^{financial} committee.)

These committees carry on the real work of the association.
~~The~~ The car pool which transports the entire negro population
(there are about 50,000 ^(in most) negroes) to and from work every
day is a complicated and expensive apparatus. It requires
about \$2,100 per week to run.

Many of ~~these~~ ~~persons~~ the roughly 90 (no one seems to
know the exact number because of a confusion of names.)
persons indicted as "leaders" ~~of the movement~~ of a conspiracy to
boycott" were actually ~~not~~ not leaders, but ~~some~~ were not
in the leadership of the ~~association~~ ^{association}, but had ~~simply~~
~~simply~~ loaned their cars to the pool.

~~There was a question~~

An efficient looking woman in a black business suit took
the stand to ask for the offering (donations) She is ~~also~~ in
reinsurance business. She said she had ~~recently~~ received
letters from children up north who ~~were~~ were worried
about her safety. "Come on up here mother, we've only got one mother
in law now." ~~There was~~ The audience responded "I get that too, yes me too!"
She said "I ~~sat~~ sat right down and wrote them that
I'm gonna stay right here and fix it so's you don't
back down when you come down to

(a.) visit your mother. ...
that to the effect of staying in montgomery ^{and} to fight
segregation received the loudest response of any.

She said. "We'll never be satisfied with segregation
again." and that ~~was~~ the theme ~~and purpose of the~~
of the entire meeting.

I remembered the statement of a young negro
student when I had asked him what would happen
if the leaders of the association were to agree to
~~just~~ end the protest. "Oh that would never happen he had
said. They bring proposals right before the meeting and
the people they would never go for that."

and E.D. Nixon had told the reporters: "~~and~~ I
~~he~~ wouldn't want to be the one to make the proposal
he said. We tried that out around ~~the~~ Feb. 1 when
we filed the suit to challenge the segregation law. We
brought in a proposal to go back on the buses and fight it
out in the courts. But it was too late for that. One woman
jumped up and said. 'I'm gonna keep walkin' until
I can sit in them seats I been standin' alongside of
for all these years.' ~~and everybody~~
everybody joined in with her and that was the end of that."

"If we got the first come first served rule, I think
we could get 'em back on the buses right away, but I
don't know ~~whether~~ just where we'd go from there. ^{all}
~~that~~ ~~the~~ ~~board~~ threats and bombs and arrests... its too
its for goin' back."

"~~we're gonna~~ We've been children too long, now we're
... ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~board~~ ~~cheers~~

(12)

The ~~collection~~ speaker made an appeal for NAACP memberships. "Anyone who isn't a member come down and join... You'll need the NAACP the rest of your life... They tell us the NAACP has communists in it... that's just to scare you off... ~~we~~ ~~have~~ the NAACP doesn't have anything to do with communists." (This was the only time in the entire meeting that either the NAACP or communists were mentioned.)

Then the collection began. The people filed ~~through~~ through the aisle past a table in front of the stage. There was no confusion in the overcrowded hall. Everyone moved quickly, row by row, in perfect order.

I rose, shook hands all around and filed past the table. I dropped ~~in front of the speaker~~ in the ~~plate~~ I rose and filed out with the line. Mine was now the only white face in the room. ~~near~~ ^{dark} near the door ^{was a} large young man stood, his face alive. He held out a big hand. I shook it hard, and passed on out the door and started ^{walking} back to town.

I was thirsty and wanted a cigarette, but ~~this was a negro neighborhood, and the streets were dark and I didn't know if I could go into one of the small restaurants along the way or not. I didn't take a chance. A patrol car slowed and two white cops eyed me suspiciously.~~ ~~I didn't know if I could go into one of the small restaurants along the way or not. I didn't take a chance. A patrol car slowed and two white cops eyed me suspiciously.~~

I stopped in a ~~small~~ ~~restaurant~~ and got my shot

so many who looked at the pass must have done walking
in the other direction. I reached the sidewalk but it's a date.
I was downtown before I found a open cafe ~~near~~ next to
an over-the-road bus depot.

~~I sat~~ Inside I drank 2 soda pops and listened
briefly to a conversation between two men. "Lord knows
I've always liked niggers. I'll be glad when things settle
down again. We always got along so well. ~~It's a polite town~~
This is a polite town. I don't know what they're kicking
up such a fuss about." ~~He~~ " ~~They're kicking~~
~~up such a fuss about.~~

~~I sat~~ ~~again~~

Outside I stood smoking for a moment. The
rain had stopped and the night was clear and beautiful.
A tall young negro in denim pants and a kalshi shirt approached
me. "Please sir, will you buy me a pack of cigarettes in the? They
not none at the depot." I took his money + bought the pack. He
bowed slightly as he took it said "thank you sir" and walked
quickly toward the depot.

~~I walked~~ I turned and walked my last walk
down the streets of the polite city of Montgomery Alabama,
and I'm telling you - I cried.

#