The Alabama legislature is presently meeting here in a special session convened March 1 to discuss 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 legislators to subpoena witnesses and records.

A third measure would make available to the racist legislators the names of those students Alabama University Students who petitioned the school to re-imitate Negro co-ed Anurah Lucas.

I attended a session of this legislature, representatives of the Southern way of life.
When I entered the capital, 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-white U.S. of Ala. with 7,000 enrolled was cut $205,000, while the all-Negro Ala. State Col. with an enrollment of 2,500 was cut $250,000.)

Some of the Senators lounged in their leather-padded chairs, reading newspapers and drinking coffee. Most of them sprawled, listened attentively. One fat legislatore lay 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 lawmakers; the discussion was dull. At length, one athletic-looking young representative took the mike 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."
not represented as we espous many genuine state the 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.

The discussion continued on the second floor for the rest of the sessions. Afterward, 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 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" were taken more seriously.

Said one lean white man: "I don't think they'll get anywhere with this boycott. That du negal didn't get anywhere. This legislation fits the issue, too, and..."
got to do. When up in the law they want get involved.
This man spoke calmly, without apparent anger,
as did all the citizens I talked to with the
other racial 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."

The white simply wouldn't talk about this subject with
strangers, even if they talk about it at length
among themselves. They don't do it obviously.

Certainly there is no obvious widespread
hysteria at the present moment. Life goes as
usual, and ordinary subjects start
conversations off. It 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 these
Montgomery events.

Asked a white carpenter
what he thought of the "boycott." He said:
"I don't own the bus company." I asked him:
"Do you think the bus company should grant their
"Then what do you think they should do?"
"I don't know. I don't own the bus company. As far as I'm concerned they can keep walking forever. I don't want things to change."

Some whites are sympathetic to the "protest." Aubrey Williams, publisher of the Southern Farmer, President of the Southern Conference Educational Fund, and an outspoken opponent of Jim Crow, 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.

On a white woman was behind the counter of a store where I had stopped. She hesitated when I asked how to get to a certain address. "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 around as I passed through the door. She called after me, "I always walk myself, lately, it's spring, you know."

The files of the local paper, the Montgomery Advertiser reveal that in the beginning of the protest movement last December there was widespread sympathy among whites with the protest. Letters to the editor cite instances of discrimination on the road and in the issues of the paper from common folk.
The Negro had "legitimate grievances."

Also, as a citizen, he had every right to a fair hearing. The three-man city commission joined the white citizens council, and the mayor announced his "get tough" policy. However, The paper has blacked out all news on the movement except official statements and legal actions, and has adopted a friendly tone toward the WCC.

One of the protest leaders told me: "When it became known that a certain white woman had helped us out a little when this protest first began, she was hounded by phone calls in the middle of the night, and threats, and I don't know what all. Why they made that poor woman so nervous she had to leave town; this town she'd been livin' in all her life. She had to go away to get a rest."

Everyone agrees that the strength of the WCC has grown considerably since the Montgomery and Tuscaloosa events. Its membership in this county has been estimated at 12,000.

The meeting held here (last month) was attended by about that many white reporters, who had been there. Said: "I was surprised to the character of the people there. I had expected a bunch of..."
Of course, there aren't many factory workers around. Applications for WCC membership are easy to get. I picked one up in the white waiting room of the railroad station. Ads from the WCC occasionally appear in the newspapers.

This is pre-election time here, and statements from politicians that they are willing to "tie" for segregation are not uncommon, but I have yet to hear a white worker say anything like that. 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 racist before, and they always seemed emotionally outspoken about their attitude, with anyone who would listen. This is certainly not the case here now, among the ordinary people.

The WCC is an semi-secret organization controlled from the top following a non-aggression policy which is not discussed, by or based on the interests of the white masses in the South. They are all African-American. They are not yet, apparently, a mass movement, but are capable of intimidating.
with the struggle of the negroes for equality.

The big thing here, and possibly the thing that has many of the whites so perplexed and causes them to be confused, and accounts for their reluctance to talk about the protest, is that they are no longer capable of intimidating the negroes in Montgomery.

A number of students at the all negro Alabama State College have told me that a cross had been burned on the campus the day before Miss Lucy was to attend her first class.

"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 young student said, "nothing is going to scare us."

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

And another, "Please Webb off these department stores and businesses down town aren't going to fire anyone, they..."
It is spring in Alabama. The pine covered hills between Birmingham and Montgomery are bright new green in the clearings, and patched here and there with red outcroppings of iron ore.

The street signs go up to Montgomery.
The red diminishes and the green increases as you approach Montgomery. The greyhound runs mercilessly out of the hills directly into the city. The reservoir 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, painted high on its old brick side—Jefferson Davis Hotel. The street signs move past the window—Washington, Lee, Montgomery. Rich port filled names, not like the broad, wide streets, broken by hills and street squares. Not like the efficient numbered avenues and streets in Birmingham's even grid.

Though its one fourth the population, Montgomery's downtown seems larger, first sight than Birmingham's.

There aren't the enormous of tall office buildings, or the smoke stacks, or mills with heaps of smoke and loud whistle. But there is an air of spaciousness, like a

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To review rather than more. Fading of
large shops and houses and many new frame buildings
than in the larger city 90 miles to the north. This is, after
all, the capital of the State. Its railroad station
larger, though emptier than Birmingham's two
combined.

There are less of the wooden shacks separated from
the prosperous standing on raw ground or foot high blocks
of bricks than in Birmingham. Others, these largely unpainted, poorly repaired dwellings cover whole
hillsides which gradually sloping away from mills and
factories and mines and railroad, and are inhabited
by white and negro workers alike, though generally in
somewhat separate sections.

Here there are tree they exist, but not at first view. There are small scattered wooden clean
bricks and frame houses with lawns and gardens. Many
are old, and cracked sidewalks—no sidewalks at
all—are not rare, but the trees and vines and lawns
seem to respond more effectively. Their roots cover
the cracks, and brighten the eye. There are more, though
really not many, of the Roman-Columned parks and
mansions with the tall greek columns across the front.
The columns rise appear like gleaming white marble,
not usually if you brush a handcoat against them,
but close examination, or a brush
of a hand coat, reveals them white-wash painted.
The bus stopped at the depot, the Negro passengers, who had occupied the last third row of seats, which remained seated or stood abreast 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 leaving the bus.

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 chiseled features and thin to the point of severity of a rose" stepped to the back of the room. She seemed at the start a weird, better one, across the room in rhythm with the tune. Started would be a better word - its hard not to start to that catchy tune. It's a good song for walking.

She took the hand of a tall young man who had been on the line. He was bald, paneled, and slint. His face was brown, his hands were large and work-worn. He too was thin, very thin, like so many others I had seen in the streets, the countryside, on the streets, in the employment offices, and outside the factories and mills in Birmingham.

There are many adjectives one could use to describe the working class of this area - tanned, polite, quiet, savvy, reserved, poor, new blood, but the word that would apply most appropriately.
The railroad station in Birmingham had the "colored" and "white" railway painted over, but another sign replaced them. They said "COLORED WAITING ROOM", and INTER STATE AND WHITE INTRA STATE PASSENGERS WAITING ROOM. Even the colored inter state passengers entered the colored waiting room. The same device was apparently considered unnecessary here in Montgomery.

insert (2.)

wearing a cotton uniform, like that of a waitress walked
to, and more of them than any other, is the second thin, very thin.

I left the depot and walked down the street toward a square with an elaborate fountain in it. I was a sunny late afternoon, and people were just getting off work. A few people nodded to me or said hello – this is a polite city – and a lot of people smiled. These were negroes. I noticed after a while that they were smiling at other negroes walking in my direction. When they were no negroes along side, the faces of those approaching bore a suppressed smile. I suppose that some might interpret it as a sneer, but it seemed to me to be more dreamy, inside smile, like that of a young person in love. But it was in all the dark faces, young, and old, rough faces and smooth faces, well-groomed faces, and worn worn faces.

Occasionally – particularly from women’s faces – it burst right through, in spite of the approaching white face, and was quickly, but with difficulty controlled by tired facial muscles.

This was the first visible sign of the Montgomery "protest" movement.

When I met a Negro reporter and asked him what he thought of the Montgomery situation, the first thing he said
was "Thus sets are a lot of smiles," and his own face
lose one. Throughout our conversation on the street (there
is no other public place where we could meet) he tried
to maintain *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 well
dressed Negro man crossed the sidewalk from inside
a shoe store. He carried a tall stack of empty
shoe boxes to be placed with others on the curb
alongside the waste paper cans which stood there.
He whistled "The Poor People of Paris," and he started as one
must when walking to that tune.

From behind me I heard the same song, whistled
from several pairs of lips. I slowed, and was
passed by three Negro women, two young, a lone possibly
their mother. The man stopped whistling as he bent to
lace the boxes on the curb. "Hello
Mrs. Smith," he said, his movements and sound
rhythm with the song.

"Why hello Mr. Jones," the woman replied, also
in rhythm. "House Business."

"Kind, just fine," said Mr. Jones as he crossed back
broad smile. The women were on my or rather startled, as one must when walking to that tune.

The other whites, and there were many near, seemed not to notice me. I suppose they are supposed to be colorblind. But they must have, they were meant to. The words had been loud enough for all to hear. If they missed that scene, they couldn't miss the others, more or less subtly which are constantly enacted all over town during the busy street time hours.

And that is the second visible sign of the Montgomery "protest" movement.

The dignity of men, the right to sit, the freedom to go where we want to, the right to speak.

The atmosphere is in sharp contrast to the streets of Birmingham where Negro eyes avoid white ones, and the tired plod, the shuffle, or the cautious step hides the joyous movement long denied or dignity long suppressed.

"Dignity!" said a student. "We've acquired dignity! Why do you know," he continued, "as inadequate as this little Jim Crow college (Alabama State College in Montgomery) is for the needs of Negroes in Alabama, many of our finest graduates move out of the state, and our people never get the benefit..."

...
changed my mind. It might change others. We are arguing 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 end of the wide street which runs up the graceful slope of a hill commanding the city, and on top of that hill stands a building monument to the Confederacy, a building which had stood when Alabama was a land of chattel slavery. It is the capital building of the State, housing the legislators. Its steel columns gleam whiter than any, and there are even real marble steps.

I walked to the broad lawn, mounted the steps and stood beneath a statue of JEFFERSON DAVIS, the plaque said, and carved around the base were the names of the states which had seceded from the Union in 1861. Birmingham has no such physical remnant of slavery, or of the civil war, because that period had passed and been obscured by years of fable and whitewashed with manufactured
Birmingham was born in the 1870's when the railroads made the large deposits of coal and iron in the Joppa valley evident. Birmingham is surrounded by the southernmost ranges of the Appalachian system. There within a few square miles are found vast deposits of coal and iron, the mineral necessary for the production of steel.

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

It is almost exclusively a city of basic heavy industry, and population is split with the work force. The inhabitants of the metropolitan area whose number half a million are overwhelmingly industrial workers.

It is the center of a region changing south, and the center of that change. The population is one quarter negro. The city is organized both negro and white workers held, and Birmingham has per capita union membership greater than Chicago's.

Montgomery, on the other hand, is the state capital and Maxwell air force base.
(which provides a large part of the city's business) is little more than an agricultural county seat, and only a handful of its 185,000 people are industrial workers, and only a part of these are union members. Its population is 40% Negro, many of these are domestic workers, and 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 every trash receptacle (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 which they built themselves right here and in the process of struggle. They act as one, and they alone control it, and through it they act as one.

For the first time since the alliance of 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 minority 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 government. This is our voice."

The origin and character of the Montgomery Improvement Association is the subject of the next article.
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 against segregation.

Tonight's meeting was held in the Bethel Baptist church on Mobile Road in a Negro residential district. 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 crammed the aisles and overflowed off the steps into the muddy paths on the edge of the street (there are no sidewalks in this section of town). Many stepped west. The long lines of parked cars were full of people escaping the downpour, and more cars arrived. More arrived.

I made my 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-appointed as many churches I had seen in the North, though it was very well kept. While I estimated about between 2 and 3 thousand people were there, probably more, the church was meant to hold much less.
I had been told that the size of the meeting 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 was standing at the speakers stand. A man in the middle of the hall began 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 the traditional "yeah," "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 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 know that child's heart." Which her voice rose "I can't break no more children's heart. Didn't God make all children?" "Oh yes!" the audience responded with passion and musical cleverness. "We can't break no more..."
The woman sat down. Others sat, now her now the others, coming out the story of what segregation means to Negroes, to individual human beings who have had a life of oppression and have never been subjected to it. They talked of the sidewalks that stop short with the white section of town, of the saying yeas and noes in to people who called them nigger, of the 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 shot 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 drudgery and drudgery work, because of a lack of other opportunities for Negroes.

And to every speaker there flowed the beat of the 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
A young man beckoned me outside. "Are you with the press," he said.

"Yes," I said. 

"Just a minute," he said. "I'd just as soon stand here than stand around the building to a small room behind the stage where I was introduced to the other out of town visitors. 

They were teachers and ... ordinary teachers and ... plain people who had come from as far as Chicago, some bringing donations from organizations.

The only whites were to two reporters besides myself. There was really just one other reporter and he himself. 

He went on stage address. The only whites were the two reporters besides myself. 

After our names and mission had been recorded we were ushered onto the platform. In front of usual 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, all were attentive and participating.

On the platform beside the guests were 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.
off to the side I recognized Rosa Parks, a middle-aged woman whose refusal to give up her seat on a bus precipitated the movement.

There was E.D. Nixon, president of the local organization of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters whose home had been bombed after the protest started. He has been active for many years in the fight for civil rights and union affairs. He is an old time civil rights and union fighter. I remember what one leader had said of him:

"We have many fine leaders, but if it hadn't been for E.D. 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, responding only occasionally, and then, it seemed, only to some practical point.

A cheer rose from the hall as Rev. Martin Luther King, president of the association entered. He is a young man only 27 and he has been in Montgomery only since 1954, and now he is president of an association with the greatest power he is the most prominent leader of this movement a powerful and active movement, protecting segregation itself, and this in "the heart of Dixie."
He carried a stack of newspaper letters and notes in his hand and he walked seriously, like a man conscious that he was making history.

"How had this all come about?" I asked myself. "How did it all start?" I asked myself. "How did it all start?"

I thought about the night of the first march and a movement like this yet started?"

The letter said much about how it had begun.

		The general counsel was a man of integrity and good standing.

		This came after the. . . as we had expected...

		This came after the. . .

A white journalist who lives in Montgomery had told me part of the answer. "That December 5 protest wasn't called because of Rosa Parks alone. That was just the last straw." He wasn't. There had been other arrests... and a long history of incidents. ... Here's one... thing. . .

That's what I heard. . . .

Everything was up to the driver, and I'm telling you, if it had been company policy to be rude, then some of those bus drivers couldn't have done worse.

Sometimes they'd take a Negro's money and drive off before he walked to the back door.

"Why one time they even arrested a 13 year old girl on not giving up her seat. They handcuffed her and took her to jail."

"I'm told, though, that never was done and not by Negroes either.

In some cases the drivers even carried guns."

"An old Negro man told me the same thing."
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 buses 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. That's when we decided to do something about it."

The Rev. Thomas R. Thrasher, a white man, wrote an article in the Apr. 27, 1955, Memphis Commercial Appeal, 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 buses the day of the trial."

Three quarters of the Negro riders stayed off the buses that Monday. Mayor A. C. Rentschler, but the judge convicted Mrs. Parks anyway, and fined her $4. 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 remember having wondered at that place. When I had read the article, but now I understood it, I was seeing it myself in this church, at different church, and three months later.

I was reminded of a description by Jacko Balten of
It had welled up and overflowed that night this month, and that was the night the Montgomery Improvement Association was born.

Once again C. 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. Our people just insisted. We formed the association because they voted to go on with the protest until we got something definite, and we organized the association right there on the spot. Reverend 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 lines 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.

And there were several short speeches. There were some short speeches interspersed with songs and hymns. I don't remember the order or all the names.

It's from beginning, "1956 will be our finest..."
"And tell "put on those new may grow arms - and we're going to sing, we need the coliseum." response: "Let's ask for it." "We'll keep on even if we have to go to jail, why, we already been to jail." musical cheers.

Rev. King spoke: "You know whether we want to be or not, we are caught in a great moment of history... it has reached the point where you are part of this movement, you are against it... it is bigger than Montgomery..."
"We must oppose all exploitation..."

"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." wild cheers.

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

"We must never forget

"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."
One 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 despotic empires of the past..." He listed the places.

"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: "Looking back..."

He spoke of the Bandung conference. "... and
another section of that movement met on a cold
December evening in the 9th Street Baptist Church. "cheers.

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

He spoke of passive resistance of Gandhi and of
"We are using the methods of the son of Galilee...
his peaceful methods... toppled the Roman Empire and
split history into AD and BC." response, cheers.

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

A young minister in the platform said "Boy that's great,
I'm gonna move to Montgomery."

The ministers smiled. E.D. Nixon looked serious, as
One speaker looked at the two others while reporters asked questions about how the papers had reported the strike. "Driving around in Cadillacs, " Of course Mrs. Lasky 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 beg me re- 


One speaker 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." 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 up and help us do it there. " We'll come "Well brothers," here. He said the Birmingham people were thinking of making a pilgrimage to Montgomery. "We figure maybe we'll ride down to the whistle of town some Friday and get together and walk children walk!" There were
The transportation committee makes no report.
This is one of the two committees in the association.
The other is financial, and is the financial committee. 
(Mrs. Ida Mae Carldwell, who is the financial secretary of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers #90 here is on that committee.)

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

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

An efficient looking woman in a black business suit took the stand to make the offering (donations). She is in an insurance business. She said she had recently received letters from children up north who were worried about her safety. "Come on up here mother, we've only got one mother in heaven." The audience responded "I got that too, yes me too." She said "I sat right down and wrote them that I'm gonna stay right here and fix it so's you won't have to do it."
visit your work. The effect of staying in Montgomery and trying 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 personality 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 would agree to protest and the protest. "Oh that would never happen he had said. They bring proposals right before the meeting and the people that would never go for that."

And S.D. Nixon had told the reporter: "I wouldn't want to be the one to make the proposal he said. We tried that and around 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. Everybody joined in with her and that was the end of that."

"If we get the first come first serve rule, I think we could get few blacks on the buses right away, but I don't know what would just where we'd go from there. We made people feel scared. Bomb threats and bombs and we can't... its too far to go back."

We've been children too long, someone said.
The collection speaker made an appeal for NAACP memberships. "Any man who isn't a member should 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. Everyone knows 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 the aisle past a table in front of the stage. There was no confusion in the overcrowded hall. Everyone moved quickly, now by now, in perfect order.

I took Pebble Lee's hand at once and filed past the table. I stopped in the rear of the new members [in the front]. I rose and filed out with the line. There was now only white face in the room. Near the door a large young man stood in a business suit. He held out a big hand. I shook it hard, and passed on out the door and started back to town.

I was thirsty and wanted a cigarette, but this was a Negro neighborhood, and I was not sure if the Negro owners of the store would be friendly. Surprisingly, 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 white car slowed and two white feet inspected me suspiciously.
Inside I drank 2 sodas pops and listened briefly to a conversation between two men. “I’ll bet they’ve always liked niggers. I’ll be glad when things settle down again. We always got along so well. It’s a polite town. I don’t know what they’re making up such a fuss about.”

Outside I stood smoking for a moment. The train had stopped and the night was clear and beautiful. A tall young negro in denim pants and a kachki about approached me. “Please sir, will you buy me a pack of cigarettes in there? They got none at the depot.” I took his money and bought the pack. He bowed slightly as he took it and said “thank you sir” and walked quickly toward the depot.

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